

# ANXIETY

## EMPLOYER DISCUSSION GUIDE

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- › Understand what anxiety means in relation to mental illness
- › Know some common types of anxiety
- › Know where to seek help for anxiety



### USING THE DISCUSSION GUIDE

#### Before Facilitating:

1. Watch video module yourself.
2. Familiarise yourself with the background information (on this page).
3. Familiarise yourself with the group questions (over page) and consider how you might respond to these questions yourself.
4. Allow 10-15 minutes for watching the video module plus exploring the group questions.

#### When Facilitating:

1. Inform the group of the purpose of the module and learning objectives. It can help to list the learning objectives on a whiteboard.
2. Have group watch the video module.
3. Ask group "comprehension" questions (over page) to ensure transfer of important information.
4. Ask group "deep learning" questions (over page) to generate group discussion.
5. Close the session by referring to the Closing Points (over page).

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Anxiety disorders are the most common type of mental illness. Anxiety is excessive worry about a potential real or perceived threat that is difficult to control and causes distress or impairs normal functioning.

There are many types of anxiety, but the more common types are specific phobias (e.g. spiders or snakes), generalised anxiety and social phobias.

### SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY

Symptoms can vary depending on the type of anxiety, but some common symptoms include:

- › Restlessness
- › More fatigued than usual
- › Impaired concentration
- › Irritability
- › Muscle aches
- › Difficulty sleeping
- › Sweating, nausea, diarrhoea

People with anxiety disorders will often avoid places or situations which may trigger anxiety, which could include social activities and the workplace.

### TREATMENT OF ANXIETY

Doctors might prescribe medication and/or refer to a psychologist. Psychological treatments target thoughts and behaviours to promote normal functioning.



## GROUP QUESTIONS

### Comprehension

What is anxiety?

What treatment options are there for anxiety?

### Deep Learning

Can anyone give me an example of when they have felt very worried about something, even if just for one day or a few hours?

#### Follow up questions:

- › What did you notice about your thoughts?
- › What did you notice about your body's reaction?
- › How did this affect how you interacted with others?

Can anyone give me an example of a time you, or someone you know, had a specific phobia?

#### Follow up questions:

- › What were you/they afraid of? (e.g. spiders / snakes / clowns)
- › What behaviours showed you that you/they were afraid?
- › Did the person ever overcome their phobia? How?

### Closing Points

Anxiety is more than merely feeling a bit stressed. It is a persistent and uncontrollable worrying that impairs a person's ability to function as they normally would. It causes both psychological and physiological symptoms. Treatment can often be effective, and can be medical or psychological or a combination of both.

If you would like help accessing some support for anxiety, please speak to your leader.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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