



Did you know that... Psychology works for Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

What is Generalized Anxiety Disorder?

If you have **Generalized Anxiety Disorder or GAD**, you will experience chronic, excessive, and uncontrollable worry, be on edge, be easily fatigued, have difficulty concentrating, feel irritable, experience muscle tension, and have problems sleeping.

GAD is one of the most common anxiety disorders. Studies show that at least one out of every 20 individuals will suffer from GAD at some time in their life. It can be mild or it can contribute to unemployment and serious family and social problems. GAD can lead to other problems such as fear of meeting people (social phobia), severe panic attacks (panic disorder), and depression. If left untreated, those with GAD are at greater risk of developing medical problems such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

Proven Psychological Approaches To Treat GAD

There are a number of proven psychological therapies for GAD. They will help you gain control over your worries, decrease your anxiety, and improve your quality of life. The therapies that have been shown to be most helpful are: Cognitive Reevaluation to help you correct thinking patterns which cause and increase worry; Problem-Solving Training to help you learn better ways to solve everyday problems; Exposure to help you confront and control rather than avoid and be controlled by fears; and Progressive Relaxation to decrease your physical symptoms of anxiety such as rapid breathing and sore muscles.

Research Shows that Psychological Treatments are Effective in Treating GAD

Research shows that psychological therapy is very effective in the treatment of GAD. In a recent Canadian study, 77% of those receiving short-term psychotherapy (16 sessions of cognitive reevaluation, problem-solving training, and exposure) remained GAD-free one year after treatment. The fact that you get better and stay better after psychological therapy is certainly an important consideration for those seeking help for anxiety-related problems.

Resources

- Anxiety Disorders Association of Canada
<http://www.anxietycanada.ca/English.htm>
- Anxiety Disorders Association of British Columbia <http://www.anxietybc.com/>

Consultation with or referral to a registered psychologist can help guide you as to the use of these therapies. For a list of psychologists in your area, <http://www.cpa.ca/Psychologist/>.

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