

5 Simple Eastern Ways to Manage Anxiety

1. Be present:

Imagine there are three boxes in front of you, on your left hand side the box represents the past; on your right hand side the box represents the future, and the box in the middle represents here and now.

Now, think about it, if you want to experience shame and guilt, which box do you focus on? The past! If you want to experience fear, which box do you focus on? The future! If you want to experience love, peace and joy, which box do you focus on? Yes, the answer is Here and Now!

In reality, the past is done, you can't go back to fix it no matter how remorseful you are. The future is not here, but you can scare yourself to death by thinking about the worst scenario and all kinds of what ifs. You will end up being paralyzed by this kind of neurotic fear. FEAR stands for "False Evidence Appearing Real"!

If you use this moment and focus on your past and/or your future, you are creating a life that is absolutely delusional! I would ask you, "Why would you create a life that is delusional? Why would you spend time being paralyzed?" "Do you have power to choose to be present?" Yes! Absolutely yes!

The untrained mind will constantly go to the past and the future. That is why it is very difficult for you to stay present. Here is a simple exercise you can do to stay present: Identify everything in your surroundings in a very quick fashion.

Before we start this exercise, make a mental note about your anxiety is now on a scale of 0 to 10. (10 being the highest).

For example: If at this moment you are in your living room, what I'd like you to do is to verbally identify each item you see out loud: "the sofa, the pillows, the colors of the pillows, the coffee table, the rug, the magazines, the coffee cup, the end table, the curtains, the door, the cabinet, the drawers in the cabinet, the wall, the color of the wall, the lamp...the plants, the texture of the plants... go as fast as you can!

As you focus on each item, it forces your attention on what it is, in this moment. You are no longer in your head, you are connected to your environment and the reality, you are not in the past or future... now notice how your anxiety is on a scale of 0 to 10 right now.

People have reported to me that their anxiety went way down by doing this exercise. You are encouraged to use this technique whenever you feel anxious, or simply to train your mind to be present!

The truth is that all we have is here and now! If you can live your life by being completely present, one moment at a time, then you are actually living your life to the fullest!

2. Choose to focus on what you want, not what you don't want

Your thought is incredibly powerful! The second you think about something, it is done! If it is not happening, it is because you also have an opposite thought about it, your doubt! When that happens your positive and negative thoughts just cancel each other out!

The law of attraction says whatever you focus on it will expand! If you allow negative thoughts then pretty soon, you will be taken to a very dark place. If you are able to use your power to choose and focus on what you want, then in the same way pretty soon things will fall into place effortlessly!

Worrying is a very good example of focusing on what you don't want! When you worry about something, usually it is future-oriented, again you are creating a life that is absolutely delusional! It is consuming your time and energy, and you accomplish nothing by worrying!

You can choose to live a life that is delusional and stuck in the past and future or you can choose to live a life that is full of love, peace and joy by being present! It's completely up to you!

3. Identify what you want and detach from the outcome

Your mind is incredibly amazing! You can manifest anything you want into your life, but you must do the following two things:

1. Identify what you want
2. Detach from the outcome

Now you know how important it is for you to focus on what you want, not what you don't want. But do you know exactly what you want? Identify exactly what you want, use your imagination to see what it is that you want, then give yourself the permission to have it, whatever it is. Remember without identifying what you want, nothing will happen.

Once you have identified what you want, the next step is to detach from the outcome. The anxiety comes in when you are attached to the outcome. Let's use hiking as an analogy: You are at the bottom of the mountain, and you want to be on the top of the mountain. The picture of attaching to the outcome is that you constantly look at your watch, and keep checking out how many people have beat you to top of the mountain. As the time goes by, you are getting more and more anxious, and your energy level starts to drop, and you feel you will never be able to get on the top of the mountain like those people did. You start to doubt yourself, and put yourself down. As a result of that you may never get to the top of the mountain, because you are spinning your wheels and getting nowhere!

Detaching from the outcome means that you are able to enjoy your journey from the very bottom of the mountain. You are able to appreciate every step that your feet have moved forward, you notice the colors of the rocks, the grass by the trees, and you are in awe of the views as you hike up toward the top of the mountain. Yes, you are aware of the fact that there are many people have passed you by and many people have already arrived on the top of the mountain, but none of them can discourage you from reaching your goals and you are enjoying it every step of the way!

4. Learn about Oneness: There is no separation between you and the abundance of the Universe!

Anxiety is fear and ego-based thoughts. As human beings, all of us have these two kinds of fear: fear of failure and fear of the unknown. If you know how to deal with fear of failure and fear of the unknown, then nothing will faze you!

First of all, let's talk about failure! Believe or not, both success and failure are illusions! It's just a label we put on ourselves and others! In reality, everything we do, we produce three kinds of results: positive, negative and neutral. Positive we can use over and over again, negative we know it is not working and neutral it stays the same.

There is no success, therefore there is no failure. Who is to say getting an F in your math class will prevent you from being a successful businessman? And who is to say making one billion dollars a year makes a man successful?

After studying Taoism for many years, I stay away from words like success and failure. Here is a quote from Tao Te Ching, verse 13: "Success is as dangerous as failure. Whether you go up the ladder or down it, your position is shaky. When you stand with your two feet on the ground, you will always keep your balance."

Taoism teaches us about Oneness. "When we don't see the self as self, what do we have to fear?"

Ego is that little voice telling you "you are not good enough!" Ego pulls you out of the oneness, and as soon as you start listening to your ego talking, you will feel more and more fear creeping in.

In order to avoid being pulled out of the oneness, you will need to first recognize what ego does. Ego's job is to compare, to judge based on one's appearance, ability, social status, possession, and everything in the material world. Ego is only concerned about self-importance and self-image. You can choose to attach to your ego, and live in fear or you can choose to learn about oneness, and ultimately set yourself free, and live a life that is full of love, peace and joy!

Now, let's talk about fear of the unknown. Where is the fear of the unknown coming from? Fear of the unknown is coming from the inability to be present. Your mind keeps going to the future, and you can't accept the uncertainty of the future. Earlier we talked about choosing to live in the future, the consequence of that is to live a life that is absolutely delusional!

The best way to get rid of fear of the unknown is to accept what is. Everything in this world falls into two categories: things are under your control, vs. things are not under your control. Things under your control, take control over it; things not under your control, let go!

Do you know how much time that you have spent trying to control those things that are absolutely out of your control? What are the things absolutely out of your control? There are five things we as human beings are absolutely powerless over: the past, the future, and other people's feelings, thoughts and behaviors. Not being able to accept the things out of your control is like screaming at the sky and asking "why are you thundering and raining right now, I'm supposed to go hiking, I can't accept it!" You work yourself up and feel angry and resentful, meanwhile there is very little time left for you to work on those things that are actually absolutely under your control!

Accepting what is doesn't mean you like it or you approve it, it only means that you acknowledge what is, and choose not to fight with the reality, because you know that the odds of winning are zero! Being able to accept what is gives you a sense of peace. The sooner you can accept what is, the easier your life will be!

5. Cultivate feeling of gratitude

When we are anxious, not only we are not able to be present, but we forget how many blessings we already have in our lives. Gratitude is the gateway to love, peace and joy! As soon as you start counting your blessings you set yourself on the positive mode. What I want you to do is to notice every little detail about things and people around you that you can be grateful for! At any given moment, I can give you more than 20 things that I am grateful for. I am grateful for the freedom of wearing the clothes I want to wear, the hair style I want to have, I am grateful for this moment I can breathe, I can see, I can smell, and my heart is beating, I am grateful for getting up in the morning, that there is water to flush in the toilet, I am grateful for this moment that I am sharing my gratitude with you...

One of my clients who suffered from severe anxiety and depression, had a very difficult time feeling gratitude. After I explained to her how to cultivate feelings of gratitude, she came to me and said, “Wen Chi, you will be very proud of me. Last night I was grateful for every single “Cheerio” in that box of cereal, because I didn’t have to cook! I smiled. Finally she understood the spirit of gratitude.

In closing, I would like to share with you about meaning the of life on this earth: We are not here to accumulate material possessions, because everything has been provided for us. We are not here to strive to be the best at what we do, because we are not human-doings, we are human-beings; we are not here to judge ourselves and others, because our imperfection makes us shine through our weaknesses and learn about compassion towards ourselves and others.

So what are we here for? We are here to learn about three things: to love, to forgive and to create. We are here to learn how to love ourselves and others, forgive ourselves and others, and we are here to take full responsibility to create the life we want!

Yes! You can have a life that is absolutely full of love, peace and joy, no matter what is happening around you! And the good news is that it is completely up to you!

For more information to manage your anxiety please visit our website. Innovative treatment modalities... only provided at Zen Institute!