

**(INFORMATION ONLY)**

# Understanding and Managing Anxiety



Mental Health Services

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**What is anxiety?**

Anxiety is a normal, necessary, healthy reaction. It happens to everyone at times of danger and in worrying situations. When you are anxious your bodily system speeds up and, in certain circumstances, this can be a definite advantage. It means that you are ready for action and able to respond quickly if necessary.

Anxiety becomes a problem when it interferes with our performance in our everyday lives. Then it is helpful to learn to control it.

Here at Dawley, we offer courses to help people recognise, understand and manage anxiety. A course usually runs for 6 weekly sessions of two hours. There are usually about 8 – 10 people in the group. Understandably, you may feel anxious about attending, but continuing to do so will lessen the anxiety week by week. You are encouraged to offer personal experiences or ask questions, but it is fine to remain quiet during the sessions.

The following topics will be covered in the course:

- \* Physical symptoms of anxiety.
- \* Negative thinking, and how it drives and increases anxiety.
- \* Thinking errors, and how to challenge them.
- \* Changing negative thoughts to realistic thoughts.
- \* Dealing with unhelpful thinking patterns.
- \* How anxiety affects behaviour.
- \* How to begin facing difficult situations again.
- \* Stress and how to cope with it.
- \* Goal setting and looking at overcoming the problems that anxiety has caused.
- \* How assertive behaviour reduces anxiety.
- \* Relaxation techniques and their value.

Printed information will be given out.

If you would like to attend an *Understanding and Managing Anxiety* course, please contact your GP for a referral to the Department.