



ANXIETY



And the Roller Coaster
of the College Experience

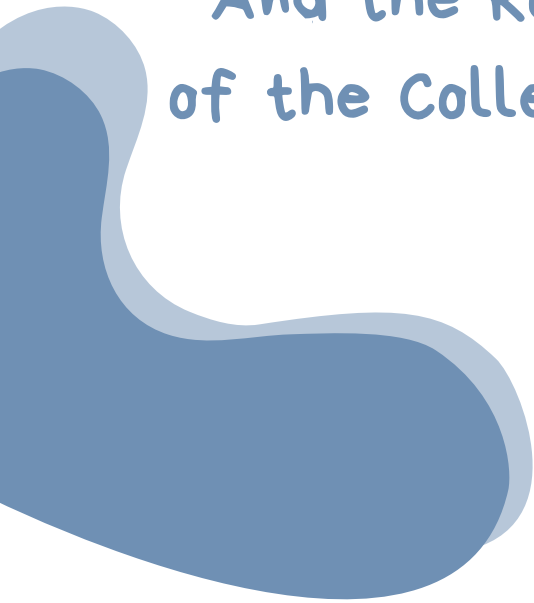


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AUTHOR'S NOTE

This toolkit was brought to you by NAMI Mercer and created by Jacob Adam, an intern at NAMI Mercer. Growing up, I was exposed to the idea of going to college from a young age.



It is glorified through the early education system despite not being the only path to success and happiness in one's life. The people who do go, are seldom informed about the hardships, struggles, and sacrifices that come with getting that piece of paper. This accomplishment could take four, six, ten, or more years to achieve based on the degree's merits. To make this journey successfully, people should be well informed on how much their lives will be altered socially, physically, and emotionally during those years.

WHAT IS "THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE?"

In college, there are a lot of large and small tasks a student must juggle, both in and out of the classroom. They often add a workload beyond the traditional full-time job. Money, time management, social life, and expectations are among the most brutal challenges students face. In high schools, there is often a lack of information or awareness of these issues in preparing students for what is to come beyond high school.



Types of Anxieties in College Students

Social Anxiety	Marked fear or anxiety about 1+ social situations where exposed to possible scrutiny by others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interacting in clubs• Transitioning to different colleges
Generalized Anxiety	Excessive anxiety and worry (apprehensive, expectation) occurring more days than not for at least 6 months about several events or activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gaining and maintaining friendships• Opportunities for research and internships• Future finances
Panic Disorder	Recurrent unexpected panic attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strict due dates• Personal issues during the semester
Separation Anxiety	Developmentally inappropriate and excessive fear or anxiety concerning separation from those to whom the person is attached to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living on campus• Loss of a family member• New environment

SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

- Nervousness or Uneasiness in Class and Social Interaction



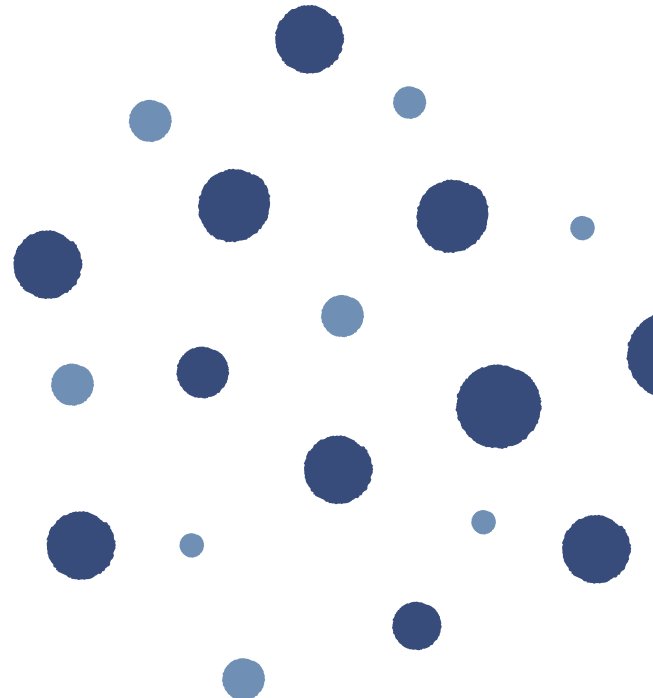
- Increased Class Absences and Missed Assignments

- Isolation from Family, Friends, Professors, and Classmates





STATISTICS



- 88% of students experience moderate to severe stress, with 44% of students showing moderate to severe anxiety and 36% of students having moderate to severe depression.

- 16% of students who were absent for at least a day in the past year and missed school for reasons other than physical illness. They didn't attend because of anxiety, and 12% said they felt too sad or depressed to participate.

- 32.4% felt moderately lonely, and 3.2% severely lonely,



NAVIGATING ADVERSITIES

Ways to Navigate Anxiety while in College:

1. Self-Care - Takes time out of your day to sit down and do what **YOU** want to do. Your favorite hobby, game, show, etc., or you can try something completely new!



2. Time Management- Put your classes, jobs, and extracurricular responsibilities in blocks and evaluate the free time and how you want to spend it.



3. Check in with your Support System Daily- Call or plan dates to converse with trusted figures in your life. The sense of isolation in yourself could be lifted and give you proper support to relieve your honest feelings and thoughts.



RESOURCES IN COLLEGES

Check Your College for:

- **Counseling Services:** Most colleges have counseling centers with licensed mental health professionals who can provide individual counseling, group therapy, and workshops on managing anxiety and other mental health concerns.
- **Support Groups:** Some colleges offer support groups for students with anxiety or related issues. These groups provide a safe space for students to share their experiences, learn coping strategies, and receive peer support.
- **Student Wellness Programs:** Colleges often have wellness programs that promote holistic well-being, including mental health. These programs may offer resources such as mindfulness workshops, yoga classes, or relaxation techniques to help students manage stress and anxiety.





RESOURCES OUTSIDE OF COLLEGE

The Anxiety &
Depression Association
of America



The ADAA

The Substance
Abuse & Mental
Health Services
Administration



The SAMHSA



NAMI Mercer HelpLine:
609.799.8994 x17





CONCLUSION

Anxiety among college students is a multi-layered issue with significant implications for both individual well-being and academic success. Through this exploration, it becomes apparent that various factors contribute to the prevalence of anxiety, including academic pressures, social expectations, financial burdens, and the transitional nature of college life. Effective interventions and support systems are crucial in addressing these challenges, encompassing both individual coping strategies and institutional initiatives aimed at fostering a supportive campus environment. By acknowledging and addressing the complex mesh of factors contributing to anxiety in college students, universities and organizations can play a pivotal role in promoting mental health and empowering students to thrive both academically and personally.

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