

*Katy Stevenson*  
HYPNOTHERAPY

# OVERCOMING ANXIETY

**A Guide To Help You Feel Calm  
& Happy Again**



**KATY STEVENSON**

Hi,

# I'm Katy Stevenson, Anxiety Specialist & Hypnotherapist

Since 2009, I've been helping women break free from the exhausting grip of anxiety, overthinking, panic attacks, and emotional overwhelm so they can finally feel safe, calm, and in control again.

## ✨ SOME QUICK HIGHLIGHTS ABOUT ME

- **17+ years of experience** helping clients heal anxiety and trauma
- Certified by the UK Hypnosis Academy
- Trained in **Advanced Clinical & Analytical Hypnotherapy**
- Skilled in **Kinetic Shift** and **OldPain2Go** techniques
- Named one of the **Top 3 Hypnotherapists (2016–2025)** by **ThreeBestRated**



# Before you begin

**Take your time with this guide.**

There's no rush to have it all figured out.

As you read, you'll find simple tools to help you feel more in control. One step at a time.

And when you reach the last page, you'll find a self-check-in... and a **small first step gift** 📺 to support you if you're ready to go a little deeper about anxiety.

*Let's begin.*



# Understanding Anxiety

## Moving Forward

A large number of people who seek help from their doctor are actually dealing with a **psychological issue** — often anxiety, low mood, or depression. Many wait months or even years before reaching out, and during that time, their distress often grows, making the problem feel even heavier.

There are many different reasons for feeling like this, sometimes can be quite clear what the issue is, other times, less so.

It could be from a childhood or recent trauma or due to the stress of daily life, or perhaps isolation and loneliness. It could also be something they are born with, part of their personality.

**A discussion with your doctor will help to establish the underlying causes, if possible.**



As a hypnotherapist since 2009, I have noticed that the majority of people that come to see me for anxiety issues, have been prescribed, or at least offered tablets from their GP. This can help for some people but often can be just a sticking plaster for an underlying issue.

By this I mean that antidepressants could be helpful in the short term but if the underlying cause is not dealt with, there will always be a symptom.

This could mean many, many years taking medication with no actual real change in sight.

I also say this as someone who was prescribed medication for anxiety and depression and was then left on them for years. I had a real battle to get back off them and get my own life back on track.

The tablets numbed me, helped me through for a while but didn't fix the issue.

This is not ideal; the preferable action is to get the relevant help to deal with whatever is causing the pain in the first place.

When someone faces mental health challenges, their condition typically falls into one of two categories: **psychosis or neurosis.**

## NEUROSIS

This term is an umbrella for mental health issues like anxiety, depression, phobias, OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder), and hysteria. It's not a specific diagnosis, but rather a way to describe distress that affects thoughts and emotions—but doesn't disconnect someone from reality.

## PSYCHOSIS

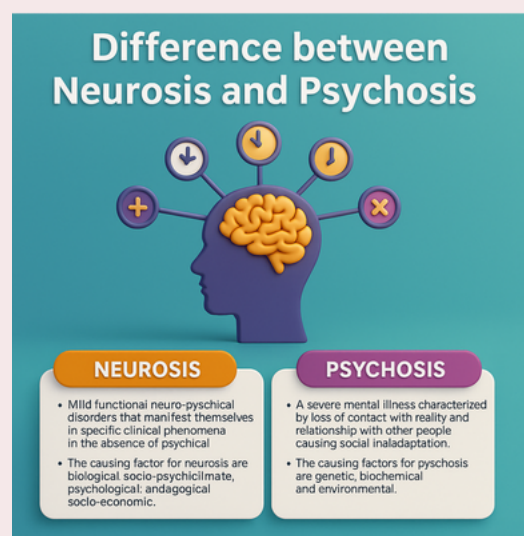
Psychosis is more severe and involves a loss of contact with reality.

This might include hallucinations, delusions, or disorganized thinking.

Examples of psychotic conditions include schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, schizoaffective disorder, and certain types of personality disorders.

**People with psychosis typically require medical treatment and support from a doctor or mental health professional.**

Psychosis can be caused by a combination of genetic, biochemical, and environmental factors.



The next page will give you some information on Psychosis. If you are suffering from it, please **get in touch with your GP.**

# WHAT IS PSYCHOSIS?

Psychosis is a symptom of a mental illness or brain disorder which entails a person losing touch with the real world.

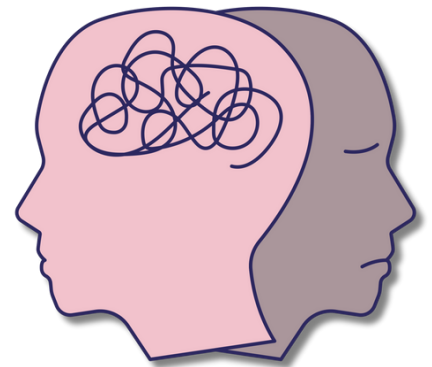
People with a psychosis process the world around them differently to other people. This can include how they experience, believe or view things.

For instance, they might see or hear things that others do not. Or believe things other people do not. Some people describe it as a **"break from reality"**. Common examples are:

## ➤ HALLUCINATIONS

These are when you see, hear or feel things that other people don't. For example:

- Seeing things which other people do not see
- Hearing voices
- Smelling things which other people can't
- Feeling someone touching you who is not there
- Hearing voices or other sounds is the most common hallucination.



Hearing voices is different for everyone. For example, voices may be:

- ❖ Female or male
- ❖ Whispering or shouting
- ❖ In a different language or different accent to your own
- ❖ Someone you know or someone you've never heard
- ❖ Negative and disturbing.

You might hear voices sometimes or all the time.

## ➤ DELUSIONS

These are beliefs that are not based on reality. Even though they feel real to you. Other people are likely to disagree with your beliefs.

(A delusion is not the same as holding a religious or spiritual belief which others don't share.)

For example, you may believe:

- That you are being followed by secret agents or members of the public
- Your food or water is being poisoned
- People are out to get you or trying to kill you. (This can be strangers or people you know)
- Something has been planted in your brain to monitor your thoughts
- You have special powers, are on a special mission or that you are a God

You may not always find these experiences distressing, although people often do. You may be able to stay in work and function well even if you have these experiences.

## ➤ **COGNITIVE EXPERIENCES**

Cognitive experiences are ones that relate to mental action. Such as learning, remembering and functioning.

Some cognitive experiences associated with psychosis are:

- Concentration problems
- Memory problems
- Unable to understand new information
- Difficulty making decisions



Psychosis can be a one-off experience or linked to other conditions. There is no single cause of psychosis.

Researchers believe that environment and genetics may affect who develops psychosis.

**You should be offered medication and talking therapy to help with your experiences.**

⇒ **To access treatment for psychosis, you usually need to have an assessment by a specialist mental health service, such as the Community Mental Health Team.**

You may need to go to hospital if you are experiencing very distressing psychotic symptoms.

**If you are not suffering from Psychosis, you may have Neurosis.**

# WHAT IS NEUROSIS?

People with neuroses **do not handle stress well** and have developed unhelpful responses to it. The extent and severity of neuroses is very variable.

It does not include hallucinations or delusions, and people are well aware of reality but they **tend to react and respond in very maladaptive ways** to their environment.

This can include lashing out at close friends and family (inappropriate levels of aggression either physically or verbally), drinking too much, taking drugs, perfectionism, obsessions, negativity and extreme anxiety.

**The causes for neurosis are biological, psychological, and socio-economic.**

This means it could be how they've been brought up, what levels of stress hormone the mother had whilst pregnant with them, and their current environment; home life, work stress, financial worries, relationships etc, or past trauma, (whether recent or childhood).

Unlike Psychosis, which is a symptom of an underlying disorder, Neurosis is a group of disorders.



**SIGNS OF NEUROSIS**

# Understanding Worry, Fear & Anxiety

If you are still reading this, then mostly likely, you are suffering from Anxiety. I am guessing this since I am an Anxiety Specialist, and you've come to me for some help! (Not because I'm a Dr or that I am psychic!)

So, what is it that causes us to feel this way?

## The Stress Response

Worries, fear and anxieties are common to us all and are the normal reactions to stress or danger. They are not physically or mentally damaging and, on most occasions, these responses are reasonable or even necessary to our survival.

**They only become a problem when they are exaggerated or experienced out of context.**

As an example: A dog is walking towards you; you start to panic; your heart beats faster and faster in your chest; you begin to get hot, you start sweating; your mouth dries up.

Now, if the dog was growling and gnashing its teeth at you, if it was showing signs of aggression and running towards you, off a lead, this would be a perfectly normal FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE response.

However, if the dog is on a lead, walking calmly alongside its owner, paying you no attention whatsoever, then you are having an unhelpful reaction to the situation.



**Can you see the difference?**

## Normal responses to stress

You are walking along a quiet country lane, the birds are tweeting, the sun is shining. It's so very peaceful, you are smiling as you carry along your picnic basket.

The next minute passes in slow motion, from out of nowhere, a motorcyclist roars around the corner, across your path and almost hits you. You feel the adrenaline sweep through your body, you drop your basket and dive out of the way, to safety. Your heart is racing, and you are shaking, but you made it to safety.

Afterwards, you feel jittery and exhausted, but this eased off with time.

Both examples show an experience where the hormone adrenaline is released, in order to give you the energy to deal with a perceived dangerous situation. I say perceived, as it may be a real or imagined threat, but the body/mind will still react in the same way.



Adrenaline pumps the blood through our bodies so that we can run towards a challenge and fight something, or runaway fast from something that could harm us.

This goes right back to when we were cave people, and we had to hunt for our food.

If a dangerous animal appeared, our bodies would flood with adrenaline to cope with the FIGHT/FLIGHT situation.

If we didn't respond in this manner, we would get eaten!

Therefore, our very clever bodies knew how to protect us.

Worry, fear & anxiety are crucial to our survival as they prepare us for coping with stress or a dangerous situation. Once the stress or danger has passed, these temporary changes subside.

Nowadays, we are not faced with the same kind of challenges, but we do still have the same response to what we perceive as a threat to our lives.

We still experience the same behavioural change in our minds and bodies just like our ancestors did.

Things that can cause our responses could be fear of losing a job, being harmed, someone shouting abruptly, almost being hit by a car, worry about an upcoming event etc.

In fact, there are many ways that we may automatically go into one of the FIGHT/ FLIGHT/ FREEZE modes.

Sometimes it can be due to the way we've taught our brains to behave; consistent behaviour changes the way that the neurons in our brains are formed.

Once you've learned a certain way of doing things, it's not easy to change, without practise.

For example: once you've learned to tie your shoelaces, you don't forget how to do it.

# PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM - VENTRAL VAGAL

This is your body's "rest and digest" mode — where you feel safe, calm, and present.

What it helps you do:

- Breathe calmly
- Digest food
- Sleep well
- Heal and fight infection
- Feel connected and safe with others

This system is active when you're:

- Relaxed
- Mindful
- Doing daily things like eating, talking, or resting

## SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

(Also called Fight or Flight)

This kicks in when your brain thinks there's danger, real or imagined.

What happens:

- Heart beats faster
- Breathing gets quicker
- Muscles get ready to run or fight
- Adrenaline rushes in

It can happen if you:

- Are truly in danger
- Feel anxious or worried
- Are excited or nervous (like on a rollercoaster or before a performance)

Your brain doesn't always check if the threat is real, it just reacts.

# DORSAL VAGAL: THE BODY'S FREEZE RESPONSE


**Sometimes, when fight or flight doesn't work, your body chooses a third option:**


## **Freeze.**

This is your Dorsal Vagal system kicking in, it slows everything down to keep you safe.

What happens:

- Heart rate drops
- Body becomes still and quiet
- You may feel numb, disconnected, or shut down
- Emotions and energy go flat

 Long ago, this helped us hide from danger- like staying still to avoid a predator.

 Today, your body might freeze when:

- You feel trapped in a scary or overwhelming situation
- You've already tried to fight or run, but nothing worked
- You've survived a traumatic event and your brain is trying to protect you

This is how people often survive:

- By emotionally “shutting down”
- By becoming numb to pain or fear
- By learning how to “cope” without reacting

This can happen in:

- Abusive relationships
- Situations of long-term fear or helplessness

Over time, depression or deep fatigue can set in when the freeze response stays active for too long.

# HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO OVERCOME ANXIETY?

Anxiety isn't just in your head.  
It lives in your body- in your nervous system.

The good news is...

**Because the body plays a role in anxiety, the body also holds the key to healing it.**

## SO, HOW DO YOU HEAL?

We heal anxiety by helping your nervous system feel safe again, and guiding it back to the Ventral Vagal state, where you feel calm, grounded, and connected.

Here's how that's possible:

**One way of focusing your mind and calming down it to do the 5 senses exercise.**

**5-4-3-2-1**  
**Grounding Technique**

5 things you can see	
4 things you can hear	
3 things you can touch	
2 things you can smell	
1 thing you can taste	

Name things that you can see, hear, touch, smell and taste. Repeat this until you have calmed down.

If you are feeling detached from reality, this exercise is particularly helpful, as it will ground you to your surroundings.

All you need to do is name things that you can see, hear, touch, smell and taste.

Repeat this repeatedly until you have calmed down.

If you are feeling detached from reality, this exercise is particularly helpful, as it will ground you to your surroundings.

**If you are still struggling, you can move onto some breathing exercises.**

*Katy Stevenson, Anxiety Specialist*

# BREATHING EXERCISES

As previously mentioned, when you are in Fight/Flight mode, your heart rate increases, and your breathing will become faster.

In order to change this, first you must notice your breathing and where it is coming from. You will be breathing high into your chest, so you must take breaths from your diaphragm instead.

- Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose for a count of 4.
- Gently hold your breath for a count of 7.
- Breathe Out (8 seconds):
- Exhale slowly and fully through your mouth for a count of 8.



# SQUARE BREATHING

This can be used any time to settle your breathing down to a nice and calm rate.

## 4-4-4 BREATHING

1 Breathe in for 4,  
thinking the word  
"Calm"

2 Hold for 4

3 Breathe out  
for 4 thinking  
the word  
"Relax"

4 Hold for 4



Repeat 3 times.

To start with, exhale all of your breath out. Hold, then breathe in deeply for 4 seconds to begin.

# THE INFINITY SIGN

**This is a great little exercise to do (kids especially love this). It soothes you whilst you settle your breathing and gives your hands something to do too!**

The sensation on your forehead will feel incredibly calming and you can use this anytime you want to feel calm and comforted.



- Simply draw the infinity sign on your forehead, slowly moving your finger from side to side, above your eyebrows.
- Breathe gently and slowly, whilst enjoying the sensation on your skin.

# 1. Is there something happening at home that you need to give a little more attention to?

Have you been neglecting your own self-care by looking after others so much?

If this is the case, try and make a slot of time every day/few days that is just for YOU!

- Time to read
- Exercise
- Chill out
- Have a bath
- Whatever you like doing



## 2. If you are in a relationship, perhaps it is just not working for you anymore, but you have kept on going just for the sake of it?

- Are you living to the same values you always had, or are they somebody else's now?
- Are you being true to yourself and living the way that makes YOU happy?
- Do you feel that you are plodding along without any part of your day making you feel happy?
  - Have you drifted apart so much that you no longer connect?
  - Are you being taken for granted?
  - Are you taking your partner for granted?
  - Do you have any quality time with your partner?

Try sitting down with them and see if there is a compromise you can come to, to make sure you are both getting the same value out of your relationship.

*Remember, your happiness matters too!*



Make sure you both get the opportunity to talk and to listen properly. If one of you is constantly overtalking and not hearing how the other feels, that can be extremely detrimental to their mental wellbeing. It should be a 2-way street.



3. If not a personal relationship, it may be something at work. Sitting down and really evaluating what is going on, causing you to feel so anxious in the first place can really help if you feel that it's possible.

I understand though, brain fog can really get the better of you and cause you to have no clue what is really going on!!! This is where I can help you.

4. Maybe you are struggling from lack of confidence and self-esteem, which is keeping you where you are, as you do not feel strong enough or capable enough to move away from it?

**Or perhaps you don't have the feelings of self-worth, to enable you to go forward and get that job or promotion?**

This **DOES NOT** have to be a forever feeling.

- You **can** have a choice in how you feel
- You **can** learn to forgive yourself
- You **can** learn to make better choices
- You **can** learn to love yourself

These are things that can be worked on and helped. I can help you change your whole mindset and help you love yourself again.

- What would it be like to actually feel positive every morning?
- What would each day look like when you wake up feeling great?
- How different would every day be if you looked forward to it?!

I can help you get back your *confidence* and *self-esteem*

Imagine having the *self-confidence* to make that big change in your life you've always wanted!!!!

Or even to just be *content* with what you already have.

# YOU'VE MADE IT TO THE END...

If you've made it this far, take a moment to pause and acknowledge yourself.

**Before you close this guide, I'd love to offer you two gentle next steps:**



# Take the Anxiety Self-Assessment

This short self-check will help you understand where your nervous system might be stuck, and what you may need to support it.

👉 [CLICK HERE TO TAKE THE TEST](#)

## Book a 1:1 Free Call >>>>

If you want to talk through what you're feeling with someone who understands anxiety deeply, you can book a private 1:1 call with me. This isn't therapy.


👉 [BOOK YOUR FREE ANXIETY SUPPORT CALL](#)

*Katy Stevenson, Anxiety Specialist*



# Here's what my clients say



 **Keith Henderson** ★ recommends **Katy Stevenson's Hypnotherapy**.

I was diagnosed with depression and given antidepressants which in no way made me feel better. For ages I suffered with extreme bouts of anxiety, stress, paranoia, anger, guilt etc etc. Nothing made me any better and the NHS seemed unable to offer anything that treated the symptoms or found a cause. I tried hypnotherapy as a last resort kind of thing, thinking 'what have I got to lose?'

It's difficult to put into words what takes place during a session or how I felt during it. All I can say is that after the first of my four sessions I felt an immediate positive change and over the few weeks it took to complete the course I completely changed my mindset with Katy's help. It literally felt like a life changing experience. During the hypnotherapy element of each session I felt emotions ranging from sheer relaxation to complete euphoria and a sense of regaining control again.

Because of Katy's help I'm back at work, regained self control and feeling happier and motivated to be again. I can't thank her enough and if I find any future hiccups along the way Katy will be my go-to method of help. Rated 100 out of 10!!

 **Hazel Crammond** ★ recommends **Katy Stevenson's Hypnotherapy**.

I was sceptical about hypnotherapy but knew I had to try to curb my anxiety and other issues. So glad I came to Katy. In 4 sessions I've become less anxious, more confident and getting back to my old smiley self. Partner had committed on the change. Katy is so lovely and supported me with the right tools to change my mindset. I would definitely recommend Katy x

1 comment

 **Kimberly Carroll** ★ recommends **Katy Stevenson's Hypnotherapy**.

Katy is professional, friendly & makes you feel at ease. I enjoyed all my 4 sessions & feel I have benefited greatly from seeing her. She has given me tools that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

I highly recommend Katy. She is the best of the best.

1 comment

 **Elsie Pie** ★ recommends **Katy Stevenson's Hypnotherapy**.

For reasons I couldn't begin to explain Katy got me to where I needed to be. With the means to tap into "me" she unlocked something I didn't even know existed. With a huge life changing event for me hanging in the balance Katy made my journey possible, she gives you the confidence and tools to move forward not just in that moment but for any decision in life..... 1.2.3 go, swoosh!! You may think nothing has changed but believe me it will have if you've had a little bit of Katy in your life. Highly recommend for anyone for whatever life throws at you, hat off to you K. Xxx

Katy Stevenson's Hypnotherapy + 1 1 comment

 **Marie Owen** ★ recommends **Katy Stevenson's Hypnotherapy**.

I recently worked with Katy on her 4 week anxiety course. Katy is warm, friendly and genuine and immediately put me at ease. She listened to my reasons for wanting support and quickly taught me techniques that had immediate effect. I'm delighted and would highly recommend

1 comment

Many more testimonials can be found on my website [www.katystevenson.com](http://www.katystevenson.com)

**Katy Stevenson, Anxiety Specialist**

*THANK YOU*