

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ANXIETY

A Guided Workbook to Explore, Acknowledge, and Name Your Anxiety

Nervana Club Series

Introduction

Anxiety is not a flaw. It's not weakness. It's not something that makes you broken.

Anxiety is your brain's way of sounding an alarm — often too loudly, and sometimes without reason. But that doesn't mean you can't learn to understand it, soften its grip, and change your response.

This workbook is your starting point.

By the end of these pages, you'll have a clearer sense of what your anxiety feels like, where it shows up, and how to begin relating to it differently — with curiosity, not shame.

Let's begin your reset.



Chapter 1: What Is Anxiety, Really?

Anxiety is the anticipation of a perceived threat — physical, emotional, or social. It's the tension before the event, the racing heart before the outcome, the spiraling thoughts of “what if.”

From an evolutionary standpoint, anxiety served a vital role: survival.

But in today's world, our alarms are often triggered by non-life-threatening stressors — emails, deadlines, social interactions, or even self-judgment.

Understanding this shift helps you recognize that you're not overreacting. You're reacting to a system that needs recalibration.



Chapter 2: When Anxiety Becomes Overwhelming

There's a difference between everyday nervousness and chronic anxiety.

Nervousness usually has a clear trigger, like an upcoming test or interview, and it fades once the situation passes. In fact, it can sometimes even enhance performance.

Chronic anxiety, on the other hand, can feel constant or random. It lingers, interferes with your ability to focus or sleep, and affects relationships. If you often feel tense, restless, or emotionally drained without a clear reason, your anxiety may have become a daily presence — one that deserves attention and care.



Chapter 3: Where Does Your Anxiety Show Up?

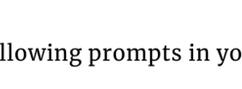
Anxiety doesn't always show up as a thought. Sometimes, it speaks through the body or behavior. You may experience tension in your chest, tightness in your stomach, irritability, procrastination, or sudden fatigue.

These signs are not betrayals. They are invitations to pay attention.

Start observing how your anxiety shows up. Ask yourself:

- Does my chest tighten when I check emails?
- Do I avoid conversations or plans without knowing why?
- Do my thoughts speed up or spiral late at night?

Awareness is the first step toward healing.

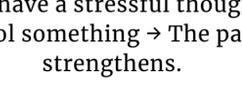


Chapter 4: Reflection Exercise – “My Anxiety Speaks...”

Complete the following prompts in your own words:

- “My anxiety often shows up when...”
- “When I feel anxious, my body tends to...”
- “If my anxiety had a voice, it would say...”

Give yourself time. There's no right or wrong answer — only insight.



Chapter 5: The Anxiety Loop – And How to Interrupt It

Anxiety often follows a predictable loop:

A trigger happens → You have a stressful thought → Your body reacts → You avoid or control something → The pattern repeats and strengthens.

For example:

You receive a message you're not ready to answer.

You think: “They must be mad at me.”

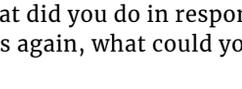
Your heart races.

You ignore the message.

Next time, the anxiety comes even faster.

But you can interrupt the loop at any point. You could breathe before reacting. You could reframe the thought. You could act despite the discomfort.

Each small interruption breaks the cycle. Over time, this becomes your power.

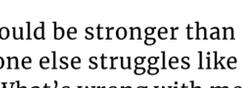


Chapter 6: Activity – Mapping Your Own Loop

Think of a recent moment when you felt anxious. In your notebook, write:

- What happened?
 - What thought went through your mind?
 - What physical reaction did you notice?
 - What did you do in response?
- If the situation happens again, what could you try doing differently?

Do this reflection exercise with two or three experiences over the next few days. You may begin to see a pattern in how your anxiety behaves — and how you respond to it.



Chapter 7: The Shame Trap

One of the heaviest parts of anxiety isn't the feeling itself — it's the shame that wraps around it. Thoughts like:

- “I should be stronger than this.”
- “No one else struggles like I do.”
- “What's wrong with me?”

These are not truths. They are echoes of old beliefs — absorbed from culture, upbringing, or trauma.

You are not weak for feeling anxious. You are human. The path forward is not perfection. It's self-compassion.

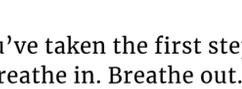


Chapter 8: Journaling Prompt – What I Wish Others Knew

Take a quiet moment. In your journal, complete this sentence:

“What I wish others understood about my anxiety is...”

Let your answer be honest. Let it be yours. No edits. No judgment.



Chapter 9: Final Words – You Are Not Alone

This workbook doesn't promise to fix you — because you are not broken.

What it offers is understanding.

Understanding opens the door to compassion.

Compassion makes room for change.

You've taken the first step.

Breathe in. Breathe out.

You're already resetting.

