
Natural alternatives for anxiety and depression

By Mel Abbott, from Empower Therapies

- **Introducing Mel Abbott**
- **Components of anxiety and depression**
- **Calming techniques**
- **Tasks for clients**
- **Nutrition**
- **Case study**
- **Questions**

Rule out current situations first

Past experiences may also require processing

Science of Wellbeing Factors

Research shows that many factors are important for people to maintain wellbeing:

Lifestyle – diet, exercise, sunlight, relaxation and good sleep

Mind – Optimism, getting in the flow, having a purpose, good work environment

Social – Having someone to confide in, helping others, intimacy, religious/spiritual group

Thinking patterns need to be recognised and changed

Simple ways to calm stress

1. Slow stop method – raise hands above head and lower very slowly, while breathing slowly and saying stop
2. 3-2-1 – 3 things you can see, hear, feel, 2 things, 1 thing
3. Balanced Breathing – breathe in and out for 6 counts in each direction to balance sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems
4. Gratitude – think through things you are grateful for

Tasks for clients

- Use calming techniques to calm stress response
- Use good body language
- Use stops to interrupt illness thoughts
- Think like a healthy person
- Visualise being healthy
- Write down positives everyday
- Make a focus board

Anxiety clients

- Use calming techniques a LOT
- Counteract what-ifs
- Talk and move slowly
- Resolve past issues

Depression clients

- Look up
- Smile
- Watch comedy
- Do exercise
- Recall happy memories

The Switch

- Switch off stress and bad habits
- Clear deep emotions
- Lifestyle changes
- Update belief system
- Application forms available at www.empowertherapies.co.nz

What can you do?

- Ask what started their anxiety or depression
- Education about thinking patterns and lifestyle patterns that exacerbate condition
- Education about diet, supplements and lifestyle factors that contribute
- Shared decision making with patient about what they can do to resolve that issue
- Tasking and follow-up are crucial!
- Ask what positive changes they have noticed
- Refer for further help

Nutrition treatment – depression and anxiety

Improve gut health

Test for gluten intolerance

Cut the crap – processed refined foods, preservatives, additives, alcohol, caffeine

Increase whole foods – fresh veges and fruit, nuts, seeds, healthy fats, proteins

Iron, zinc, magnesium

B vitamins, folate, Vit D3, Omega 3, St Johns Wort

Further Reading

- Bays, Brandon: The Journey
- Dispenza, Dr Joe: Breaking the habit of being yourself
- Hay, Louise: You can heal your life
- Lipton, Dr Bruce: The Biology of Belief
- Pert, Dr Candace: Molecules of Emotion
- www.empowertherapies.co.nz