

Clark

# On a walk, mental health.

Understanding anxiety, self-harm, depression and suicidal ideation in farming communities.

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Understand	Support	Listen	Encourage	Together
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## Anxiety — what is it?

The amygdala is an almond-shaped structure in the brain, often described as the body's smoke detector.  
Trigger → Amygdala → Stress response → Physical symptoms.

**The body's reaction to something that feels scary or threatening**

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**Can build up from one occurrence, or many occurrences of the same issue**

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**When triggered, the amygdala releases cortisol and adrenaline within about 15 minutes**

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**Problems occur when the amygdala becomes overly sensitive and reacts even when you're safe**

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**Contributes to anxiety, panic disorders, and PTSD**

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**A disconnect between cognitive (thinking) and emotional (feeling) functioning**

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## Signs to look out for

Anxiety shows up differently for everyone — this is a starting point, not a checklist.

**Fight, flight, freeze, fawn, or flop**

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the body's automatic stress responses

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**Physiological changes**

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faster breathing, raised heart rate

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**Persistent thoughts or feelings about the issue**

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**Changes in behaviour**

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excessive nerves, poor concentration

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**Uncontrollable worry**

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**Sleep issues**

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**Muscle tension**

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**Upset stomach**

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**Decreased enjoyment in usual activities**

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**Hypervigilance**

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## Ways to help reduce anxiety

Different things work for different people — often a combination helps most.

### Medication

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prescribed and monitored by a GP

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### Mindfulness

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grounding exercises, e.g. counting backwards from 100 in 7s to reconnect thinking and feeling

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### Therapy

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talking therapies such as CBT or counselling

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### Activities

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walking in green spaces, running, swimming

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### Box breathing

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a simple, steady breathing pattern to calm the nervous system

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### Strong scents

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smelling something strong can help refocus the senses — the idea behind smelling salts

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## Need to talk to someone now?

<b>RABI</b>	<b>0800 188 4444</b>	24/7
<b>Samaritans</b>	<b>116 123</b>	24/7
<b>FCN</b>	<b>03000 111 999</b>	7am–11pm
<b>Agricultural and Rural Support Chaplains</b>	<b>07966 754110</b>	Office hours

In an emergency, always call 999.

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