

IndieFlix presents

# Angst

RAISING  
Awareness  
AROUND  
Anxiety



Screening & Discussion Guide

[www.AngstMovie.com](http://www.AngstMovie.com)

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To help identify silent sufferers and make it easier for a young person to reach out for help. Survey to be completed after film screening.

# Welcome

Angst is an IndieFlix Original, documentary designed to raise awareness around anxiety. The film includes interviews with kids, teens, educators, experts, parents and a very special interview with Michael Phelps.

The goal is to start a global conversation about anxiety and mental health.

Most importantly we hope the film will help people identify and understand the symptoms of anxiety disorders and encourage them to reach out for help. Angst screens in schools, communities and theaters around the world. The film and corresponding materials provide tools, resources and above all, hope.

*[AngstMovie.com](http://AngstMovie.com) & [IndieFlix.com](http://IndieFlix.com)*

## Preparing for your Screening:

- In preparation for your screening we have weekly conference calls where you can dial in and hear from the Angst filmmakers Scilla Andreen and Karin Gornick to glean info and insight about the film and other screening experiences. The calls are every Tuesday at 9:30 AM PT.
  - Dial in info: (712) 451-0663 [Access code: 427505]
- You can book Angst Filmmakers or Experts for your screening and discussion. Ask your Distribution Lab Rep/Booker for details or reach out to [angstscreenings@indieflix.com](mailto:angstscreenings@indieflix.com)
- Find promotional and marketing materials on our website [angstmovie.com/promote](http://angstmovie.com/promote) including posters, social media images, sample tweets, press release, info about the film, etc.
- Connect with us on social media
  - Instagram - [@indieflixmovies](https://www.instagram.com/indieflixmovies)

- Twitter - [@indieflix](#) and [@indieflixceo](#)
  - Facebook Pages - “[IndieFlix](#)” and “[Angst: Raising Awareness Around Anxiety](#)”
  - Hashtags: [#AngstMovie](#) [#IndieFlix](#)
  - Tag us and we will repost!
- Test audio/visual on the film in the venue you are using a few days before as well as the day of the screening event.
    - PLEASE NOTE FOR SCHOOLS: WE STRONGLY ADVISE YOU TO TEST IN ADVANCE OF YOUR SCREENING TO MAKE SURE YOUR SCHOOL INTERNET ALLOWS ACCESS TO OUR WEBSITE.
    - Test your Internet speed by taking the speed test <https://www.speedtest.net/>. To avoid buffering, let the film play through before your event and hit replay for your screening.
  - During your screening, please remember to turn off notifications on the computer or system you are using for your event.
  - Please help us by sharing this quick survey with your community so we can source more information, resources, and tools to share. This survey is appropriate for kids, parents, educators, professionals, and anyone who saw the movie. Forward or copy this link below and send to your screening attendees. You can also post the link to your social networks or websites: <http://bit.ly/angst-movie-survey>

## Screening Discussion Guide

**ANNOUNCE TO YOUR AUDIENCE BEFORE THE FILM:** (we strongly recommend having a moderator to introduce the film and panelists as well as lead the direction of the post-film discussion. The moderator can field questions to the panelists, take questions from the audience, and keep the discussion on track)

*“Angst is 56 (or 43) mins and there will be a brief Q&A following. Please stick around. The filmmakers created Angst to help break the stigma around anxiety and open up the conversation around mental*

*health. They believe there is power in watching as a community, power to change, and permission to talk about it.“*

## PANEL SUGGESTIONS

- We suggest circulating index cards and pencils for people to ask questions. It's a great way to allow people to ask a question and maintain anonymity. Collect the cards post-screening and hand to moderator. You can also include the student survey included in this packet to encourage students that might need help but are afraid to ask.
- We strongly encourage you to have 2-4 people on the panel. We recommend a moderator, licensed therapist, school counselor, social worker, or human resource representative to be in attendance to assist with the Panel Discussion and Q&A. If a student or parent is willing to be on the panel it makes for a powerful experience to hear from the students and parents too. While it may be very scary for them, it models pushing through. Student panelists in particular have shared with us how happy they were to have participated. They should talk about anxiety and how it specifically affects your group (students, parents, employees, etc.), and why the film is timely, useful, and beneficial.
- We suggest that you connect with your panel in advance to talk through how questions will be addressed. Encourage everyone to try to keep responses informative yet concise.
- Briefly introduce each person and ask them to share what they thought of the film and why it was helpful. (Remember, you want to utilize the power of the film to encourage discussion, so keep these comments concise and under 2 minutes each.) The focus should be on the Q&A, not the panelists.
- Open it up to the audience for questions.

MODERATOR: (We have found this helps to kick off the conversation.)

- *“Raise your hand if you or someone you know has ever felt the negative effects of an anxiety disorder. Now, keep those hands up and look around. As you can see by the show of hands, anxiety touches us all.”*

TIP: Remember to have a list of questions (below are some suggestions) to ask the audience if they are slow to ask their own questions. Feel free to add your own and the index cards are always helpful.

QUESTIONS FOR THE EXPERTS: Be sure to leave time for the audience to ask questions. You can collect the index cards while the experts are speaking.

- Is anxiety on the rise or are we just more aware of it? Why?
- Why do you think it's so hard to talk about anxiety and mental health when it affects our entire community?
- Since we know that anxiety affects all of us, how can we manage our daily stress and anxiety?
- What ways can we support someone who experiences severe anxiety?
- Can you share one thing that stands out from the film?
- How do I know if my child has anxiety or is just anxious? What's the difference? How much of anxiety in our kids is genetic?
- What are the top 3 things we should look for and how should we as parents respond?
- What do I do if my child doesn't want to talk to me and yet I can tell something is wrong?
- What do I do when my child, friend or colleague tells me they are struggling? What's the most important thing I should say or do?
- Talk a bit about the brain science and anxiety. Share tools/tips.
- (School Professionals) What are the schools doing to address anxiety in our kids? How can parents help?
- *Move to index cards if you have any or open up to audience questions. (One suggestion is color-coding cards; white index cards for kids and color index cards for adults)*

## IN CLOSING

- MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us. Go to [angstmovie.com](http://angstmovie.com) for more resources and answers to other commonly asked questions, tools, and information about how to find or book a screening of Angst.
- If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 911, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255, or text the Crisis Text Line 741741. They are free and have trained professionals ready to help you or someone in need.

## Commonly Asked Questions at Previous Screenings

We want to make sure you have the resources you need to lead a healthy discussion. We have included some audience questions from previous Angst screenings we think you might find interesting. These questions may be helpful for attendees with children.

The following questions were answered by Cathy Cassani Adams, LCSW, Chicago/Zen Parenting Radio

1. How do I differentiate between not removing my kid from the anxiety-provoking situation (not picking them up from school) while also allowing them to take a walk, take a break, go listen to music.

Every child/situation is different, and there is a lot of gray area. There is not always a right and wrong. There is a what works for this particular child, what have they been able to articulate as useful or helpful in decreasing their anxiety. Picking a child up from school is very different than allowing them to take a break from class – on a break they are still IN the school, but just using a coping tool so they can STAY in the school. Actually leaving the school could contribute to the anxiety, and if the parent is always picking up the child, they are unknowingly playing a role that may not be helping the situation.

2. Why is medicine not mentioned in the film?

The filmmakers explained that the people in the film didn't mention medication. The core of the movie is really about that we are "built" to cope with the challenges of anxiety – that within the challenge of anxiety, we have innate coping tools that can help us manage what we are experiencing (breathing, breaks, counting, asking for help, even the use of ice cubes...). In some situations people are so deeply anxious and so in a "hole" that they need a "ladder" just to get to the point of finding these innate coping tools. In these situations, medication can be really

helpful, because the med allows the person to climb out just enough to reach for an innate coping tool. And sometimes meds are used alongside coping tools to deepen a practice. There are times when clients ask for a med, but then choose not to explore other ways to cope/manage what they are experiencing. In these cases the med can become a band-aid, because the core issues are not being addressed and innate coping tools are not being utilized. We are lucky to have meds available for when they are needed, and for some, they can be the difference between life and death. But for most, if used, they should be used as a tool to access what we already innately have available to us – they are a ladder to reach a solution rather than the entire solution.

3. When we talk to our kids about anxiety, do we use the word anxiety?

The more we normalize words and not shy away from them, the more we are capable of having honest conversations about how we are feeling. But we should be careful of our tone/body language when we talk about anxiety, because if we are using the word and then looking/sounding afraid, we are doing the exact opposite of what we are hoping to do (normalize/validate). So it takes a lot of self-awareness on the part of the parent to become comfortable with anxiety, what it is, what it means, and how one can cope – so the conversation with our kids can be grounded and calm rather than filled with fear.

4. What tools can we use to manage everyday anxiety?

I am a mindfulness teacher, so I appreciated this question. I talked about meditation (but also used the words stillness, quiet, and calm as synonyms so people don't get too caught up in the word "meditate"). Daily stillness/meditation can strengthen the mindfulness muscle, which means creating some space between stimulus (like a feeling of anxiety) and reaction (becoming more anxious about feeling anxious). A meditation/stillness practice can help us RESPOND, rather than REACT. We can practice noticing a feeling and then choosing to breathe through it, rather than react to it. Anxiety will still show up, that's part of being human, but being mindful means we can decrease the pressure of the feeling, or sit with the feeling until it passes (rather than getting more anxious about feeling anxious).

5. Daily meditation/stillness is like "working out" this mindfulness muscle every day, so then we can use it in present time when something anxiety provoking actually occurs.

Compare dealing with anxiety to running a marathon – to run a marathon, we need to exercise our bodies on a daily or weekly basis so we are ready to perform during the race. A meditation/stillness practice is exercising the brain by noticing and breathing through thoughts – then when an anxiety-provoking situation arrives, we can actually "perform" what we've been practicing. Other ways to practice mindfulness – breath work, yoga, walking meditations, visualizations. Anything that helps the brain "practice" calming down.

6. A little girl asked about how to manage her panic attacks.



In front of the crowd I told her that the only thing she needs is her breath – that her thoughts feelings may not be clear, but if she can remember to breathe, she will slow down every part of her body and mind. It may not “stop” it immediately, but it will keep it from getting worse and help ground her. I talked with her (and her mom) for a long time after the movie – we talked more about things that preceded the panic attacks and how they could work together to decrease the anxiety before they took hold (the little girl admitted to being a perfectionist with homework, and this would make mom anxious and annoyed, and then it would just escalate, etc...).

**Answers to Commonly Asked Questions at Previous Angst Screenings can be found on [angstmovie.com/resources](http://angstmovie.com/resources) - please feel free to direct your audience there.**

## **Teacher-Driven Classroom Discussion Guide & Corresponding Clips**

The following classroom clips and corresponding discussion questions can be leveraged as a classroom follow up to a school screening of the Angst film or as a stand-alone lesson. The 4 chapters of the discussion can be fit into 1 class period (50 mins), or it can be separated out by chapters over several class periods if the instructor would like to spend more time discussing each topic.

### **CHAPTERS**

Clip 1: Anxiety 101 - <https://vimeo.com/325095674/9d1fa7976d>

Clip 2: Distraction - <https://vimeo.com/325095875/dd1dca0889>

Clip 3: Avoidance - <https://vimeo.com/325096232/9933521bac>

Clip 4: Phelps - <https://vimeo.com/325096415/667d48dcab>

# DISCUSSION

## Anxiety 101

Clip 1: Anxiety 101 - <https://vimeo.com/325095674/9d1fa7976d>

1. What are some signs our bodies can give us when we are experiencing anxiety? (ie: heart starts racing, start to sweat, want to avoid/escape, etc.)
2. One of the therapists in the clip mentions the 'Amygdala Hijack Phenomenon.' How can anxiety 'hijack' our brains? (ie: the amygdala takes over and tries to override our prefrontal cortex)
3. How do you think the amygdala served a purpose since the days of early humans? (ie: a caveman being aware of a lion nearby)
4. What sorts of things could be triggering our amygdala in modern times? (ie: social media, etc.)
5. What are some situations at school that may create anxious feelings? (ie: classroom presentations, test taking, applying for college, grades).

## Distraction: Give Your Amygdala A Break!

Clip 2: Distraction - <https://vimeo.com/325095875/dd1dca0889>

1. Why is distraction helpful when you are feeling very anxious? (ie: takes you out of the amygdala so can be in your rational, prefrontal cortex)
2. What are some tips you can use to bring calm to your body when feeling anxiety? (ie: snapping fingers, holding ice, listening to music, flipping hands, picturing calm place, etc)
3. In the last section we talked about some stressful situations at school that may create anxious feelings (ie: classroom presentations, applying for college, grades). Now, let's apply some of these tips to those school situations (ie: doing the stress-breath before a presentation)

## Take a Break, Reboot & Jump Back In

Clip 3: Avoidance - <https://vimeo.com/325096232/9933521bac>

1. Why is it important to jump back in after taking a break and not avoiding a situation when you are feeling anxiety? (avoidance gives anxiety power, so being capable gives us back our control)
2. What are some things we can do to give ourselves a short break?
3. How can you have a friend help you when you are feeling tempted to avoid due to anxiety?

## **It Gets Better, So Start Talking!**

Clip 4: Phelps - <https://vimeo.com/325096415/667d48dcab>

1. Pass out survey questions during this section that are listed below (survey handout is also on last page of discussion guide). Have students turn in questions even if just on an index card with their name on it. Teachers can read aloud the questions as students fill out the survey. This helps identify those 'silent sufferers' who could use more support.
2. Michael Phelps says 'It's ok to not be ok.' What do you think he means?
3. Why do you think talking to someone about your anxiety symptoms would be helpful?
4. Who would you contact at the school if you or someone you know needs help?
5. Would you like someone to reach out to you to check in about you or someone you know?

## **Peer-Driven Classroom Discussion Guide**

The following guide is to be leveraged as a classroom follow-up discussion to a school screening of the Angst film. At the beginning of the class, the teacher can break the class up into small groups with one student representative volunteering for each group. The student representatives will read aloud the discussion questions to their small groups and gather their group's answers to later share to the class at the end of the discussion period. Student-led, this exercise is meant to foster solidarity, empathy and idea sharing amongst the students, leading to tangible solutions and individualized action. The survey at the end also helps to identify those students in more immediate need of help (silent sufferers).

### **1. TEACHER OPEN**

Explain that today's class will consist of a discussion around the Angst movie. Share 3 facts about anxiety.

1. If you are human you experience anxiety at times in response to stressful situations.
2. Anxiety is treatable!

3. The first thing we can do to make our anxiety symptoms better is to start talking about it. So we are doing that today!

Share that the class is going to do an exercise that will lead to ideas for managing their anxiety responses to stressful situations. They will also be able to create their own personal action plans for easing their anxiety as it shows up in their lives by setting personal intentions.

## **2. BREAK INTO PEER-LED GROUPS**

The teacher breaks the class up into small groups, selecting a volunteer student leader (or could select by choosing randomly). Each small group gets scraps of paper and a bowl.

## **3. PEER GROUP DISCUSS QUESTIONS (approx. 20 mins)**

Teacher keeps track of time and suggests when to move onto the next question. Allow at least 5 minutes per question for group discussions. The student representative for their group reads aloud the question to their group and gathers their responses.

### Question 1

What are some signs our bodies can give us when we are experiencing anxiety? Go around the group and each student shares some signs they feel when they are experiencing anxiety. The leader writes down sample symptoms (ie: heart starts racing, start to sweat, want to avoid/escape, etc).

### Question 2

What are 3 stressful situations that can cause you to feel anxious feelings? (ie: classroom presentations, applying for college, grades, meeting new friends). The student leader asks everyone in their group to write sample situations that cause them to feel anxiety down on a scrap of paper and throw them in a hat/bowl. The leader then reads aloud each scrap of paper to the group. Chances are that there are more than one situation – many people share the same fears!

### Question 3

What are some ideas for the anxious situations shared? What are some tips you can use to bring calm to your body when feeling anxiety? (ie: snapping fingers, holding ice, listening to music, flipping hands, picturing calm place, etc) Talk amongst the group about each situation and ideas that could help calm anxiety. The group leader will write down the calming ideas shared.

#### Question 4

Why is it important to jump back in after taking a break and not avoiding a situation when you are feeling anxiety? (ie: avoidance gives anxiety power, so being capable gives us back our control). Discuss as a group what would happen if habitually avoid the anxious situations shared? What would happen if jump back in and push past the fear?

#### **4. PEER REPRESENTATIVE SHARES (approx. 5 -10 mins)**

Each peer representative for each group comes up and shares out loud as teacher writes ideas shared down on the board for all to see.

#### **5. SET PERSONAL INTENTIONS (ANXIETY/ACTION PLAN) (approx. 10 mins)**

- A. The teacher passes out an index card has students write - for themselves at their desk - their top 3 stressful situations that create anxiety for them.
- B. Then ask them to leverage the shared ideas captured on the board to set an intention to actively address each one of their top 3 stressors the next time the situation arises.
- C. Have students write on the index card one person they know they can talk to when feeling a lot of anxiety. Can be an adult in their lives or a teacher at school. There is someone!

Suggest that each student keep the index card somewhere they can easily find and refer to when stressful situations arise: in their binder, in their calendar, on a picture in their phones, etc.

#### **6. PASS OUT STUDENT SURVEY**

Teacher passes out survey for each student to fill out and turn in at the end of class (survey handout is also on last page of discussion guide). In summary, each student will have a private intention plan they will keep and a student survey they will turn in.

### Angst Student / Youth Survey:

Please complete the questions below following the Angst film screening.

1. Did you identify with anyone in the film? (feel free to list one or more)
2. Do you think parents should see this film? [ YES / NO ] (circle one)
3. Who would you contact at school if you or someone you know needs help? (feel free to list more than one)
4. Would you like someone to reach out to you to check in about you or someone you know? [ YES / NO / NOT SURE ] (circle one)

## **Guidance for Families Considering Bringing Their Children to See Angst**

Below is some information that will help you to decide whether to bring along your middle or high school student to the Angst showing. If you think your child is experiencing anxiety, depression, and/or panic attacks, this film may be especially helpful for them to see as it provides an understanding of why anxiety happens in our bodies and shows there is help and hope for treating symptoms. Please use the following insight when deciding whether to bring your child to the screening with you. If you do bring your child, the experience of watching the film is a wonderful way to start a conversation together. Plan to discuss or process it afterwards in a way that works for your child and feel free to leverage our family discussion questions.

- The film is designed to be shown to both students and parents, separately or together.
- The narrators are students, parents, teachers, and expert therapists.
- There are many students voices, from elementary age through high school age, trending more toward the older students, describing their experience and how they are coping in ways that help.
- The young people featured in the film are very diverse in terms of race and class.

- Areas discussed include: modern day anxiety triggers in today's world, the difference between "typical, expected" and debilitating anxiety (Anxiety Disorder), panic attacks and the physical symptoms, the brain science around understanding why the symptoms happen, and suggested tips for managing anxiety
  - The science underlying anxiety symptoms
  - Parent response - what helps support a teen experiencing anxiety and what doesn't
  - Student responses to extreme anxiety - strategies for taming it
  - Coping strategies in general
  - Exposure therapy - doing what scares you
  - Noticing the signs of anxiety, and taking it seriously
  - Working with students' core fear
  - The generational connection - parental anxiety
  - Breaking the generational cycle of anxiety
  - Types of therapy available
  - Explains that anxiety is treatable!

*By Wellness Center at Castro Valley High School*

# ANXIETY TIP SHEETS (3 tip sheets):

**With the help of our experts we've rounded up some tips on anxiety support.**

Often, those who experience extreme anxiety feel ashamed and suffer in silence but the good news is that there is hope. Anxiety disorders are highly treatable. Below are some common signs from experts associated with Angst that kids struggling with anxiety may exhibit, as well as tips on how to respond.

**Fact:** Anxiety disorders are treatable.

**Fact:** Neuroplasticity of the brain is real. You can change the way you think about something. You can rewire your brain to positivity.

**Fact:** Distraction allows your amygdala (fight-or-flight part of the brain) a break. It can be helpful to distract your mind and give yourself some space for a short period, but prolonged isolation can lead to avoidance of anxiety producing situations which reinforces the negative thought process.

**5 Ways to Support Your Teen's Mental Health**

**1** Validate your teen's emotional pain

**2** Educate yourself about how the body reacts to anxiety

**3** Create an environment that encourages facing fears

**4** Model vulnerability "it's ok to not be ok"

**5** Consider extra help from professionals

For more resources and information, please visit: [www.adaa.org](http://www.adaa.org)

**ADAA** ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



## TIP SHEET #1

### HOW TO HELP A FRIEND WHO HAS AN ANXIETY DISORDER

Having supportive and understanding friends is an essential component to recovering from an anxiety disorder. How can you help?

**Educate yourself** - Understanding what your friend is going through will help you better support them. It will also help alleviate frustrations that you may have about his or her behavior.

**Be supportive** - Encourage your friend when he or she is having a tough time and be empathetic to what he or she is going through. Be respectful but do not support avoidance of stressful situations.

**Don't try to change your friend** - Modify your expectations of how you want your friend to be and accept your friend for who he or she is.

**Communicate** - Be sure to listen with a nonjudgmental attitude. Help him or her find treatment. Sometimes it's hard to take the first step alone. Be supportive and encourage your friend to get help.

**Encourage** - Encourage your friend to confront stressful situations and support them through the experience, rather than avoiding anxiety-provoking situations. Avoidance can actually make the anxiety disorder worse.

**Be fun** - Sure it's good to have someone to talk to, but your friends need you to keep the fun going. Help make them laugh and relax.

**Visit [angstmovie.com](http://angstmovie.com)** for more information including videos, articles and websites.

Tips powered by [TeenMentalHealth.com](http://TeenMentalHealth.com)

## TIP SHEET #2

### MANAGING ANXIETY AT WORK, SCHOOL OR IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**Be Specific:** Address your stress inducing thoughts and label them concretely. Make a list at the end of each workday and evening (at home) with the labeled stressors and an action plan of completion. Even if the items of stress are not task oriented in nature, it is beneficial to label them and write them down (for example, “Concerned about my daughter’s lack of interest in school.” Plan – take her for a drive and begin a conversation.) (For employees: “I am worried about an upcoming presentation.” Plan – talk with a coworker, manager or HR representative.)

**Take a Break and Distract:** If you feel your thoughts becoming clustered and overly emotional, or the beginning stages of anxiety increasing, get up and move for 5-10 minutes. Take your thoughts and body to a new location, even briefly, to grab a drink in the lounge or hallway, listen to music for a moment. Distracting your thoughts will allow your brain to function in an organized and efficient manner.

**Don’t Isolate (for long):** It can be helpful to distract your mind and give yourself some space for a short period, but prolonged isolation can lead to avoidance of anxiety producing situations, which reinforces the negative thought process. Do what you fear, be it networking socials or assertively stating your idea in a meeting.

**Model Emotional Honesty and Reach Out:** Let your coworkers, and loved ones know if you are feeling stressed, create an environment where all emotions are labeled and acknowledged. Address your needs.

**Visit [angstmovie.com](http://angstmovie.com)** for more information including videos, articles and websites.

## TIP SHEET #3

### 12 DEFINITIONS & TIPS ON ANXIETY

Some anxiety is normal and natural, occurring in children, teens and adults every day. Anxiety is generally defined fear that is future-oriented, while phobias are specific, exaggerated fears. Anxiety becomes problematic when it begins to interfere with everyday life.

1. There are many different types of anxiety disorders, and they are one of the most common forms of mental illness. They include:
  - a. **Panic Disorder**, which involves physical symptoms of anxiety as well as fear of having another panic attack.
  - b. **Social Anxiety** in which people avoid social situations (i.e., public speaking).
  - c. **Specific Phobias**, or intense fear of specific objects (i.e., snakes).
  - d. **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder**, which involves thoughts (obsessions) that tend to be unwanted and intrusive (i.e., maybe there are germs on my hands), and create anxiety, after which the individual engages in compulsions, or actions designed to reduce that anxiety (i.e., hand washing).
  - e. **Generalized Anxiety Disorder**, or excessive fear related to several things.
  - f. **PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)** involves exposure to an extremely traumatic event that could result in death or serious injury, followed by a re-experiencing of the event, increased arousal, and avoidance of things that remind the person of the event.
2. There are three parts to anxiety: What I think (cognitions); What I feel (physical sensations); and What I do (behaviors). Helping people break down and verbalize these distinct thoughts, feelings, and behaviors helps them understand and face their fears.
3. Our bodies have a natural, physiological, way of coping with fear. A specific set of sensations occurs when we're anxious, including pounding heart, shortness of breath, dizziness, and sweating. This set of symptoms, called the fight or flight response, is designed to help us avoid danger, but sometimes works more like a faulty smoke alarm. Helping teens understand these natural sensations in their bodies without overreacting, and showing them how quickly things can return to normal can help give them control over their feelings of anxiety.

4. Facing fears and anxiety can teach an individual that they are stronger than they think they are, that they can face something that they thought was insurmountable, and decreases those fears in the long term. Avoiding fears actually increases the chances that they will turn into a problem.
5. Excessively reassuring someone who is anxious that everything will be okay may backfire when trying to help them cope with anxiety. Instead, empathize that it's natural to feel anxious, and focus on helping them through their feeling so that they can successfully face their anxiety. Avoiding activities because of fear can lead to increased anxiety because it reinforces the false concept that anxiety makes the activity too scary or difficult. For example, if someone is anxious about having a panic attack while driving, and therefore is encouraged not to drive, they learn that driving must be dangerous, because otherwise, why would everyone be discouraging driving?
6. Fears, phobias, and anxieties can be successfully treated with cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which helps teens change their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. This is a short-term (6-16 sessions) weekly type of therapy that teaches an individual to become his or her own therapist. The cognitive piece helps people identify their fear as excessive, and as something they can overcome by focusing on, and then changing, specific irrational thoughts that lead to anxiety.
7. Behavior therapy for anxiety often relies on the concept of Exposure Therapy, which focuses on helping an anxious person face their fears in a controlled environment. This may involve helping someone with a fear of public speaking give a speech in front of a few people, and then a larger group, and finally, a target audience. The goal of Exposure Therapy is to help an individual learn that they can feel anxious but that they can still live their lives.
8. Medication for anxiety may be an option as well. The most typical types of medication prescribed for anxiety are called Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors, or SSRIs.
9. The best thing you can do for someone with anxiety is help them face their fear. If you're experiencing symptoms of anxiety, think about how you can tackle your fear head on, possibly in small steps.

10. You can also help reduce anxiety through changing “self-talk”, a part of CBT where people learn to identify the thoughts that they have that perpetuate their fears. Instead, try and identify what you’re really worried about, and whether it’s likely to happen.
  
11. Praise and reward yourself for facing tough situations. Be liberal with support if you know someone who is struggling with anxiety – even if the fear is irrational, it’s difficult to face your fears. Any small step in the right direction should be encouraged.
  
12. Finally, take care of yourself! If you’re feeling anxious, make sure you’re managing your base stress levels by exercising, eating right, and getting enough sleep. All those factors can play a part in making anxiety worse as well.

by Regine Galanti, Ph.D. Director, Long Island Behavioral Psychology

# CONTACT US

Spread the word. Believe change is possible.

These screenings bring kids, parents, and educators together to talk about this universal issue, share personal stories, and provide resources and tools. There is power in solidarity. The more you share, the more we connect. Share this film in your community because watching it alone on your couch does not create the same effect as watching it with others.

Interested in additional screenings? Please visit: [angstmovie.com](http://angstmovie.com)

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Questions? Feel free to call us: 323 940-3549 | Email: [angstscreenings@indieflix.com](mailto:angstscreenings@indieflix.com)

# Angst Student / Youth Survey

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Student First and Last Name

Please complete the questions below following the *Angst* film screening.

1. Did you identify with anyone in the film? (feel free to list one or more)

2. Do you think parents should see this film?

[ YES / NO / NOT SURE ] (*circle one*)

3. Who would you contact at school if you or someone you know needs help? (feel free to list more than one)

4. Would you like someone to reach out to you to check in with you or someone you know?

[ YES / NO / NOT SURE ]