
Writing as a Tool to Cope With Anxiety

OSHER 625-001

Dates: Thursdays: October 15 – November 19

Time: 9:30 am – 11:30 am

Location: Online via Zoom

Instructor: Debbie Leaman

Course Description:

Distracting thoughts and rumination can lead to excessive worry, irritability, self-doubt, and other negative emotions. No matter the cause of anxiety – the pandemic, current events, temperament, illness, life transition – writing helps re-center us and calm our minds. Putting pen to paper, we can unload persistent thoughts onto the page, providing distance and a new perspective.

Course Overview:

Week 1:

- Introductions
- What is Anxiety?
- Anxiety in Your Body
- Self-Compassion
- The Importance of Journaling

Week 2:

- Feeling Bad About Feeling Bad
- Grief
- Welcome Anxiety into Your “Home”

Week 3:

- “Self-distancing”
- Anxiety in our Everyday World
- Listening to Your Inner Voice

Week 4:

- Current Event Anxiety
- Creating Agency in Your Life
- Procrastination Anxiety
- Resilience

Week 5:

- Productivity Anxiety
- Perfectionism and the “Shoulds”

Week 6:

- A Talk With our Inner Critic
- What Can be Learned from Regret
- Appreciating Anxiety

**Weekly topics subject to change*

Hotline and Emergency Phone Numbers

“Writing as a Tool to Cope With Anxiety” is a writing class, not therapy. Writing is not a replacement for psychotherapy, but it can be helpful in alleviating feelings of anxiety. If strong feelings arise and you need support, there are numerous services that can provide assistance. Below is a list of support services that are available from several entities on the University of Utah’s campus, as well as from local and national crisis hotlines and referral organizations.

University Neuropsychiatric Institute Crisis Line: 801-587-3000 (available 24/7)

Center for Student Wellness: (victim-survivor advocates, bystander intervention training): 801-581-7776

University Counseling Center: 801-581-6826

Women’s Resource Center: 801-581-8030

Utah Psychological Association: (hotline resources and phone numbers)
<https://utpsych.org/page-18075>

Jewish Family Service: 801-746-4334 (non-denominational, offers counseling on a sliding fee scale)

Salt Lake Behavioral Health: 801-264-6000 (free & confidential assessment, available 24/7)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800.273.8255 (available 24/7)