

For Broadcast: 16th October 2022

TEEN ANXIETY

Interview

Rebecca: I remember when I had a really bad panic attack and I thought I was dying. It felt like I was just being covered in blankets almost like I couldn't feel anything no one was around. It was just me and that feeling. No one expects it to be anxiety or an anxiety attack.

Jo: Hi, this is messages of hope and I'm Jo Chamberlain. Anxiety can affect any of us at any time. How do you cope with anxiety? Sometimes it can seem that nothing we do helps. And often it just makes things worse. Today, we're hearing the real-life struggles of teenagers with anxiety.

Jo: Describe what anxiety feels like.

Rebecca: I could go a whole day at school and not remember anything a teacher said because I'm just sitting in the classroom focusing on, okay. Like, do I look normal? Do I look like I'm functioning properly? I hope no one can tell.

I can't focus on anything around me whatsoever.

Lily: I just felt like, no one else around me was experiencing it. So obviously it's like something personally wrong with me and there's no cure for it. I'm just gonna stay like this forever. It was a very isolating moment

Lucy: It can literally come out of nowhere and you just don't know why. It can be the most random thing. Like walking down the street.

Rebecca: Someone touching me is a big one for me. It can be someone walking past me in the shops and they just brushed past me or whether it's someone I trust it can still just come out of nowhere and really overtake that whole moment.

Jo: When you suffer from Anxiety, you can feel like you're the only one who does, however many people suffer from anxiety. You are not alone and there is hope. Coming up. We'll hear insights on who teenagers can turn to and strategies that have helped and not helped them cope with anxiety.

I'm Jo Chamberlain and you're listening to messages of hope. Today, we're hearing real stories about the impact of anxiety on teenagers. What stops you from asking for help?

Rebecca: I never talked about it, especially to my parents, because I always thought that they would feel like they had failed in some way or that they would feel like it was on them. I didn't want anyone to feel like they were responsible or there was anything they could do to fix it. Because it was just my thing. I didn't want to bring anyone else in on it.

Lucy: You don't want to be judged. Don't want to be pitied. It's personal and having somebody else there kind of invades that sort of privacy, and then it kind of makes it worse.

I don't really talk about it unless like, with your friends, if you know that they're in a similar position, then it's like they understand and they are friends, so it's fine. But other than that, you just, you don't talk about it.

Tori: For me to talk to someone, it was actually the school counsellor. And I only did that because I was forced to, by people around me, but also I have siblings that I'm very protective of and I did not want my problems to affect them. So I knew I had to do something about that.

Rebecca: I don't know. I feel like maybe in high school, especially in those later years, a lot of people, probably everyone experienced it and at a party or in the bathrooms you seem to run into somebody who's struggling and they talk about it and then you talk about it and you're not competing or anything. You're both just going, we've all felt this.

Jo: What are some things that really don't help

Rebecca: When people tell me to calm down or just breathe, that just annoys me so much.

Tori: When people try to relate to you that just makes my blood boil. Especially if you got yourself calm enough in a situation to sit and talk to them. And then they're like trying to bring you back into the situation. Oh, I know how you feel in that situation where I'm like, I don't want to be in the situation with you right now. Let's not do that.

Everyone's anxiety is different. So not sharing tips sometimes is almost the better way to go about it because I guarantee everyone's tried to find their own tips.

Jo: You're listening to messages of hope. Anxiety is difficult to deal with and difficult to care for someone who's going through it. Coming up you'll discover who people turn to when faced with anxiety and what helps them through.

Anxiety in teens can be debilitating and a real struggle. Who do teenagers turn to and how can they find a pathway out of anxiety?

Tori: The people who are closest to me, like my best friends, the way they handle it the best, that'd be like, all right, let's go for a walk because walking it out is one of my strategies and they've learned that and they're like, okay, let's get you in the fresh air. Let's go for a walk. Sometimes if I don't want to do that, it's good to be pushed to other times you don't want to be pushed. Because they've been through so much with you and experienced a lot with you. They know that you're just having a moment and you'll probably go take a walk with them later.

Lily: Usually if I'm at home with the family, mum will come in and be like, what do you need? And I'll usually say, I have no idea, then she knows that she just needs to get to the point. Be realistic with me. Tell me what is going to happen next, give me like a set list of what I'm going to do and then I can work through and that's again, just taking the steps forward, if I can take a step forward, then I know I'm taking a step out of the situation.

Lucy: I just like to be left alone. Not really having anybody try and talk to you or if they do just like being extra kind. Just kind of being aware that you're in quite an emotional state, I guess. And don't take anything personally and kind of just give that bit of space and don't put pressure on, on me. Yeah.

Jo: What are some strategies that have worked for you?

Lucy: As I got older and I know how to deal with it more, it's more about like, kind of you centering yourself. Obviously you can't all the time, but you try and bring it back to what you can smell, what you can touch, what you can hear and just try and go through all that.

Lily: I have learnt literally just with experience, but just embracing the fact that it's happening. I'm not going to be able to escape it. If I'm having a panic attack, it's going to happen. Whether I like it or not. So just embracing that it's going to happen. And like saying yeah, this sucks. But then, you know, you're not trying to escape it and you're not spending more energy, trying to run away from what's going to happen anyway. If I've accepted it. And that's the first step towards getting through it, I think.

Tori: I've always like thought you can't have good without the bad. So I know I've had a really, really bad day and that helps me appreciate when I'm having a really, really good day. I can just be carefree with the people I'm around. Like, I can appreciate that moment so much more

I've found the strategy that works for me in the situation. I just count, I pick any pattern around me and I just meticulously count. It could be the dots in the carpet. And if I can just keep counting, put your brain back to, phase one, what you learned to do when you're little, you count. And that sort of gets me out of it. If you see me staring at a wall, I'm probably counting the dots on the wall.

Lucy: For me, it's kind of like acknowledging how I'm feeling, and then finding something to ground yourself. It can be different every time really, but just finding one thing to kind of ground you and bring yourself back.

Lily: Quite often I feel like it's just even the act of choosing to do something about it is like a step forward into the right direction. So yeah.

Jo: Knowing who you can turn to and how to ground yourself are helpful ways to manage anxiety. If you are struggling with anxiety, there is help available. Please contact lifeline on 13 1114

Jo: For more on anxiety go to messagesofhope.org.au.

You're listening to messages of hope Be inspired and encouraged by following messages of hope on facebook Instagram twitter and linkedin. Coming up We'll hear what gives teenagers hope through anxiety

Jo: How do you break the cycle of helplessness that comes with anxiety?

Lucy: When you have the good days and you just want to have the hope that you have more good days than bad days.

Rebecca: Having goals, having something to work towards or look forward to whether it's an event or a wedding or a career goal as well. Just having something in the future that makes me want to keep working hard.

Lily: The good days, even if it's like the end of the day, if there's a nice sunset, I'm like, oh, well, the world's bigger than me, and this has been good. And it might be good tomorrow.

Jo: Caring for a teenager with anxiety can be overwhelming and there's often very little we can do for them. Knowing they are loved no matter what and just being present with them can help. Know that Jesus cares for all his children and is walking beside them through all their struggles Bring your requests to God And know that he is listening

You've been listening to messages For free pdfs videos and podcasts dealing with anxiety go to messagesofhope.org.au or for a free booklet call 1800 353 350.

Jo: I'm Jo Chamberlain. I hope you can join us again next week for another messages of hope. Real hope to cope with life's challenges.

Thank you for ordering a script of Messages of hope. We pray that it is of benefit to you and gives you hope.

You are free to share this with other people and offer them hope.

Messages of hope radio messages, scripts, and booklets are also available for you at www.messagesofhope.org.au

You can also order Messages of hope monthly CDs that have the radio messages on them.

If you would like to support us to reach out to more people with messages of hope, or you would like more information about us, please go to www.lutheranmedia.org.au or call FREECALL 1800 353 350, or write to us at Reply Paid 65735 Lutheran Media, 197 Archer Street. North Adelaide SA 5006.

Thank you for your interest and support of Messages of hope.

LUTHERAN.MEDIA)))
COMMUNICATING CHRIST