

Tame Anxiety

Peggy Arndt and Judith Westerfield



Affect labeling

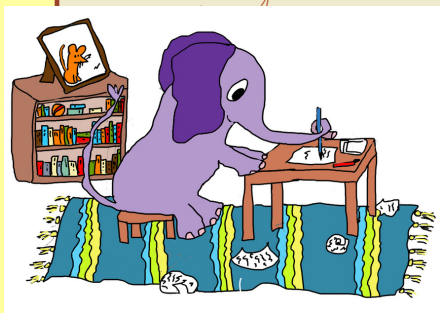
Affect labeling—the act of naming one’s emotional state—helps blunt the immediate impact of negative feelings and begin the process of reducing stress.

What it does:

- Reduce activity in the amygdala, the part of the brain in which the fight or flight reflex originates.
- Increased activity in the right ventrolateral prefrontal cortex, associated with vigilance and symbolic processing.
- The brain’s perception of the images shifted from objects of fear to subjects of scrutiny.
- Experientially, the fact that there is a name for what you’re going through means that other people have experienced it as well, which makes an overwhelming emotion feel less isolating.



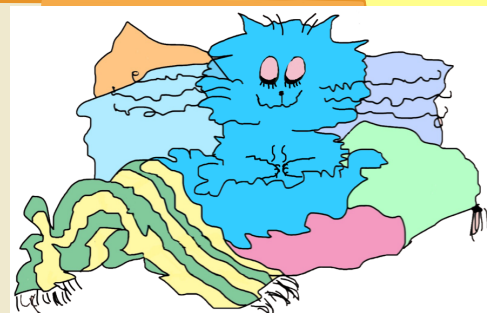
How to do it:



- Write down a word(s) that best describes the emotion you’re experiencing. It doesn’t have to be comprehensive. Just a word or two will do
- Admit that a situation is painful or uncomfortable.
- Recognize that pain and discomfort are universal elements of the human experience.

Then

- Stress chemistry takes 15 - 20 minutes to metabolize from your cells. Do something active to speed up the process - take a walk, stretch, clean, garden ...



all in 30 seconds...

...as long as you don't count the 15 minutes of moving!

From Max Your Mind

Self-care tips, tools, techniques & neuroscience research— shared with a wink and a smile <https://peggyarndt.com>

