

**Unit: Mental Illness
Anxiety**

Objective

Ps will identify anxiety, its symptoms and treatment

Materials

- **Anxiety Symptoms Sentence strips**
- **Jigsaw puzzle**
- **Managing Anxiety Flashcards**
- **Teacher Notes**

Step 1 Warm Up (15 minutes)

Introduce the topic of mental illness:

- Ask the participants “What is mental illness?” Ask them to brainstorm. Record any of their responses on the board.
- If any negative responses are suggested (such as crazy, weak, nuts) write them on the board but then immediately after the brainstorm activity is finished address these negative words. Cross them out and explain we do not use such negative definitions in Canada. Refer to the true definitions if they had been suggested or add them yourself - such as:

Mental illness refers to a wide range of **mental** health conditions — **disorders** that affect your mood, thinking and behavior.

- Discuss this with them and put the word *anxiety* on the board. Explain that anxiety is a type of mental illness and the topic for today. Ask them what they know about this. Record their answers being mindful once again to discourage any negative responses.
- Explain that for today’s class you will discuss anxiety.

Step 2 Work out (45 minutes)

All about anxiety:

- Write the word *anxiety* on the board. Write the following words below it:

What is it?
Symptoms

Causes

Help for anxiety

- Ask the participants to look at the question *What is it?* If any of the definitions they gave in the warm up activity were correct write that answer beside the *what is it* question. If not write the following definition:

An anxiety disorder causes unexpected or unhelpful anxiety that seriously impacts our lives, including how we think, feel, and act.

- Discuss this definition for a moment to ensure they all understand it.
- Explain that anxiety is not something to be ashamed of. Explain that in Canada we talk about mental illness openly. Explain that we know it is genetic and not weakness.
- Put the class into appropriate groupings and hand out the **jig saw puzzle**. Have the groups discuss their portion of the jigsaw and then proceed according to the instructions on the Entry website under jig saw puzzles.
- Ask what are the *symptoms* of anxiety. Write the word on the board. Hand out the **anxiety symptoms sentence strips** - if possible one to each student or in whatever manner it divides them up for your class and have them read them out loud. Discuss.
- Refer to the *causes* word on the board. What do they think causes anxiety. Explain that doctors don't know exactly why some people get anxiety but they do know that there are some things that might contribute to it. Write the following words on the board: ***drugs or alcohol, genetics, some medications, some health problems, a trauma or tragic event, intense stress..*** These can all cause anxiety in seniors. (refer to teacher notes)
- Put them into pairs and give each pair one of the **Managing Anxiety Flashcards**. Ask the pairs to discuss what they think the flashcard means. What does the picture show about how you manage anxiety?
- Have them return to the main group and one by one go over what they came up with about each flashcard. If they are not correct write the correct answer on the board. Discuss.

Step 3 Cool Down (10 minutes)

Check their progress:

- Ask them to tell you the symptom/possible causes/ and management for anxiety. What else did they learn? Discuss.