

# SANE AUSTRALIA

SANE Australia Online Peer Group Chat

Date: 07/04/22

**Title:** Coping With Anxiety

**Description:** Anxiety is something that many people share when experiencing mental health issues. It can be really challenging to deal with and overwhelming at times especially when you need to be focused on life's priorities. Let's come together to discuss our lived experiences and strategies for dealing with anxiety. It could be a great time to learn some coping techniques or contribute to someone else's recovery.

<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	<b>Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about Coping with Anxiety. We really value your thoughts on how these groups go, so we will send a link to a short survey at the end of this event for you to complete. While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way through the event, you can find the survey here now:</b> <a href="https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW">https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW</a>
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	<b>Tonight, Peer Support Workers @RiverSeal and @Mrnobody21 will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of Coping with Anxiety. We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about mental health struggles. @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety. If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ (<a href="https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faq#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support">https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faq#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support</a>) or message @Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>

<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and expand our ideas of Coping with Anxiety.
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	Welcome everyone! Feel free to introduce yourselves. I'm mrnobody21
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	Good evening @Jenn
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Hey folks! I'm Ohsun_Blu. Happy to be here with you all tonight :)
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	Hello everyone!! I'm RiverSeal
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	Hi @the magician Welcome to the chat
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Hey @the magician great to see you again!
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	Many people experience anxiety when dealing with poor mental health. What is your experience of anxiety?
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I get anxiety about places and people but I'm getting better at that recently which is nice
the magician	hello just got off the phone to psychiatrist talking about overwhelming symptoms decreasing if i look after my stress in relation to educational goals and planning
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	I have definitely experienced periods of anxiety when my mental health has been struggling. I usually notice that, when I am feeling particularly anxious, it can be a sign that some other areas of my life are in need of some attention. Anxiety has been a big part of my life in a lot of different forms, it's a tricky experience that sometimes wears many hats and shows up in different ways
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	That's great @the magician and studying can be both rewarding and stressful
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	@the magician studying can definitely be an overwhelming experience, despite also being rewarding

the magician	for me the problem is ensuring i have satisfactory options. knowing that things are possible and can persevere. when a course is cancelled and you have to readjust the uncertainty is overwhelming until a solution presents itself for the replacement course option.
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	<b>Can you think of a time when you were able to overcome your anxiety?</b>
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I get anxiety when I go into the city as it has a lot of memories for me but I am getting better at managing that. When I do feel overwhelmed I listen to music and get on the tram if I can so I feel I'm leaving.
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	I had an experience last week where my anxiety was creating a barrier to engaging with a group of people in a way where I could be quite present due to a few factors. Through checking in with myself, naming the feeling as anxiety, and requesting some accessibility support, I was able to ensure adjustments were made where the needs of the rest of the group were being met as well as my own. Checking in with my needs and allowing myself to ask for support is often a cause & way to overcome my anxiety
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	Yes, self check ins are vital
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I get anxiety about people I meet and how I will be received and I am socialising more to try and overcome that which seems to be working
the magician	instead of ruminating over courses came up with a checklist. squeeze a pencil when shopping instead of a stress ball. have a song in my head at same time. it is amazing what can happen with the right meds though. along with setting yourself goals outside of your comfort zone.
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician I believe that meds create a good base for you to work on other methods to help you cope and it sounds like you might be doing that?
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	@RiverSeal (PSW) @the magician so true, it can be really scary to grow outside of our comfort zones and challenges ourselves to do the things that may be at fuelling the anxiety. Getting the right supports in place, sometimes with medication too, can be a huge tool in taking those steps
the magician	yes exactly. if i become overwhelmed i experience anxiety but the alternative is to do nothing. neither are acceptable. my doctor just said my achievements' will never be as high as my goals are because of this.
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	<b>What are some ways you use to cope with your anxiety?</b>
the magician	CBT break the issue problem down into steps and small tasks

RiverSeal (PSW)	@the magician Do you know much about SMART goals? They can be tailored to be achievable!
mrnobody2021 (PSW)	I've also used CBT many times when dealing with anxiety, @the magician
the magician	exercise music meditation a good book tv show. yoga nature. tell me more about smart goals i want to use them in approaching studies?
mrnobody2021 (PSW)	Love using music too
RiverSeal (PSW)	Listening to music is a big one for me. I like to spend time in a park to keep my anxiety at bay.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Coping tools sometimes vary for me, and I have discovered that sensory regulation has been a huge part of my coping tools. If I can decompress my body in an environment, then I find it easier to move into challenging my anxiety. Music is a huge part of that too, yeah!
mrnobody2021 (PSW)	<b>There are different kinds of anxiety. What type of anxiety do you experience (e.g., social anxiety, generalised anxiety disorder)?</b>
mrnobody2021 (PSW)	I was diagnosed with generalised (or GAD), I feel like my experience certainly includes social settings as well.
RiverSeal (PSW)	@the magician I have a link about SMART goals that I can share with you from Khan Academy if you would like me too?
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Anxiety has shifted the ways that it looks for me over the years. I have experienced debilitating social anxiety to the point of agoraphobia, as well as generalised anxiety and OCD. I was originally diagnosed with generalised anxiety as a young adult, though it was later discovered that this anxiety was associated with other parts of my mental health
the magician	I avoid my neighbour friend who wants to get to know me because I haven't had non mentally ill friends in a long time. im worried my gift of gab will get stuck.
mrnobody2021 (PSW)	I also have similar fears when talking to my friends who haven't experienced mental health issues
RiverSeal (PSW)	@the magician Here's the link <a href="https://www.khanacademy.org/college-careers-more/learnstorm-growth-mindset-activities-us/elementary-and-middle-school-activities/setting-goals/v/learnstorm-growth-mindset-how-to-write-a-smart-goal">https://www.khanacademy.org/college-careers-more/learnstorm-growth-mindset-activities-us/elementary-and-middle-school-activities/setting-goals/v/learnstorm-growth-mindset-how-to-write-a-smart-goal</a>

<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	I feel that, @the magician sometimes relating to people who have not experienced having to manage mental health has resulted in me feeling pretty stuck too. I would get anxious that I would overshare or make the other person uncomfortable
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I definitely have social anxiety but at the same time I am really social when I have the opportunity
the magician	i need reason to be excited about things. i used to after major relationship trauma have panic attacks virtually every where i went. excited about options that are feasible. and ways to enjoy routines and those places /people helps. reclaiming space.
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I ruminate a lot to about things and that is a form of anxiety
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	"Reclaiming space"--I love that @the magician . Reclaiming space & remembering that your story and voice matters can be such a huge part of the recovery journey
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician I love that reclaiming space!! A phrase that I have been using lately too
the magician	yes me too. im thinking of applying smart goals instead of ruminating when overwhelmed and fixing my doctors problem.
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	<b>Many people have multiple mental health issues. If this is the case for you, do you find that anxiety often triggers your other mental health issues?</b>
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	That's a great way to apply the SMART goals @the magician
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	I find that my depression is frequently triggered by anxious thoughts
the magician	when i feel alone or optionless it affects my sleeping in patterns
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	Definitely, I get more depressed as my anxiety is present
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	@the magician Yeah it has a huge impact on my sleeping patterns too
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	Sleep yes!! I get poor sleep when I have anxiety particularly the ruminating

<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	My anxiety is very much a direct result of being AuDHD (Autistic & ADHD). My natural state of being has always been to be scanning and observing my surrounds. I experience a sensory processing disorder as a part of my AuDHD, so very sudden changes to my environment can be a trigger here too
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	oh gosh yeah the sleep thing! If I have not slept it can feel like it's me vs the world sometimes
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@Oshun_Blu (Moderator) I know!!
the magician	i have problems with sounds in my environment triggering paranoia and voices. too.
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	Yeh the white noise as it's called triggering voices
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	<b>How would you help someone if they were experiencing anxiety?</b>
the magician	sleep is procrastination. simple steps: set an action to do in 2 minutes, use your environment and rewards to help, set a second action and make it a routine
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I think you need to ask the person what they need in the moment
the magician	water and listen. encourage them to write it down. whats their main concern?
the magician	and seek help.
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	Excellent strategies @the magician !
the magician	sleep with blind half open!
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Love that, @RiverSeal (PSW) Everyone often has different needs when experiencing high periods of anxiety. I often will do what I can to tend to the person's basic needs (water, a blanket, quiet space, etc) and then sit alongside them for whatever they need to come next
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician it's amazing how water can solve many issues or at least help
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Definitely! Sometimes the simplest things are the ones that help in huge ways
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I think talking about whats going on for the person can really help too

the magician	in heatwaves water for paranoia even helps
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	and @the magician love that tip of focusing on the main concern. Sometimes anxiety will have us thinking that everything needs to be done at once. Sometimes coming back to the moment and focusing on one thing at a time is a big help
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Sometimes I have to say to myself "one thing at a time" as a reminder to come back to the moment
the magician	check in and quiet time to pat and play with the cat.
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Grounding is fantastic!
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	<b>There has been a lot of awareness raising around anxiety in the last 10-20 years. Do you feel that people are now more understanding of anxiety?</b>
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	Animals do have such a calming effect
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I think the past couple of years will go a long way to changing attitudes and peoples understating of anxiety
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	I feel like there has definitely been a surge in awareness around anxiety over the last 10-20 years. This has helped the understanding of it, and at times I feel like it has almost created a catch-22 where; because more people understand it they may be quick to dismiss it or pass it off if it strays from the very text book understanding they may have.
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I see more awareness in the community but in conversations I still find some people are still not understanding
the magician	Balanced time perspective can make life meaningful for mental health. doing something in the short term but being part of something bigger and being capable and able of it.
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Things have certainly come a long way, and still have some ways to go. But that's why talking about these experiences in an open way, such as in this group, can be so powerful. It can open peoples eyes to the various ways these things can & often are experienced
the magician	i understand it as an unmet stress need rather than being told youre just insecure
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	Generally speaking, I think the campaigns that we've seen over the past ten years or so have done a decent job of raising awareness but I feel that for many people, that might be where it stops for them. As in, a lot more people are aware of the issue but still have limited understanding. My point is very similar to @RiverSeal (PSW) s

<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician Taking those small steps towards recovery can be really hard and frustrating
the magician	peer groups can be rewarding for self esteem, solutions, with those in the same boat .
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	Yeah being around people with lived experience is so valuable
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician speaking to peers is a great way to learn and recovery for MH
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Peer support is magic for recovery, lived experiences & sharing stories have been profound for removing feelings of isolation for myself in the past. Reminders that we don't have to do this stuff alone can be amazing sometimes
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@Oshun_Blu (Moderator) creating that connection is really profound for MH recovery journeys
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	<b>Have you learned anything helpful from others' experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn?</b>
the magician	im writing to local members about having regional peer groups at the mental health pop up clinics there needs to be more
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	Thats an excellent idea!
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Wow, @the magician ! Such an important and great idea. Anxiety does not care where you live, and so regional support is so needed to bridge those gaps
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician Definitely that's a great idea!! I came for somewhere very regional and I didn't ever see anything to provide support for MH
the magician	smart goals could revolutionise my one remaining symptom. remission is coming!:sunglasses:
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician So glad that works for you!
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	In terms of what I have learned tonight, I have really enjoyed reading about each of your experiences with anxiety and ways that you have challenged it. I love the idea of reclaiming space, and needed that reminder tonight!
the magician	you have all helped me . thanks.
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I have learn that we all share a history of experience of MH challenges but have shared some great stories of recovery and hope



<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Right back at you, @the magician your openness & willingness to share and engage in this space has always been wonderful to see when I get to hang out here :)
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	You're most welcome @the magician :D
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician No problem! Thank you for joining in and having such great discussion tonight
the magician	ohhh:hugging:
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Definitely agree with you @RiverSeal (PSW) Though our experiences may differ in some ways, there is sometimes big overlaps and that's what makes this stuff so important
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	<b>Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about anxiety and how it effects our lives. Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do?</b>
the magician	im going to share with my mum my new strategy. followed by tv.
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Think I might unwind with a cuppa and maybe pop on a doco. Been on a huge true crime kick lately so may go indulge some mystery tonight haha
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	I'm going ot enjoy cooking a nice sausage sandwich dinner
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the mag
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	I'm also gonna enjoy some tea :)
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician That's great you have a new strategy out of tonight
the magician	gratitude journal care plan
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	@the magician that sounds like awesome self care!
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	The app gratitude @the magician ?
the magician	its pages out of the gratitude journal

<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. As we're trialling this service, we'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this link: <a href="https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW">https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW</a>
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	@the magician I see! that's great you journal
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Thank you all so much for tonight! I always come away from this group feeling armed with new techniques, strategies, and huge appreciation for our community. Thanks again :)
the magician	keeps me together
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	Same
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at: <b>1 Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) - Osmosis</b> <a href="https://youtu.be/9mPwQTiMSj8">https://youtu.be/9mPwQTiMSj8</a> <b>2 Social Anxiety Disorder – Osmosis:</b> <a href="https://youtu.be/QLjPrNe63kk">https://youtu.be/QLjPrNe63kk</a> <b>3 Anxiety - Healthline:</b> <a href="https://www.healthline.com/health/anxiety">https://www.healthline.com/health/anxiety</a>
the magician	goodnight til next week people
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	g'night @the magician :) Take care
<b>mrnobody2021 (PSW)</b>	Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊
<b>RiverSeal (PSW)</b>	Thank you @the magician Good night!