

# at

anxious times



## **Special feature:**

Anxiety UK announces  
the support of actress,  
Rebecca Front - Page 8

## **Spotlight on....**

### **Emetophobia**

A very real and debilitating  
condition - Page 7

# Ask Ursula

A chance to ask renowned Clinical Hypnotherapist and Anxiety UK patron Ursula James your anxiety questions

*I am 18 now and I have been scared of sick for about 11 years. I think it was due to food poisoning years ago. My family do not understand and get annoyed with me! I really want to overcome this, and although this sounds silly I would love to be a nurse. I'm fine with everything else; it's just sick. I have applied to do nursing at University as I think it will force me to overcome my fear! Do you think it will work?*

Alice, comment submitted via [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

Emetophobia is more common than you might think! Working on your confidence generally will help enormously. Focus on things you are good at, and stress management techniques like hypnosis or meditation will help too. A quick tip is that if ever you find yourself in a situation where your fear comes up, gently squeeze the soft flesh between your thumb and first finger. This is an acupressure spot for stress reduction and by doing this regularly you can teach yourself to reduce your anxiety and control your responses.

I know you will make an excellent nurse. Follow your dreams!

*I spend my whole day at work worrying about going red and having a panic attack that I can barely function. I am constantly thinking that people are thinking "how red is he". And obviously the more you worry about it the redder you get leaving me with no alternative but to make an excuse to leave the room. If I get into a situation where it is impossible to get away from (i.e. a meeting) then it's guaranteed that I will have a panic attack. It is a horrible feeling to be on edge the whole time. How can I manage this long-term?*

Richard, comment submitted via [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

We all blush. You know that already. However, blushing isn't really the problem here, as I am sure you know, but your thoughts and feelings about what other people might think of you is more significant. You do not worry about going red when there is no-one else around, so it is the social aspects which you need to work on.

You can help yourself with a number of different 'tricks' in these situations. One is to concentrate on what the other people are saying rather than what they are thinking, or to focus your attention on what people are wearing. Train yourself to become the observer. Anything which takes your attention away from yourself will help you reduce your social anxieties. Practice having a conversation in a mirror – it helps.

*I would like to know whether any of these symptoms are symptoms of anxiety.*

- Unable to stop moving, such as just moving a foot, and without doing so, feeling like your heart will stop.
- Palpitations
- Inability to sleep
- Constantly feeling uncomfortable

Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Niall, comment submitted via [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

My advise to you is to go and see your GP. All the signs which you have listed are all potentially symptoms of anxiety, but they could equally be indigestion, excitement, restless-leg syndrome, or numerous other things. It is always important to seek medical assistance if you have unusual symptoms before self-diagnosing. The doctor can do a lifestyle assessment as well as the usual medical checks e.g. blood pressure. If you have been checked out and the doctor cannot find any obvious origin to your condition, they will usually then ask questions designed to identify signs of stress or anxiety. They can then recommend an appropriate course of treatment.

*I sit awake at night scared that something is going to happen to me, leaving my young son on his own. I'm constantly at the doctors, finding myself ringing the out of hours doctors or even an ambulance. I feel like this every second of the day; it doesn't just come and go and it's ruining my life. I have been like this for four years, after I left my son's dad when he became violent and tried to kill me. I'm only 21 and can't do normal day to day things or go out with friends, take holidays, etc. I'm on medication for depression and anxiety but it doesn't help. I've been to see a counsellor which hasn't helped either. I'm at the end of my tether with it as its really affecting mine and my son's life. I was thinking about seeing a hypnotherapist but don't see how that would work either. Please help!*

Kim, comment submitted via [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

It is not surprising that you are anxious after what happened to you. Sometimes when really hard things happen our system gets stuck on 'high-alert'. It is as if you cannot relax in case it will happen again. Your idea of seeing a hypnotherapist is a good one as they can help you to let go of the past, and to start living in the present with a more realistic expectation of the future. Your fear is perfectly understandable, but the part of your mind which is still reliving it needs to be reassured. If you do go to a hypnotherapist,

make sure you explain what it is that you want from your life now, and writing down your dreams and goals before you go and see them will help you to move on.

*I cannot go anywhere unless I know I have easy access to a toilet for a wee. It started about six years ago now and has gradually gotten worse. I haven't been on holiday for five years as when I did my poor husband had to stop at every service station or place that had a toilet and even then I panicked in between. It puts limitations in my every day life and is the main reason I suffer from anxiety. Recently it has gotten worse and I now panic if I get stuck in traffic or stopped at traffic lights. I feel like I need to use the toilet even when I've just been before I left the house. I would love to know of any ways to tackle this problem. I know it's a mind issue and that it's all in my head but its become an almost natural part of me.*

Rebecca, comment submitted via [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

Problems of this kind can relate to general feelings of lack of control.

Take a sheet of paper and make two columns. Write in one column all the areas of your life over which you feel you have control, and in the other all the areas over which you feel you have low or no control. By becoming aware of the areas of low or no control you can then look at doing something about them. Take it one at a time, and ask for help, either from a trusted friend or a counsellor. Your symptoms will reduce when you start to take control. Assertiveness training can be really helpful. There are lots of good books out there to choose from.

Start taking back control and you will get your life back.

If you would like to ask Ursula a question, email [media@anxietyuk.org.uk](mailto:media@anxietyuk.org.uk) with the subject "Ask Ursula" or write to **Anxiety UK, Ask Ursula, Zion CRC, 339 Stretford Road, Hulme, Manchester M15 4ZY.**



## About Ursula James

Ursula is a Visiting Teaching Fellow at Oxford University Medical School and an Honorary Lecturer at Barts and The London Medical School.

Her not-for-profit organisation, Thames Medical Lectures, has taught hypnosis to doctors at eleven UK medical schools including Oxford and Cambridge.

She is a Patron of Anxiety UK and the National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV). She is also Chair of the Medical School Hypnosis Association (MSHA).

Ursula's books include the *Clinical Hypnosis Textbook*, now in its second edition. *How To Be Amazing – Transform your life with hypnosis*, *You Can Think Yourself Thin*, *The Source – A Manual of Everyday Magic*, and a yet to be published series of novels.

She has appeared on *This Morning* on TV and *Woman's Hour* on Radio 4. She regularly appears on *Macaulay and Co* on Radio Scotland and her TV series, *Sex, Lies and Hypnosis*, was broadcast on Channel 5 in the summer of 2007. She also has her own radio show on Radio Lightworker called *The Witching Hour*.

And finally, Ursula is currently working on a Not for Profit venture called Art in View designed to brighten up Britain by bringing art to the streets.



## Anxiety UK launches Direct Debit

Anxiety UK will launch a Direct Debit scheme this spring, giving people another option when purchasing membership or donating to the charity. Direct Debit is a simple, safe and convenient way to make regular or occasional payments directly from your bank account. You agree with Anxiety UK the amount to be collected and the date of payment. From then on the amount will be deducted from your account as agreed. If the collection date or amount ever needs to change, Anxiety UK must get in touch with you first.

Paying by Direct Debit is the most efficient way to pay a charity as it involves less administration, meaning that more of your money will go directly to the services we provide. If you'd like to make your membership payment stretch even further by paying by Direct Debit, fill out the Direct Debit Instruction when you receive your membership renewal. For more information, ring **08444 775 774** or email [info@anxietyuk.org.uk](mailto:info@anxietyuk.org.uk)



# More bang for your buck!

Anxiety UK is aware that times are tough for our members at the moment and as such we want to make sure you are getting the most from your membership. Earlier this year we reduced the price of membership to £20. Now we are introducing a raft of new online services that are to be included in your membership.



## Online support groups

These groups will run every Tuesday between 7:00-9:00 pm and will be facilitated by an Anxiety UK member who has personal experience of anxiety. On the first Tuesday of every month we will have a guest speaker at the group, giving you the opportunity to talk to leading experts in the world of anxiety research. After each specialist session, a factsheet will be produced and will be available in the members' resources area of the site. **If you require a hard copy of this please contact the Anxiety UK office on 08444 775 774.**

The topics will be as follows:

Date	Topic	Professional
5th April 7-9 pm	Social phobia and blushing	Professor Robert Edelmann
6th May 7-9 pm	Children and young people with anxiety (parents session)	Dr Samantha Cartwright-Hatton
1st June 7-9 pm	Agoraphobia and panic attacks	Professor Karina Lovell
5th July 7-9 pm	Post natal anxiety	Fiona Challacombe <a href="http://www.postnatalocd.org">www.postnatalocd.org</a>
2nd August 7-9 pm	Choosing the right therapy for you	Clare Baguley
13th September 7-9 pm	Generalised anxiety disorder	Dr David Baldwin
4th October 7-9 pm	Emetophobia and body dysmorphic disorder	Professor David Veale
1st November 7-9 pm	Workplace stress and anxiety	Professor Cary Cooper
6th December 7-9 pm	Benefits and anxiety	TBC



## Free downloads

We also have a brand new area of the website which gives you free access to four years of back editions of *Anxious Times* magazine, and also free downloads of a range of Anxiety UK relaxation CDs.

To access these please go to the 'members' area of the website and select 'Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner resources'.

The link is <http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/membership-services/>.

Don't forget that the password to that area is **therapy6645**.

## WaysForward programme

Along with this we have managed to get Anxiety UK members exclusive free access to the 'WaysForward' online counselling service. This computerised counselling service provides questions to help you reflect upon your difficulties and move forward. This can be accessed at <http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/membership-services/waysforward-online-self-help-program/>