



Anxiety Disorders Association of Ontario

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**ADAO
14-Week Anxiety Management Workshop
Frequently Asked Questions**

1. Who created the program?

The 14-Week Anxiety Management Workshop started as a 12-week program in 1998. It was developed by ADAO in partnership with a psychiatrist at the Royal Ottawa Hospital.

In 2008, ADAO updated all of the material for the 14-week program and revised and created a new Facilitator's manual and Participant's Kit.

In June of 2009, the facilitators and board members came together to review the evaluations from the last year and make revisions to the manuals. Those revisions are reflected in this updated version released in June, 2010.

2. Who runs the program?

Each session is run by two facilitators. ADAO has a total of 20 facilitators, all of whom have a background in health, social services, and/or education (e.g., counselors, nurses, social workers).

Our facilitators, in addition to their professional and educational facilitation experiences, also receive training from ADAO to deliver the 14-Week Anxiety Management Workshop. Facilitators receive ongoing training from ADAO and are supervised by an experienced facilitator.

3. Where is the program held?

Sessions are held downtown and in the west-end of Ottawa. Future sessions are planned for the east-end and south-end of Ottawa.

4. How long is the program?

The program is 2 ½ hours each week. It runs for a total of 14 weeks, excluding the registration evening. The registration night is approximately one hour long. It gives participants a chance to meet the facilitators, who also explain what participants can expect as well as answer questions about the program.

5. Who can attend the program?

Individuals over the age of 18 whose primary symptoms are those of anxiety. The program is not appropriate for people whose primary concern is Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

6. What model is the program based on?

ADAO's approach to supporting people with anxiety is to find ways to reduce and manage their anxiety by offering a tool kit of supportive resources. The toolkit, like the program itself, is based on the different ways that people understand and seek to address anxiety. It is common practice today for anxiety treatment to include medical and psychotherapeutic approaches. In developing the model for the ADAO program, the goal has been to pull together complementary theories and strategies from four main fields of practice: cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), psychotherapeutic methods, holistic approaches, and wisdom traditions / spirituality.

7. Is the program group therapy?

The 14-Week Anxiety Management Workshop is not group therapy. It is an educational workshop, the focus of which is on providing participants with skills, tools, and information to help them deal with their symptoms of anxiety. We use the analogy of a tool kit: ADAO provides participants with many tools and it is the participant's decision as to what tools they are going to use.

The facilitators share information with participants through short lectures, diagrams, and examples. Participants also participate in group discussions as well as small group and individual activities. The facilitators use a variety of different methods to share information with participants and to help them learn the necessary skills.

8. What is unique about the program?

- It allows individuals to self-manage their anxiety as well as develop peer-to-peer support networks within their community.
- The cognitive-behavioural group model allows individuals to modify their thoughts, behaviours, and emotions as well as how they relate to others and their environment.
- The group provides participants with the opportunity to witness others successes, practice new behaviours, develop a social support system, problem-solve, as well as receive feedback and support on their developments and setbacks.
- The group is directed solely at individuals with anxiety, to ensure that interventions and program content is specific to their needs.

9. What are the benefits of the program?

- A safe environment in which to practice new skills
- Observational learning
- Social support when you experience setbacks and challenges
- The opportunity to learn and practice new social skills and ways of relating to others
- Overcoming feelings of isolation
- Receiving feedback from others who experience similar challenges
- Progress often occurs more rapidly in groups because they are time-limited and structured.

10. What can I expect each week?

- A check-in activity followed by a relaxation or mindfulness exercise.
- The focus of each session is on information-sharing and activities/exercises related to the topic of the week (e.g., mini-lectures, group discussion)
- Each session ends with a grounding exercise as well as a check-out activity.
- Each week participants are assigned reading as well as homework activities.

11. Do I have to participate in class?

Participants in the program are not forced to speak or called on; however, individuals are encouraged to participate to the fullest of their ability in order to get the most benefit from the program.

12. What are the materials used by the program?

- "The Anxiety & Phobia Workbook" (4th Edition) by Edmund Bourne
- ADAO Participant Manual
- ADAO Participant Workbook
- Relaxation CD

13. What are the topics covered during the program?

Session 1 – Introduction and Definitions
Session 2 – Mindfulness
Session 3 – Relaxation
Session 4 – Nutrition
Session 5 – Identifying Thoughts and Feelings
Session 6 – Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
Session 7 – Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
Session 8 – Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
Session 9 – Managing Feelings and Emotions
Session 10 – Working With Self-Resistance
Session 11 – Communicating More Effectively
Session 12 – Community
Session 13 – Spirituality
Session 14 – Celebration

14. What is the fee for the program?

The cost of the program is \$425, which includes all the program materials. There are subsidized spaces available to those who qualify.

ADAO does not receive funding from the municipal, provincial, or federal governments. The 14-Week Anxiety Management Workshop fees cover the costs for the two facilitators, room rental, and materials.

15. What is the success rate of the program?

It is not possible for ADAO to keep statistics on the success of the program because we cannot measure many important factors, such as homework completion, the use of tools and techniques in daily life, the motivation and preparedness of individuals to make changes, and whether or not individuals continue to use the techniques in between sessions and after the program is over. Individuals who have the most success with the 14-Week Anxiety Management Workshop are those who are:

- Motivated and prepared to make changes.
- Individuals who attend the classes each week and participate actively.
- Individuals who complete the readings and homework activities.
- Individuals who continue to use the materials provided during the program, on a daily basis, once the program is complete.

16. Does OHIP pay for the program?

No, the program is not covered by OHIP. Sometimes other social benefit systems (e.g., ODSP) will cover the cost of the program but these arrangements need to be made by the participant with their case worker. Some workplace extended health benefits also pay for the program but it is the responsibility of the participant to enquire whether the program is covered and to submit any necessary paperwork.