



Anxiety and Shadow Work Journal

———— RABBI SHLOMO SLATKIN, MS, LCPC ————

www.themarriagerestorationproject.com

Introduction

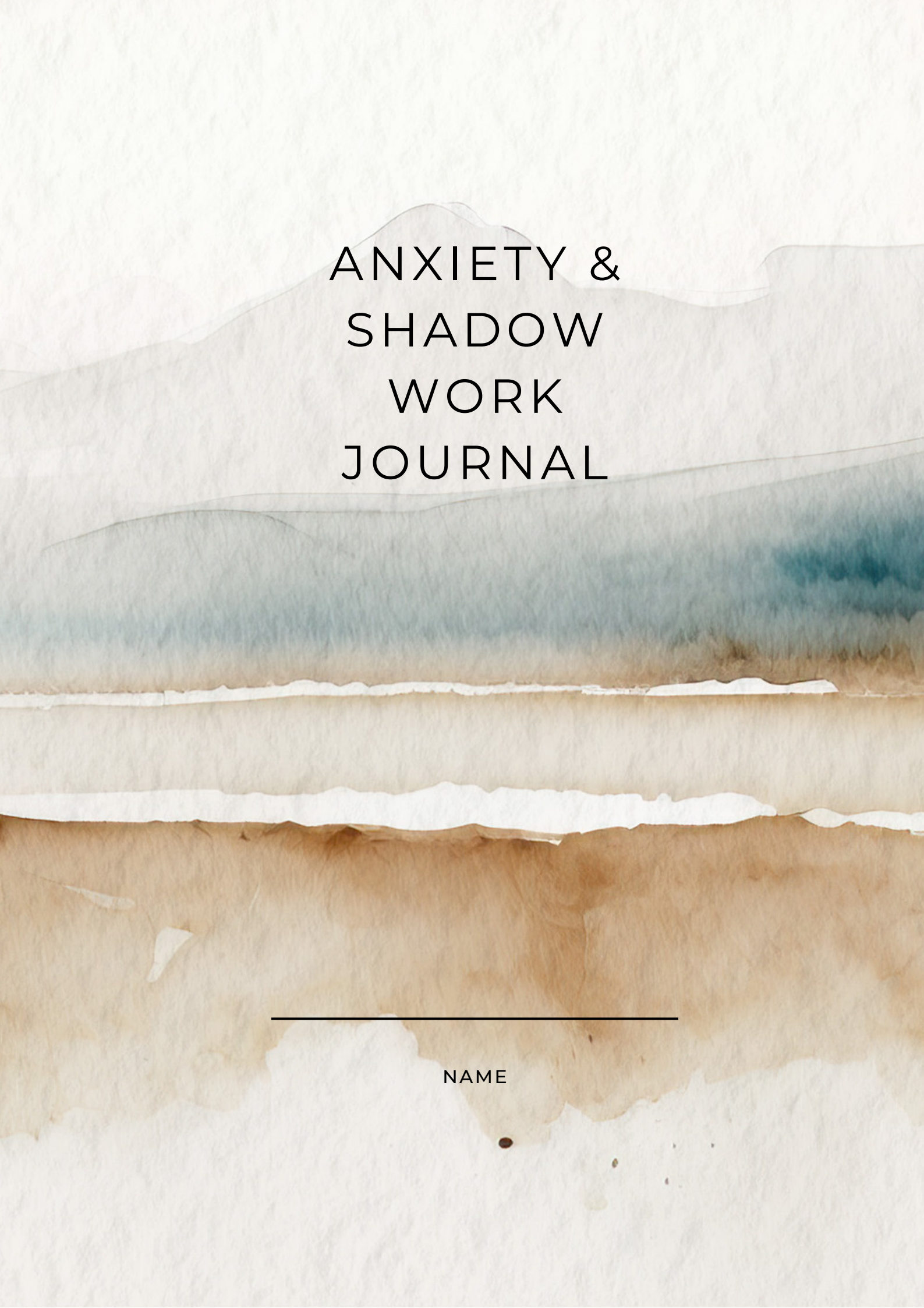
Anxiety is pervasive in our society more than ever. Even if one's anxiety is not pathological, it can still be a disruptive force in life.

In our fast pace day in age with the bombardment of social media, we are exposed to a wide range of information that may play on our emotions, evoking fear, jealousy, and general negativity. Learning to have more control over our inner reality is the secret to finding peace amidst the deluge that rages around us.

The first solution to any problem is to become conscious of triggers. These worksheets help you go deeper and explore the source of your anxiety so that you can be better able to chose how you respond, and regain control of your inner life.

May they help you find inner calm and peace of mind,

Rabbi Shlomo Slatkin MS, LCPC
The Marriage Restoration Project



ANXIETY & SHADOW WORK JOURNAL

NAME

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is a natural and often necessary human emotion. It's a response to stress or potential threats and can help us stay alert and focused in challenging situations.

However, when anxiety becomes excessive, persistent, or disproportionate to the situation, it can develop into an anxiety disorder, which can significantly impact a person's well-being.

How Anxiety Manifests in Your Life?

Understanding the physical and emotional symptoms of anxiety helps you identify when you are experiencing anxiety and take steps to address it.

Physical Symptoms

- Racing heart or palpitations
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle tension and stiffness
- Sweating
- Nausea or stomach discomfort
- Headaches
- Trembling or shaking
- Fatigue
- Insomnia or sleep disturbances

Emotional Symptoms

- Excessive worry or fear
- Irritability
- Restlessness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling on edge or jumpy
- Impending sense of doom
- A constant need for reassurance
- Perfectionism
- Avoidance behaviors

Recognizing Triggers

Identifying the specific situations or thoughts that trigger your anxiety is crucial for managing it effectively.

Triggers can vary widely from person to person, but some common triggers include:

SOCIAL SITUATIONS:

Meeting new people, public speaking, or social events can trigger social anxiety.

HEALTH CONCERNS:

Worries about health, illness, or the well-being of loved ones can lead to health-related anxiety.

WORK OR SCHOOL:

Deadlines, high expectations, or workplace stress can be significant triggers.

TRAUMA EVENTS:

Past traumatic experiences or reminders of these events can trigger anxiety.

FINANCIAL CONCERNS:

Worries about money, debt, or financial stability can lead to financial anxiety.

UNCERTAINTY:

Some people may become anxious in situations where outcomes are uncertain or unpredictable.

PHOBIAS:

Specific fears, such as fear of flying, heights, or spiders, can trigger anxiety in relevant situations.

EXISTENTIAL OR PHILOSOPHICAL CONCERNS:

Thoughts about the meaning of life, mortality, or existential questions can trigger existential anxiety.

Recognizing your unique anxiety triggers allows you to develop strategies to manage and cope with them effectively, whether through relaxation techniques, therapy, or lifestyle changes.

Identifying Triggers

A. Identify potential triggers

Take time to identify what may lead you to feel overwhelmed or trigger a negative emotional response. Triggers can be anything from people, places, and situations to events or even specific memories or thoughts. Make a list of your potential triggers in the space below:

Take time to assess how you typically respond when you're feeling overwhelmed. Do you become angry? Anxious? Depressed? Write down your typical responses in the space below:

Challenging Anxious Thoughts Worksheet

In this step, you aim to explore and acknowledge the various factors that can provoke feelings of overwhelm or negative emotions. Triggers come in many forms, ranging from external factors like people, places, and situations to internal experiences such as thoughts, memories, or events.

By identifying these potential triggers, you can gain a deeper understanding of the sources of your emotional responses and begin managing them more effectively.

1. **External Triggers:** Think about the people, places, and situations in your life that have the potential to trigger negative emotional responses. These could include stressful work environments, social gatherings, or specific individuals.
2. **Internal Triggers:** Consider internal factors like thoughts, memories, or past events that tend to provoke negative emotions. These might be recurring self-doubts, traumatic experiences, or intrusive thoughts.

Use the space below to create a list of your potential triggers. Be as specific and comprehensive as possible. The act of identifying these triggers is the first step in gaining control over your emotional responses.

Outline a common situation or scenario that you feel triggers your anxious feelings

Thought #1: (Write down the thought that emerged)

Thought #2: (Write down the thought that emerged)

Thought #3: (Write down the thought that emerged)

What is the evidence supporting this thought? What evidence disputes this thought?

Try to envision yourself in the anxiety-triggering scenario you just outlined.

What is the worst potential consequence of this scenario?

What is the best potential consequence of this scenario?

Now, what do you feel is the most likely consequence of this scenario?

Create Rational Responses

Replace automatic anxious thoughts with rational, positive thoughts. Try to reframe your thinking in a balanced and constructive way.

Thought #1: (Write down the thought that emerged)

Rational Response #1:

Thought #2: (Write down the thought that emerged)

Rational Response #2:

Thought #3: (Write down the thought that emerged)

Rational Response #3:

Coping Strategies for Anxiety

Coping strategies for anxiety are essential tools that can help you manage and alleviate the symptoms of anxiety. These strategies are often used in conjunction with professional treatment, such as therapy, but can also be effective on their own.

Here are some effective coping strategies for anxiety:

DEEP BREATHING AND RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

- Practice deep breathing exercises to calm your nervous system. Inhale slowly through your nose, hold for a few seconds, and exhale through your mouth. Repeat this several times.
- Explore other relaxation techniques like progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery, or meditation to reduce physical tension and anxiety.

EXERCISE REGULARLY

- Engage in regular physical activity, as it releases endorphins, which can improve your mood and reduce anxiety.
- Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week.

MAINTAIN A HEALTHY DIET

- Consume a balanced diet that includes whole foods, fruits, vegetables, and lean proteins.
- Limit caffeine, alcohol, and sugar intake, as they can exacerbate anxiety.

ADEQUATE SLEEP

- Ensure you get enough quality sleep as sleep deprivation can exacerbate anxiety.
- Establish a consistent sleep routine and create a relaxing bedtime ritual.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

- Learn stress management techniques such as time management, setting boundaries, and prioritizing tasks.
- Develop problem-solving skills to address the root causes of stress and anxiety.

POSITIVE SELF-TALK

- Challenge negative and irrational thoughts with positive and rational self-talk.
- Practice self-compassion and be kind to yourself, especially during anxious moments.

SUPPORT SYSTEM

- Share your feelings with trusted friends and family members. Sometimes, talking about your anxiety can provide relief.
- Consider joining a support group to connect with others who have similar experiences.

LIMIT EXPOSURE TO TRIGGERS

- If certain situations or environments consistently trigger your anxiety, consider limiting your exposure or finding strategies to cope with them effectively.

MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION

- Practice mindfulness techniques to stay present in the moment and reduce rumination about the past or worries about the future.
- Mindful meditation can help you focus on your breath, sensations, or a specific point of focus. [Listen to our healing childhood meditations here.](#)

JOURNALING

- Keep a journal to track your thoughts, emotions, and triggers. This can help you identify patterns and work through your feelings.

HOBBIES AND CREATIVE OUTLETS

- Engage in activities you enjoy, such as art, music, writing, or sports, to redirect your focus and provide a sense of accomplishment.

BREATHING TOOLS:

- Consider using tools like stress balls, fidget spinners, or apps that guide you through breathing exercises.

PROFESSIONAL HELP:

- Seek therapy, such as Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT), which is particularly effective for managing anxiety disorders.
- Consult a psychiatrist if medication may be necessary to manage your symptoms.

The Imago Dialogue Script

Addressing Anxiety in Your Relationship

Imago Dialogue is a powerful tool for enhancing communication and understanding in your relationship. It provides a structured way to address anxiety and other issues. The following questions and prompts will guide your dialogue.

GUIDELINES:

- Choose a comfortable, quiet space.
- Maintain eye contact and avoid interruptions.
- Use "I" statements to express your feelings and thoughts.
- Be an active listener - focus on what your partner is saying.
- Practice patience and empathy.
- Avoid blame or criticism.
- Follow the structure: Mirroring, Validation, Empathizing, and use additional tools as needed.

Session Questions and Prompts:

Speaker 1 - Sharing Your Anxiety

1. What specific situations or issues trigger your anxiety in our relationship?
2. How do you feel when you experience this anxiety?
3. What are some thoughts or concerns related to this anxiety?

Listener 1 - Mirroring:

Listen actively, then mirror your partner's words. For example, *"So, what I hear you saying is that..."*

Listener 1 - Validation:

Show empathy by validating your partner's feelings. For example, *"It's understandable that you're feeling anxious about..."*

Listener 1 - Empathizing:

Express your understanding and empathy. For example, *"I can imagine how that situation can make you feel anxious, and I'm here to support you."*

Switch Roles: *Speaker 2 shares their anxiety, and Listener 2 mirrors, validates, and empathizes.*

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Listener 1 - Empathizing:

Express your understanding and empathy. For example, *"I can imagine how that situation can make you feel anxious, and I'm here to support you."*

- 1.Are there any past experiences or traumas that contribute to your anxiety in our relationship?
- 2.What physical sensations do you experience when you feel anxious, and where do you feel them in your body?
- 3.How does anxiety affect your behavior and actions in our relationship?
- 4.Can you identify any specific triggers or patterns that consistently lead to anxiety in our interactions?
- 5.What are your fears or concerns about how your anxiety might impact our relationship in the long term?

- 1.Are there specific actions or behaviors of your partner that trigger anxiety for you?
- 2.What do you need from your partner when you're feeling anxious to feel supported and understood?
- 3.How do you currently cope with your partner's anxiety, and do you feel this is effective?
- 4.Can you recall any moments in our relationship where we successfully managed and reduced anxiety together? What made those moments different?

Introduction to Shadow Work

An Introduction to Shadow Work

Shadow work is a psychological term coined by Swiss psychiatrist, Carl Jung, and is a central part of analytical psychology. The "shadow" refers to the unconscious part of the mind containing qualities and impulses that individuals disregard, deny, or reject about themselves.

It consists of the parts of ourselves that we might be ashamed of, afraid of, and generally want to ignore, but it can also contain positive aspects that we have not yet acknowledged or fully expressed.

How does it work?

Shadow work is a psychological and introspective process that helps individuals explore and integrate their unconscious or hidden aspects, known as the "shadow." It is based on the ideas of Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung and has been adapted and expanded upon by various psychological and self-help approaches. Here's how shadow work works:

IDENTIFICATION OF THE SHADOW:

Shadow work begins with identifying and acknowledging the existence of the shadow. The shadow represents the parts of ourselves that we repress, deny, or disown because they are considered socially unacceptable, shameful, or uncomfortable.

EXPLORATION AND SELF-REFLECTION:

Individuals engage in self-reflection and introspection to uncover aspects of their personality, emotions, beliefs, desires, or behaviors that are buried in the unconscious mind. This involves exploring thoughts, feelings, and memories that may have been repressed due to societal conditioning, early experiences, or cultural influences.

IDENTIFYING TRIGGERS:

One of the key aspects of shadow work is recognizing triggers. These are situations, people, or experiences that bring these hidden aspects to the surface. These triggers often lead to emotional reactions or behaviors that can be perplexing or distressing.

How does it work?

ACCEPTANCE AND INTEGRATION:

Shadow work is not about getting rid of the shadow but acknowledging it and integrating it into your conscious awareness. This involves accepting and making peace with these hidden aspects. Integration is the process of consciously embracing and incorporating these aspects into your sense of self, leading to a more complete and balanced identity.

Shadow work can be a transformative and healing process, as it allows individuals to confront their inner demons and turn them into allies, leading to greater self-acceptance and personal growth.

It's important to remember that this process can be emotionally challenging, so seeking the guidance of a trained therapist or counselor experienced in shadow work is often beneficial.

Benefits of Shadow Work in Managing and Alleviating Anxiety

INCREASED SELF-AWARENESS:

Shadow work encourages self-exploration and introspection. By delving into your unconscious mind, you gain a deeper understanding of the hidden aspects of your personality, emotions, and thought patterns. This increased self-awareness can help you identify the root causes of your anxiety.

EMOTION REGULATION:

Shadow work helps you become more in tune with your emotions. This heightened emotional intelligence enables you to better regulate and manage your feelings, reducing the intensity of anxiety.

REDUCED REPRESSION AND DENIAL:

By acknowledging and integrating your shadow aspects, you reduce the need for constant repression and denial of certain thoughts and emotions. This leads to less internal conflict and, consequently, less anxiety.

PERSONAL GROWTH:

Shadow work is a transformative process. As you integrate hidden aspects of yourself, you experience personal growth and self-improvement. This growth can lead to increased self-esteem and confidence, which are powerful tools for managing anxiety.

IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS:

As you work on accepting and integrating your shadow, you become more accepting and compassionate toward others' imperfections. This can lead to healthier, more fulfilling relationships, which can, in turn, reduce interpersonal anxiety.

It's important to note that shadow work can be a challenging and emotional process, and it may be beneficial to undertake it with the guidance of a trained therapist or counselor, especially if you have severe or persistent anxiety.

However, the rewards of increased self-awareness, personal growth, and improved emotional well-being make shadow work a valuable tool in managing anxiety.

Shadow Work Prompts

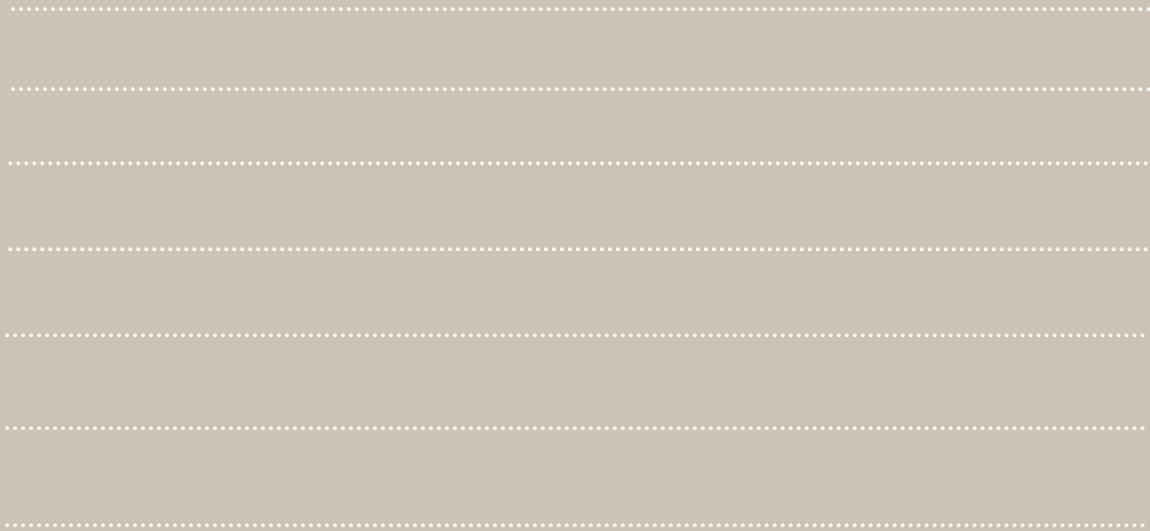
FOR ANXIETY

When using prompts for shadow work to overcome anxiety, it's important to create a supportive and introspective environment.

- FIND A QUIET, COMFORTABLE SPACE.
- CREATE A RELAXING ATMOSPHERE.
- HAVE A JOURNAL OR DIGITAL DOCUMENT READY.
- START WITH A FEW MOMENTS OF RELAXATION.
- TAKE YOUR TIME AND BE HONEST.
- EMBRACE VULNERABILITY AND SELF-COMPASSION.
- WRITE FREELY, DON'T WORRY ABOUT PERFECTION.
- REFLECT ON YOUR RESPONSES.
- USE YOUR INSIGHTS FOR POSITIVE ACTION.
- SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT IF NEEDED.
- MAKE SHADOW WORK A REGULAR PRACTICE.

Anxiety Triggers

What situations or thoughts trigger your anxiety, and why?



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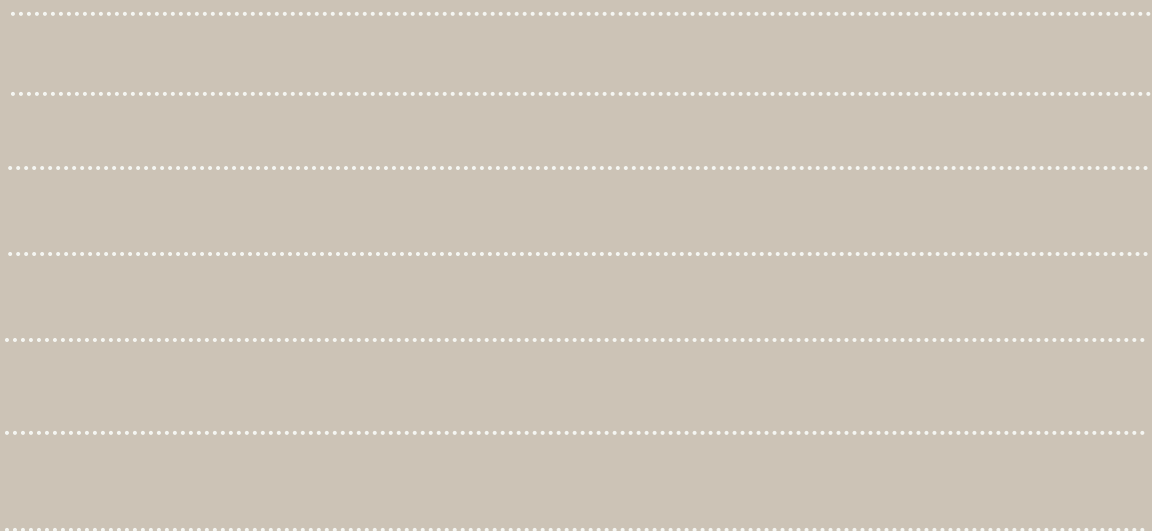
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Earliest Memory of Anxiety

Reflect on your earliest memory of feeling anxious. What was the situation, and how did you cope with it?



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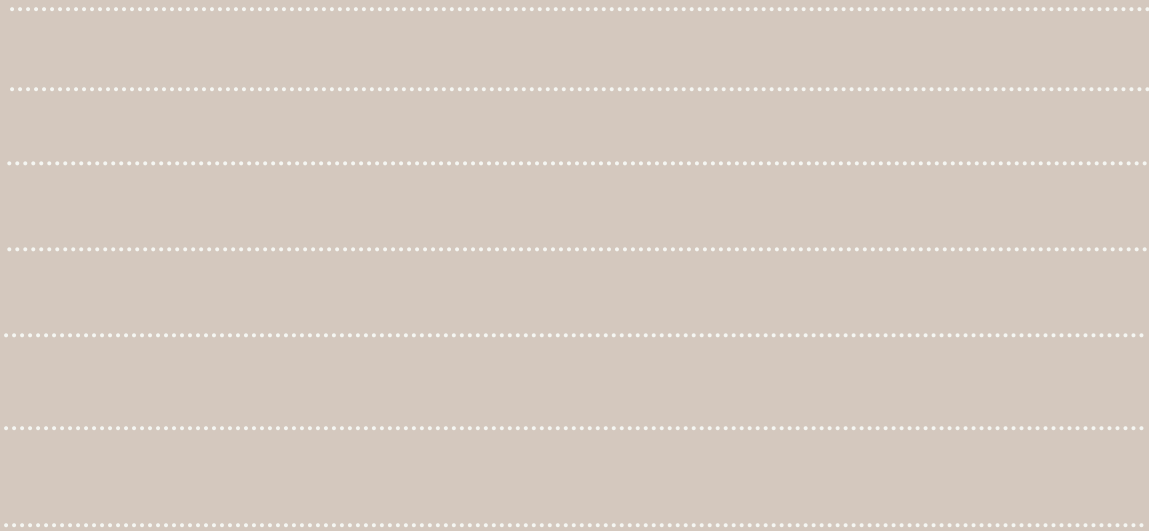
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Recurring Anxious Thoughts

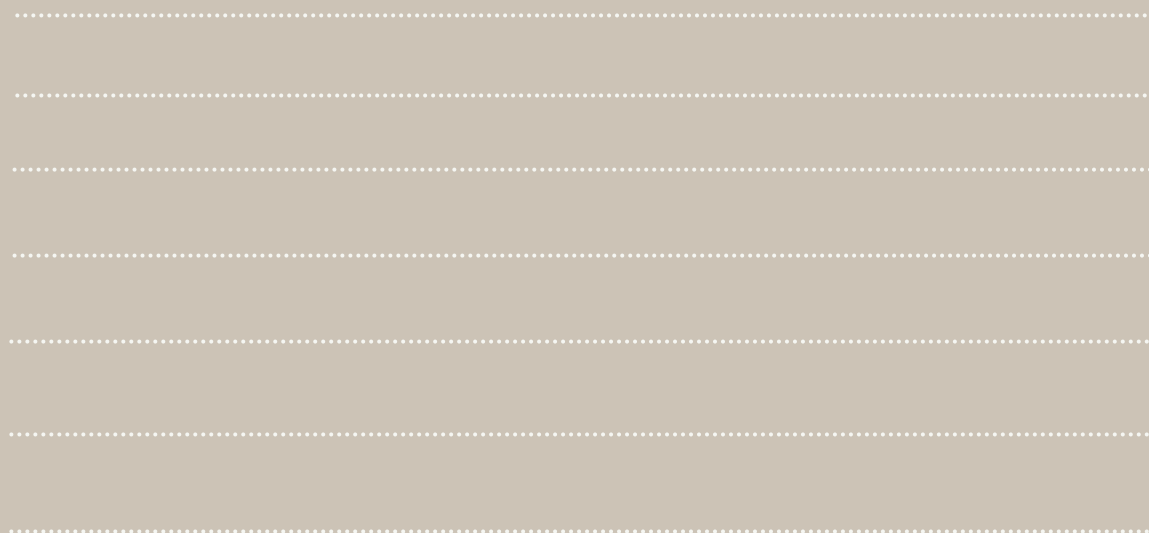
What are some recurring negative thoughts or beliefs that contribute to your anxiety? Explore their origins.



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Hidden Fears

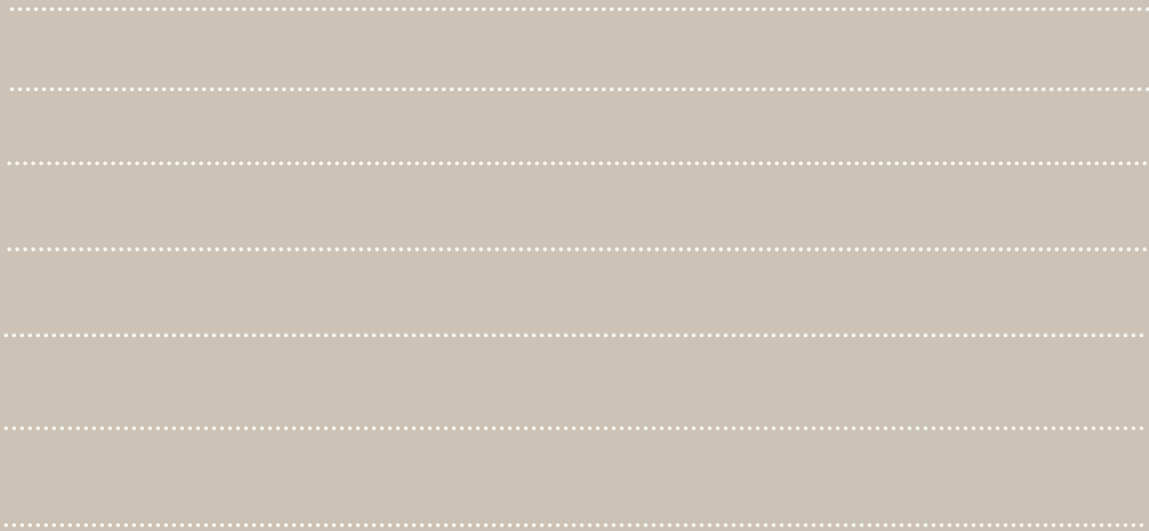
Are there any deep-seated fears that you haven't acknowledged? What might be causing these fears?



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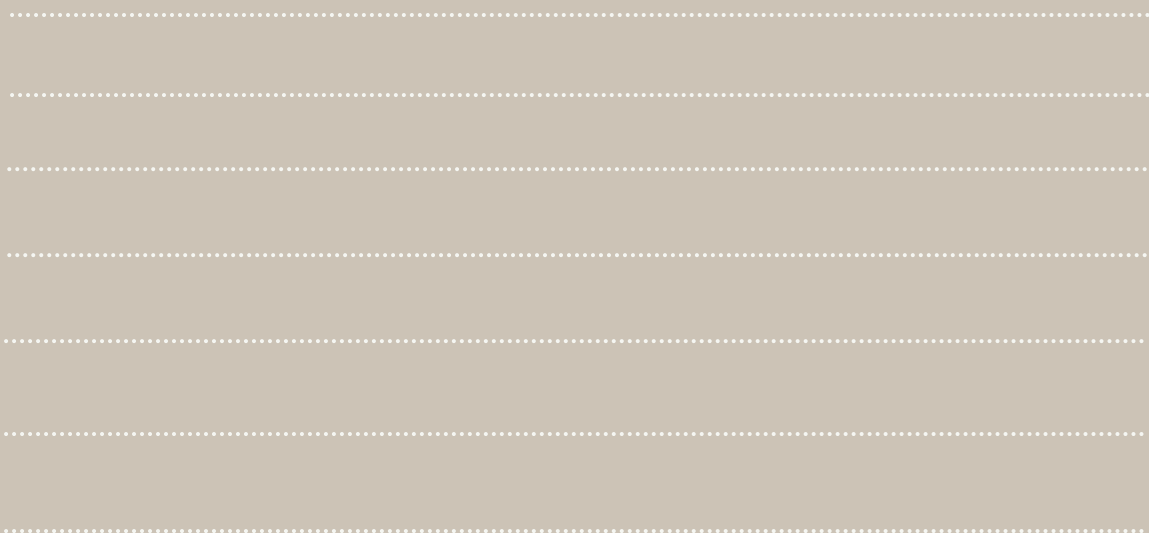
Unresolved Conflicts

Are there unresolved conflicts or past traumas that continue to influence your anxiety? How can you begin to address them?



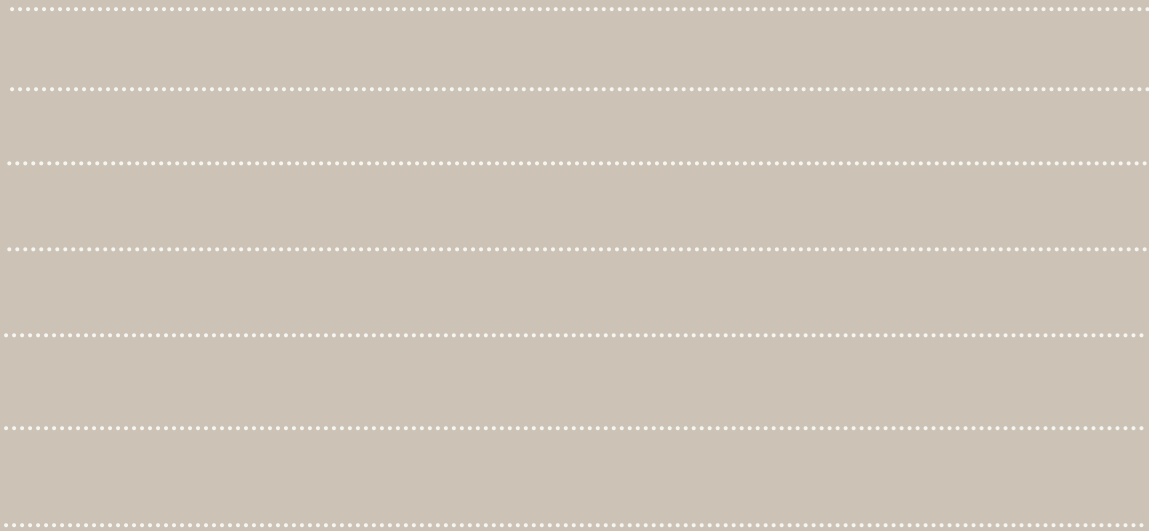
Repressed Emotions

Are there emotions you tend to suppress or deny when you're anxious? What might be the consequences of this repression?



People-Pleasing

Explore if your anxiety is connected to a need to please others or gain their approval. How does this impact your well-being?



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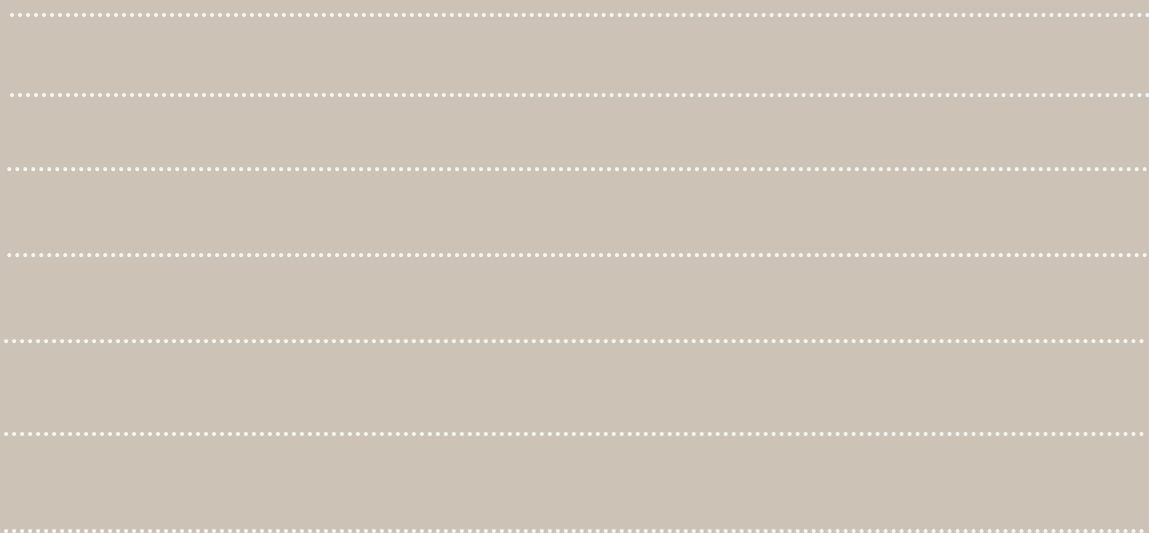
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Perfectionism

Do you have perfectionist tendencies that contribute to your anxiety? What's the source of this need for perfection?



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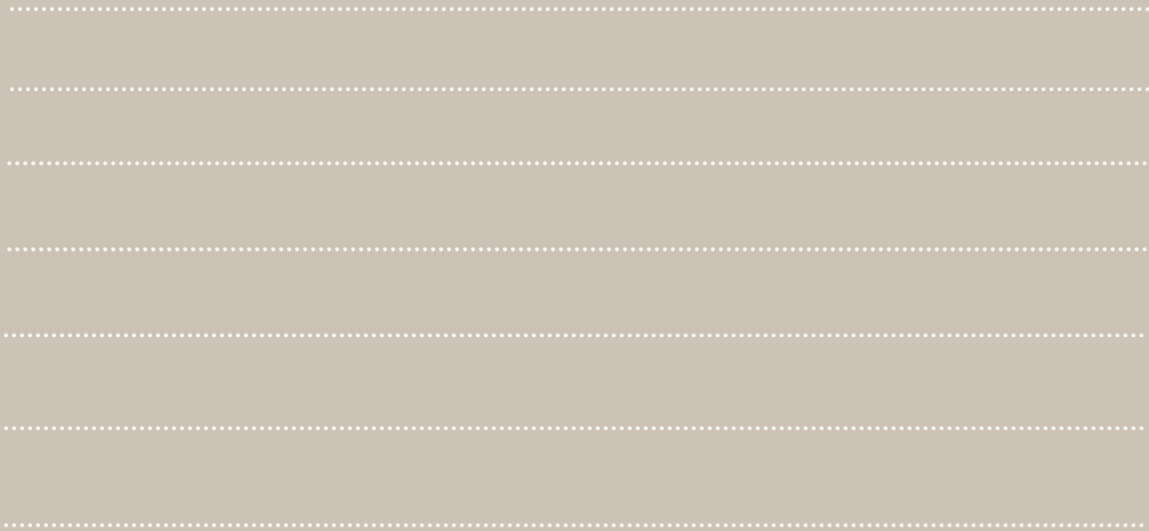
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Avoidance Behaviors

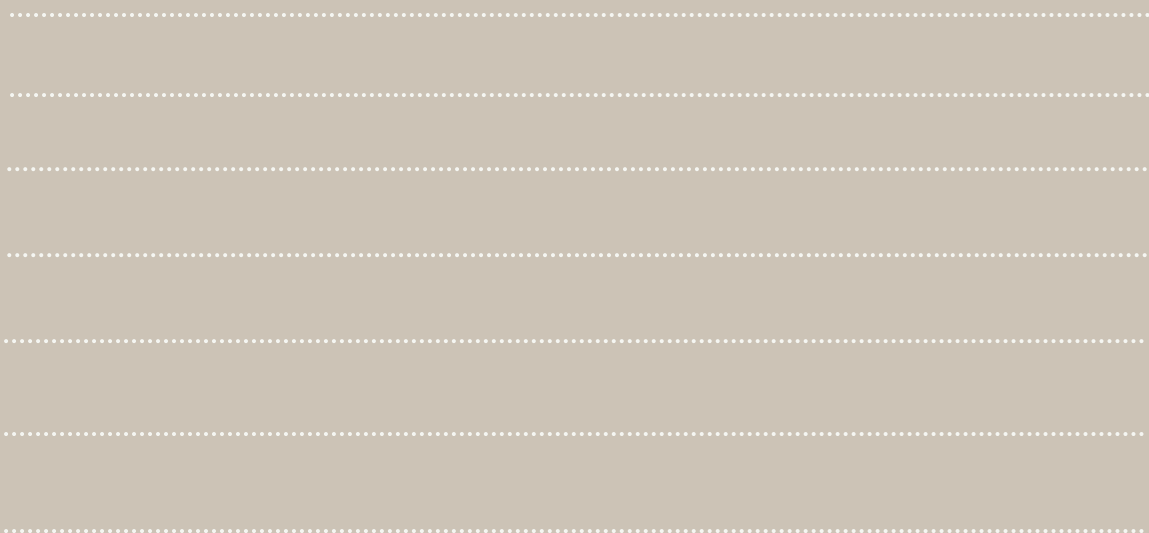
Reflect on any behaviors or situations you consistently avoid due to anxiety. What do you fear about these situations?



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Self-Criticism

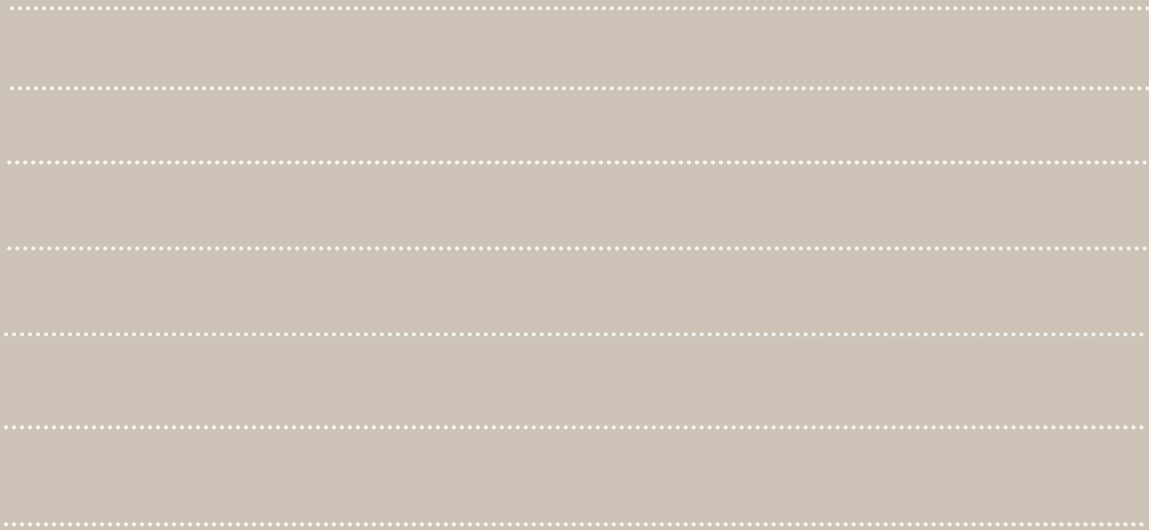
**How does your inner critic contribute to your anxiety?
Identify specific self-critical thoughts.**



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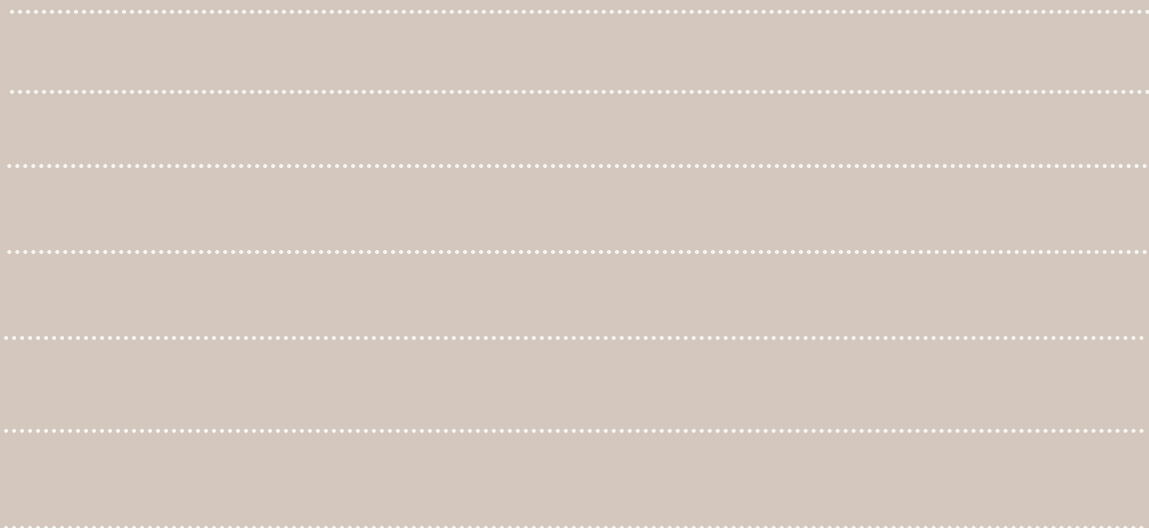
Self-Worth

Examine how your sense of self-worth or self-esteem is linked to your anxiety. What core beliefs about yourself may be in your shadow?



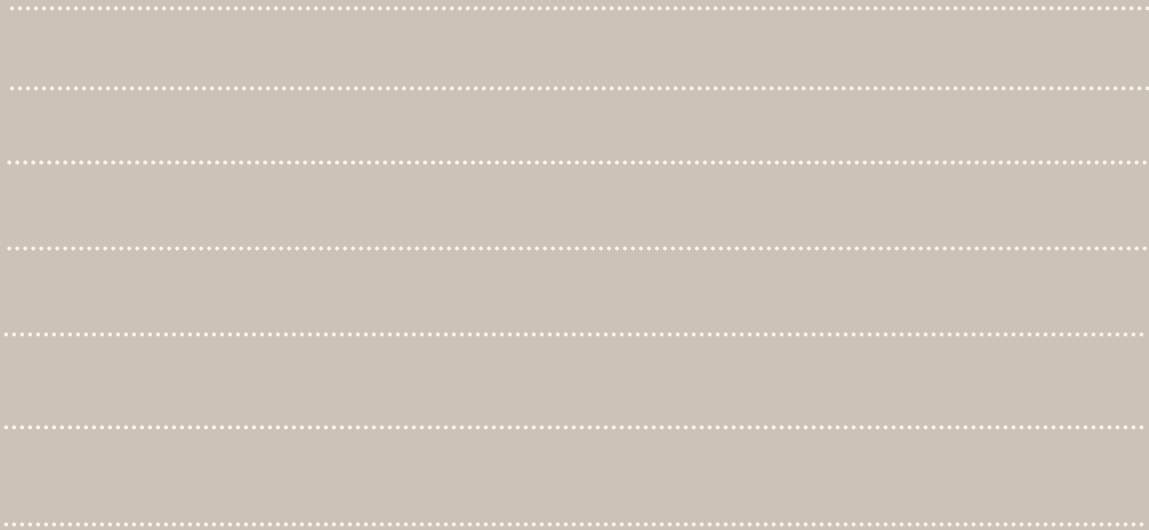
Control Issues

Explore if you have a need for control in various aspects of your life. How does this need impact your anxiety?



Abandonment Fears

Are there underlying fears of abandonment or rejection that contribute to your anxiety? How can you address these fears?



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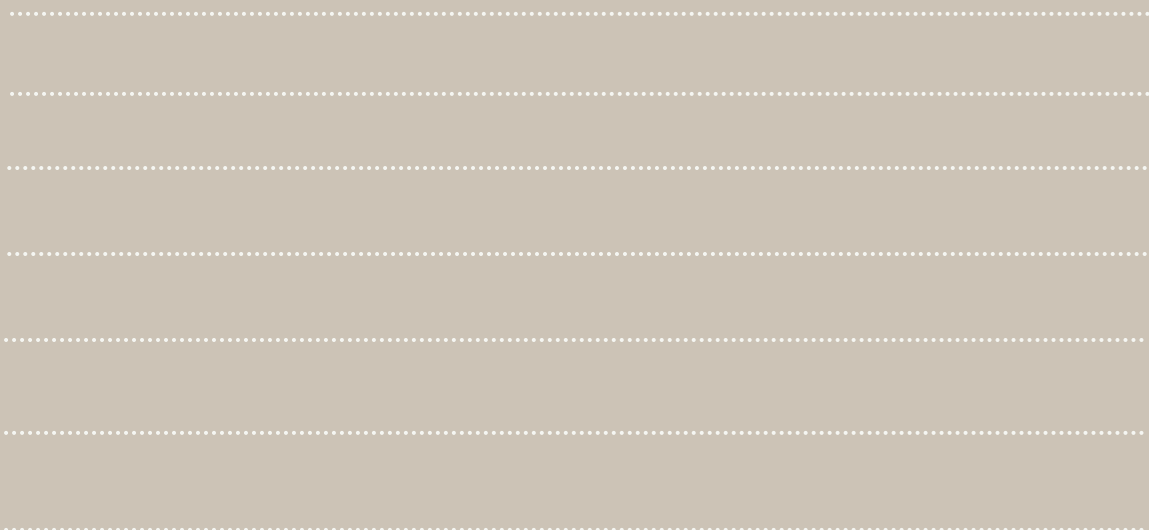
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Guilt and Shame

Reflect on any feelings of guilt or shame associated with your anxiety. What experiences or actions might be behind these emotions?



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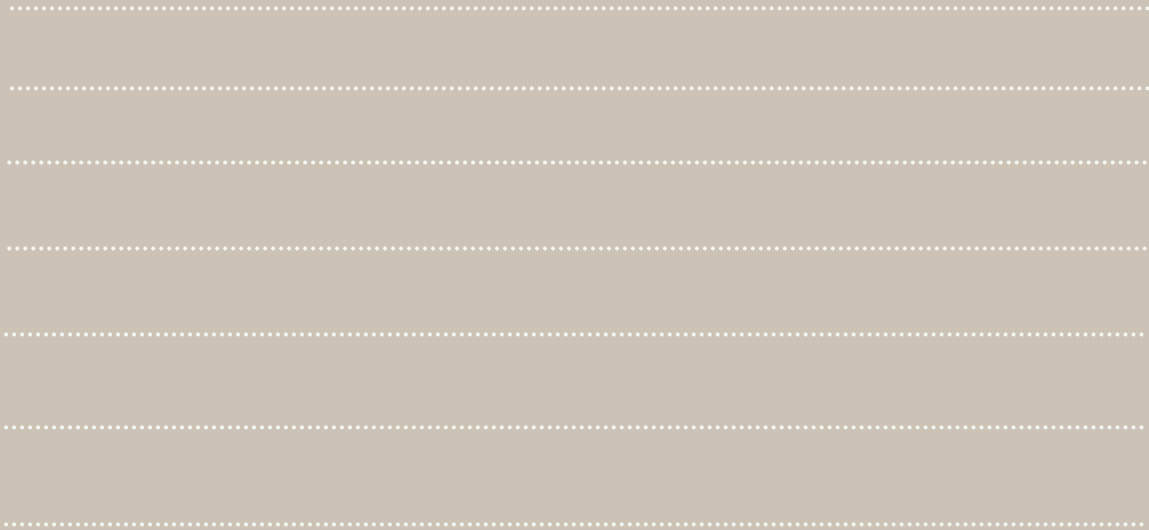
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Relationship Patterns

How do your relationship patterns or dynamics contribute to your anxiety? Are there recurring issues you need to explore?



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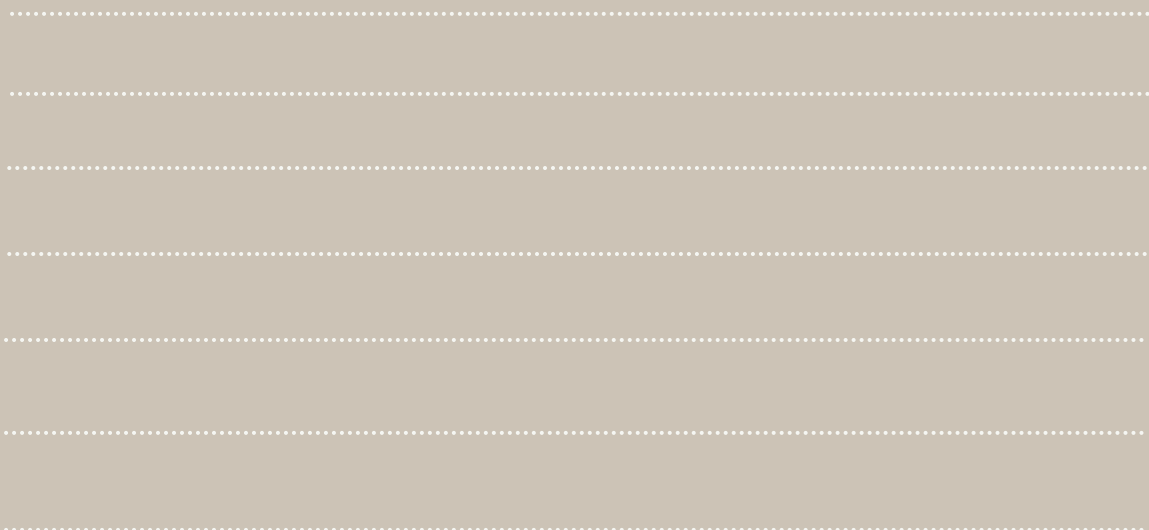
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Coping Mechanisms

What coping mechanisms do you use when anxious? Are they healthy, or do they mask deeper issues?



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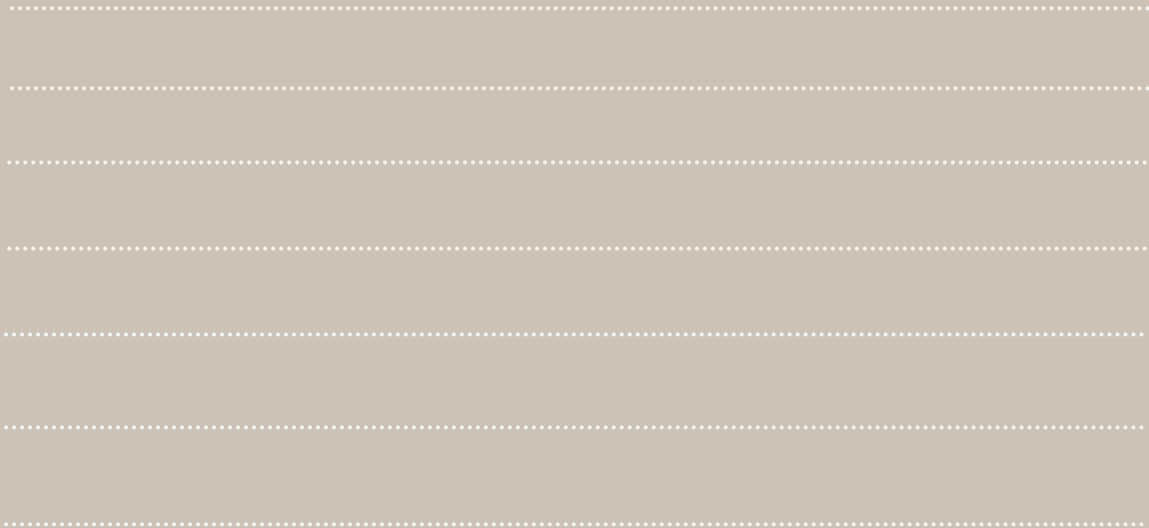
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Hidden Talents

Shadow work can also reveal positive aspects. What positive traits or talents have you neglected or denied? How might they help you overcome anxiety?



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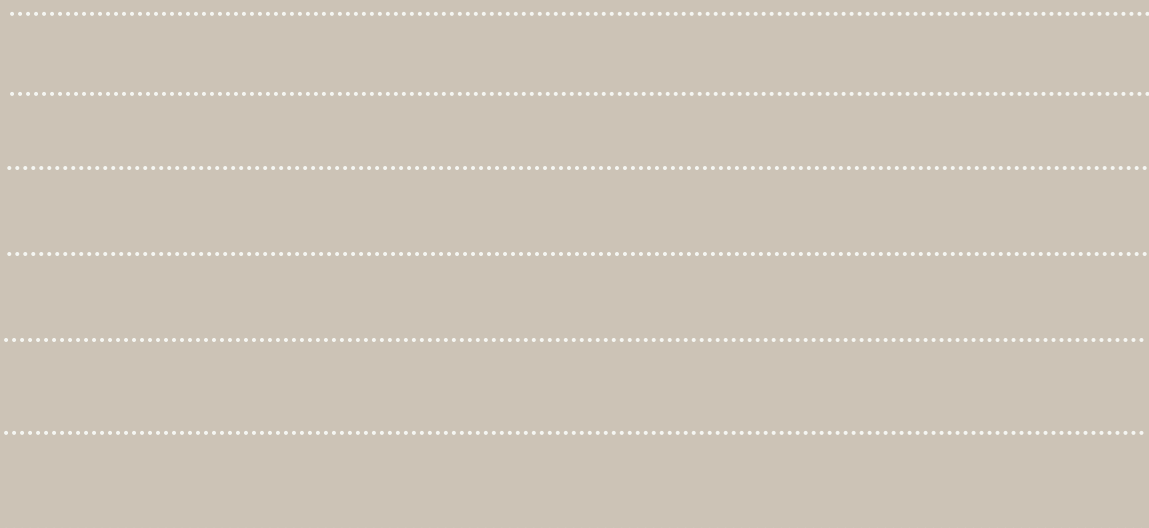
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Embracing Vulnerability

Reflect on your relationship with vulnerability. Are you comfortable being vulnerable, or do you avoid it to prevent anxiety?



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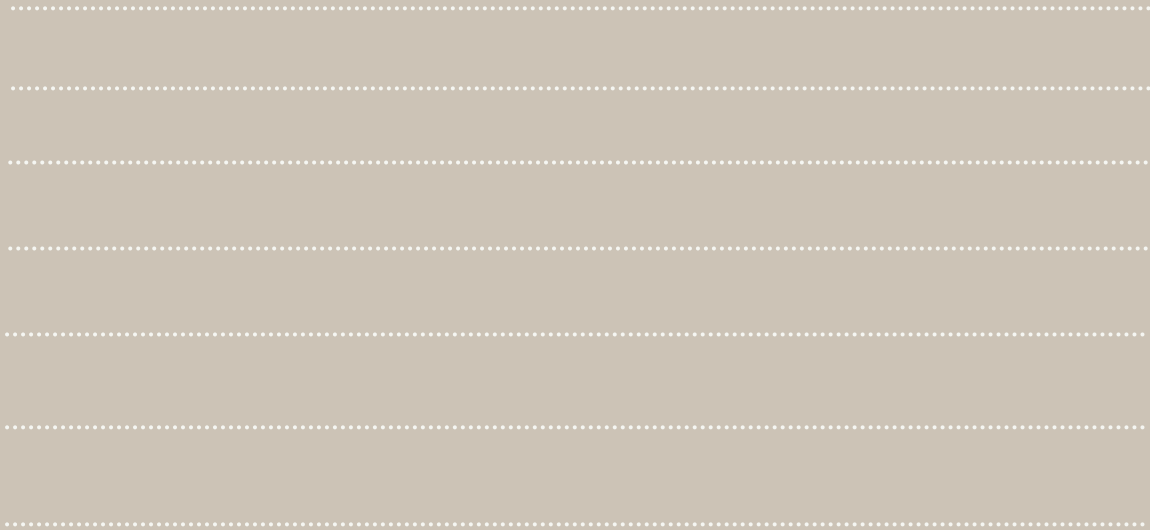
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Setting Boundaries

**How well do you set and maintain personal boundaries?
Explore how boundary issues may contribute to anxiety.**



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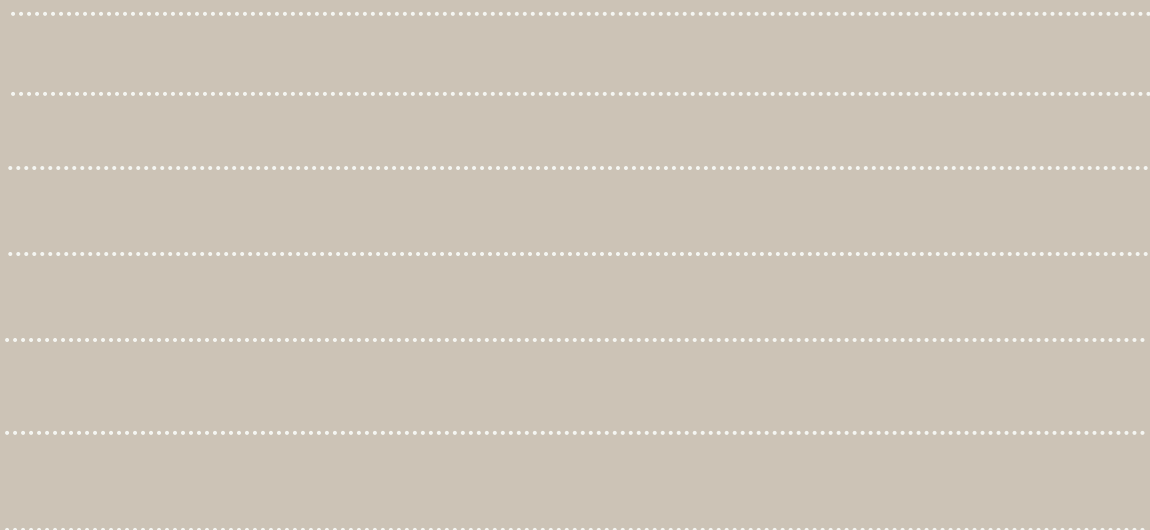
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Accepting Imperfection

**How do you react to your own imperfections or mistakes?
Can embracing imperfection alleviate anxiety?**



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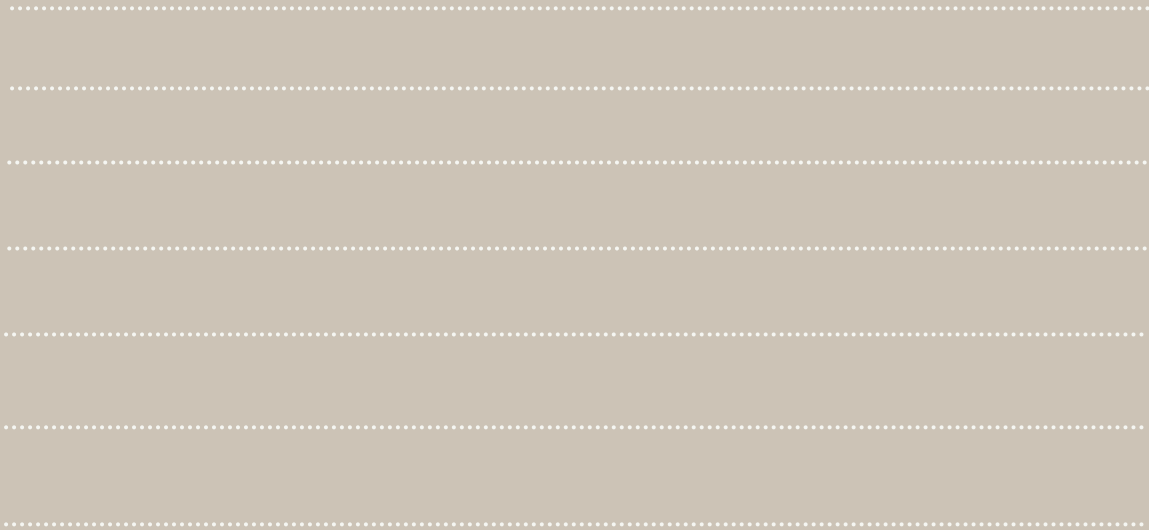
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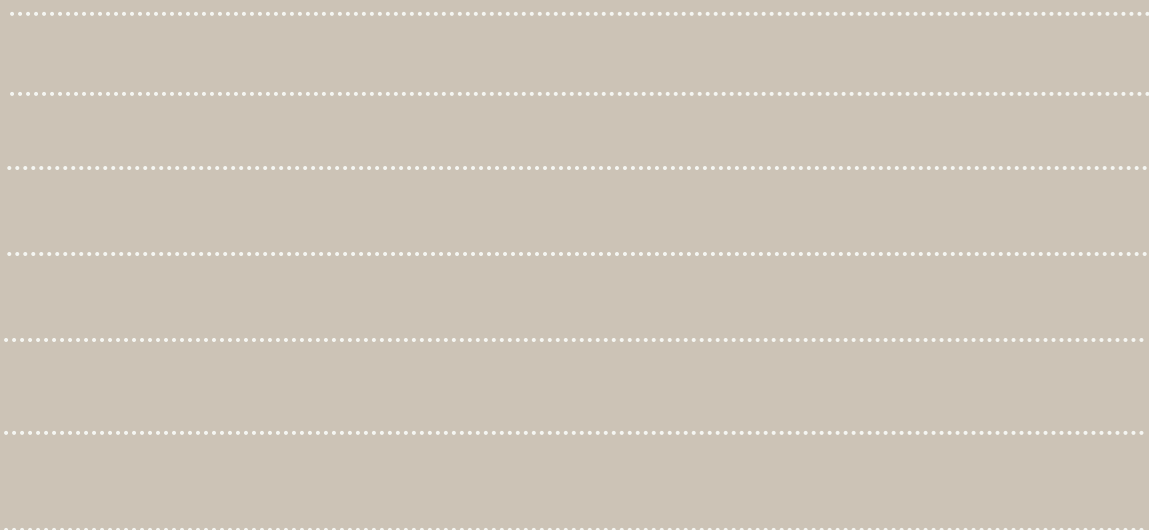
Early Conditioning

Reflect on your upbringing and early conditioning. What messages about anxiety and emotions did you receive from your family or culture?



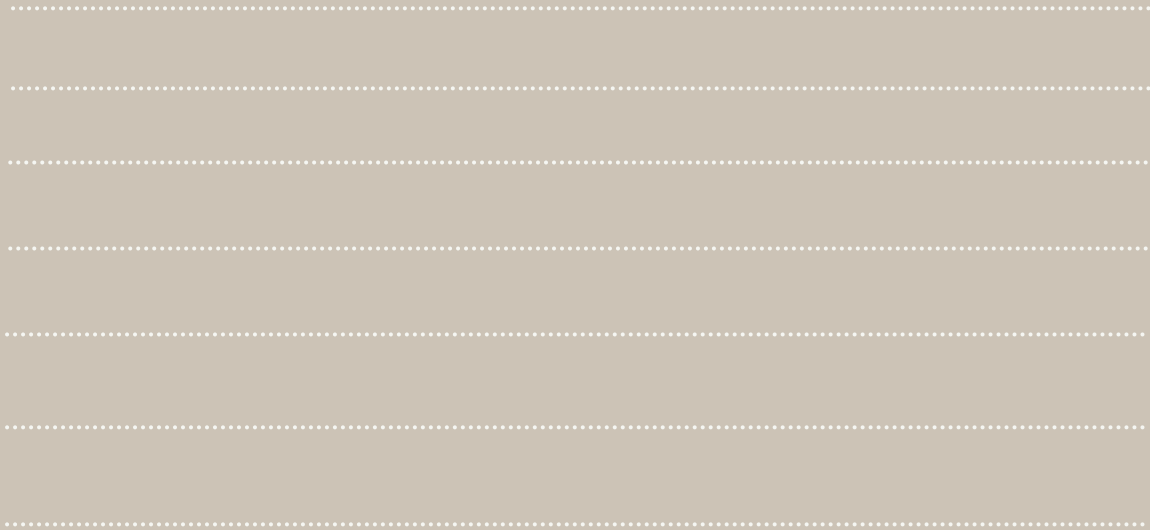
Self-Compassion

How self-compassionate are you when experiencing anxiety? What actions can you take to increase self-compassion?



The Fear of Failure

Explore your relationship with failure. How does the fear of failure contribute to anxiety, and how can you reframe it?



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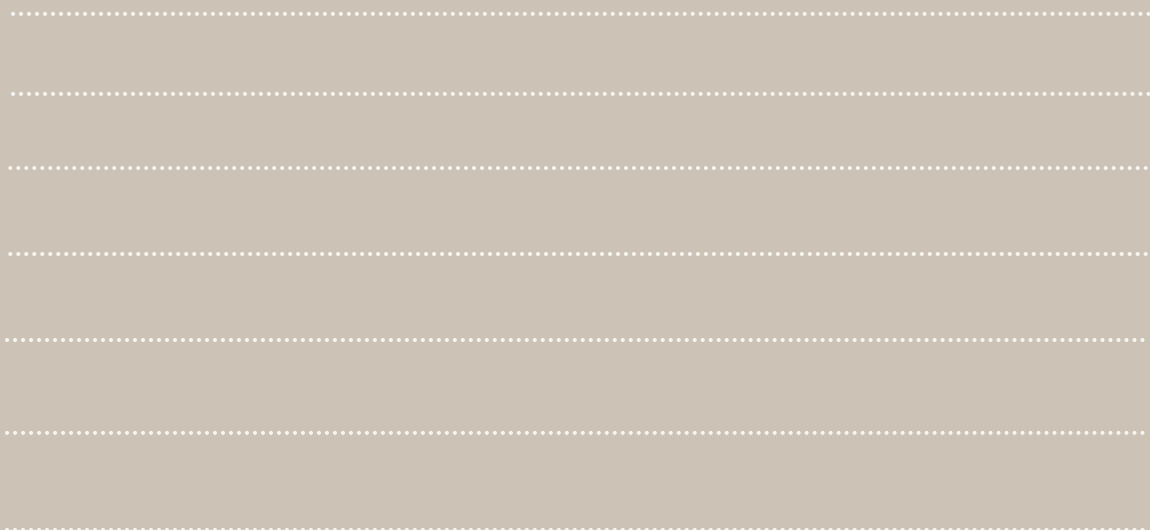
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Overthinking

Do you tend to overthink or ruminate on anxious thoughts? How can you break this cycle?



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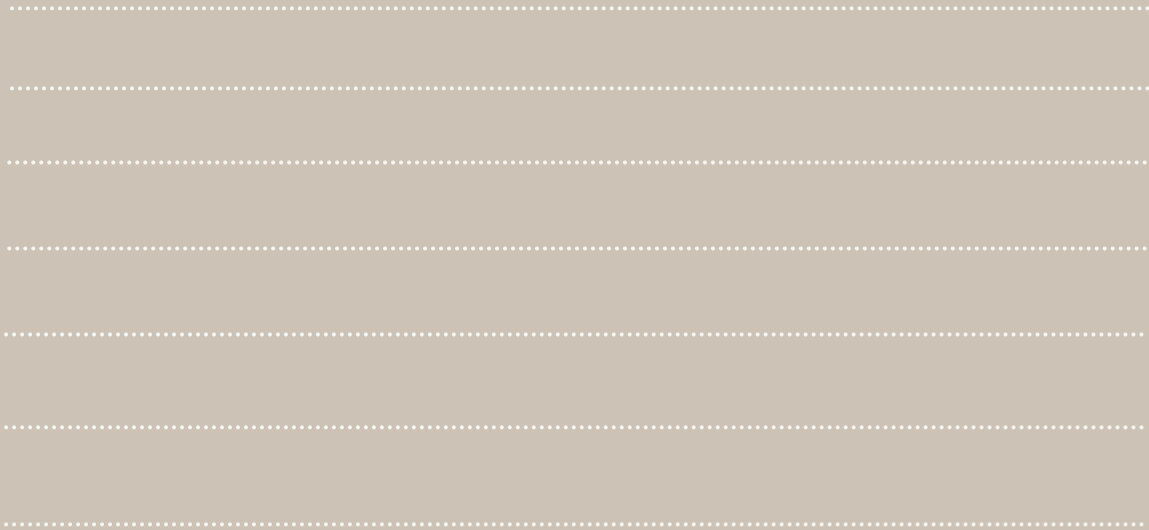
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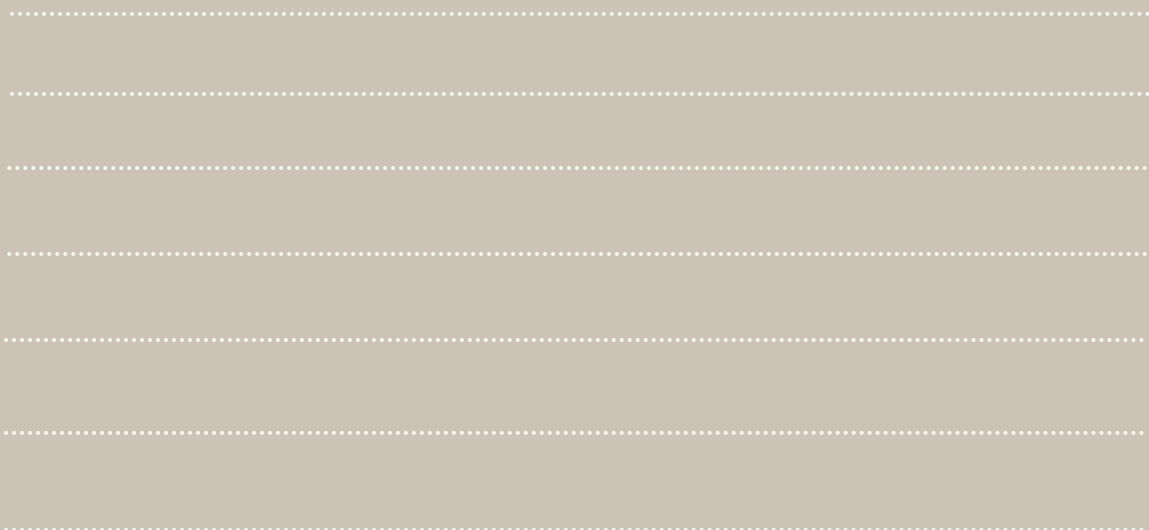
Unfulfilled Desires

Are there long-held desires or dreams that remain unfulfilled? How might pursuing them reduce anxiety?



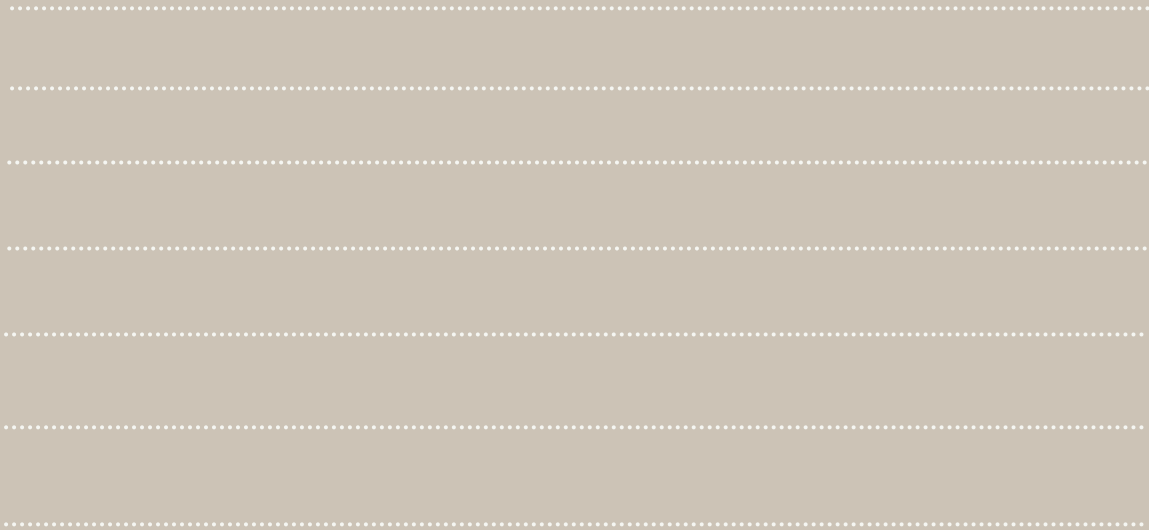
Legacy and Impact

Reflect on the legacy you want to leave and the impact you want to have in the world. How does anxiety affect your ability to achieve these goals?



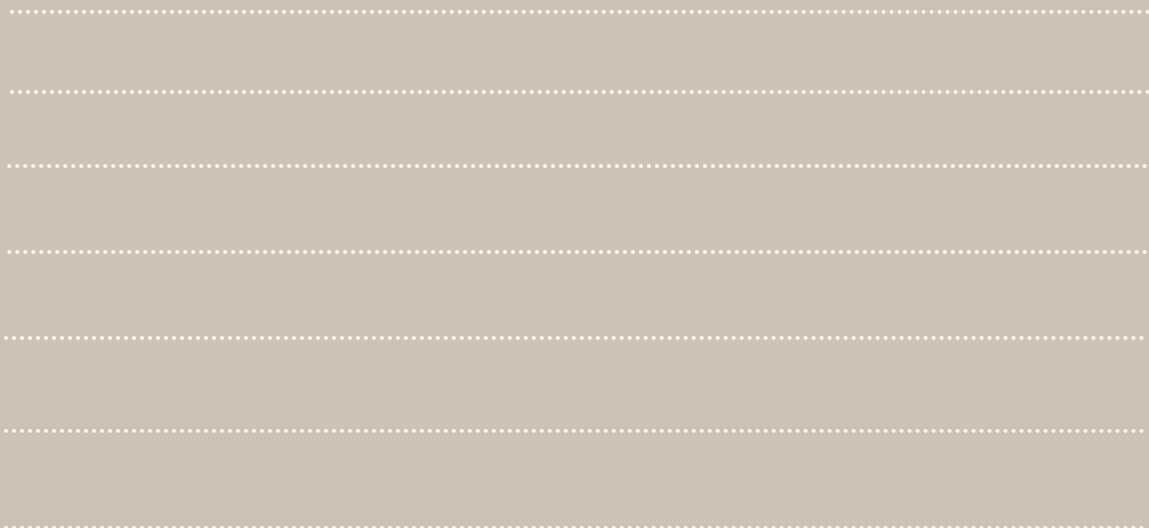
Inner Critic and Inner Ally

Differentiate between your inner critic and your inner ally. How can you empower your inner ally to counteract the critic?



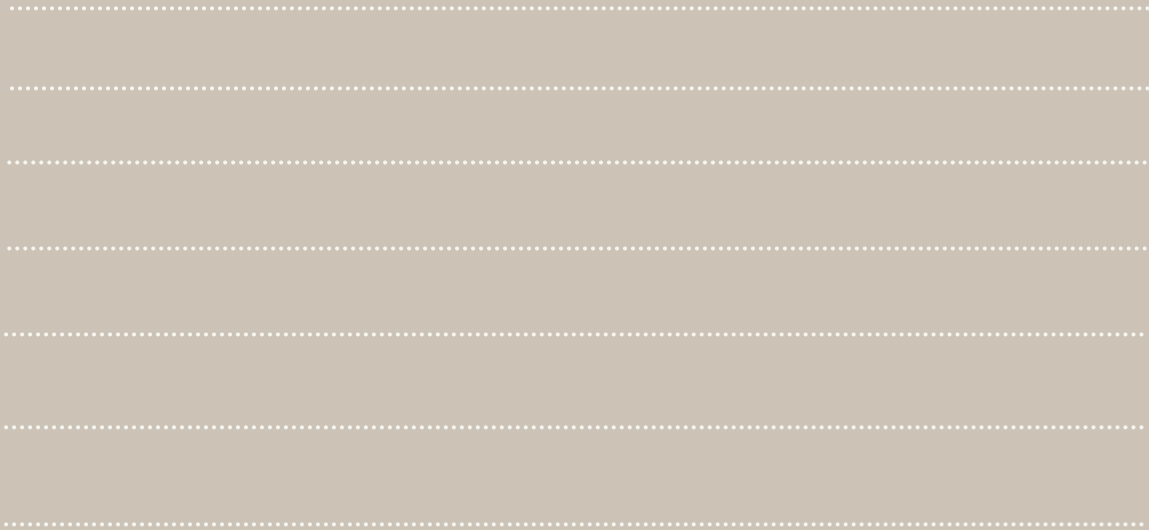
Self-Identity

How does anxiety shape your self-identity? How can you redefine yourself beyond your anxiety?



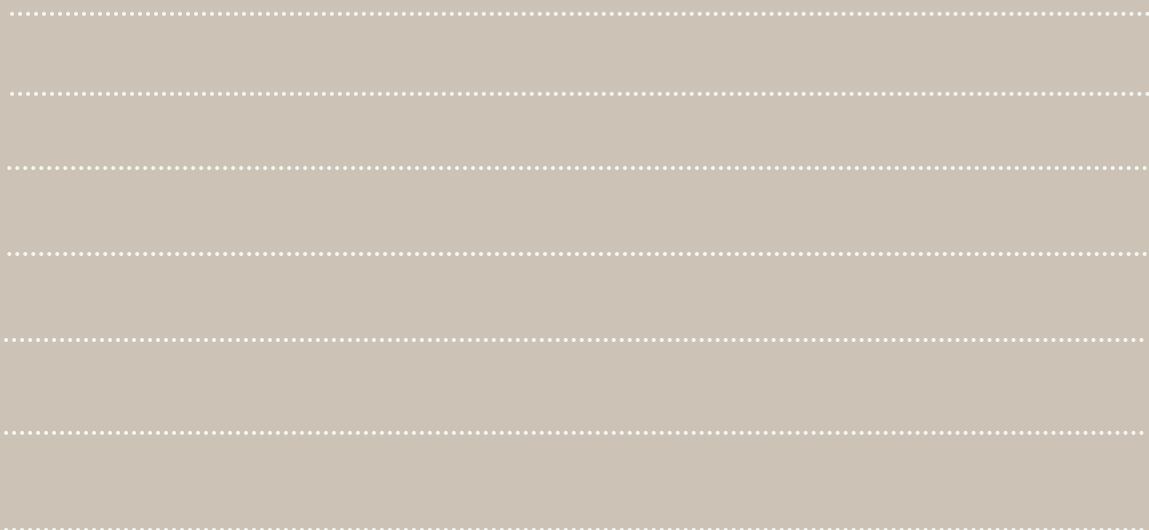
Forgiveness

Is there anyone you need to forgive, including yourself, to move beyond your anxiety? What steps can you take towards forgiveness?

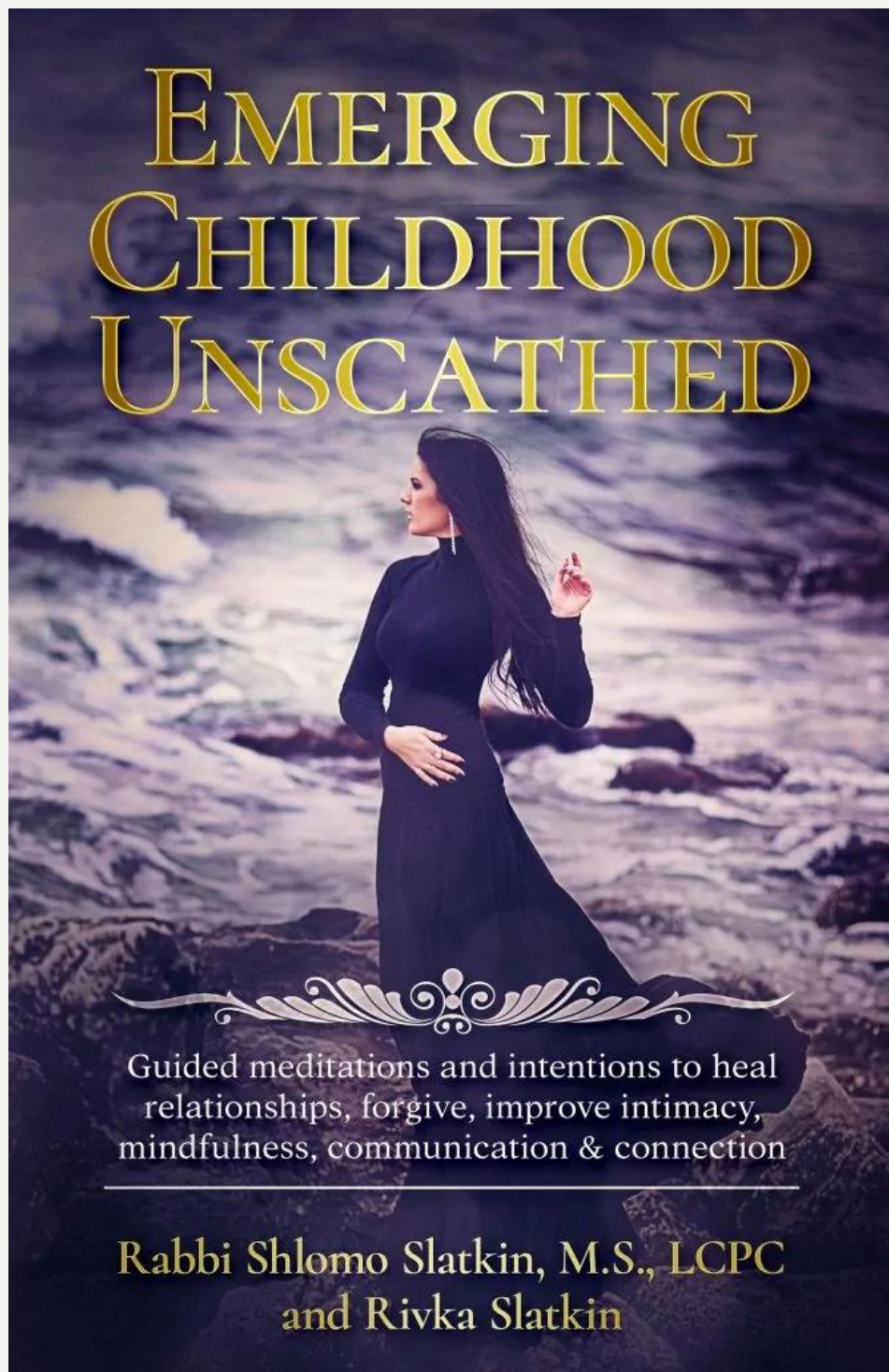


Affirming Strengths

List your strengths and positive qualities that can help you overcome anxiety. How can you leverage them in your journey?



**Enjoy our book of inner child
healing meditations available on
Amazon and Audible.**



References

Anxiety, <https://www.apa.org/topics/anxiety>

Anxiety Worksheets, <https://positivepsychology.com/anxiety-worksheets/>

How Imago Therapy Can Deepen Your Relationship,
<https://www.healthline.com/health/relationships/imago-therapy#techniques>

Contact Us

*Speak to a Marriage Counselor at
The Marriage Restoration Project*



443.570.7598



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Book a time to talk

www.themarriagerestorationproject.com