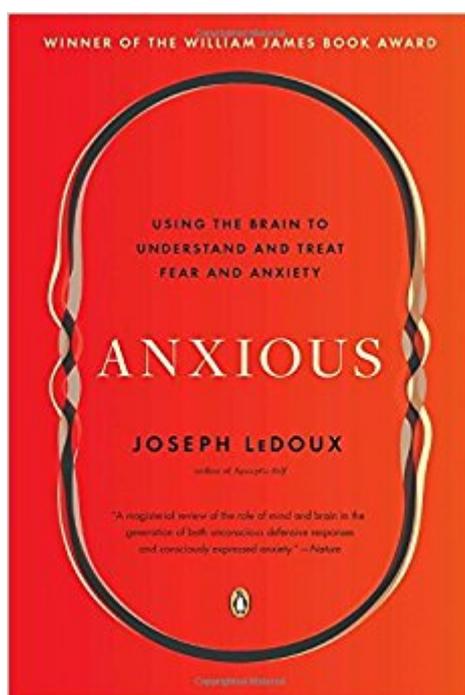


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# Anxious: Using The Brain To Understand And Treat Fear And Anxiety



## Synopsis

â œA rigorous, in-depth guide to the history, philosophy, and scientific exploration of this widespread emotional state . . . [LeDoux] offers a magisterial review of the role of mind and brain in the generation of unconscious defense responses and consciously expressed anxiety. . . . [His] charming personal asides give an impression of having a conversation with a world expert.â •

â ”Nature” A comprehensive and accessible exploration of anxiety, from a leading neuroscientist and the author of *Synaptic Self* Collectively, anxiety disorders are our most prevalent psychiatric problem, affecting about forty million adults in the United States. In *Anxious*, Joseph LeDoux, whose NYU lab has been at the forefront of research efforts to understand and treat fear and anxiety, explains the range of these disorders, their origins, and discoveries that can restore sufferers to normalcy. â LeDouxâ™s groundbreaking premise is that weâ™ve been thinking about fear and anxiety in the wrong way. These are not innate states waiting to be unleashed from the brain, but experiences that we assemble cognitively. Treatment of these problems must address both their conscious manifestations and underlying non-conscious processes. While knowledge about how the brain works will help us discover new drugs, LeDoux argues that the greatest breakthroughs may come from using brain research to help reshape psychotherapy. â A major work on one of our most pressing mental health issues, *Anxious* explains the science behind fear and anxiety disorders.

â Praise for *Anxious*:â œ[*Anxious*] helps to explain and prevent the kinds of debilitating anxieties all of us face in this increasingly stressful world.â • â ”Daniel J. Levitin, author of *The Organized Mind* and *This Is Your Brain on Music*” â œA careful tour through the current neuroscience of fear and anxiety . . . [Anxious] will reward the informed reader.â • â ”The Wall Street Journal” â œAn extraordinarily ambitious, provocative, challenging, and important book. Drawing on the latest research in neuroscience (including work in his own laboratory), LeDoux provides explanations of the origins, nature, and impact of fear and anxiety disorders.â • â ”Psychology Today

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Some reviewers say that the book is too academic for them, but the description on the cover clearly states that this "explains the science behind fear and anxiety disorders." Maybe these reviewers were expecting another soft new age psychology book. Rather, this is a refreshing different perspective from real neuroscience breakthroughs in understanding this problem. The examples from the book below show that the language is easy to understand for any level audience, ranging from high school to university research professor. The first half of this book is a wonderfully exciting journey through the mechanisms of the brain, explaining how the biology of fear and anxiety works, in a way that is easy for anyone to understand. The book ventures into cutting edge research, so even someone with a neuroscience or medical background would benefit from this as a knowledge refresher. The second half of the book describes pros and cons of the traditional therapy approaches, and the author's recommendations for improved strategies based on the latest research advances in understanding the contribution of the conscious mind and higher levels of thinking to anxiety problems. On page 252: "Putting Conscious Experience Front and Center in the Science of Anxiety As I have argued, the essence of anxiety is the unpleasant feeling -- the apprehension, dread, angst, and worry -- that one experiences when he perceives he lacks control in situations of uncertainty and risk. It is a by-product of our unique ability to envision our future self and especially to anticipate unpleasant, or even catastrophic, scenarios regardless of their likelihood." The book explores a variety of techniques, including learning to control anxiety through meditation.

I'd give it 6 stars if I could. The extra star is for work that contributes to a fundamental paradigm shift in the foundational assumptions upon which a science or professional discipline is built. This collection of information that's been entered into the database of humanity is simply underrated and underestimated. Some negative reviews have come from a few individuals who do understand and feel threatened. I was a student of psychology research until 20 years ago... Everything I learned up to 20 years ago has literally been invalidated by a few inventions like the MRI and a handful of

neuroscientists able to think out of the box. I feel so fortunate to have enough of a psychology research background to understand the contents. However, as a bankrupted consumer of countless mental health services and a severe anxiety sufferer, I can tell anyone with anxiety that limits normal life activities it is worth learning the science just to understand the research in this book. Why? Because the research now shows us conclusively that "anxiety" is NOT a genetic disorder, or a character trait, or a demonic curse, or sin. It's simply a subjective perception of non-specific fear caused by the brain's threat-response system needing a bit of tune up. Most importantly this knowledge allows me as a sufferer of this condition to be able to divorce myself from the lifelong shame of thinking that my anxiety, my fear of my anxiety, and all the embarrassing coping mechanisms I built into my "personality" were the sentences in the definition of who I was. I am now free of those oh-so misguided assumptions, and I can at least live my remaining life as a new person without any labels.

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