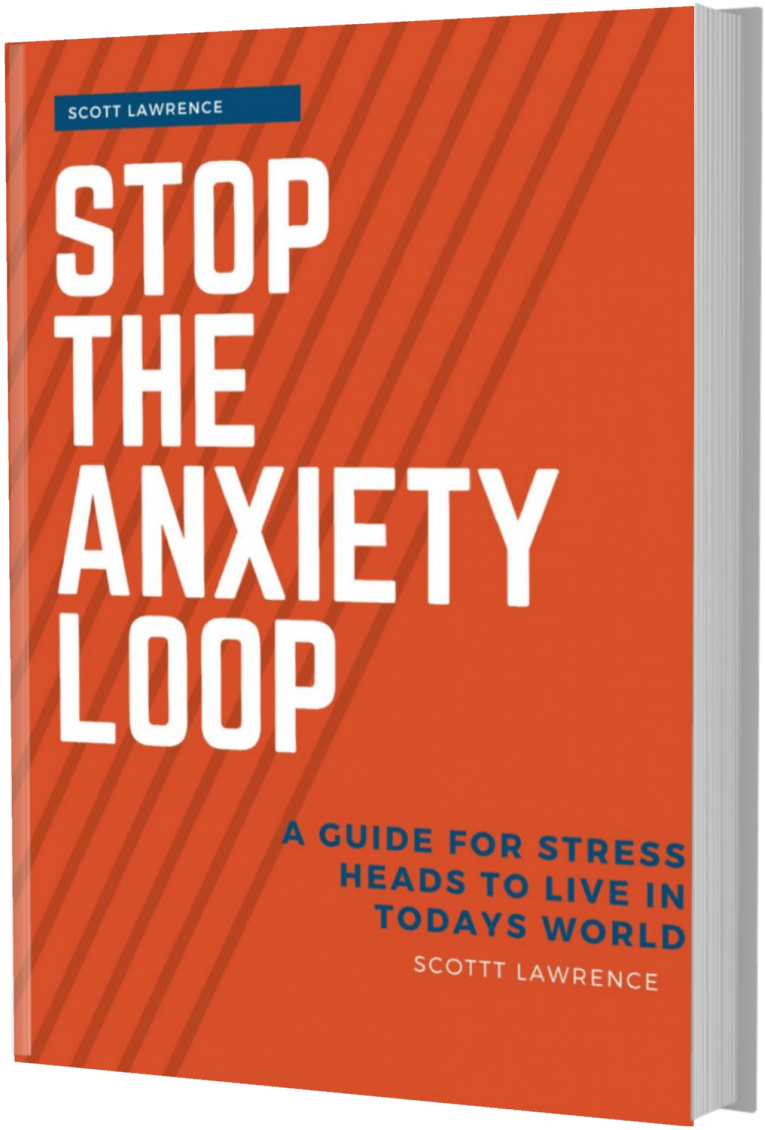
SCOTT LAWRENCE
STOP THE ANXIETY LOOP
A GUIDE FOR STRESS HEADS TO LIVE IN TODAYS WORLD
SCOTTT LAWRENCE

Do you have anxiety?

Do you help people with anxiety?

Have you noticed that anxiety is determined to come back after you cure it?

This book will show you:

Practical Tools for Calming the Mind,

The 9 Secret Anxiety Triggers and

Hypnotic Techniques to get you through any situation, even if you have struggled for years

Growing up as a Sydneyite, I got to visit Questacon, The National Science and Technology Centre in Canberra. I couldn't get enough of the TV commercial of the 10 year old boy who didn't want to go inside the centre because he was having too much fun playing with the automatic door at the entrance.

It was amazing what some people focus on.

But what captured my amusement was the school excursion of primary school boys pushing and shoving each other to out pedal the bony biker.

Questacon had geared up a children's bike to connect to an adjacent bike where a mannequin of a skeleton was ready to 'Out Pedal' you. But the trick was that every time these kids turned their pedal, the bony biker was hooked up to turn 4 times to every 1 cycle that the kid achieved. The monitor in front reported the kids failed attempt to 'Out Pedal' the bony biker next to the skeleton.

There were no motors powering the bony biker. The power came from the free labour of the child. The trick is that you can't 'Out Pedal' the bony biker. You can't win so don't try.

In an exercise in pure cruelty or Zen Buddhism, the children would compete and somewhere in their subconscious develop a love / hate relationship for both science and bony bikers.

Anxiety is like the bony biker. You can't 'Out Pedal' it. That's not how anxiety works.

After seeing over 4,000 clients in my clinical hypnotherapy training, being on commercial national radio many times, writing many books on psychology and running countless seminars, I feel qualified to give you my opinion on anxiety.

To summarize my opinion quickly, I believe these 5 things about anxiety, psychology and the world at large.

1. Anxiety is the cause of most major problems.
2. Suffering can be unpacked into sections made up of Sensory visual, audio and kinaesthetic data.
3. All suffering involves fears about Survival, Acceptance, Identity or Ego.
4. Anxiety can be cured
5. Anxiety is clever and will resist being cured.

But most of all, I believe that Anxiety presents itself as a loop.
Here are some examples of anxiety loops.

- A client needs to quit smoking 6 weeks before heart surgery or else the doctor won't operate on them.

  But here's the loop...

  The client won't quit smoking because of the stress of the heart surgery not going well.

- A woman with flying phobia wants to stop thinking about having a panic attack on the plane.

  But here's the loop...

  The more that the woman tells herself to stop thinking about having a panic attack, the more pressure she is under and the worse the panic attack gets.

- A student who wants to start his business has been broke for 10 years playing around with advertising strategies. He has no idea what he's doing.

  But here's the loop...

  He won't hire a coach to teach him better money and advertising strategies because he has no money right now.

  (The strange part is that he hasn't had money for 10 years and he'll continue to have no money for another 10 years. Business coaches actually have a high success rate.)

- A grieving client wants to forget about their ex and actually heal so that they can experience love again in the future.

But here's the loop...

They keep checking their exes social media account to see if their ex is happy which causes them to grieve for longer.

It's human nature to do stupid things. I do stupid things all of the time and you probably do to. It's completely normal. It's human to make mistakes. It's normal.

But what doesn't need to be normal is suffering.

As Haruki Murakami said, "Pain is inevitable; suffering is optional"

Actually this was a Buddhist saying made popular by Haruki Murakami.

The path forward for people is extremely simple.

Most things have been figured out. Happiness, Money, Health, Relationships, Cooking, Currency Trading, Forex, etc... It's all out there.

Given a logical set of steps, most people will still argue for their limitations, re-invent the wheel, go against the science, never research the important stuff, never ask for help and never do what it takes to get better. Why are people like this?

Anxiety is a Loop

Would you believe that 90% of anxiety is actually caused by the fear that more anxiety will come?

It's true. Crazy but true.

And here's the cure for anxiety in 5 steps.

1. **Stop talking** about what you don't want. Instead talk about what you want. The subconscious doesn't understand that you're being negative so it will learn the wrong patterns if you're not careful.
2. **Look after your body**. If you don't breath, sleep, hydrate, eat clean, exercise and take breaks then you're a prime candidate for developing an anxiety loop.
3. **Overcome resistance** to change. If you're always looking for the easy way out, then you're not just a trapped, you're trapped forever. The habits that you develop around avoiding important steps will eat away at your confidence until you have no resources left. If you're in that situation now, then ask an expert for help now. Don't wait, just ask.
4. **Slow Down** when you think that you're in a hurry. There is a difference between an emergency and an adult tantrum. But even paramedics are trained to walk, not run, to a casualty. There is never any benefit to panicking.
5. **Plan Something Bigger than yourself.** Your life will always feel better when it's spend meaningfully for more than just you.

These 5 rules are simple enough, so why do so many people break them on a daily basis?

The answer is simple. The Amygdala or Amygdaloideum is bigger than the Frontal Lobe.

The Amygdala forms part of the Limbic System. This means that it has a vital role in processing emotions in the brain.

Whereas the Frontal Lobe, which is a very thin slice at the front of the brain likes to solve puzzles until it gets tired.

The problem with the Frontal Lobe is that it's so small that it gets tired very quickly. This means that you literally don't have access to your frontal lobe while making most decisions.

There are 5 key rules to cure anxiety and the part of the brain that's smart enough to use them gets tired too quickly before it can put them into place.

Well that sucks. What are we meant to do about that?

Meanwhile the rest of the brain seemingly never gets tired. And that's great, except that the rest of the brain is so lacking in logic that it's creating more issues with Anxiety Loops, Poverty, Physical Illness Loops and Relationship Struggles.

It's not looking too good for us right now.

Practical Tools for Calming the Mind

Clients tell me about their week. The first question that I ask people is “What’s been happening this week?”

In itself, this question is cathartic. People get to let the pressure out and open the release valve. They no longer need to filter themselves.

One of the most common causes of stress for people these days is being bombarded with questions or demands. Peoples’ phones, homes, computers and work spaces are battle fields of adrenaline.

But don’t you find it strange that people are busier now than ever, even though we’ve made all of this progress with technology?

We have opened up the flood gates to be contacted, advertised to, work and to be disturbed 24/7 now. We hear and feel our devises while driving, in bed, walking, talking to someone else or even just while managing the kids.

Something has got to be done to manage our modern life. People need balance, but they’re afraid that if they miss a call or a message that they will lose money, opportunities or important messages.

In this chapter, I will give you 5 practical tools for calming the mind, but first we need to have a conversation about Creating Permission to Relax.

This is an example of another Anxiety Loop.

A client says, “I can’t relax at home because I never get any time away from the kids or my work from home job that keeps me too busy.”

This means that the client can’t fix their Inner World because their Outer World won’t give them permission to.

I suggest to them, “Let’s work on strategies to free up time at home by asking people for support and deciding how much work can reasonably be done in 1 day.”

And the loop continues as the client says, “I can’t bring myself to ask for help. I’m too stressed to face people. This Anxiety is killing me and I’d rather just try to get everything done by myself.”

The loop continues again as they can’t fix their Outer World because their Inner World won’t give them permission to.

This back and forth has got to stop. If this sounds like a situation that you're in right now then here's the list of steps that you should follow.

1. Handle External World Emergencies first. This includes calling emergency services for Fire, Ambulance, Police, etc... This does not include pleasing people. People can wait.
2. Schedule all other External World Emergencies for later. If you have children to attend to, then do your best. But do not get caught up getting involved in some To-Do list. Just schedule everything for 20 minutes later even if you're behind on Money, Sleep and Everything Else. The reason that you're behind is because you're in a loop. This is the way out of the loop.
3. Do these next meditation techniques for 20 minutes that I have listed here in this chapter.

How to Meditate Properly....

1. Write a list of everything that you need to do today so that for the next 20 minutes, you don't have to remember your list. The paper will do it for you.
2. Set an alarm for 20 minutes from now so that for the next 20 minutes, you don't need to know what the time is.
3. See in your mind a visual image of something that causes you stress. Now imagine that picture moving further and further away just so that you have some space and breathing room.
4. Put 1 hand on your stomach and notice how the stomach inflates with your in breath and deflates with your out breath. Get your in

and out breath to roughly take about the same amount of time as each other so that your nervous system can experience rhythmic breathing for at least 2 minutes.

5. Imagine one of those price stickers that they put on Christmas presents in the store. This is the type of sticker that if you remove it too quickly, you end up leaving half of the sticker and a sticky residue behind. But if you remove the sticker slowly enough, you can remove the entire sticker in 1 go. Imagine any pain in your body being represented by one of those price stickers. Imagine peeling one off slowly, but so slowly that you don't tear or damage the sticker. This can take physical pain levels from a 10 down to a 9 in 30 seconds. As you continue, it'll approach an 8,7 or 6 within minutes and continue onto to 5,4 or 3 in its own time.

All 5 of those meditation techniques work great if you give yourself permission to stop and to do them properly. Let them be your bible.

The goal here is to end the Anxiety loop and to get your mind ready to do its best thinking.

We never see the world for what it is. We always see the world through our filters. After meditation, your inner genius will start to see opportunities and methods that were previously unavailable.

Remember that the Adult Tantrum is a real thing.

9 Secret Anxiety Triggers

1. Asking for what you want
2. Exposure or being found out
3. Regret
4. Bombardment
5. Dying alone or FOMO
6. Guilt
7. Comparison
8. Fatigue or Struggle
9. Contamination

Asking for what you want is scary.

I mean, what if they say no?

What if you seem pushy?

What if the very act of asking makes things worse for you?

What if you get what you ask for but it still doesn't make you happy?

What if you're not ready to receive what you want and you waste your opportunity to enjoy it properly?

There's so much to consider.

Isn't it just easier to just keep quiet and to be happy with what you have?

It seems like the number 1 skill on the planet is how to ‘Put up with a Bad Situation’, even anxiety.

I mean, why rock the boat right?

But what if the only reason that you’re missing out is that you don’t speak up and ask for what you want?

What if your life could be 10 X easier, but because you don’t ask, you’ll never find out how abundant resources can actually make their way to you.

Let me ask you these questions.

When was the last time that you wanted help at home but didn’t ask for it?

Have you ever been lonely, but didn’t ask for company because it could make you seem weak?

Have you ever neglected to ask for a raise or to put your prices up because you believe that you or your product / service isn’t worth that much?

The truth is that we’re all going to die, so we’re not risking immortality by living a little bit more before we die. What we’re really risking here is **pride**.

Our brain stem uses serotonin to keep a record of how ‘Important’ or how ‘Alpha’ that we think that we are.

We can feel it in our bones if we’re at the top of the ladder or if we belong at the bottom. But if you’re accepting a life of pain and anxiety, then you have to change your standards for how important that you think that you are. This doesn’t mean that you’re putting others down. Quite the opposite, you’re setting an example for other people for how to apply self care.

Exposure or being found out can also be called Impostor Syndrome.

Impostor Syndrome is a condition where you believe that you don’t belong or don’t deserve a position, a status or a responsibility because you’re not ‘Really an Expert’ or you’re not ‘Really that Type of Person’

This is another illusion created by the brain to try to keep you safe, back during a time thousands of years ago. Back then, if you stepped out of line, you’d die. If you over stepped your scope of permission, you’d be exiled, killed or ‘made an example of’ to stop others from trying to escape their class. This mostly doesn’t exist today. It’s safe for you to improve upon your situation free from being harmed by others. Most people are mostly bark and no bite.

A few exceptions can exist where you're literally not allowed to beat the other player. These circumstances are usually prison gangs, governments, police, courts or in war zones where there is still an unfair power gap between you and the other player. Luckily in the 1st world countries that we live in, we mostly are free of those power struggles or at least they're manageable.

This power gap mostly doesn't exist in other areas of life such as, asking somebody out on a date, asking for more money, advertising yourself, asking somebody to be your friend or most of the things that people put off. We live in a completely different world now. Try living it your way by asking for what you want.

Regret comes in the form of regretting Not doing something. People are so busy now that they get distracted and discouraged from their main goal. They look back and ask where the time went because they didn't narrow their focus the way that you need to do today to make things work. Life will temp you with distractions that have nothing to do with your core passions if you let it. Don't regret being undisciplined. Do the things that you want to do.

Bombardment comes from a lack of boundaries. People only abuse your boundaries if they get what they want by violating them. A client who recently visited me was almost ready to die. He was so exhausted because at work and at home, he never got any guaranteed time to himself. He would drink and smoke to try to win back some sanity. His restaurant staff knew that they weren't allowed to talk to him between 3pm and 4pm, but they didn't care.

They didn't care about his boundaries because he would stop what he was doing and give people what they asked for anytime that they interrupted him. He eventually learned that he had to risk offending some people, say no, and make people figure out their own issue between 3pm and 4pm or else they were being taught to disrespect his boundaries.

Today, we get bombarded by messages from our devices. It can cause mental illness in some people with weak boundaries. Don't give anybody anything during your break. If the break has started, everybody has to wait until your break is over before they can have your attention or else it isn't a break.

Dying alone or FOMO are opposite to bombardment, but equally as popular as a fear. Just in case you hadn't heard of FOMO, it stands for Fear Of Missing Out. It's very popular language with young people today. Learning to let go where you don't need a witness to exist will set you free. Not needing anyone allows you to love people more.

Guilt is the brains way of trying to time travel back to the past and changing something that has already happened. You can't educate your past self. You can only learn from what has happened and apply it to the future. Many people keep a box of negative emotion in their head. They can't throw out the box of negative emotions because it contains important information about a mistake that they made. But keeping the box is poisoning them. They need to open the box, learn

the lesson about how to make the future better and then throw out the box.

Comparison is another mental poison. Somebody is always doing better than you and somebody else is doing worse. It's a pointless comparison. Instead of comparing to others, it's better to slow down and to plan out a vision for themselves. Comparison is extra pointless due to the fact that not everybody wants the same life as each other. What makes someone else happy may not be what makes you happy. Make it about you and your vision.

Fatigue or Struggle can be an addiction. Busy people aren't usually more successful. No coach should tell you to work yourself into exhaustion. If anything, you're more productive overall, richer and healthier if you try for a 50:50 split between work and downtime. This sounds crazy to most people. A common reply would be, "How am I meant to get just as much done in half of the time?"

The answer is pretty simple. Busy people take on far too much fluff that doesn't actually have to be done. Refreshed people make better decisions and are more productive. The science backs this point up.

Contamination is an anxiety. We have filters for gross, exhausting, boring, irrelevant, expensive, etc... This one is OK and doesn't need to be an anxiety unless it becomes debilitating. You don't want to become overwhelmed with stress every time you're in public. Some change is good and we need to relax about it.

Hypnotic Techniques to get you through any situation, even if you have struggled for years

People can be annoying, the media can be depressing, the government can be liars, family and friends can be unreliable or needy, the year can go too fast, the day can go too slow or you can feel like you're getting nothing done.

On the more severe side, clients have talked about debilitating anxiety, inability to drive, being socially disqualified, not being good enough in general, and thoughts of self harm.

Let's break this down into 4 categories

1. Fear of People
2. Fear of Running out of Resources
3. Fear of losing yourself and
4. Having a non-meaningful life

It's important to know which is which and this can be tricky.

A client who had a fear of driving was actually in the fear of people category. Think about it. What are they really afraid of? Are they afraid of the car or the other drivers?

This client couldn't drive on the freeways or highways. I asked them if they would be comfortable driving if they were the only human alive, driving on the road.

The answer was 'Yes'

Without the other drivers, they don't care about the freeway.

Again, think about it.
Why were they afraid of freeways and highways but not any other roads? It's because the other drivers, trucks and busses felt aggressive to this client and they were worried about being judged.

The People / dog Technique.

If you have trouble with what other people think, imagine that all other people are dogs. If you walked past a strangers house and a dog barks at you through the fence, you'd never take it personally. You wouldn't ask yourself, "What is it about me that makes that dog bark at me when I walk past that house?"

We got this client, while under hypnosis, to imagine that all other drivers were dogs. Cute dogs, but cute angry dogs. If a dog driving a car drove too close behind my clients car, she felt that it was a cute, yet moody puppy having a tantrum, and not in fact their fault for being an annoying driver who angers other cars by doing the exact limit.

A client who was a Workaholic was actually in the Fear of Running out of Resources category. The more they worked, the more poor they became. This is actually true. They were so run down that they started to make poorer and poorer decisions.

The Resource / hospital Technique.

I asked this client what would happen if they stopped and took a break to enjoy life. Of course the answer was, “If I don’t work, money doesn’t come in. I don’t have the luxury of taking breaks.”

This was a interesting and caught my attention as strange because nobody should be under that much pressure. It’s like having a car fall on top of you. It’s a lot of pressure, but it’s not doing you much good.

So I asked them how much money they believe that they’ll have in their bank account in 6 months time. Their answer was, “Probably the same as what I have now.”

Next I asked, “What if you stopped what you were doing and took a 2 week break from everything? How much money would you have then?”

And of course they complained, “I’d have no money because I can’t afford to stop. Don’t you get it? Life is hard!”

I was really curious about this one. I asked, “What if you were hit by a car? What then?”

“If you were hit by a car and you had to spend 2 weeks in hospital, then how much money would you have in your bank account?”

They looked up to access their visual mind and then said, “Probably about the same, because things would still get done anyway. I guess that my money wouldn’t change because everybody else would pitch in.”

I was impressed. This took almost no persuasion at all. If you imagine what would happen if you were taken out for 2 weeks, wouldn’t you be just fine at the end?

My next question was, “So why are you working so hard? What’s that about? Why not just enjoy life more. If you want more money, just get a money coach. This working yourself to death isn’t working for you.”

They agreed with me. If was like a revelation for them. They wondered why they’d tortured themselves so hard for so long. Have you ever wondered why some people who work hard have nothing, not even 2 coins to rub together, and others who lounge around a bit own their own house, have plenty of savings and seem to be able to afford whatever they want? Working yourself to death is not the answer. Get strategic, not exhausted, you’ll thank yourself later.

A mother of a 4 year old, a 18 month old child and 4 months pregnant with her next, and had anger issues with her husband was actually in the category of Fear of losing herself.

She used to do pretty well for herself in the corporate world. She cut down to 2 days per week to keep in touch with the world, but felt angry, not getting time away because she's either working or looking after her family. Strangely, being some kind of super woman, she never seemed to get tired. In fact, she was bored. She had her corporate work that she could do from her home office. Occasionally she'd leave the house for a meeting. Her parents were a massive support and were pretty much free to baby sit most days.

She was feeling fulfilled and had everything that she wanted, but the anger was still coming up. When I asked her who she was when she wasn't working, being a wife or being a mum, she didn't know what to say. It had been such a long time since she had done something for herself like read a book, see a movie, make her own plans or just to slow down and re-discover what she's actually into, that she couldn't answer the question.

The Losing Yourself / Brain Storm Technique.

So we did a brain storming exercise coming up with over 100 ideas. We didn't attempt to come up with 100 accurate or good ideas. We simply spent the time just brain storming any ideas about things that

she could do. Then she scored each of the ideas out of 10 for how interested she was in exploring that path or road.

It takes time to know yourself. You have an essence about you that can't come out properly without the proper fertility of mind. You need time, space and intention to actually discover yourself. Who knows what you love or don't love doing until you've tried some things. It may be time to have some new experiences.

What has changed in your life? What would you like to try? Maybe you can try it now that your circumstances have changed. Discovering your new self can be a way to heal

A man with a drinking addiction actually in the Having a non-meaningful life category.

He wasn't super rich, but he could afford a few side businesses with staff and a warehouse without breaking the bank. He also wasn't too bad at moving stock, but he didn't really feel challenged by the idea of growing a business. It came second nature to him to move $50,000 of stock on a weekend. And to celebrate, he got drunk 7 nights per week. He was doing well in every other area of life. But in his mid 50s, he was aware that he was shortening his life span.

The Non-Meaningful / Growth Technique.

He was in an anxiety loop about alcohol. He couldn't imagine a life without drinking. So we set him up with a challenge that he hadn't had before.

We humans think that we're pretty good at hiding what we want from people, but we're actually more transparent than we think. People think that they are good at hiding feelings of anger, loneliness, boredom, hunger, laughter, etc...

This client had always wanted to perform in front of a crowd doing comedy. He was shy that was, but had no problem speaking in front of his team, negotiating sales or anything work related. He just didn't think that he was worthy of enjoying a challenge that was a little less results driven and a little bit more experiential.

Comedy was on his bucket list, but he'd never done comedy before. He gave it a go and actually enjoyed the thrill of winning over an audience. His drinking stopped because he got to experience something that he really wanted to do. He stopped trying to make alcohol his place of mental freedom and got to experience mental freedom from being himself.

No matter what is causing anxiety for people, there is a way out. It pays to be honest about what you really want, be willing to believe that things may not be as they seem.

The world is full possibilities and opportunities. But our brains get stuck in a negative pattern sometimes. This negative pattern doesn't need to be a permanent condition. The key is to recognise the anxiety loop and to let go of our resistance.

If we peruse what we really want in life, take breaks, look after ourselves and stop the adult tantrum, then we may just be ok.

When I ask a client to speak with certainty and they say, "I'll try to speak in a more certain way, but it's hard." Then that client is in a loop. Let the loop go.