Recommended Self-Help Books and other Resources: Improving Mental Health
Complied and reviewed by Amy Capetta, Good Housekeeping Magazine, Apr 18, 2019

The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook
This book offers a wide variety of coping skills to deal with all sorts of anxiety disorders — but it tops our list because it was recommended by several of our experts. Sheela Raja, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist and associate professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, says it’s updated to address modern stressors; and Ramani Durvasula, Ph.D., a licensed clinical psychologist and author of Should I Stay or Should I Go? Surviving a Relationship with a Narcissist, points out that it "can be a great adjunct to therapy."

The Perfectionism Workbook
If you’ve ever struggled with paralyzing procrastination or an extreme fear of making mistakes (a.k.a. two of the five traits that the author of this book says are associated with perfectionists), this tip-filled workbook is for you. "[It] helps the reader understand the difference between having a high standard and being ‘perfect,’” Dr. Chapman says.

The Stress-Proof Brain
Now this is what we call brain power: According to the author of this educational read, our brains are not only able to develop new neurons, but we can also expand the parts of our brains that alter how we perceive stressful situations. Plus, Marni Amsellem, Ph.D., a licensed psychologist who specializes in working with clients managing anxiety and depression, says the techniques described in the book are "easy to digest and put into action."

The Highly Sensitive Person
Dr. Hendriksen, host of the award-winning podcast Savvy Psychologist, says this 1996 classic — which landed in the bestseller category primarily by word-of-mouth — remains the go-to book for people with ultra-sensitive nervous systems. "Dr. Aron offers readers self-care, helpful tips, and a boatload of validation, as well as insight," she says.

The Anxiety Toolkit
If you often overanalyze situations and imagine worst possible outcomes, you might want to give this book a read. Some of the suggestions might seem run-of-the-mill (think: meditation), but don't dismiss the author's "basic" advice: "There's a reason so many people 'prescribe' these tools — they work," says Elizabeth Lombardo, Ph.D., a licensed clinical psychologist. "Just because something doesn't sound complex doesn't mean it isn't powerful."

The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook
Originally published in 1980, this workbook (now in its sixth edition) was awarded "The Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Self-Help Seal of Merit." Dr. Raja says it's a great option to help you learn different skills for managing your anxiety — and then once those skills are learned, the authors guide you to slowly face your fears through a process called systematic desensitization.

The Worry Trick
Dr. Lombardo applauds this author and psychologist for explaining the inner workings of the anxious brain. "Having the explanation — presented in easy-to-understand language — as to why worry can happen is the first step to overcoming it," she explains. "Dr. Carbonell offers research-supported strategies that the reader can implement to reduce worry and get control of their life again."

Full Catastrophe Living
Dr. Raja labels this book "essential reading" for anyone looking to tap into the medically proven healing powers of meditation. "The author is a pioneer in the technique of mindfulness-based stress reduction," she says. "He explains the basics of meditation and suggests some basic ways you can integrate these practices into your daily routine."

When Panic Attacks
Chronic worriers often walk around with a nervous feeling in the pits of their stomachs because they’ve convinced themselves that their fears are manifesting. In reality, though, their fears are nothing but false narratives — and this author provides 40 techniques designed to make them disappear. "A year’s worth of shrink sessions are packed into each of his books,” Dr. Hendriksen adds.

**Getting Over OCD**
According to the ACAA, obsessive compulsive disorder (or OCD) affects approximately 2.2 million adults. If you’re one of them, this book could help: Grounded in cognitive behavioral therapy principles, it’s "user-friendly" and "effective" in helping people chip away at the distress they feel as a result of their OCD, Dr. Chapman says.

**Better than Perfect**
As contradictory as it sounds, perfectionists tend to feel unfulfilled, unhappy, and emotionally unbalanced. Dr. Lombardo's book breaks down what perfectionism is and how you can keep the good parts of it (such as striving for excellence) while getting rid of the bad parts (like never feeling good enough). "When you live a better-than-perfect life, you no longer worry about what might happen and create a life you truly love," she says.

**Webinars, Blog Posts and Videos**
- [Depression Among College Students](#), webinar from JED Foundation.
- [Depression Among College Students](#), blog post written by Erica Riba and Diana Cusumano, JED Foundation
- [University of Fear and Anxiety: How to Pass your Freshman Year of College](#), blog post by ADAA member Ken Goodman, LCSW
- Created for students, ["Glass People illustrates college-age anxiety and the great value of finding professional help. The filmmakers, John Berardo and Brian Frager, are students at the USC School of Cinematic Arts.](#)

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