

Anxiety Should Not Stop Us

We Can Manage It, And Teachers Can Support Us

Briceida Garcia

BEFORE YOU READ: What does it mean to *manage* a health condition? Do you or someone you know have a health condition to manage? How do you (or they) do it?

For me, anxiety is not easy. Sometimes I can't think or I overthink. Sometimes I have the sensation that I am scratching myself. Sometimes I scratch until I hurt myself, leaving scars.

These days, I have been able to *manage* my anxiety well. I do breathing exercises to calm myself down a little. Another strategy I use to calm myself is to put a hair tie on my wrist. When I have the urge to scratch, I will pull at the hair tie instead. If I don't have a hair tie, I will try to find a different activity to distract myself (playing with my baby, reading, watching television).

When I manage my anxiety, I can do more things. For example, I can do simple things like

ask a teacher for help. I ask for help whenever I don't understand what the teacher is saying. I also ask for the teacher to clarify what they are saying and repeating directions if necessary. I can do more activities with the other students in class. I worked on group projects and had group discussions with the other students.

Anxiety does not have to be a disability. If you have a class where the teachers support you, then you can still learn. If you do the work wrong or the work piles up, you should be able to ask for help. The teachers should be understanding.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What specific strategies does Briceida use to manage her anxiety?
2. Read the story, "Anxiety Makes It Hard to Learn," on pp. 22-23. What does Briceida have in common with the author of that story? What is different?
3. According to both authors, what can teachers and schools do to help students manage anxiety? Write a letter to your program director asking what accommodations the program has for students with anxiety.

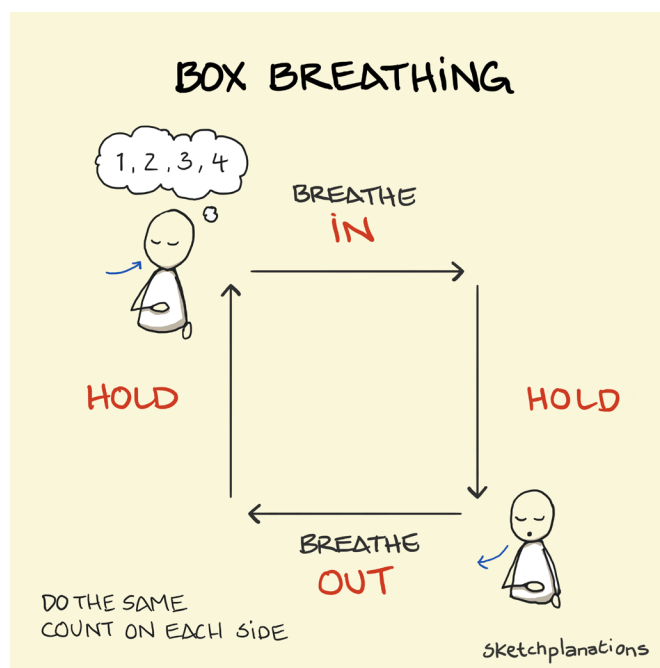


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Briceida Garcia is a student at the Adult High School Credit Diploma Program at Plainville Adult and Continuing Education in Plainville, Connecticut. In her spare time, she enjoys television shows, reading, and participating in school-based community events. When she's not at school, she's raising her beautiful daughter.

