

# What is Anxiety?

## The Fight, Flight or Freeze Response

Anxiety is a **normal** emotion that everyone feels at some point in their life. This is because of something in our brains called the **Fight, Flight or Freeze** response.

Humans developed this response as cave men because it was a much more dangerous time to live back then (think running away from saber tooth tigers and hunting for food).



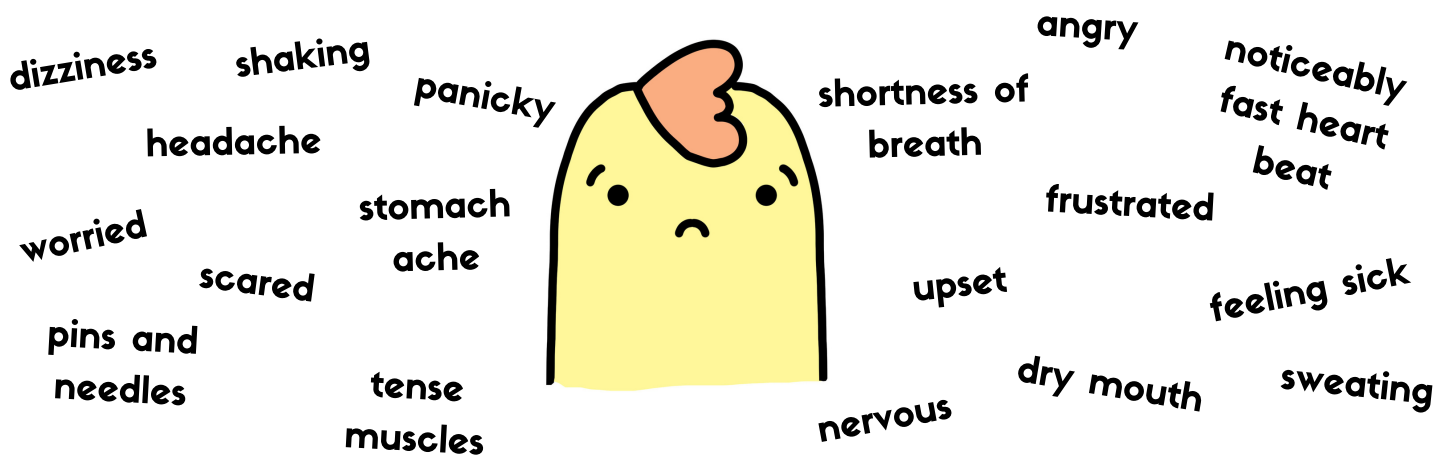
The Fight, Flight or Freeze response meant that cave men's bodies went into survival mode whenever their brains sensed danger. This meant their heart rate and blood pressure would increase so they had a better chance of running away (flight), fighting the danger (fight) or hiding (freeze).

We all react in different ways when we feel anxious and our Fight, Flight or Freeze response kicks in, but it's important to remember that it is normal!



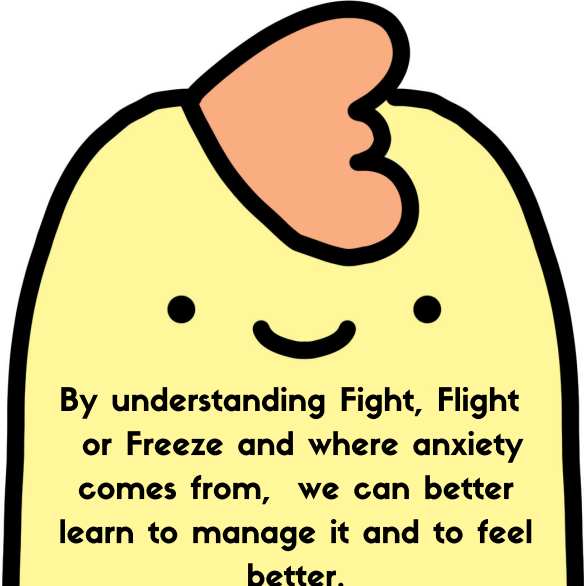
## Symptoms of Anxiety

When the Fight, Flight or Freeze response kicks in and our heart rate and blood pressure increases, we might notice some of the following symptoms.



## It's like a Smoke Alarm

Imagine you have a smoke alarm that is overly sensitive and goes off all of the time, even when there isn't a real fire. When you have a problem with anxiety, your Fight, Flight or Freeze response is just like this - it goes off and causes the symptoms of anxiety, even if there isn't any real danger.



By understanding Fight, Flight or Freeze and where anxiety comes from, we can better learn to manage it and to feel better.