

## Counseling Success Story – About Anxiety in Students

I'd like to share a story about one of my clients who was triggered by a lesson at school. This student was consistently attending class until she read a book in which a character discussed death. Her anxiety (after reading the book) prevented her from logging into her classes. She fell behind and was failing all of her courses. I received a referral from one of the counselors that stated that she was diagnosed with Generalized Anxiety Disorder and had not attended class virtually for more than one month.

Due to her anxiety, this student was anxious about meeting with me and, after 5 attempts, she responded to my calls. I built rapport with this student and was able to easily connect with her. This student and I reviewed the physiological effects of anxiety, the purpose of anxiety and ways to manage it. She understood that anxiety caused by the fear of failing an exam can push her to study for that exam, and that anxiety is crucial to have when we are attempting to survive (fight, flight, freeze response). She began to connect her past trauma to her fear of death and how this triggered her anxiety.

This student, after two sessions, began to attend classes, is making up assignments, and is communicating with her teachers. She incorporates rewards and appreciates receiving my praises for all the hard work in overcoming and moving forward. We continue to meet on a weekly basis, and she has understood that anxiety has a purpose. We should not treat it by trying to get rid of it, but rather by managing it.

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