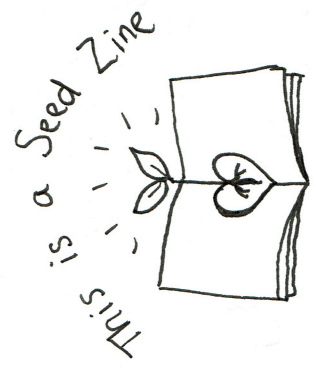


Copy it. Fold it. Plant it.
(SeedZines.com)



Molly Caro May's potent Story Mammal course was my intro to nervous system, and her Loam community helped me develop awareness of sensation & story.
• www.mollycaromay.com

Resources

Irene Lyon's teachings changed my life. Irene teaches that trauma (aka nervous system dysregulation) is at the root of many challenges—far beyond anxiety.

(A deeper view I wish I'd known sooner: Much of what we've come to label as "mental health" conditions—and even "autoimmune"—and many chronic ailments—are actually the result of a dysregulated nervous system)

Her work empowers and teaches folks to work with their nervous systems to transform trauma, heal body + mind, and live full, creative lives.

- www.irenelyon.com
- ↳ just type "anxiety" into the search on her site, or her YouTube page.

||| a Seed Zine by:
Rebecca Roots

ANXIETY ISN'T WHAT YOU THINK
What I Wish I'd learned Sooner

A New Way

I learned that my system never learned to recognize safety—in the environment or in myself. And so it scanned for threat constantly, sent urgent signals, tried to protect me in the way it knew how. The beautiful part? We can teach our systems to recognize safety. Today, everything feels different. Turns out what I had called "me" for 30+ years was largely stuck survival energy.

What helped me wasn't talk therapy or pharmaceuticals (though you do what feels right for you)

- ⊙ What helped was listening to my body's sensations,
- ⊙ Slowly building capacity for safety and pleasure (w/ somatic experiential)
- ⊙ Reconnecting with Nature

This is what most approaches miss

it begins in the body.

But anxiety doesn't begin in the mind.

We tend to notice anxious thoughts first, because we're taught to live from the neck up.

Whether from doctors or self-help books, these are the stories many of us learned—shared by people doing their best with the tools and paradigms they had.

"Take this pill—it's the only way!"
"Stop worrying! Simply change your thoughts + you'll transform your life!"
"You're just an anxious person!"

An Incomplete Story of Anxiety

"Anxiety is a mental health condition"

Often, this stress is the result of unhealed early and developmental trauma (EDT) (not necessarily violence, abuse, or disaster, as is often associated w/ the word "trauma")

Your body locked in a survival response. (...which thoughts alone cannot transform. But we can absolutely shift this physiology!)

It's trapped survival stress (aka trauma) still alive in your body—a stuck sympathetic charge of fight/flight that never got to complete.

What we refer to as "anxiety" is fundamentally a nervous system state.

What Causes It (That Few Talk About): EDT

EDT happens in the tender beginnings of life—in the womb to age 3 (some frame-wombs go up to age 5 or 7)—often before memory forms. You might not know you experienced it. Your mother might not either. And doctors rarely think to ask.

Here are a few examples of EDT that can wire a young system to store survival stress (which has been called "anxiety"):

- Stress in the womb (your mother was stressed, anxious, sick, or unsafe)
- Emergency C-sections
- Interruptions to natural mammalian birth (like early cord cutting)
- Surgeries, anesthesia, circumcision
- Near-drowning, choking, high fevers
- Being helpless w/ no way to escape
- Denying biological impulses (being told to sit still, stop crying, not being allowed to use bathroom until permission)

Reasons why the sympathetic charge doesn't complete are varied. Often, familial and societal norms repress natural completion—being told to stay quiet, be good, not move in that way, not express our authentic self.

My Experience

For years in my 30s, every day felt terrifying. I didn't feel human. My body was so fragile and sensitive; most everyday things caused tears and migraines and the most intense, uncomfortable sensations. Energy beyond depleted by early afternoon. I thought something was wrong with me. I had to completely rewire my brain.

Nothing "bad" had happened to me in childhood. I thought "trauma" and "PTSD" only applied to huge hard events. I didn't understand what was going on... until I started learning about the nervous system.