



FEAR FACTOR

Labelling your fears can help confront them, say experts

CAN DESCRIBING YOUR feelings when you are particularly stressed make you less anxious? A new study suggests it may very well be so.

A new psychology study by the University of California-Los Angeles suggests that labelling your emotions at the moment you are confronting what you fear can indeed have the effect of reducing anxiety.

The psychologists asked 88 people with a fear of spiders to approach a large, live tarantula in an open container outdoors. They were told to walk closer and closer to the spider and eventually touch it, if they could, the journal *Psychological Science* reports.

The subjects were then divided into groups and sat in front of another tarantula in a

container in an indoor setting. In the first group, the subjects were asked to describe the emotions they were experiencing and to label their reactions to the tarantula - saying, for example, "I'm anxious and frightened by the ugly, terrifying spider".

"Here, there was no attempt to change their experience, participants just stated what they were experiencing," said Michelle Craske, professor of psychology at UCLA and senior study author, according to a UCLA statement.

In a second group, the subjects used more neutral terms that did not convey their fear or disgust and were aimed at making the experience seem less threatening. They might say, for example, "That little



spider can't hurt me; I'm not afraid of it".

In a third group, the subjects said something irrelevant to the experience, and in a fourth group, the subjects did not say anything - they were simply exposed to the spider.

All the participants were re-tested in the outdoor setting one week later and were again asked to get closer and closer to the tarantula and potential-

ly touch it with a finger.

The researchers found that the first group did far better than the other groups.

These people were able to get closer to the tarantula - much closer than those in the third group and somewhat closer than those in the other two groups - and their hands were sweating significantly less than the participants in all the other groups. *IANS*

ALIGN YOUR LIFE

Colour Your Life

Do you feel uneasy in a red room? Do you feel relaxed in a mint green room? Does the colour blue make you feel calm? Colours have impacted our lives for centuries and now choosing the right colour is the norm while designing a space or picking an outfit.

Artists and interior decorators have long understood that colours impact our moods and feelings. Many scientific studies have pointed out that colours influence our thought process. Colours can be used for various activities - from designing a home to boosting physical health. It is one of the most powerful tools that will help you to balance your life.

Colours play a significant role in many cultures across the world. For example in Chinese culture red is the most auspicious colour. It is extensively used for weddings and New Year celebrations, but in South Africa red is the colour for mourning. In Western countries white depicts purity and innocence; but in India it is the colour of sadness.

Colours can have many meanings and interpretations, but in the end it boils down to only one thing - how do they make you feel?

Sir Isaac Newton discovered the concept of colour in 1666 and the theory about warm and cool colours was established. Colours in the red area of the colour spectrum are known as warm colours and include red, orange, and yellow. These warm colours are known as active colours and often boost energy and vitality. Colours on the blue side of the spectrum are known as cool colours and include blue, purple, indigo and green. These colours are often described as calm and healing.

Many wellbeing therapies have been created to incorporate colours. Colour therapy is used for energising chakras, practicing meditation and enhancing good health. Choosing the right colour in your living space is highly recommended in feng shui. Colours are often used in the field of psychology to help with emotional trauma and depression.

So what do these colours mean? Red is always associated with energy and vitality, while orange boosts confidence. Yellow is used to enhance memory and green helps in relaxing the mind. Blue brings about calmness, while indigo improves concentration. Violet promotes creativity and white signifies clarity of thought.

Take a look around you and evaluate your colour preference. Are you more inclined to choosing one colour over another? Are you constantly surrounded by a certain colour? Try and balance your life by choosing appropriate colours. Reduce stress by incorporating more blue and green in your surroundings or simply eat more red fruits to increase your energy level.

Pick a colour that suits you and brightens up your life.

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Once you have mastered Padmasana 1, you are ready to extend the sequence by incorporating the second variation of the Lotus, which is shown here. This particular variant not only releases the hips, but also stretches the spine and exercises the shoulder muscles.

NAMASKAR PADMASANA

The padmasana series is really helpful for people who regularly practice meditation. It supplies lots of blood to your spine and to your mind.

TECHNIQUE

• Sit on the ground with your legs spread forward. Then place the right foot on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh; after that inhale, bend your arms behind your back and bring the hands together in prayer form with fingertips pointing upward and your little fingers touching the spine. Press the palms together and gaze straight ahead.
• Exhaling, fold your body forward, keeping your hands in prayer position behind your back. If possible, touch the floor with your forehead. Draw down the back of the body to move the pelvic bone

toward the floor.

• Gaze downward. Hold the full pose for 10 breaths, then slowly come back.

BENEFITS

• This posture creates a natural balance throughout the body and mind.
• Padmasana is highly recommended to improve chest, shoulder, spinal, thigh, waist flexibility.
• Helps in childbirth if this asana is practiced regularly during pregnancy.
• Slows down breathing, thereby increasing concentration powers.

AVOID

• If you have any knee or hip problems.
• You should not attempt to perform Padmasana if you have a knee or ankle injury.
• Only do this asana under professional guidance.



• If you have too much difficulty in getting into the required position it is better to avoid it.
• In case of extreme difficulty performing Padmasana, there are other easier asanas

which can be done which can prepare the body for the rather difficult position of Padmasana.

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