WORKING through it

Eighth grader Savanna Delgado uses different techniques as she learns to overcome her anxiety.

Story by I. Stewart

All alone. Keeping anyone from seeing the shake of her hands or hearing the rapidness of her strained breaths, Savanna Delgado attempts to ground herself during a panic attack.

Having only dealt with anxiety since fifth grade, she is still figuring out what best helps ease her mind from all the worries it brings, especially in social situations.

"Usually I panic attacks during social events and I don’t want people to see me because I feel like they are pitying me," she said.

With so many people in public, it can be hard to not think about the opinions of everyone around, something she struggles with.

"My mom always tells me (to) worry about my own feelings, but I worry about theirs," Delgado, an eighth grader, said. "Sometimes I’ll say something and (think) maybe it hurt their feelings, even if it doesn’t mean anything.

Delgado has a few methods that she uses to bring herself back to reality, such as reassessing herself.

"If I’m in a certain situation I try to tell myself it will be OK, they’ll be OK, quit worrying all the time," she said. "Because all of the things I worry about, there’s no reason to. I try to breathe, through my nose and out the mouth.”

There are times these methods don’t always do the trick, which is something she continues to work on.

"Sometimes none of that calms me down though. I don’t really know how to calm it down except just talking to myself and trying to clear my head," Delgado said. "Some of the things I worry about during panic attacks don’t help so I need to work on what works for me a little more.

trinity bush

Has dealing with anxiety interfered with your academics?

"I think a lot of it has been my fault. Sometimes I get super unmotivated and I’ll be doing the right thing, but my brain will trick me into thinking I’m not and then I’ll just give up and I won’t do it.”

How does it affect you socially?

"It’s really hard. Every time I meet someone I always second guess it and think they probably hate me and think I’m annoying.”

Are your friends supportive or helpful when you’re feeling anxious?

"Sometimes they help but sometimes they don’t. They don’t really know what to do.”

Are your friends supportive or helpful when you’re feeling anxious?

How does coming out of quarantine after a long time played in your interactions with people?

"I definitely made a lot more connections because I found myself in a lot of new places, and now I decide to myself and not really care what is cool.”

Do you have any tricks you use in your daily life to take yourself down and overcome anxiety?

"I just have to remember that I’m not what my anxiety says. I’m my own person and should not listen to it. I try not to and it helps me make friends and get my grades up.

shaye guaquiliano

Has dealing with anxiety interfered with your academics?

"When you’re having an anxiety attack it’s really hard to talk to people so you tend to just not say anything. It makes it hard to focus and do your work when you’re panicking so it affects grades and your social life with your friends.”

How does it affect you socially?

"Sometimes it’s hard because I talk so much and people feel like I’m bothering them.”

Are your friends supportive or helpful when you’re feeling anxious?

"They’re always there for me. If I’m feeling anxious and they’re with me, they tell me I’m OK and they’ll just try to make me laugh.”

Are your friends supportive or helpful when you’re feeling anxious?

How does coming out of quarantine after a long time played in your interactions with people?

"I like to listen to music really loud, draw something, or do something that will distract me.”

How does coming out of quarantine after a long time played in your interactions with people?

Has COVID been taking a longer toll on your anxiety?

"A little bit because I haven’t been able to hang out with a lot of people and that is where I feel better and safer.”

33% ANXIETY DISORDERS affect one in three teens.

“When we came back to school I kind of struggled with it a little bit more like I used to. I got really nervous because I hadn’t seen people in such a long time and everybody changed. I’ve gotten better with my anxiety and talking with more people. I got started going up to people and said ‘hi’ and started making friends.”

- Rosalinda Felix Lopez [8]

33% NOT ON OUR OWN

According to the National Institutes of Health, nearly 1 in 3 people ages 13 to 18 will experience an anxiety disorder. Between 2007 and 2012 the number went up 20 percent.