



Feeling anxious is part of daily life. A little bit of thinking can help defuse the feeling and bring balance. **By BARTON Goldsmith**

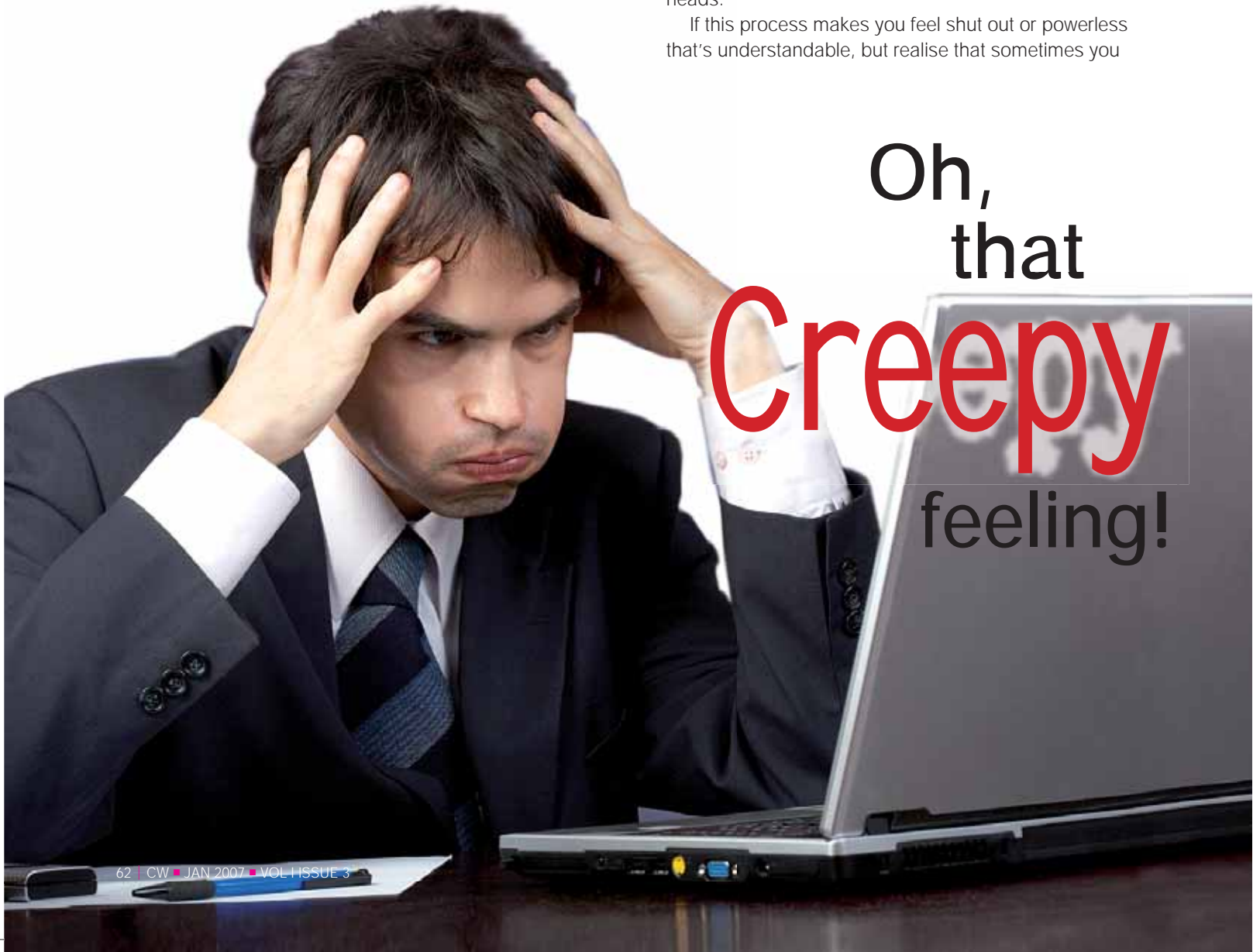
All of us have anxious days. They can come from not feeling physically well, being stressed or emotionally drained, and many other reasons. When your colleague has an anxious day, it can sometimes be contagious and make you feel anxious as well. This is a situation that can be remedied with a little understanding and/or by using a few simple techniques.

First, realise that someone else's mood is not your responsibility, even if they tell you it is [unless you have intentionally hurt him or her]. The real truth is that we all

have anxious days occasionally, and we all deal with them differently.

If you are the type of person who tries everything you can to pull your colleague out of his or her anxious days, your associate is lucky to have you. However, despite your best efforts you may sometimes not be able to change how your colleague feels. On such occasions you need to understand that your colleague is in the process of healing themselves and that may require him or her to do their own internal work. For some this may mean curling up on the couch with a cup of tea and a book, while others may need to go to bed and pull the covers up over their heads.

If this process makes you feel shut out or powerless that's understandable, but realise that sometimes you



Oh,  
that  
**Creepy**  
feeling!

## Reduce Anxiety in 10 Steps

Everyone has moments, which create anxiety. This particular feeling can be detrimental to you because it may stop you from living a normal life. Here are 10 tips that can help you deal effectively with this uncomfortable emotion

**1** If you are prone to anxiety you have two choices. Give in to it or learn to live with it. Giving into it means that your colleagues will suffer the burden of your fears. So, to make your lives better, find ways to eliminate or at least limit this feeling by taking responsibility for your emotions and knowing you have a choice

**2** When you wake up tomorrow start doing something right away, and keep busy all day. Taking action by doing something, almost anything, will help you work through your anxiety. Sometimes, it's doing the dishes or working in your garden. Other times, it's reading or meditating. Just sitting around and thinking about your worries won't make them go away

**3** Focus your attention on where the feeling of anxiousness is in your body and keep your attention there until the feeling moves or dissolves. For example, the tension could be in your abdomen, or your neck. Whenever your attention wanders, bring it back to the place in your body where the physical feeling is. Doing this for five or 10 minutes can reduce, if not eliminate, anxiety

**4** Anxiety will grow if it's not directed into some positive action. Find someone who needs you and lend him, or her, a helping hand. It will almost always take your mind off your problems and fears. Helping others is actually a way of taking action and responsibility for your own healing

**5** Talking to someone is one of the best ways to overcome your anxiety. Getting together with your family and friends, even your fellow patrons at a coffee bar, and talking

about what you are feeling can be helpful. If you can't talk to someone, try writing a letter or visiting an appropriate Internet chat room

**6** Exercise is another good way to keep your fears from overwhelming you. Sometimes, gentle forms of exercise like walking and yoga can be better than a hard work-out at the gym. Do what works best for you at the moment and don't worry about breaking your normal routine. This change may actually help reduce your anxiety

**7** Start a gratitude journal; write down three to five things that you are grateful for. Do this every night; it works and it's very easy. Become aware of all the good that surrounds you. You can also have a releasing journal where you write about your anxiety and the actions that you can take to overcome those fears

**8** The opposite of fear is faith. When you are anxious, a great way to get out of it is to find some faith. Believing that things will get better is sometimes all it takes to make things better. It also helps to never underestimate the power of positive prayer or visualisation. If it can cure cancer, there is no way why it can't reduce your anxiety

**9** If watching news fills you with anxiety — turn off the TV! The world will continue to revolve even if you're not watching it on CNN. Limit yourself to one hour a day of news and don't watch anything that may upset you before you go to bed

**10** Courage is not the absence of fear, but taking action in spite of fear. Doing something new or confronting a fear by taking some baby steps is much more positive than doing nothing. If you need a better reason pick an action that was helpful to someone else.

can't help someone change how they feel. If your colleague is not being open to your suggestions, overtures of kindness, or your best jokes, don't take it personally. There are times when the only thing you can do for the one you work with is to just be there.

### Understand needs

This doesn't mean that you give him or her the silent treatment, and cop an attitude yourself, that will only put salt on the wound. The trick here is to maintain your normal demeanour and be available when your colleague is ready to talk. Understanding that everyone needs a little inner processing time, every now and then, will help you to deal with this occasional departure from your normal routine.

If you are the one who is having an anxious day, don't inflict your discomfort on your colleagues. Simply let him

or her know that you just need a little quiet right now. Reassuring them that you can manage is also helpful; this way no one takes it personally. If you or your colleague withdraws on a regular basis, it is a sign that there may be other issues, such as depression.

Having an anxious day is a part of life. Knowing how to get through it in a manner that won't foster disharmony will provide you with many more days to create beautiful music of your own. Your colleagues will be able to do likewise.

### Stay Well

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