

My Age of Anxiety

by Scott Stossel

A printable to-do list of the most effective habits from this book. Check one off each day you do it.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰¹ **Map Your Anxiety Spectrum**

Identify where you typically sit on the Yerkes-Dodson curve. Are you in the apathy zone, the sweet spot, or the overwhelm? Understanding your baseline - not fixing it - is the first step. Write down three situations where anxiety helped you and three where it hurt. Look for the pattern.

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⁰² **Start Consistent Aerobic Exercise**

Stossel tried everything. Exercise was the most reliably helpful. Not yoga, not meditation - sustained aerobic exercise (running, swimming, cycling). 30 minutes, 4 times a week. It does not cure anxiety. It lowers the floor so the worst days are survivable.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰³ **Study Your Anxiety History**

Write the story of your anxiety. When did it start? What was happening in your life? What have you tried? What helped, even a little? Stossel found that giving anxiety a narrative - a beginning, a shape, a timeline - reduced its power. Unnamed things are always scarier.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰⁴ **Stop Seeking the Perfect Cure**

Stossel's most hard-won insight: there is no silver bullet. Stop searching for the one thing that will fix everything and start assembling a portfolio of things that each help a little. Therapy plus exercise plus sleep plus connection. The portfolio approach works better than the magic pill approach.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰⁵ **Read the Anxious Canon**

Read Kierkegaard's *The Concept of Anxiety*, Darwin's autobiography, Freud's *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety*. Discover that the greatest minds in history wrestled with the same feelings you do. You are not broken. You are in extraordinary company.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰⁶ **Keep Going Anyway**

This is Stossel's ultimate message. He did not beat anxiety. He outlasted it - every day. He gave speeches while nauseous. He wrote a book while panicking. He ran a magazine while medicated. The goal is not to stop being anxious. It is to stop letting anxiety stop you.