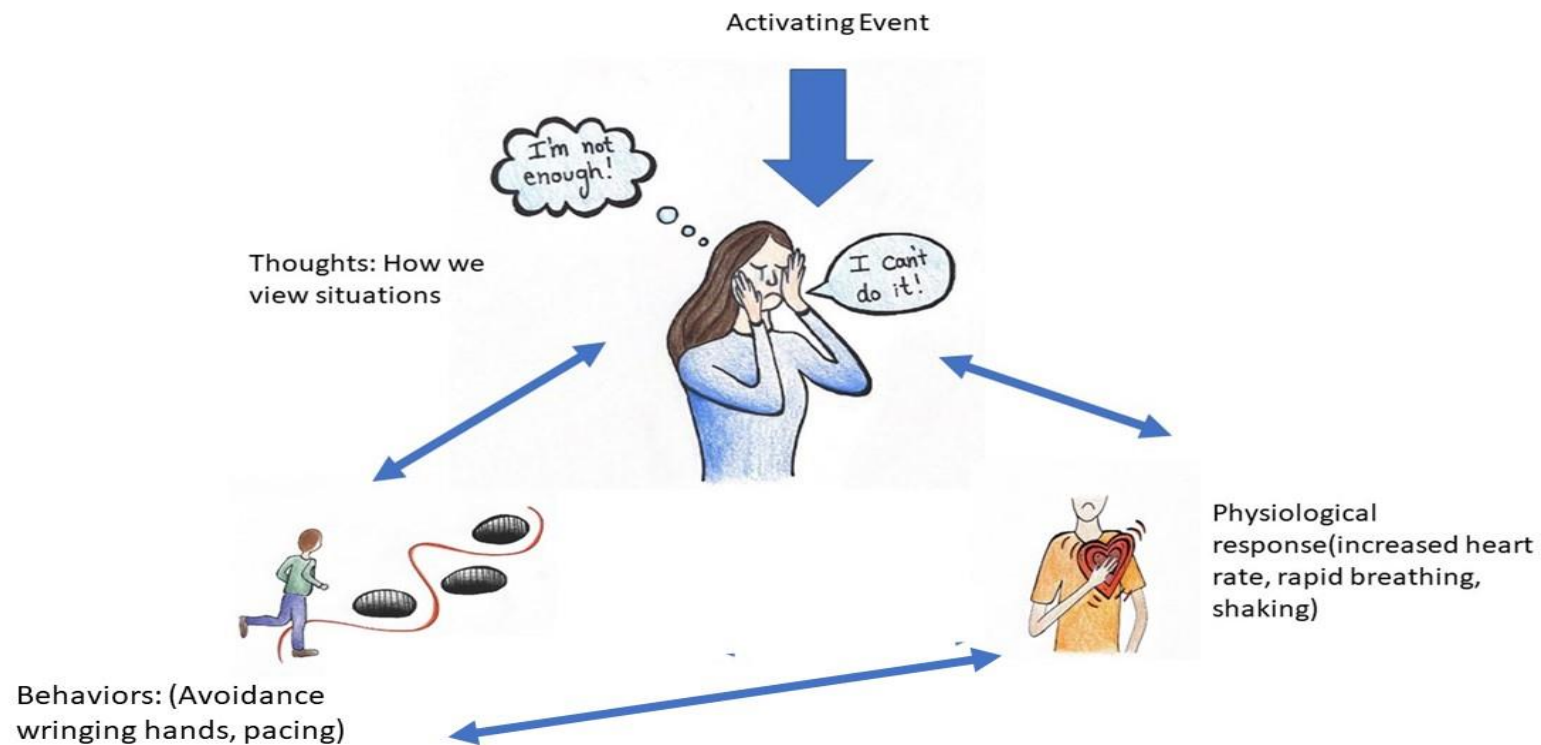


Anxiety Feedback Loop

Our brain is always working and active, even when we sleep. An important function of the brain is to protect us from danger. Input is received from all or one of our senses. Our body responds and creates a chemical reaction to allow us to protect ourselves. We can make the moment worse by how we respond to the onset of anxiety. If we mismanage this moment, we create our own feedback loop. This allows the anxiety to continue or worsen. The body itself resets in 90 seconds but our response allows it to continue or end. Since our brain is working continuously and unconsciously, individuals may not be aware of what initially created the anxiety.



Our **Physiological response** (increased heart rate, rapid breathing, body shaking, etc.) and our interpretation of the event that is creating the reaction (how we perceive the event of our physiological reaction). We feel anxious, on edge, racing thoughts, jaws clenching, tight muscles, rapid heartbeat, light headed, sweating, nausea).

Fill in your **physical** indications of anxiety:

Fill in your **thoughts** about your reaction to anxiety:

We think: "This is horrible," "Here we go again," "Why is this happening to me?" "Why am I feeling this way?," "This will never end," "List some of the common thoughts you have when you are anxious.

Or

Event or situationally driven. Determine if there are predictable situations, time of day, or events that can create anxious feelings.

Event: Jim must speak in front of his group in their quarterly meeting, Wendy has a big test tomorrow, Ann is worried about getting a promotion.

Name some events that would create anxiety:

Interpretation of the event (either in the past or future):

“What happens if I say something stupid?” “I could flunk my test and my mom will get angry.” “What will happen if I don’t get the promotion?”

Name some thoughts that would create the anxiety.

What would your **physical responses** be? When you think about the event what is your physical reaction.

It may not be a conscious thought that starts this off. If our brain detects something that creates anxiety, it is possible we may never figure out what started it. It is more important to stop this from continuing. If we are aware of the physical aspects, behaviors we exhibit, and thoughts that either create or amplify our anxiety, we can plan and intervene to stop the loop from continuing.

Input from event, situation, thought, and the environment

This is what my **action steps** looks like!

These are events I need to expect to be uncomfortable: _____

When I am feeling anxious, I could address my anxiety by:

Coping/Counter Thoughts I could think about:

To address the physical symptoms, I am experiencing I could: _____

Actions I could take (behaviors) when I feel anxious or to prepare for anxiety:
