

32 a higher power

for you to know

Many people believe that there is a power in the world that is greater than human power. People label this power in different ways depending on their beliefs. If you have a belief in a higher power, you can use this to both prevent and manage feelings of anxiety.

The idea of a higher power is usually connected to the concept of spirituality. Spirit is a nonmaterial part of life that has been described as a life-giving force, consciousness, inner being, or soul. You do not need to belong to a particular religion or belief system to have spiritual beliefs, although religious groups are often where people first learn about spiritual ideas.

Having spiritual beliefs can help people manage anxiety in some of the following ways:

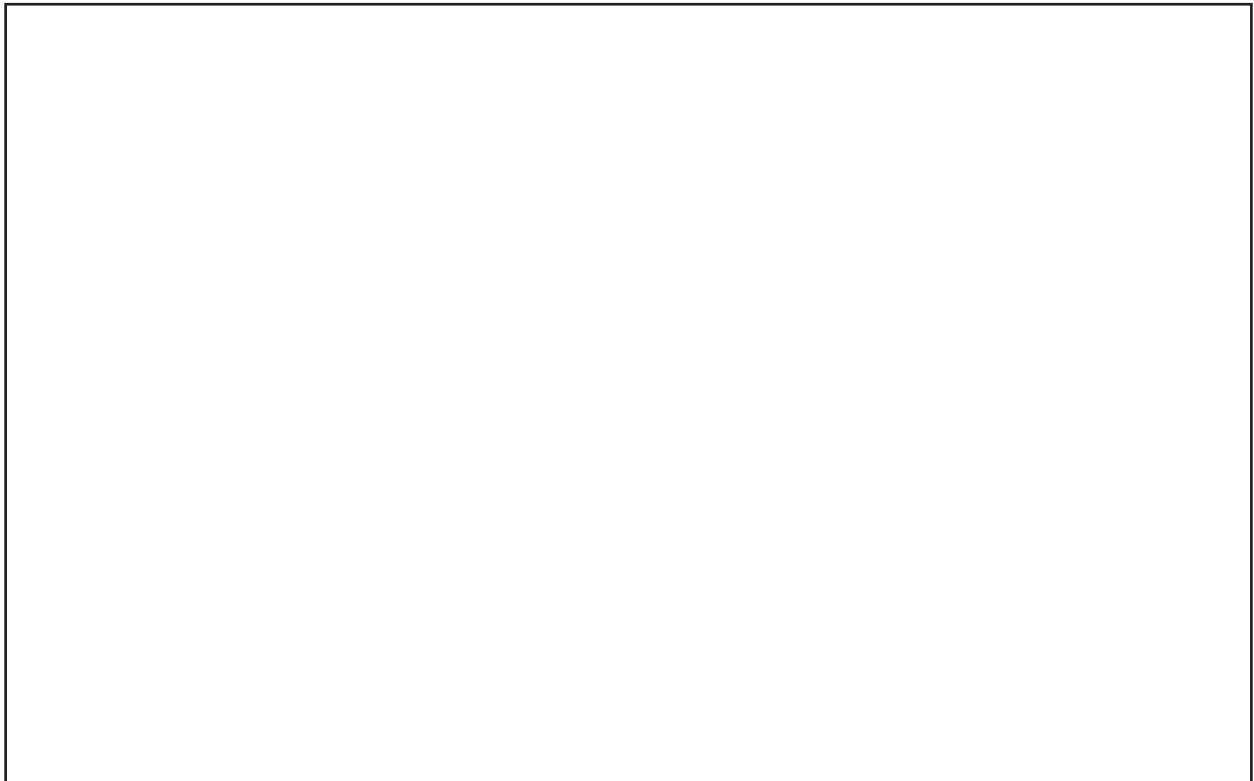
1. Lisette believed that she was protected at all times by a power greater than herself. Reminding herself of that helped her feel less anxious.
2. Dominic believed that a higher power had a plan for his life, so there was a reason for everything that happened—even if he didn't understand it at the time. This belief reduced his anxiety when something happened that was unplanned or that he didn't like.
3. Taylor believed that if she prayed, or communicated with a higher power, she could have an effect on the outcome of a situation that made her anxious.
4. For Kurt, just the quiet act of praying lowered his heart rate, released the tension in his muscles, and helped him feel more peaceful.

directions

Circle any of the words below that sound like they are related to your personal spiritual beliefs or ideas about a higher power:

spirit	soul	gratitude	heart
beauty	divine	God	purpose
love	hope	miracles	connectedness
faith	kindness	universe	heaven
peace	worship	nature	holy
forgiveness	eternity		

In the space below, draw a picture, make a collage, write a poem, or tell about your personal spiritual beliefs or your personal ideas about a higher power. Sometimes people don't know exactly what they believe, and that's okay. If that is the case for you, just express your guesses.



more to do

Tell whether it was easy or difficult for you to describe your ideas about a higher power, and why.

Look at the words and pictures that express your beliefs. Describe any feelings of peace that they bring up in you, and tell why.

Describe any feelings of anxiety that your words and pictures bring up in you, and tell why.

If your beliefs about a higher power raise your anxiety level, it might be helpful for you to share your feelings with an adult with whom you feel comfortable.

Describe a situation that you have been feeling anxious about recently, and tell how you might use belief in a higher power to help you to feel more peaceful.
