

# **UNDERSTANDING THE ROLLERCOASTER OF ANXIETY AT WORK**

**PRESENTED BY**

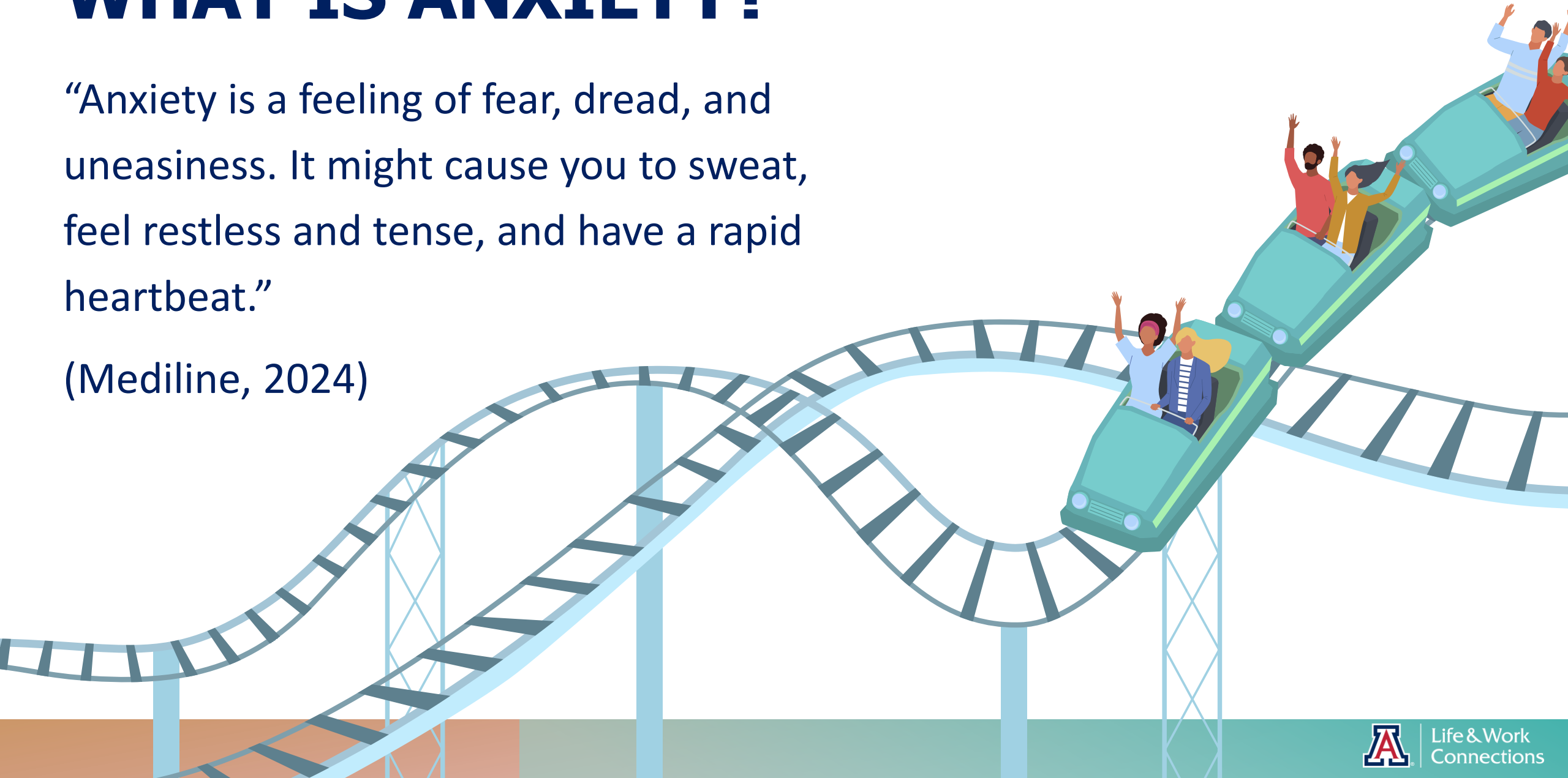
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# WHAT IS ANXIETY?

“Anxiety is a feeling of fear, dread, and uneasiness. It might cause you to sweat, feel restless and tense, and have a rapid heartbeat.”

(Mediline, 2024)



# WHO DOES ANXIETY AFFECT?



## 40 Million Adults

According to the Anxiety & Depression Association of America, 19.1% of the U.S. adult population lives with an anxiety disorder.



# ANXIETY VS ANXIETY DISORDER

## Anxiety

- Anxiety happens every day
- Can involve feelings of mild nervousness or excitement
- Anxiety may take place prior to an event, speech, or introduction



## Anxiety Disorder

- Impairment – Interferes with daily life or tasks
- Duration – Takes place over time
- Severity – Mild, Moderate or Severe
- Examples: Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

# DESCRIBE A ROLLERCOASTER RIDE



# HOW ANXIETY IMPACTS WORK

Workplace performance 56%

Relationship with coworkers and peers 51%

Quality of work 50%

Relationships with superiors 43%

Workplace Stress & Anxiety Survey (2006)



# HOW DOES ANXIETY SHOW UP AT WORK

- Feel physically ill when thinking about work
- Have a hard time focusing on work-specific tasks
- Notice your motivation shrinking
- Avoid meetings, new projects, or work events
- Head and neck pain
- Tension in your body
- Sweating palms
- Consistent stomach pain or nausea



Healthline: Your Guide to Managing Workplace Anxiety



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# INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE

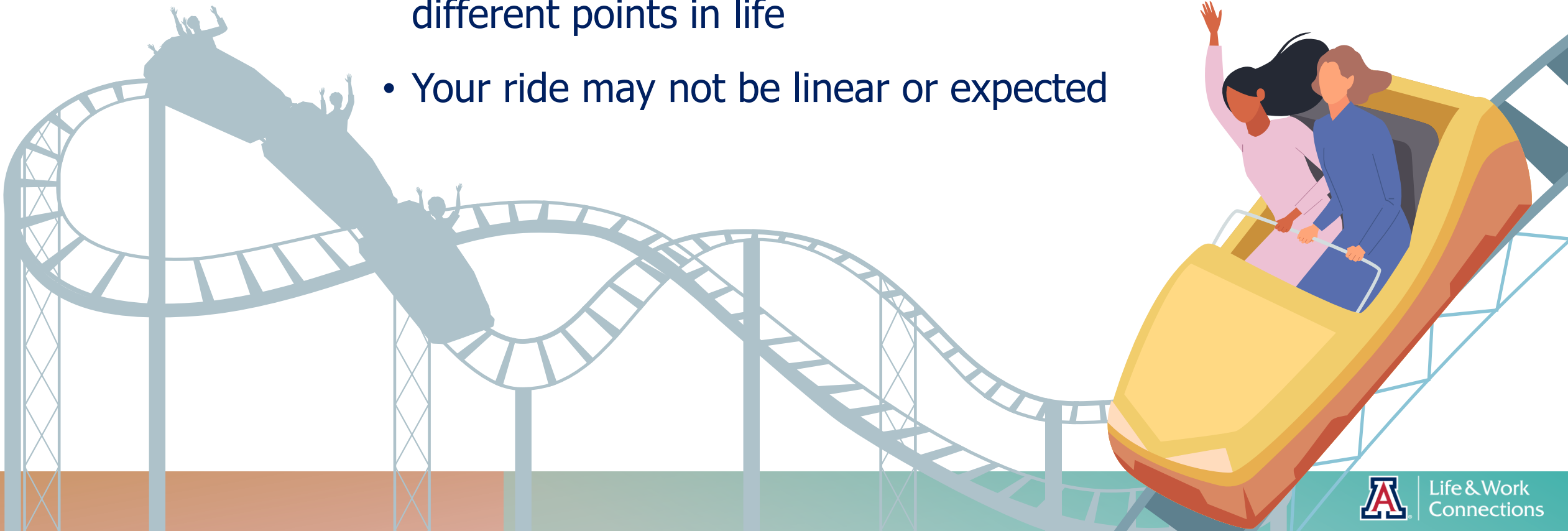
- Reactions to rollercoasters (anxiety) are different
- The points in life where we experience anxiety vary





# INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE

- The same ride or experience can impact everyone differently
- Your experience on the rollercoaster can change at different points in life
- Your ride may not be linear or expected



# 3 KEY TURNS TO REMEMBER ABOUT ANXIETY



# KEY TURNS TO REMEMBER ABOUT ANXIETY

- Acknowledgement is a starting point
- You might not be able to remove the cause
- Short-term actions, long-term actions, and systemic actions will differ



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



- Saying out loud to yourself that anxiety is impacting you could provide relief (knowing the unknown)
- Acknowledgement does not have to include talking about it at work. It might not be safe to do so
- Action Step – Take an assessment, **Are Your “Worry Days” a Sign of Anxiety**  
[arizona.crediblemind.com](http://arizona.crediblemind.com)

# SOURCES OF ANXIETY

The source of anxiety may not be something that YOU can resolve alone or directly. It might be something that you can only manage.



# SUPPORTS

- Accepting support is a vulnerable act
- Seeking support does not equal failure



- Supports that work for others might not work well for you
- Support may be a combination of things
- Finding what you need may take time

# SHORT TERM ACTIONS

Internal action steps: What can I do to while I'm in the seat of the ride

- Taking a step back
- Breathing
- Self-guided meditation
- Ending a conversation
- Declining
- [arizona.crediblemind.com](http://arizona.crediblemind.com)



# LONG TERM ACTIONS



External Directed Supports: What can happen before or after the ride

- Talk with someone (online group, life coach, therapy)
- Western or Eastern interventions
- Lifestyle changes (Health Impact Program)
- Life changes



# SYSTEMATIC ACTIONS



## Starting Points

- Conversations with coworkers and department leadership
- Engagement in policy review, development, change
- Open discussions about workplace culture
- Add a Wellness Ambassador

*Reminder systematic actions may take longer.*



# IN CLOSING

Understanding anxiety means acknowledging that there are an array of causes that may require an array of responses to manage the ups and downs that take place



# REFERENCES & APPENDIX

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# CredibleMind



## The University is piloting CredibleMind, a one-of-a-kind online mental health self-care resource.

CredibleMind's one-stop-shop digital platform is available to you, your dependents and members of your household 24/7. It's accessible from a mobile phone, tablet or computer, with no login required, so any time can be the right time to focus on your mental health and well-being.

With CredibleMind's self-care content, you have access to:



An expansive library of valuable and trusted information, tools and assessments



A completely confidential site separate from the University, so your information and wellness journey can remain personal



Customizable and personalized content to meet your needs and preferences



Expertly curated and scientifically backed resources



To see the resources available to you, please visit [arizona.crediblemind.com](https://arizona.crediblemind.com) or scan the QR code today!



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Create a Network of Support & Inspiration

Cultivate a Culture of Health & Well-Being

[lifework.arizona.edu/wellnessatwork](http://lifework.arizona.edu/wellnessatwork)



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