Speaking from both personal experience and extensive research, I can tell you that there are several upsides to having high-functioning anxiety. (No, seriously.) For one thing, recent research suggests that there’s a very real link between anxiety and intelligence. Several studies have shown that anxious people (or even just people who worry a lot) have higher IQs than their more laid-back peers. On top of that, more often than not, creative geniuses suffer from an anxiety disorder of some kind. All of that said, one of the downsides of being high-functioning and anxious is that people don’t always realize when you’re suffering. Sometimes anxiety symptoms seem like something other than anxiety, and this is especially true for anyone who is high-functioning enough to maintain active social lives, jobs, and romantic relationships.

Personally, I don’t know how high-functioning I am when it comes right down to it. I mean, I’m able to hold down a job, keep up with my exercise schedule, and cultivate a social life — but that doesn’t mean my anxiety doesn’t interfere with my ability to write articles or be on time for parties. Sometimes, my anxiety pushes me to do some...
seemingly selfish things in the name of self-care, and I don’t think it makes me any easier to date. That said, when controlled, my anxiety is also what pushes me to be diligent and hardworking. I don’t think I’d exercise daily if it didn’t feel like an act of survival, and I think dealing with anxiety might make me more sensitive to other people with chronic illnesses, too. Still, it can be really frustrating when my anxiety looks like rudeness or selfishness to others. Believe it or not, it’s even a little bit upsetting when anxiety looks like self-discipline or motivation.

On that note, here are a few things that can be anxious habits, whether they seem like it or not.

**Needing To Exercise Daily**

![Image](https://source.giphy.com/)

OK, so I get that not everyone uses physical activity to treat their...
anxiety. Further, exercise can feel similar to a panic attack for some people — because both work outs and panic attacks increase our heart rate, breathing, and adrenaline.

That said, for me and so many other people, exercise is pretty much the go-to treatment for anxiety. This is even more true for those of us who are trying to treat anxiety without medication. So while it might seem like your friend who works out six days a week is just super-dedicated to fitness, it's possible that they rely on those frequent gym trips to stay functioning. I know that's how it works for me, anyway. It’s been this way since I was a kid, too. While this is generally healthy, of course, a compulsive need to exercise can also be an anxiety disorder in itself.

Talking Super-Fast

OK, so I don't know if this was the case with Rory and Lorelei, but anxiety really can make you talk super-fast. This is even more true if you suffer from both an anxiety disorder and a bipolar disorder. (In fact, "talking very fast" is actually one of the symptoms of a manic episode.) Ironically, social anxiety can cause people to talk fast, or in excess, too. This doesn't mean everyone who talks fast is anxious, but there is definitely a link between anxiety and speech abnormalities.

So if you or someone you love tends to talk at the speed of Gilmore, know that it could very well be the direct result of their coffee intake — but remember that it might just be a symptom of their anxiety. Also
keep in mind that anxiety messes with speech patterns in a variety of other ways, too. Which brings us to...

...Or Not Talking Much At All

In addition to the fact that anxiety is best friends with both overthinking and insecurity, anxiety can cause inflammation of the throat. Not only is throat inflammation uncomfortable, I can tell you from experience that it makes you feel like you have an actual lump in your throat. Since anxiety also messes with our ability to move facial muscles, it's not surprising that anxiety can literally silence the people who struggle with it.

The mind and body are connected, and if you're an anxious person, that means your nerves can literally prevent you from speaking. Personally, I can't count the times I've felt too anxious to talk. What's more is, I deal with this anxiety symptom even when I'm in the company of my closest friends. So the next time you're with a friend and they seem unresponsive or bored, ask them if they're feeling anxious. They may only be able to nod "yes" or "no," but they'll appreciate your concern. Plus, I'm guessing it beats feeling like your buddy is ignoring you for no apparent reason.

Taking Forever To Make Decisions
Indecision might seem like an annoying quirk that makes your mom/friend/partner late to everything — but it can be much more serious than that. If you (or someone you know) has been experiencing difficulty making decisions for some time, it could mean you're dealing with anxiety and/or depression. Not only is indecision a legitimate symptom of both of these illnesses, indecision actually works to increase anxiety — which can push sufferers into a downward spiral of self-sustaining uncertainty and fear.

Fortunately, you can learn how to become more decisive. If that doesn't seem realistic to you right now, that's OK, too. There are also ways you can make your indecision work for you.

Daydreaming Excessively

To be clear, "Maladaptive Daydreaming" (MD) — the psychological concept in which excessive fantasizing can replace human interaction and interfere with everyday life — isn't recognized as a mental disorder by the entire mental healthcare community. The term has only been around since Eli Somer, a professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Haifa, coined it in 2002 — so there's not exactly a ton of research on it, either.

That said, many experts do believe that Maladaptive Daydreaming is a diagnosable mental disorder, and there's a huge online community/support group of "Maladaptive Daydreamers." Further still,
although MD is treated as its own illness, people with anxiety disorders often suffer from it as well. So if it seems like someone you love is never really present when you’re with them, know that it might not have anything to do with you. Also keep in mind that MD is addictive and pathological, which means those who struggle with it need as much support and understanding as they can get.