



Middle School Guidance Officer Report



7 Ways To Tell If Your Racing Thoughts Might Actually Be A Mental Health Issue

It happens to the best of us: an inability to concentrate at work, panic in traffic, or thoughts that are too scattered or busy to let us fall asleep. But for others, constant racing thoughts can become an uncomfortable, but consistent, part of everyday life. And mental health professionals want people to know the difference.

“Occasional periods of racing thoughts are nothing to be terribly concerned about as they could be related to a reasonable worry,” Dr. Nicole Washington, psychiatrist and the Chief Medical Officer at Elocin Psychiatric Services, PLLC, tells Bustle. “Even a reasonable stressor can lead to moments of feeling like your thoughts are racing.” So it’s important, first and foremost, to assess whether you’re simply having a proportionate reaction to the stressors in your life. And even then, if you’re finding trouble coping, it’s OK to reach out for help.

But sometimes a legitimate diagnosis is necessary. “Racing thoughts are usually associated with anxiety disorders, panic attacks, OCD and ADD, as well as the manic phase of Bipolar Disorder,” Cali Estes, PhD., therapist and founder of The Addictions Academy, tells Bustle. “If your heart rate is elevated and you feel like you are in a constant state of panic, then you might have anxiety or an anxiety disorder and you should be evaluated by a professional.” Cyclothymia, a mood disorder that causes emotional highs and lows, is another example. Regardless of where you might fall in the DSM-V, however, you deserve to care for your mental health, and to be able to spot potentially concerning symptoms.

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