

WH

Always Trend First
Warehouse Fashion

How to tackle phone anxiety and get comfortable making (and taking) calls

Comment

Rosie O'Neill
Saturday 25 Jun 2022 7:00 am



67 SHARES



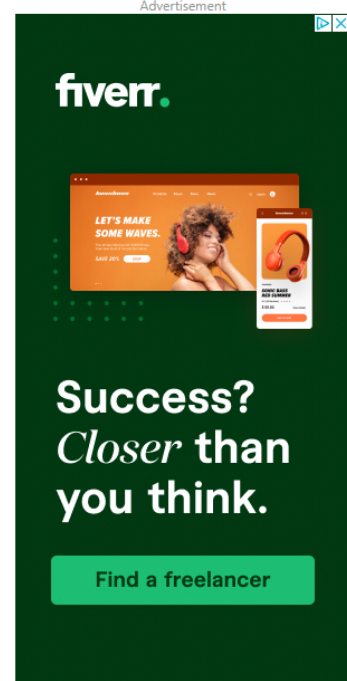
Face the fear (Picture: Getty/Metro.co.uk)

Hate making phone calls? You're not alone.

A 2019 study of 500 office workers estimated that 62% have some form of 'telephobia'; a fear of making or taking calls.

Often linked to social anxiety, this can be associated with similar symptoms such as increased heart rate, nausea, and dizziness.

Thanks to intense feelings of self-consciousness and a fear of being put on the spot, sounding strange or getting something wrong, many of us delay making phone calls or avoid them altogether (61% of millennials, in fact).



MUST READ



It's time to say goodbye. »



Spotify finally has Sid Owen bop Good Thing Going and our non lives are complete



As well as the obvious embarrassment that comes from being a grown adult who can't sort their own life out, a fear of phone calls can also mean putting a hold on important parts of your career and relationships. Because while email and texts offer convenience and a lower-pressure, editable method of communication, there are some things that can only be handled over a call – checking in on a friend, or getting through a first stage phone interview.

I've had phone anxiety ever since I was old enough to be making calls for myself. I couldn't arrange a doctor's appointment for myself, avoided phone calls with friends and even – particularly embarrassing – once had to get student services to phone the Student Loan Company for me (ironically, I found this even more excruciating than the phone call itself).

And then, the pandemic happened. With literally everything going virtual we've all **found ourselves relying on calls more than ever** – for connection, for support, for essential services – and my usual avoidance tactic was no longer an option.

Like my very own exposure therapy, the more calls I made or received, the more dialled down my anxiety became. I reached out to friends to check on them during lockdown, completed an online course with live, virtual feedback, and took my doctor's appointments over the phone with lower anxiety symptoms each time.

Surprising myself, I also decided to try therapy for the first time. Virtual, of course. Believe me, crying over Zoom to a stranger 40 minutes a week desensitises you to phone anxiety like nothing else.

I can now happily take work calls from prospective freelance clients, make appointments when I need them – and I even joined an online writing group where I read my creative fiction aloud.

If that sounds a little bit extreme for you, there are a host of other tricks you can try to ease that phone anxiety.



Lost of us experience telephobia (Picture: Getty/Metro.co.uk)

Get it out of the way first thing

Like all bad things, sometimes the **'eat the frog' method** works the best. The idea is to give yourself as little time as possible to build those anxiety levels up.

Put the phone number on a post it note and leave it somewhere prominent. Go somewhere quiet, take a deep breath, and just do it.

You'll feel better for it. Plus, the more easy, low-stakes calls you make (hairdressers, dentists and opticians are all good for this), the less stressful all calls will become.

Make some notes

If you're booking something, have your calendar out in front of you with the times that work best highlighted.

If you're having a virtual doctor's appointment, make a list of any medications or symptoms you need to ask about.

And for work calls – prepare your talking points to run through.

At the suggestion of my therapist, I even made a list of topics and questions before phoning a friend for a catch-up. I didn't end up needing them, but they served their purpose and helped me and my anxiety get out of my own way and make the damn call.

MORE: MENTAL HEALTH



FIRST PERSON
As a young model, I put up with racism and sexism. Now, I refuse

I'll always remember the photographer who referred to me as his 'little Indian takeaway'. »



Dads who formed rock band during pandemic prepare for first major London gig

'It's our passion project.' »



From Burger King to Subway, try these fast-food plant based offerings this Veganuary

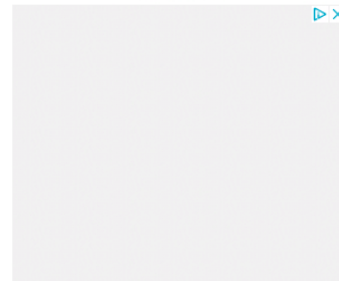
It's not all green smoothies and chickpeas. »



'Kinkeeping' is the invisible work women do - that no one gives them credit for

The term 'kinkeeping' is gaining attention on Tiktok - but what does it mean? »

Advertisement



Man with incurable brain tumour outlives prognosis by two years and plans to run marathon

'My whole world was turned upside down.' »





Nature to be prescribed to patients who tell their doctor they're feeling unwell



'If we keep doing hair transplants like this someone is going to die', surgeon warns



Indian TV actress Tunisha Sharma dies by suicide aged 20

Rationalise things

What's the worst that could happen, really? Now, I say this as the type of person who answered that very same question with 'we could crash and die', when asked by a driving instructor, but that probably won't apply in most cases.

Receptionists, call centre operators, even a job interviewer, they all have one thing in common – it's pretty much their job to help you get the outcome you need when you call. They aren't trying to catch you out or trip you up, they don't think you sound weird and they don't care if you stumble or mess up your words.

Get some help

Phone anxiety can really knock your sense of confidence and independence, so it's absolutely worth taking some time and outside help to get you through it. It might seem like a trivial thing, but there's no shame in seeking help from a pro.

Though I didn't start therapy to help specifically with my phone anxiety, opening up to someone about all the weird thoughts and worries whizzing around my head definitely had positive knock-on effects in other areas of my life.

Do you have a story to share?

Get in touch by emailing MetroLifestyleTeam@Metro.co.uk.

MORE : [Do you have 'laidback anxiety'? Here's how to cope with it](#)

MORE : [Could time-tracking change your life and make you more productive? I tried it out](#)

MORE : [Why you need to lower your expectations for the sake of your mental health](#)



MORE [Anxiety](#) [Better Living](#) [How to...](#) [Mental health](#)



Create your happiest year yet - how to be happier in 2023 »



Mum with dissociative identity disorder reveals what life is like with 20 personalities »

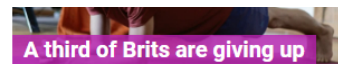


Can committing to 30 days of yoga change your life? »



The life-changing football league with more than one goal »

Join in the conversation on [Metro.co.uk](https://www.metro.co.uk)



A third of Brits are giving up gym memberships due to cost of living worries

It's particularly affecting young people. »

Cancer survivor says bodybuilding has transformed life and helped her rediscover herself

'My battle with cancer has definitely made me more motivated.' »

SHOPPING
The best red bridesmaid dresses to buy for 2023 weddings

Maid-y in red. »

Advertisement

Need a Freelancer?
Find Yours Now **fiverr.**

No one expected me to be at the spa alone - but I love 'masturbating'

It felt very... correct. »

These cities named the best in the world for 2023 - but they're some of the most expensive

There was an 'honourary city' chosen, too. »

SHOPPING
What are Aldi's Specialbuys this week? Top picks from the middle aisle

Sign Up

AdChoices

Sponsored

JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Get cooking with Aldi's deals. »

How Veganuary can help with menstrual cramps

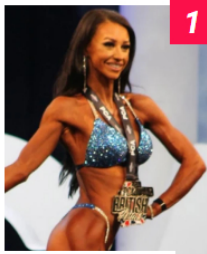
Some simple changes to your diet could make all the difference. »

Mum with heart-shaped uterus defies odds to give birth to one-in-500 million twins

She initially didn't believe doctors when they diagnosed her. »

WHAT'S TRENDING NOW

[More trending stories »](#)



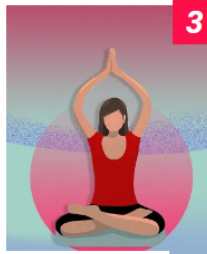
1

Cancer survivor says bodybuilding has transformed life and helped her rediscover herself



2

Woman who lost her husband and leg in horror crash becomes disability advocate



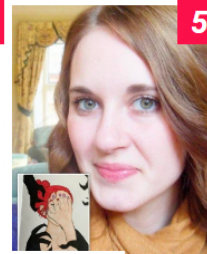
3

Can 30 days of yoga change your life?



4

EXCLUSIVE
Are you guilty of the Enid Effect? Why we need to hold our friends accountable



5

Mum with dissociative identity disorder reveals what it's like living with 20 personalities

VIDEO

[More videos »](#)



▶ Incredible moment passenger is saved from falling under moving train



▶ Whale gives birth right next to a boat of whale watchers who can't believe it



▶ This is the CCTV that led police to John Jessop who murdered mum-of-three



▶ Lorraine Kelly flustered over Prince Harry's wild penis revelation