

Anxiety in the free world

[Health & Medicine](#), [Mental Health](#)



What are you thinking of right now? Got it? Okay, now imagine thinking of that thing for six months on end. Imagine that one issue getting to you so much it turns to a negative thought. It constantly is distracting you from living your life so much that now you are focused on ways to avoid thinking about this idea so much. The Free World is a 2016 drama, written and directed by Jason Lew. This movie is filled with many ups and downs which cause the main character, Muhammad, to go through many mental blocks with his existing psychological disorder. Growing up, Muhammad had a hard life. He was raised by his mother who was always at work which led him to being in the streets. Muhammad had so much anger build up inside him, he eventually went to prison for murder.

Once he was released from prison, Muhammad was set up with a low income job, at a animal shelter, and a home. One day while Muhammad was at work a policeman, who was known for his arrogant attitude, brought in his wife's dog that he accidentally hit. Later that night out of rage, Doris murdered her husband. Around midnight, when Muhammad was closing up he noticed a woman (Doris) near the dog cages, covered in blood, and kneeling over. After trying to calm Doris down, she passed out. From previous experience with police and what he was known for by the police, Muhammad made the decision not to call the cops. He then makes the decision to take her to his house, where she will stay for over forty-eight hours passed out. Daily, when he comes home he gets anxious knowing Doris is probably dead. Soon enough she wakes up and they introduce themselves and discuss their past lives. Muhammed makes the decision to keep doris in his home. One day

Doris has flashbacks of her dog and leaves the house, she is spotted by someone.

Once the police receive a tip for where she is located they immediately go to Muhammad's house to catch them. Little did they know that Muhammad and Doris had already left. The two of them escape to Muhammad's brothers house where they all come up with the plan to go to Mexico. This plan doesn't go as planned because the men in Mexico tried stealing Doris and killing Muhammed. Luckily, Muhammad kills them first and saves Doris. They escape, however, they are covered in blood and speeding away. A cop then pulls them over while Muhammad surrenders and Doris runs. They both end up in prison and fall in love. Throughout The Free World, Muhammad is constantly faced with problems. Starting off, he was born in a single parent home and his mother was always at work. Muhammad and his brother would always find themselves in trouble and feeling alone. Studies will show that the majority of single parent children are faced with some sort of psychological disorder (Jacoby, S. F. , Tach, L. , Guerra, T. , Wiebe, D. J. , & Richmond, T. S, 2016).

With this being said, later on in life Muhammad starts murdering people. Without a diagnosis this clearly shows signs of some psychological disorder. The night Doris is found, covered in blood, Muhammad is faced with a huge decision whether to call the police or not. With his previous experience with the cops, from prison, he knows either way this situation goes he will be found guilty of something. After being in prison for ten years, having the thought of going back would only send negative thoughts to his brain. To go

along with this, the home that he is given is basically empty. He keeps everything he owns lined up in the same order, all in one bedroom. Even when Doris is staying with him, everything she touches Muhammad has to go and fix the way it is placed. The movie does not focus too much on how he adjusts the placement of his items, but this is a big indicator. It is safe to say Muhammad did not have such an easy going life, he was faced with many mental challenges that all can lead up to different psychological disorders.

Although anxiety is looked at as one of the most common psychological disorders, it is more than just the average dose of being anxious. Fear and anxiety in an exaggerated state is the diagnosis of Anxiety (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Muhammad showed an outstanding amount of anxiety, repeatedly. From the moment he was released out of prison he was placed into a whole new world. Immediately he showed signs of nervousness, weakness, hyperventilation, and often had issues with sleeping. He always had that “ what if” mindset. As a response to this he suffered from panic attacks. It is important to know that just because he had a panic attack does not mean he is automatically diagnosed with Anxiety (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). However, due his existing symptoms he is easily identified as having the psychological disorder of Anxiety. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder is full of symptoms for anxiety, they state signs of edginess, irritability, fatigue, sweating, nervousness, and hyperventilation mixed together could be anxiety (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Although Muhammad would attempt to handle and overcome his worries, he found it was more harder to do than to not. Coping with anxiety was not very hard for Muhammad. For the most part he understood his issues, he just struggled with the daily battles of Anxiety. Instead of putting negative thoughts in your head, always thinking positive is an effective way to cope (Anxiety, 2018). Another way to cope is simply understanding that things just happen the way they happen and there is nothing we can do to stop it (Anxiety, 2018). Muhammad relates with these two coping strategies the most because he finds a new religion. During his time in prison he related to the Muslim faith. He believed that with this religion he does not need to confess, however he will need to accept. He finds major peace with this because with this faith he prays very often. He believes when he speaks with his Gods he is forgiven. When he comes across battles with his mental health he automatically speaks with his Gods to calm himself down. This not only brings positive thoughts, but also puts his view in perspective that everything happens for a reason.

Another coping strategy Muhammad uses is actually keeping his items very organized. He does this so it creates no stress to him, as this would only give him more anxiety. Him keeping his items organized to create less stress is an example of the coping strategy of just doing as good as you can. Doing what you're capable of is a great way to limit anxiety because it helps show you that nothing is perfect (Anxiety, 2018). Muhammad understood this greatly, because he would do what he could, with what he had. Muhammad was never actually treated for his psychological disorder, however there are many ways besides medicine that can help you grow from Anxiety. When a

person can accept the battles of anxiety while learning to manage the battles, that ultimately decides if medication is required or not (Cooper, 2014). Luckily, Muhammad was very good at managing most of his symptoms, after many years in prison he mastered this. His dose of medication was relaxation, yoga, and prayer. When medication is necessary, very common prescriptions such as Benzodiazepines, Buspirone, Serotonin, and Tetracyclines are prescribed (Cooper, 2014).

Overall, Anxiety is much more than just a rare feeling of anxiousness. It actually consumes people's lives for months on end. This psychological disorder can be managed but it takes time to do this. The Free World did great with showcasing examples of mental health and expressing it in a positive way. While Muhammad shows great strength while dealing with this disorder, it took time for him to get to this point.