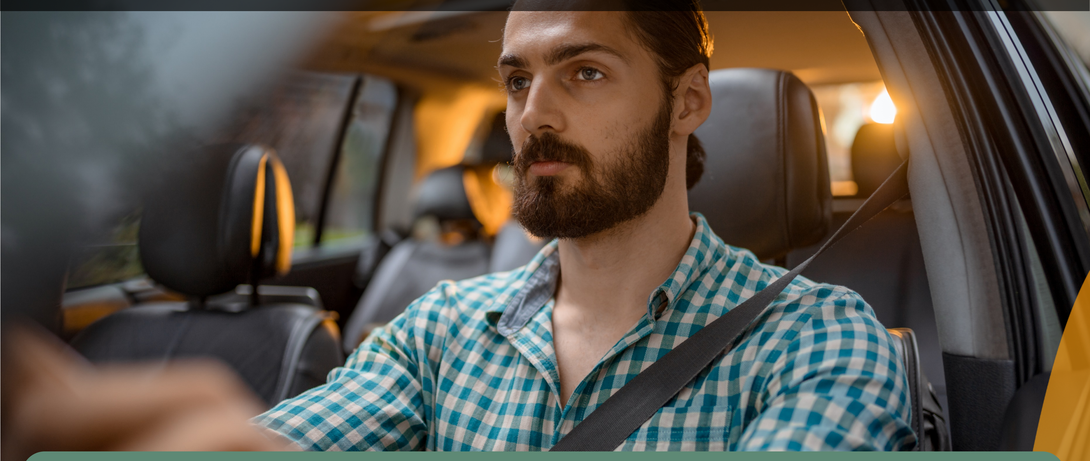
Anxiety and Empathy while Driving



We live in a world that seems to be constantly stressed and anxious, where empathy is increasingly less visible and sometimes non-existent. **This is also true for traffic and mobility.**

The person driving the motor vehicle is the same person who earlier faced a family crisis or work-related problem, or who perhaps was involved in some sort of personal conflict. **Every day, with everything that happens to us, we get in a vehicle and share the road with other people who also carry their own conflicts and stories.**

When we are stressed or anxious, our mind wanders and loses clarity. This is extremely dangerous when driving. In these situations, it is more difficult to concentrate and pay attention to traffic and what is happening in the surrounding environment.

Drivers may become aggressive, intolerant to the mistakes of others or the speed of vehicles traveling ahead. This can lead them to make decisions that put their safety and the safety of other road users at risk.

We hear a lot about empathy, but do we practice it on a daily basis?

Some ways to practice empathy and remain calm while driving:

- **Be tolerant** of the mistakes other drivers make.
- **Obey traffic rules** and regulations.
- **Yield and protect pedestrians**; They are the most vulnerable roadway users.
- **Avoid arguing with other drivers or accepting challenges**. Remember that you are smarter than a simple provocation.
- In heavy traffic, **assist and facilitate the merging of other vehicles**. Avoid blocking intersections and impeding traffic flow.
- Understand that if there is a traffic jam, **getting angry or stressed will do you no good.**

In situations where stress and anxiety take over, try to relax. Take several deep breaths, drink some water, and listen to soft music that you like. These attitudes can help you get out of that state of anxiety.

Please note that, although we live with stress and anxiety daily, if these are exacerbated, recurrent, and you feel like you cannot control yourself, it is necessary to seek a trained professional for help.

Driving a motor vehicle and being part of mobility is a great responsibility. As drivers, we must promote a friendly and safe traffic environment.

Be a responsible and safe driver. Take care of the lives you come across.