



9 Healthy Tips to Help Cope With Anxiety

If you struggle with anxiety on a daily basis, you may find yourself using unhealthy methods, such as drug or alcohol abuse, to cope with it. Ultimately, this type of relief will only be short, and you may be back to square one.

Given this is not the best approach, here are some strategies that may help:

1. **Deep breathing exercises.** Many of us underestimate the power of our breath. We also tend to use our chests to breathe rather than the diaphragm, which is a large muscle found in your abdomen. **When you breathe in, your stomach should expand and then contract when you breathe out.**
 - Breathing with only your chest will cause you to have short and shallow breaths that can cause increased stress and anxiety.
 - Instead, slow down and send the signal to the body that everything is ok by stopping, close your eyes and draw in a big deep breath. Pull it down as far as you can and release it with feeling. After 3 deep breaths, you will have assured your body that it is going to be ok and this will clear your mind enough to continue on with your day.

2. **Progressive muscle relaxation.** This technique involves tensing your muscles and then relaxing them one at a time. If you have ever taken part in meditation, you may have noticed just how much we tend to hold on. When you do this, you're teaching your muscles that when you're stressed, which often causes muscle tension, that you need to relax.

3. **Mindfulness.** This is a common technique to reduce anxiety. With mindfulness, **you put your full attention on what you're doing in that moment.** You notice the sights, sounds, and smells around you. When your full focus is on the present moment, there isn't room for feelings of anxiety. Also ask, is this problem occurring right now? Often, rumination or dwelling can steal our present moments away from us.

4. **Self-monitoring.** What triggers your anxiety? **It may be that certain people, events, or situations cause you to feel anxious.** Once you figure out your triggers, you may be able to do something to prevent the oncoming anxiety. At times we need to consider that certain friends, some family and acquaintances do not serve our wellbeing. Choosing to reduce the time spent here can greatly increase your ability to relax.

5. **Get support from others.** It has been found time and time again that support from friends and family is incredibly important when dealing with anxiety. Having someone you trust that you can talk to can be helpful.
 - There are also therapists and various groups available full of like-minded people dealing with similar issues who may be able to help too.

6. **Self-soothing strategies.** While support from others is beneficial, sometimes you may find yourself alone. One self-soothing technique involves being positive and telling yourself that everything will be okay and that you can handle the situation.

- It's important that you don't allow any negative thoughts into your mind while performing this strategy.
 - Don't underestimate the power of your mind. When you give it a direction, it gets to work ensuring that need is met. Once you have reassured yourself, empower your mind to seek a solution to whatever may be contributing to the anxiety. You may be surprised just how effective this can be.
7. **Write down your thoughts and feelings.** Rather than keeping how you feel inside to fester, it would be better for you to get these thoughts out of your mind and onto paper.
- Journaling is a powerful tool to help enable us to release pent up emotional energy. Ensure you write exactly how you feel as this process is for you alone. You can choose to burn or rip the paper up once you have finished.
 - This process also has the power to help you to find solutions as you have shifted the energy that was creating an emotional block.
8. **Distraction techniques.** Sometimes focusing on your emotions can make them even stronger and leave you feeling more out of control of the situation. By using distraction, you're taking your mind off your emotions, making them easier to manage.
- You can do anything you want to distract yourself. Try to ensure it is a healthy choice such as a walk in nature, a swim in the ocean, talking to a loved one, petting an animal or engaging in funny entertainment.

9. **Work towards a goal.** Achieving a goal can be motivating and can help reduce both depression and anxiety.

- Try using a technique called behavioral activation. **Each time that you feel anxious, engage your mind in a positive and rewarding activity, such as working toward a goal.**
- Spend time outline what you would like to achieve and the steps that will get you there.

These strategies can each help you to cope with anxiety. Some may work better for you than others. Some may work better in different situations. And some may not work for you. **The key is to practice them and then try them out in anxious situations** to see which ones work best for you.

If you would like some guidance on how best to embrace these steps as well as other techniques, please contact me for assistance. I help empower individuals to harness their ability to strengthen the relationships that shape their lives. Contact me on social media, nowincreation@gmail.com or at my website www.nowincreation.com for a no obligation chat.



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