Techniques to Address Anxiety

About Stress - From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Strong emotions like fear, sadness, or other symptoms of depression are normal, as long as they are temporary and *don’t interfere with daily activities*. If these emotions last too long or cause other problems, it’s a different story.

Sometimes stress can be good. It can help you develop skills needed to manage potentially threatening situations. Stress can be harmful, however, when it is prolonged or severe enough to make you feel overwhelmed and out of control.

1) Deep Breathing Exercises

Take a slow deep breath and release it. Now, focusing on distending (pushing out as you slowly breath in) your abdomen, draw your breath in as slowly as you can. Keep count to see if you can take 15 seconds to fully fill your lungs. Hold the breath as long as you can, and then see how slowly you can release the breath. Repeat for ten minutes.

2) Reframing Exercises / Self-Talk Exercises

Many times, we don't realize the messages that we are unconsciously giving ourselves throughout the day. How many times have you said to yourself "What a stupid thing to do!", or "God, you're so dumb!". This is called self-talk and even though it is internal, it can make a huge difference. Practice giving yourself good messages, such as "I am going to have a great day today" or "Today, I am going to have fun and be successful" - Whatever it is that you are working on, incorporate it into your self-talk during the day. If you make a mistake, suffer a disappoint, or earn a lower grade than you expected, give yourself a pep-talk! Begin training yourself to give good messages, such as, "That's okay - you can do better next time!" Make it a point to give yourself a good message every morning before school, at least once a day during school, and at night before you sleep.

3) Try Relaxation Techniques

Begin by sitting in a chair or laying on your bed. Count five things you can see. Count five things you can hear. Count five things you can feel, and five things you can smell. After centering yourself within your environment, begin at your toes and consciously clench each muscle group as you slowly proceed up toward your head. When you are tensing all your muscles, hold it for ten seconds and then begin to relax them in reverse, beginning at the top of your head until you reach your toes.

4) Create a Playlist

Make a list of all the music that relaxes you and slows your breathing. Compile a playlist and keep it handy for the next time you begin to feel anxious.

5) Call Friends

Keep a list of numbers of people that you can call to talk to when you begin to feel anxious. Tell your family and friends when you are feeling overwhelmed and anxious. Spend time with them doing activities that you enjoy or that are physically active.

6) Take up a Physical Activity

Begin to learn a new sport like Yoga, or even jogging. Try to get a workout buddy and create a schedule that you both commit to, even if it is only one day per week.

7) Watch a Funny Movie

Make time for humor - Create a list of movies that crack you up and keep them ready! Humor goes a long way toward relieving stress!

8) Volunteer or Do an Anonymous Act of Kindness

Doing things to make others happy can make a huge difference in the way we feel about ourselves, and life in general!

9) Create Something!

Whether it is a journal full of sketches, a watercolor painting, or some kind of craft, when you create something, it allows you to express yourself while focusing on something else.

10) Learn What Triggers Your Anxiety

When you begin to feel anxious, take a moment to reflect. Ask yourself when the feelings began and try to pin-point where, what and when it was that triggered those feelings in you. As soon as you can recognize the situations that cause you anxiety, you can begin to address them. One way to expose yourself to the same situation in a controlled environment. For example, if presenting in front of your class causes you anxiety, begin practicing in front of your friends - recreate the situation the best you can in a safe environment and practice. The more you know what to expect, the less anxious you become.

11) Seek Professional Care if Stress Becomes Overwhelming

http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/topics/teens.asp

HOTLINE NUMBERS:

**CA TEEN LINE**

**800-843-5200**

**Crisis Call Center**800-273-8255 or text ANSWER to 839863
Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week
<http://crisiscallcenter.org/crisisservices-html/>

**Suicide Prevention and Crisis Hotline:
(775) 784-8090 or 1 (800) 273-8255**

**SASS Hotline:
(775) 221-7600**

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1 (800) 273-8255**

**EMERGENCY:
CALL 9-1-1**

**Text:
"ANSWER" to 839863**

Standard messaging and data rates may apply. Text STOP to cancel. For end user privacy and terms and conditions, go to: [Terms and Conditions for PreventionPays™ Text](http://www.preventionpaystext.com/policies/)

**Crisis Text Line (U.S. only)**
Text HELLO to 741741 or message us at facebook.com/CrisisTextLine to chat with a Crisis Counselor.
Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week

**Depression and Bipolar Support**
800-273-TALK (8255)
Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week
[http://www.dbsalliance.org](http://www.dbsalliance.org/)

**HopeLine**
Call or text 919-231-4525 or 1-877-235-4525
<https://www.hopeline-nc.org/>