

Managing Stress, Anxiety & Burnout – Coping Strategies

Progressive muscle relaxation

This exercise can help reduce the feelings of muscle tension that often comes with anxiety:

- Find a quiet location.
- Close your eyes and slowly tense and then relax each of your muscle groups from your toes to your head.
- Hold the tension for three seconds and then release quickly.
- You can hold onto something while you do this e.g. a chair

Grounding Techniques

The 54321 method is a grounding exercise designed to manage acute stress and reduce anxiety. It involves identifying: -

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Stay in the present moment

Anxiety can make your thoughts live in a terrible future that hasn't happened yet. Try to bring yourself back to where you are. Practising meditation can help.

Maintain a healthy lifestyle to reduce anxiety

A healthy lifestyle can help reduce anxiety and improve your well-being. Healthy habits include:

- Keeping active
- Eating well
- Spending time outdoors in nature
- Spending time with family and friends
- Doing activities, you enjoy
- Where possible, avoid stress

Small acts of bravery

Try doing something that makes you anxious, even in a small way. For example, if public speaking makes you anxious, put together a small presentation for your friends or family.

Success with small acts of bravery can help you manage your anxious feelings for bigger acts of bravery.

Avoiding anxiety triggers can make you feel better in the short term, but it can make you more anxious in the long term.

Challenge your self-talk

What you think affects how you feel. To change your thinking:

- find new, positive ways to look at a situation that's making you anxious
- look at the facts – is your thought true?

Anxiety can make you overestimate the danger in a situation and underestimate your ability to handle it.

Be kind to yourself

Practising self-compassion can help reduce your anxiety. We all deserve to be nurtured, even by ourselves.

Find out how to develop a Wellness Action Plan (WAP)

Plan worry time

It's hard to stop worrying entirely so try planning regular worry time. This can help to stop your worries from taking over at other times.

Set aside 10 minutes each day to think about your anxieties or write them down.

Get to know your anxiety

Keep a diary of when you feel calm or anxious. Try to identify what works to reduce your anxiety and what makes it worse. This can help you manage your anxiety.

Focus on what you can control

Use the circle of influence to understand where your energy needs to be in terms of what you can control.