
Anxiety Relief Techniques

What is Anxiety vs. Fear

Fear is the response to a threatening sensory experience which activates the sympathetic nervous system* or the fight or flight response.

Anxiety arises when **imagining a threatening experience** activates fear and the fear response's system, sympathetic nervous system.

Techniques - to address anxiety you need techniques that will deactivate the sympathetic nervous system and move into the parasympathetic nervous system - rest and digest mode.

Breathing is the quickest antidote. Take a deep breath in and out through the nose.

Worry is future oriented - Guilt Is past oriented

Worrying – good or bad?

Guilty - good or bad?

How much guilty does it take to change the past?

How much worry does it take to change the future?

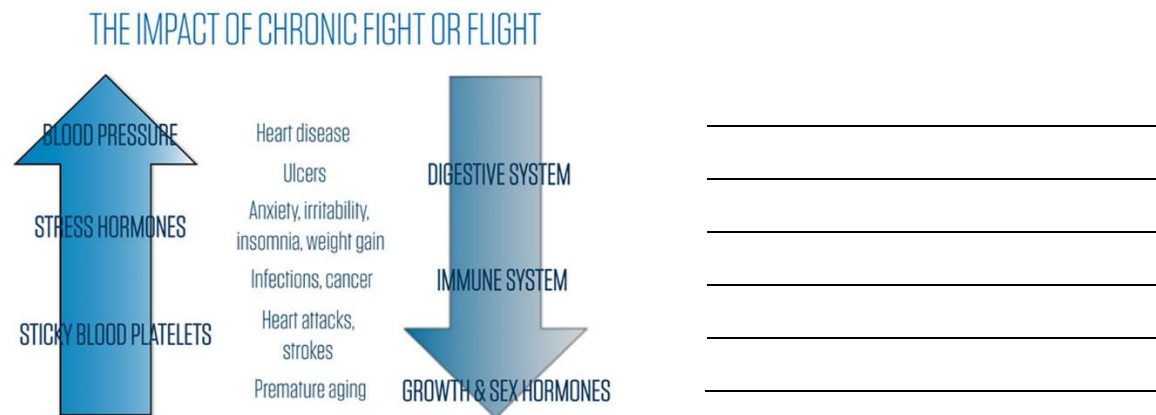
Anxiety and fear are cousins but not twins.

Fear sees a threat.

Anxiety imagines one.

Max Lucado

Impact of Chronic Flight or Flight



Stress Response: ACTION! Get moving fast!

- Enhance the strength of your skeletal muscles – anxiety lasting too long can cause muscle tension.
- Increase heart rate – chronic anxiety can cause rapid heartbeat, palpitations, raises BP.
- Increase sugar and fat levels – too much stress can cause dizziness, shakiness, trembling, diabetes
- Enhances mental activity – too much anxiety can lead to intense focus on fear/threat.
- Slows down blood clotting time
- Decreases intestinal movements – constant anxiety can lead to bowel problems like constipation, diarrhea
- Limits digestive secretions - bowel problems – chronic anxiety could develop irritable bowel syndrome
- Constricts peripheral blood vessels but can lead to cold, sweaty hands, feet
- Dilates Pupils (increases light in)

Physiology of Fear and Anxiety

- Fear starts in the senses – you are walking in the woods and look down and quickly **see** a snake. Your body response to the sight with fight, fright, or freeze. A second later, you notice it is a stick that looks like a snake. You can relax.
- Anxiety starts in the mind – you are so afraid of snakes, a picture of a snake in a book signals your brain to fight, fright or freeze. Your brain evokes fear with just a picture of a snake.

Autonomic Nervous System has 2 branches:

- Sympathetic nervous system - it signals your body to go into protection mode. This means shutting down "non-essential" functions so your body is ready to run, fight or freeze.
- Parasympathetic nervous system - manages the activities of your bodily systems in rest and relax mode, keeping you healthy and alive.

Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety Disorder is:

- Chronic – lasting a long time
 - Debilitating – an intense or extreme sense of fear or dread about everyday situations or tasks
 - Continuous activation of stress response system
 - Requires medical assessment and treatment
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Mindfulness Techniques & Exercises

Mindfulness Techniques & Exercises

Mindfulness – state of being conscious or aware of something. A tool you can use to turn off the sympathetic nervous system’s use of mental activity to keep you hyper alert: especially at 1 am when you are trying to sleep.



- Manage your focus: present focus, positive focus, what you can control

- Procrastination

- Come to your Senses

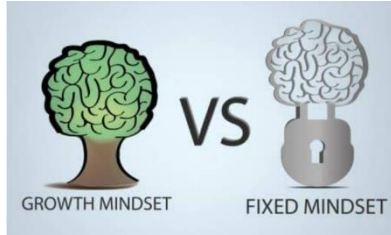
Focus on your immediate surroundings: USE ALL YOUR SENSES

- **What do you see?** Colors, light, objects, beauty, order, chaos....
- **What do you hear?** Wind, traffic, A/C, computer, printer, insects, birds....
- **What do you feel on your skin?** Air/wind, cold, warm, sun.....
- **What are you touching?** How does it feel? Standing on, sitting on.....
- **What do you smell?** Fresh air, cooking, perfume, flowers, grass....
- **What do you taste?** Bitter, sweet, salty, sour, savory....



- Meditation

Mindset Changing Exercises



Research shows that mindset play a significant role in determining life's outcomes. By understanding, adapting, and shifting your mindset, you can improve your health, decrease your stress, and become more resilient to life's challenges – Stanford report 9.15.21

- Reframing

- Intrusive Thoughts

- Worrying Thoughts – Action is worry's worst enemy. Proverb

- Cognitive Disorders

- Attitude of Gratitude – changes your brain – rewires it to be happier
 - Journaling – compared to meditation and reduces anxiety, depression, and stress
 - Appreciation – for partners – 5 min/day express appreciation. Whole Family – mealtime share pride accomplishments

Breathing Techniques

Psychological studies have revealed breathing practice to be an effective non-pharmacological intervention for emotion enhancement – National Library of Medicine – The Effect of Diaphragmatic Breathing



- Diaphragmatic Breathing

- Diaphragmatic Breathing Exercises:
 - 2:1 Breathing
 - Explosive Exhale
 - Heart centered breathing

Visualization

The process of using your imagination and focus to create a scene or situation so realistic that you feel as if you are in it.

- Guided Meditation – many apps and online recordings. Try recording a personal guided visualization
- Yoga Nidra - Yoga Nidra is a useful tool for those that struggle with meditation. It gives your left side (logical side) of the brain something to do while, the guided meditation quiets your body. It is said that 20 mins of yoga nidra = 4 hrs of sleep.

Food & Movement

Exercise in almost any form can act as a stress reliever. Being active can boost your feel-good endorphins and distract you from daily worries. Mayo Clinic

- Exercise & Stress relief
- Pumps up your endorphins –
- Reduces negative effects of stress
- It's meditation in motion
- Improves your mood



Success tips to keep it going: Creating a goal, find a friend and change up your routine

Food & Inflammation

How We Eat

Exercise and Anxiety

Anxiety & Motivation - 5 second Rule (Mel Robbins)
