

Tools to Reduce Anxiety

To reduce anxiety in your life, try these tools on a regular basis. Daily would be great but as often as you can, regardless of whether you feel anxious or calm. Practicing these exercises when you are calm, helps your brain register and hard-wire them.

Remember, these only work if you do them and practice them! (set an alarm as a reminder if you need to)

- **Exercise**

Try something to get your heart rate up slightly and for you to sweat. Moving your body in this way helps release built up energy. Also try a body-focused exercise that brings awareness to how you feel in the body such as Yoga, Tai Chi, or Pilates. Youtube is a great resource for these exercises.

- **Meditate**

Don't knock it until you try it! Find an app or look online for meditation scripts or videos. The idea is to bring awareness to your breath, thoughts, and body sensations.

- **4 x 4 x 4 Breathing**

Breathe in to a count of 4. Hold breath for a count of 4. Exhale to a count of 4 and repeat. Do it 4 times. To cure a panic attack: Breathe out all the way, then breathe in halfway. Do 8 times or until the panic is gone.

- **Silence the alarm**

Feel where the anxiety is in your body. Put the heel of your right hand on your left eyebrow, near the nose. Brush your hand from your nose to behind your ear and down your neck to the tip of your shoulder. Flatten your hand and brush from your shoulder, past your elbow, and off the back of your left hand. Do this 3 times, then switch sides and do it 3 times. Keep going until anxiety disappears.

- **Vagal Hold**

Put your right hand on your heart and your left hand on your belly. Breathe deeply for at least 10 minutes. Notice how you respond.

- **Beauty Awareness**

Look around you and notice anything that pleases your eye. Keep attention right there for a minute. Find something else that is pleasant to look at. Keep going, noticing pleasant things and see what happens.

- **Gravity and Grounding**

Notice gravity holding you in your chair. Lift different body parts and drop them. Imagine running a cord or a root from the bottom of your spine and from each foot, rooting you like a tree. Imagine breathing down the cords into the ground.

- **Sending and Receiving Love**

Imagine breathing into and from the heart. Imagine people you love. Send love out from your heart to everyone you love with each exhale. Bring love into your heart with each inhale. Breathe in love, breathe out love. Repeat.

- **Two Hand Technique**

In one hand hold how scary the situation feels, and in the other, how dangerous it actually is. Hang out with that feeling for awhile, and explain to the body that its ok to relax around this, and at the same time drop your shoulders, breathe deeply, and notice your safe surroundings.