Coping Strategies

Try these when you’re feeling anxious or stressed:

• **Take a time-out.** Practice yoga, listen to music, meditate, get a massage, or learn relaxation techniques. Stepping back from the problem helps clear your head.
• **Eat well-balanced meals.** Do not skip any meals. Do keep healthful, energy-boosting snacks on hand.
• **Limit caffeine.** which can aggravate anxiety and trigger panic attacks.
• **Get enough sleep.** When stressed, your body needs additional sleep and rest.
• **Exercise daily** to help you feel good and maintain your health
• **Take deep breaths.** Inhale and exhale slowly. A longer exhale tells your brain to calm down.
• **Count to 10 slowly.** Repeat, and count to 20 if necessary.
• **Do your best.** Instead of aiming for perfection, which isn't possible, be proud of however close you get.
• **Accept that you cannot control everything.** Put your stress in perspective: Is it really as bad as you think? Remember, your brain can trick you into thinking catastrophic thoughts!
• **Welcome humor.** A good laugh goes a long way.
• **Maintain a positive attitude.** Make an effort to replace negative thoughts with positive ones.
• **Get involved.** Volunteer or find another way to be active in your community, which creates a support network and gives you a break from everyday stress. People who volunteer experience less depression.
• **Learn what triggers your anxiety.** Is it work, family, school, or something else you can identify? Write in a journal when you’re feeling stressed or anxious, and look for a pattern. Know that your brain can be glitchy and tell you to something is dangerous when it isn't. Know the difference between danger and discomfort and face your fears!
• **Talk to someone.** Tell friends and family you’re feeling overwhelmed, and let them know how they can help you. Talk to a physician or therapist for professional help.

Resources:

• Anxiety and Depression Association of America: www.ADAA.org
• International Obsessive-Compulsive Foundation: www.IOCDF.org
• Anxiety Coach: www.AnxietyCoach.com
• Help for sleep: Calm app
• Meditation Apps: Headspace, Buddhify. DreamKid. Insight Timer. Stop, Breathe & Think
• Tedx Talk Till Gross for social anxiety: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtDkg3Xwn7U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtDkg3Xwn7U)
• Mark Freeman You Tube videos: The OCD Stories