

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>
- Mark Freeman You Tube videos: The OCD Stories