

# ANXIETY MANAGEMENT.



TECHNIQUE	HOW TO DO IT
<b>1. Regain a sense of control and perspective</b>	<p>Focus your time and energy on things that you can control and influence. Ask yourselves these questions about any situation that is making you anxious:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What within this situation is within my control?</li> <li>• What within this situation can I influence?</li> <li>• What within this situation is out of my control?</li> <li>• How much time and energy am I spending focusing on things related to this situation which are out of my control, within my control or within my influence?</li> <li>• How can I increase my control and influence in relation to this situation?</li> <li>• How will I look back on this in 1 week, 1 month, 3 months or 1 year?</li> <li>• What does this mean for my current situation?</li> </ul>
<b>2. Change your inner self-talk</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Become more aware of the thoughts you have – for a few days try writing them down – just a word or two</li> <li>2. Practise replacing the thoughts with more positive counter statements – use the following guidelines:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Never use double negatives to create a positive</li> <li>b) Use the term 'I' in your statement e.g. "I am" or "I can"</li> <li>c) Make your statements believable</li> <li>d) Write your statement in the present tense as if it were going to happen now e.g. "I am feeling more calm and relaxed" rather than "I will soon feel more calm and relaxed"</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Use your positive counter statements when you catch yourself thinking negative thoughts replace it with your positive statement. This may take some practise but it will get easier the more you do it.</li> </ol>
<b>3. 10-second mindful pause</b>	<p>Devise a 10 second routine you can run for moments when you feel you are getting anxious. For example taking your pulse, taking three deep breaths or paying attention to a non-anxious part of your body such as your feet or hands. Or look at something outside of the window. Taking a moment to pause in stressful situations helps ground you in calmer moments.</p>
<b>4. Create a positive anchor</b>	<p>Create a positive anchor to call upon when you feel yourself getting anxious:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close your eyes and take a deep breath</li> <li>• Think of a person your care about dearly – a family member, a friend or even a family pet</li> <li>• Repeat in your mind a genuine phrase of kindness and well-wishing for that person that feels authentic to you e.g. "May you be happy"</li> <li>• Use the image and repeat the phrases at your own pace – if your mind wanders, simply bring it back to the image and the phrase</li> <li>• Practise this repeatedly, even when you're not feeling anxious then you can call upon for stressful moments and it will help calm you down and stay anchored in the present moment</li> <li>• You can also connect a physical action with the practise such as squeezing your finger and thumb together, if you do this repeatedly then simply doing this action will help calm you down as your body will associate the action with those feelings of calm and kindness that you have practised.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Take it one day at a time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you notice that your brain is starting to spin out into future thinking and worry, take a mindful pause and remind yourself to take it one day at a time</li> <li>• Do what needs to get done today, and then take care of tomorrow when it comes – tomorrow</li> <li>• If needed use an even smaller timescale. Ask: What do I need to do this hour? Take on the day hour by hour, minute by minute, if that's what it takes to stay grounded.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Cut out the noise</b>	<p>Cutting down on daily distractions can significantly reduce your levels of anxiety. Notifications on your phone, computer or in person, distract you and decrease your focus contributing to you feeling stressed. For one week try switching off all the email and social media notifications you receive on your phone and computer. Only check them once per hour so that you are not compulsively checking your devices. Within a week or two, this change will likely give you a stronger sense of focus, control and wellbeing.</p>

Source materials: Adapted from various sources including Stephen Covey's *Circle of Concern and Influence*; Brewer (2020) *Anxiety Is Contagious. Here's How to Contain It*. HBR. <https://hbr.org/2020/03/anxiety-is-contagious-heres-how-to-contain-it>