

## Managing anxiety guide.

Keep in mind that **anxiety can vary** from person to person, so it's essential to find strategies that work **best for you**.

### Understand anxiety

Start by learning about anxiety, its causes, and common signs. Use our workshop and other online resources to help you.

### Self-awareness

Recognise the signs of anxiety in yourself, what are the warning signs that you are feeling anxious?

### Breathing techniques

Practise breathing exercises to calm your nervous system.

### Physical activity

Engage in regular physical exercise, which releases endorphins and helps reduce anxiety.

### Healthy diet

Eat a balanced diet with whole foods and avoid excessive caffeine and sugar.

### Adequate sleep

Ensure you get enough sleep. A well-rested body is better equipped to handle stress and anxiety. Follow information on good sleep hygiene to help you.

### Establish a routine

Create a daily or weekly schedule to add structure and predictability to your life. To-do lists, calendars and wall charts can all be useful tools for this.

### Journaling

Keep a journal to write down your thoughts, feelings, and worries. It can help you gain perspective and help process your experiences.

### Identify triggers

Recognise what triggers your anxiety. Once you identify them, you can work on managing them. Journaling or diaries can help you to identify patterns and triggers.

### Mindfulness and meditation

Try mindfulness or meditation to stay present and reduce rumination on past or future worries. When our mind is focussed on the present, it moves away from threat and grounds itself in safety.

### Progressive muscle relaxation

Practise progressive muscle relaxation to alleviate physical tension. Start with your head and work your way down. We have included an additional worksheet to support you with this.



# Managing anxiety guide (cont.)

## Limit information overload



Reduce exposure to distressing news or media, especially before bedtime, including “doom-scrolling”. Unfollow / block any social media accounts that do not make you feel good about yourself, the world or your future.

## Hobbies and interests



Engage in activities you enjoy to distract yourself from anxiety and stress. Return to old interests or look to try something new. Distraction is not a long-term solution but can help very quickly in the moment. Focus your attention on something non-threatening.

## Relaxation techniques



Explore relaxation techniques such as guided imagery or aromatherapy. There are a lot of resources online and helpful apps you can utilise.

## Time management



Prioritise tasks and break them into manageable steps to reduce overwhelm. When you are very anxious, these steps might have to be very small.

## Social support



Sharing your feelings can be a relief. Talk to friends or family members about your anxiety, alternatively find a support group or online community.

## Avoid perfectionism



Challenge perfectionism with self-compassion. Be understanding with yourself, acknowledge your humanity.

## Set realistic goals



Set achievable goals that help you face the things you fear and then celebrate your successes, no matter how small they may be. Graded exposure work can be helpful in this regard.

## Thought challenging



When you notice a worry-thought, define it clearly in your mind and assess the evidence for and against its validity. Then create a more balanced thought to challenge the original one.


For example: “*I made a mistake, I am going to lose my job*” becomes “*I have made a mistake, my boss will not be happy about it but I will most likely be given chance to correct it*”

## Medication & therapy



Some people feel they benefit from medications to help with anxiety. In the UK, you can speak to your GP about your options although it may take some trial and error.

It may also be beneficial to explore your therapy options. In the UK, your GP is a good starting point to discover what is available to you locally.



Investing in Wellbeing’s resources are designed to support self-help and are not a replacement for professional intervention. If your difficulties persist or worsen please seek advice from a health professional.