

The 5,4,3,2,1 technique

Name 5 things you can see in the room with you (e.g. chair, painting)

Name 4 things you can feel (e.g. my feet on the floor, cool air on my skin)

Name 3 things you can hear right now (e.g. people talking outside)

Name 2 things you can smell right now (e.g. toast, perfume)

Name 1 good thing about yourself (e.g. I am strong)

Touch and describe an object

Find an object around you e.g. cushion, handbag, water bottle.

Try to describe it as if you are explaining it to someone who has never seen it before. e.g.

“This is a cushion, it is a square shape with a red and purple pattern of stripes...it feels soft with some hard ridges around the corners”

Repeat until you feel calm.

Memory Game

When you are feeling anxious, you need to try to reorient yourself to the present moment, and using declarative memory can help with this. e.g.

Name as many types of dog breeds you can.

How many cities have you visited around the world?

Repeat the alphabet backwards.

Say your Mantra

When you are not in an anxious state, it can be helpful to develop a list of personal mantras or affirmations that help you when you become panicked or disoriented. Write them down somewhere and keep them in your handbag. e.g.

I am safe, I am here in the present moment

This feeling will pass, nothing bad is happening right now

I can handle these emotions, I am strong

Square Breathing

Getting your breathing under control can be hugely effective in reducing anxiety. Square breathing is a simple way to refocus your attention to your breath and the present moment.

With your index finger, slowly trace the shape of a square in front of you, keeping your eyes on that finger.

With one side, breathe in for 3 seconds...

With the next side, hold your breath for 1 second...

With the third side, breathe out for 3 seconds...

With the final side, hold for 1 second...

Self Soothe Box

It's recommended to have a range of sensory things and something to focus your mind on. You could include something to smell, to touch, to look at and maybe even something to taste.

Touch – Soft fabric, feather, stress toys, playdough. This serves as a good distraction for your hands and can encourage your muscles to relax

Smell – Peppermint for grounding, lavender, rose or chamomile for relaxation. Smells you find comforting.

Taste - A boiled sweet, chocolate, mints.

Music – Write down calming songs that are personal to you. Use a wind up music box.

Memories – Photos of people or places with positive memories linked to them. A nostalgic item.

Positive Affirmation/Quote Cards/Breathing Cards

Activity – Having an activity to complete can really help you self-soothe. Colouring sheets, puzzle books, poetry, cross stitch

Grounding techniques...

focus on the here and now

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