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17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

Worry, stress, and anxiety can trigger a host of health problems, but there are things we can do to overcome the feelings of worry, stress, and anxiety. Here are 17 simple ways to relieve worry, stress, and anxiety.

You Got This!

How do I forgive myself?

How do I stop worrying about my kids?

Am I good enough?

All these questions and more are answered in **"You Got This!"**

"You Got This!" Is a thoroughly researched, easy-to-read, well-designed action plan to calm feelings of fear, anxiety, worry, and stress with a wide variety of proven cognitive behavioral therapy techniques, tips, and tricks that empower people to regain a sense of peace and control in their lives.

You Got This! Will show you how to decrease stressors, increase coping skills, increase confidence, increase resilience, and find solutions to your problems.

1. Go for a walk

Virtually any form of exercise can act as a stress reliever, but activities such as walking or jogging that involve repetitive movements of large muscle groups can be particularly stress

2 17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

relieving since they offer many of the same benefits as meditation. The benefits are strongest when you exercise regularly. People who exercise regularly are less likely to experience anxiety than those who do not exercise.

There are a few reasons behind this.

Regular exercise lowers the level of stress hormones. It also helps release endorphins, which are chemicals that improve your mood and act as natural painkillers.

Exercise can also improve your sleep quality, which can be negatively affected by stress and anxiety.

Regular exercise improves feelings of confidence and mood, which in turn promotes mental wellbeing.

Try to find an exercise routine or activity you enjoy, such as walking, dancing, rock climbing or yoga to relieve stress, worry, and anxiety.

2. Consider supplements

Several herbal and natural supplements help manage and relieve stress and anxiety. Here is a brief overview of some of the most common ones:

Lemon balm: Lemon balm is a member of the mint family that has been studied for its anti-anxiety effects.

Research shows that taking a single dose of lemon balm increases calmness and alertness.

Other studies show that adding lemon balm to a food or drink reduces anxiety and improves memory.

Omega-3 fatty acids: One study showed that medical students who received omega-3 supplements experienced a 20% reduction in anxiety symptoms. In another study, researchers found that people who took high doses of omega-3s (up to 2,000 mg a day) seemed to have the most reduction in anxiety symptoms.

3 17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

Ashwagandha: Studies show that Ashwagandha, a medicinal herb, seems effective at lowering symptoms of stress and anxiety. Ashwagandha helps to lower levels of cortisol, a stress hormone in the body.

Valerian: In studies, Valerian root demonstrated antioxidant, neuroprotective, antispasmodic, anxiolytic (anxiety reducing), anticancer, and antidepressant effects. It is also popularly used as a sleep aid due to its tranquilizing effect.

Kava: Kava is an herbal remedy used to relieve stress and anxiety and boost sleep. Studies show that this plant extract has a calming, euphoric effect.

Vitamin B: Many studies show that B-complex supplements have been shown to be beneficial in alleviating symptoms of anxiety. Vitamin B1 is important for balancing blood sugar levels, which are a significant factor in anxiety levels.

Vitamin B3 has been shown to help with anxiety at a dosage of 1,000-3,000mg per day.

Vitamin B5 supports the adrenal glands, which reduces stress and anxiety levels.

Vitamin B6 together with magnesium can balance out anxiety that occurs in conjunction with PMS.

Vitamin B9 (also known as folate or folic acid) and vitamin B12 are important in balancing out depressive moods.

Although individual B vitamin components offer positive effects, it is a good idea to include a B-complex since they work together synergistically.

Some supplements can interact with medications or have side effects, so you may want to consult with a doctor if you have a medical condition.

3. Connect with nature

Spending time outside in nature is good for the body and the mind. It helps relieve feelings of worry, anxiety, and stress. Natural beauty distracts us from problems and just helps us feel good.

Studies show that being in nature, or even viewing scenes of nature, reduces anger, fear, and stress and increases pleasant feelings. Exposure to nature not only makes you feel better emotionally, but it also contributes to your physical wellbeing, reducing blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, and the production of stress hormones.

4. Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy uses aromatic essential oils medicinally to improve the health of the body, mind, and spirit. It enhances both physical and emotional health. Several studies show that aromatherapy can decrease anxiety and improve sleep.

Some scents are especially soothing. Here are some of the most calming scents:

Lavender

Rose

Vetiver

Bergamot

Roman chamomile

Neroli

Frankincense

Sandalwood

Ylang ylang

Orange or orange blossom

Geranium

Aromatherapy can come in many forms including using essential oils, scented candles, diffusers, aromatic spritzers, inhalers, bathing salts, body oils, creams, massage lotions, facial steamers, etc. There are many available options to use this tool to help relieve anxiety and stress.

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5. Journaling

One way to handle stress is to write things down. Many studies have shown that journaling is a valuable tool to improve mental health. There are many approaches to journaling that can help with anxiety:

Taking out the trash: If you are struggling with negative or overwhelming thoughts, one technique to help relieve the tension and stress is to write all the negative thoughts down on paper.

Keep writing until you cannot think of anything else to write. Then tear up the paper and throw it away or burn it. This symbolically helps your mind understand that these thoughts are

6 17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

garbage. Then write new positive thoughts to replace the negative ones. Keep and re-read those positive thoughts often.

Gratitude journal: Gratitude may help relieve stress and anxiety by focusing your thoughts on what is positive in your life.

Success journal: Writing down successes and focusing on positive thoughts have been shown to reduce worry and stress.

Write a letter you will not send: When you are feeling anxious about an interaction or a personal relationship, you might have a lot of dialogs building up in your head.

And while a real conversation might be necessary, writing a letter to someone that you will not send will help to expel some of the extra energy that is overwhelming you.

Write an honest and brutal letter, holding nothing back. Write as many letters as you need to before you feel some relief — just do not send them.

6. Listen to soothing music

The soothing power of music is well-established. It affects our emotions and can be an extremely effective stress management tool.

Soothing music can slow the pulse and heart rate, lower blood pressure and decrease the levels of stress hormones and distract us from our worries.

Research shows that listening to music can help a person with clinical depression or bipolar disorder get through their worst, lowest moods.

When people are feeling stressed and overwhelmed, there is a tendency to avoid actively listening to music. Perhaps because it feels like a waste of time when there is so much to do and to worry about.

7 17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

But adding music to our day is a small effort that can produce great rewards since our productivity increases when stress is reduced.

To incorporate music into a busy life, try playing CDs in the car, or listen while doing other necessary tasks like bathing or getting ready for the day. Take portable music with you when walking the dog or listen to music instead of watching TV to wind down before bed.

7. Sing

Singing has been scientifically proven to lower stress, relieve anxiety, and elevate endorphins which make you feel uplifted and happy. It helps relax muscle tension and decreases the levels of the stress hormones in the blood stream and can help take your mind off the day's troubles to boost your mood.

In addition, scientists have identified a tiny organ in the ear called the sacculus, which responds to the frequencies created by singing.

The response creates an immediate sense of pleasure, regardless of what the singing sounds like so you do not have to have an amazing voice to feel the positive effects of singing.

Participants in one study showed significant decreases in both anxiety and depression levels after one month of adding singing to their routine.

So, if you find yourself in a rough spot, sing along to an upbeat, positive song to relieve stress, worry, and anxiety. Sing through one song three times or sing three different positive upbeat songs once.

Allow the music to wash through you and feel the healing and invigorating effects immediately lifting mood and bringing relief. From my own experience, I can say that it really works.

8 17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

Print out the lyrics so you can sing all the words and choose songs that have lyrics that have meaning to you personally.

Here are a few suggested songs to help you create your own list: Roar by Katy Perry, Try Everything by Shakira, Waka Waka by Shakira, Brave by Sara Bareilles, Unwritten by Natasha Bedingfield, Fight Song by Rachel Platten, Happy by Pharrel Williams, Better When I'm Dancin' by Meghan Trainor, On Top of the World by Imagine Dragons, Believer by Imagine Dragons, and You Are Loved by Stars Go Dim.

8. Laughter

When looking for an excellent distraction, laughter really is the best medicine. Laughter stops distressing emotions. It helps you shift perspective, allowing you to see situations in a more realistic, less threatening light.

Laughter makes you feel good. It triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals.

And the good feeling that you get when you laugh remains with you even after the laughter subsides. Humor helps you keep a positive, optimistic outlook through difficult situations, disappointments, and loss.

It adds joy and zest to life, eases anxiety and tension, relieves stress, improves mood, and strengthens resilience.

So, what makes you laugh? A good joke? Funny cat videos? Make a list of things that make you laugh and keep them on hand because nothing works faster or more dependably to relieve stress, worry, and anxiety than a good laugh.

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9 17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

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9. Connect with friends

We live in a digital age where we can be tempted to replace person to person contact with phones and computers, especially if we are feeling vulnerable.

But humans are social creatures, we crave feeling supported, valued, and connected.

Studies show that being socially connected increases happiness and leads to better health and a longer life.

It helps overcome feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Make a list of the people you can turn to.

These are people that you trust to support you and try to contact them regularly.

Reach out to them and ask for specific kinds of help. Remember, your friends cannot read your mind and it's not fair to expect them to.

And if you are working on a goal, such as trying to overcome anxiety and depression, having a friend to report to and keep you accountable can make all the difference in the world.

The likelihood of getting new habits to stick, of following through on your assignments and reaching goals is remarkably higher when someone else is aware of your goal or assignment and you set a time to report back to someone on your progress.

10. Just say "no"

Being selective about what you take on — and saying no to things that will unnecessarily add to your load — can reduce your stress levels.

Take control over the parts of your life that you can change and are causing you stress. One way to do this may be to say “no” more often.

This is especially true if you find yourself taking on more than you can handle, as juggling many responsibilities can leave you feeling overwhelmed.

Finding ways to simplify can help to prevent, manage, and relieve stress, worry, and anxiety.

11. Avoid procrastination

Another way to take control of your stress is to stay on top of your priorities and stop procrastinating.

Worrying about something that you need to do takes energy. That is energy expended in addition to the energy required to do the task.

Procrastinating undesirable tasks takes more effort than just doing them.

Procrastination can lead you to act reactively, leaving you scrambling to catch up. This can cause stress, which negatively affects your health and sleep quality.

Get in the habit of making a to-do list organized by priority.

If you cannot get everything done, pick six items that are the most important and focus on those. Give yourself realistic deadlines and work your way down the list.

One suggestion is to set aside a certain block of time each day, 30 minutes for example, to work on items on your to-do list.

12. Pet the dog

If you are feeling anxious, stressed, depressed or lonely, one thing that might help is to spend some time petting a dog or cat.

Science shows that playing with or petting an animal can reduce stress and can also help us reduce feelings of isolation and help us feel more connected. Petting a dog or cat increases the production in the brain of “feel good” neurotransmitters which lowers stress and increases feelings of happiness. It also decreases production stress hormones, so it works in multiple ways to help you calm down and feel better.

13. Mindfulness and meditation

There are many studies that verify that mindfulness and meditation ease anxiety and mental stress. Mindfulness is about paying attention to daily life and the things we typically rush through. It is about turning down the volume in your mind by coming back to the body.

To see what a mindfulness meditation experience is like, you can try one of the guided recordings by Dr. Ronald Siegel, an assistant clinical professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School.

They are available for free [at www.mindfulness-solution.com](http://www.mindfulness-solution.com).

Here is a mini mindfulness/meditation exercise that you can do anytime, anywhere, to help calm you down in just a few seconds. With your hands in front of you, line up the tips of the fingers of your left hand to the corresponding tips of the fingers of your right hand.

Take 5 slow, deep belly breaths while pressing the fingertips against each other. Shake out your hands and relax them to your sides or your lap and take one last slow, deep breath.

Some people have found that doodling or using coloring books helps them get the creative juices flowing and lets their minds take a break.

12 17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

There are a variety of Art Therapy Adult Coloring Books featuring geometric patterns, mandalas, nature, flowers, owls, the ocean, Native American inspired designs, and more.

Many experts recommend these anti stress adult coloring books as an alternative to traditional meditation.

Deep abdominal breathing increases the supply of oxygen to your brain and promotes a feeling of calmness.

Deep breathing helps to activate the body's relaxation response and studies show that abdominal breathing for 20 to 30 minutes each day reduces anxiety and stress.

14. Practice abdominal breathing

Most people are not consciously aware of the way they are breathing, but generally, there are two types of breathing patterns:

Thoracic (chest) breathing

Diaphragmatic (abdominal) breathing

The easiest way to determine your breathing pattern is to put one hand over your belly button and the other hand over your heart.

As you breathe, notice which hand raises the most. If you're breathing properly, your abdomen should expand and contract with each breath (and the hand on it should raise the most).

When people are anxious, they tend to take rapid, shallow breaths that come directly from the chest, but chest breathing does not properly oxygenate the blood and may result in increased heart rate, dizziness, muscle tension, anxiety, and panic attacks.

When you are feeling anxious, you may not even be aware you are breathing this way, but the natural consequences of chest breathing will take their toll.

13 17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

Deep abdominal breathing, on the other hand, increases the supply of oxygen to your brain and promotes a feeling of calmness.

Deep breathing helps to activate the body's relaxation response and studies show that abdominal breathing for 20 to 30 minutes each day reduces anxiety and stress.

The next time you are feeling anxious try this simple relaxation technique:

Place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen. Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose. Keep your shoulders relaxed. Your abdomen should expand, and your chest should rise very little.

Exhale slowly through your mouth. As you blow air out, purse your lips slightly, but keep your jaw relaxed.

Repeat this breathing exercise for several minutes.

You can perform this exercise as often as needed. It can be done standing up, sitting down, or lying down.

If you find this exercise difficult or believe it is making you anxious or panicky, stop for now and try it again in a day or so. It is okay to build up the time gradually.

15. Yoga and tai chi

Yoga has become a popular method of stress relief and exercise among all age groups. Research has found that yoga can enhance mood and may even be as effective as antidepressant drugs at treating depression and anxiety. Yoga helps lower cortisol levels, blood pressure and heart rate, and modulates the stress response

Tai chi is another fabulous option for stress management. Tai chi may help improve your mood if you are depressed or anxious.

Preliminary research suggests that regularly practicing tai chi can reduce the symptoms of anxiety and depression.

It's believed that the slow, mindful breaths and movements have a positive effect on the nervous system and mood-regulating hormones.

16. Serve others

Depression, worry, stress, and anxiety tend to make a person retreat inward. Helping other people can help bring us outside ourselves. It can also help distract us from our own problems and think about something else.

Studies have shown that people who help others have lowered levels of depression and anxiety.

In fact, in the research study, service was more effective in making a positive difference in the way participants felt about themselves than trying to pamper themselves or creating self-esteem goals.

17. Reduce caffeine intake

Research shows that high doses of caffeine, a stimulant found in coffee, tea, and energy drinks, can increase levels of anxiety, depression and increases the need for anxiety medication.

Caffeine may cause anxiety and panic in panic disorder patients and may aggravate the symptoms of premenstrual syndrome.

Chronic users who are caffeine-sensitive may develop symptoms of caffeinism a condition marked by restlessness, nervousness, irritability, insomnia, diuresis, tremors, and tachycardia at relatively low doses.

And heavy caffeine users may show signs of caffeine withdrawal syndrome after abstaining from the drug.

15 17 Simple Ways to Relieve Worry, Stress, and Anxiety

People have different thresholds for how much caffeine they can tolerate. If you notice that caffeine makes you jittery or anxious, consider cutting back.

Although many studies suggest that coffee can be healthy in moderation, it's not for everyone.

In general, four or fewer cups per day is considered a moderate amount.

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