

Tips for Reducing Anxiety

1. Take care of your physical well-being



- a. **Sleeping:** Keep your sleep as consistent as possible by going to sleep and waking up at the same time every day. Avoid caffeine and spend at least 30 minutes a day outside. If you don't fall asleep within 20 minutes of turning in (or if you wake up and can't fall back to sleep in 20 minutes), get out of bed and do something relaxing until you feel sleepy.
- b. **Eating:** Eat a breakfast that contains protein every day. This will provide energy for the day. Enjoy complex carbohydrates which are believed to increase serotonin. Try to eat healthy, balanced meals that include lots of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- c. **Exercise:** Even a daily 10-15 minute walk can help increase the flow of serotonin in the brain. This can help improve mood and decrease anxiety. Find forms of exercise that you enjoy (dancing, running, yoga, tennis, walking) and give any new exercise routine time so that you build endurance, strength and confidence.
- d. **Substance Use:** Alcohol and drugs often have an exacerbating long-term effect on mental health struggles. Limit or avoid substances altogether.

2. Take care of your social well-being



- a. Develop and maintain relationship(s) with individuals that you can confide in and share your struggles.
- b. Be mindful of your social energy levels. Too much socializing can be draining for some people. You may also opt for deeper, quality connections instead of quantity of social interactions and friendships.
- c. Avoidance of social settings (or other situations that create anxiety) are not effective anxiety management! Talk with a counselor to help you develop more effective ways of treating and coping with anxiety instead of avoiding social interactions and relationships.
- d. Try engaging in hobbies or clubs related to your interests. This will help engage you in something you're interested in, provide an opportunity for connection, and decrease isolation.
- e. Limit your engagement with social media. Research indicates that social media increases anxiety.

3. Take care of you emotional and mental well-being



- a. What is draining your mental and emotional energy? Are there things you can cut out, delegate, cut back on, or take a break from?
- b. What are you doing to recharge? If you're losing energy faster than you're recharging, this can cause fatigue and leave you vulnerable to mental health struggles. What do you enjoy doing? What do you do to rest? What makes you feel nurtured or fulfilled? Do more of that.
- c. What are the ways in which you are coping, in both healthy and unhealthy ways? Counseling can help you gain strategies to cope with your struggles.
- d. Feeling anxious? It can be helpful to reflect on why you may be anxious and what about a specific situation is anxiety provoking. What is rational and what is not? What is the most likely scenario? How could you cope with it?

4. Take care of your self-care



- a. Practice deep breathing. ([LINK HERE](#))
- b. Master Mindfulness. ([LINK HERE](#))
- c. Explore Yoga and Meditation. ([LINK HERE](#))

5. When to seek professional help



- a. If struggles are getting in the way of day-to-day life or completing tasks.
- b. If your relationships are being impacted.
- c. If you are experiencing physical symptoms such as headache, stomach ache, excessive sweating, trouble breathing.
- d. You notice major changes in functioning (eating, sleep, mood, concentration).
- e. You engage in unhealthy ways of coping such as drug or alcohol use, self-injurious behavior (cutting, scratching, burning, etc.), food, etc.