

-Grounding/Coping Skills for Anxiety Relief-

- **Use your senses to bring yourself back into the present moment**
 - **5 Senses** - focus in on your five senses to help you stay present in the room. This is especially helpful if you find yourself dissociating or having too much anxiety about the past or future. You can focus in on 5 things you see, 4 things you hear, 3 things you smell, 2 things you touch, and 1 thing you taste.
 - **Change of Temperature** - Run cold water over your hands and focus on how the temperature feels on each part of your hands. You can switch the temperature to warmer water if you'd like and then focus on those sensations.
 - **Tapping, Squeezing or Shaking** - With your hands, tap your body all over, from your head to your toes. You can also squeeze different parts of your body, instead of tapping. Try to do these evenly on both sides. If you want to stay in one part of your body (your legs for example), try tapping back and forth both sides for a while. This can create a sense of calm and grounding and bring you into the present moment. Shaking is another thing to try on both sides of the body. Shake your hands, your arms, your upper body, and then move to your legs, ankles, feet with lower body shaking. Shaking is what animals do after a traumatic incident to help them get back to their baseline.
 - **Eat** - Sometimes eating something can help us feel more regulated. Doing some mindful, single-tasking eating can help us stay in the moment. As you eat, take small bites, one bite at a time slowly and pay attention to the taste and texture of the food. Don't have any other distractions as you eat (turn the TV off, avoid conversations for this activity as well), and focus on staying in the moment. It's important to listen to and fuel our bodies, pay attention to your hunger/fullness cues and your cravings. Pay attention to your mood pre and post meals.
- **Breathing** - Inhale and count to 4, hold your breath for 3 seconds, and then exhale for another count of 4. Repeat a mantra or happy word as you breath. For example - "I am safe", peace, easy, or gone.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation** - This is where you tense and then relax parts of your body. For example, press your feet to the ground as hard as you can for a few seconds, or squeeze your toes or your wrists. Then release the pressure and notice how those areas that were tensed up now feel.

- **Distraction Games** - Sometimes we need healthy distraction to help us feel more grounded. Think of different categories as a distraction. For example, you can think of cities, types of dogs, tv shows you like. You can also think of answers in these categories that all begin with the same chosen letter.
- **Safety Visualization** - Create a safe place in your mind. You can think back to a moment when you felt safe and happy. Or you can create a new safe place that you haven't experienced yet. Think about all the details of being in that moment. Tune into how your body feels in that moment.
- **Think About People** - Think about people in your life that you care about, or that make you feel at peace. Looking at photos of them can help with this.
- **Hug Yourself** – Give yourself a hug. This can help you feel a sense of containment and safety. You don't just have to rely on others for a hug, you can give yourself one!
- **Movement** - Sometimes movement is what we need. Movement such as stretching, jumping up and down, dancing, or running/jogging can all be helpful. Focus in always on how your body feels as you move around and pick movement that feels enjoyable.
- **Body Scans** - take a moment to scan through your entire body to notice how you feel and if there is any tension, or lightness throughout. Start by sitting or lying in a comfortable position and close your eyes. Focus on your lower part of your body first. Feel your feet on the ground, and slowly move your attention up your leg through your ankles, knees, thighs, etc. See if you can notice pressure, tension, temperature, and other sensations. Take a deep breath into the tension areas that you feel and visualize releasing that tension as you exhale. Do the same with the upper body next all the way through your head and face. It may help to visualize a light of energy moving through your body as a way to help you release tensions and become more connected with yourself. This light can leave through the top of your head at the end of the scan, with certain releases and intentions in mind.
- **Develop a growth mindset** - View challenges as opportunities for growth, prioritize learning over seeking approval, focus on the process rather than the outcome, learn that growth from mistakes doesn't mean failure, have compassion and understanding for yourself, and reward your efforts.
- **Flexible mindset** - Flexibility is part of building resilience. By learning how to be more adaptable, you will be much better equipped to respond to changes and crises in life. It's

good to acknowledge that there's not one correct way to go about solving a problem or thinking something through. We may have to think creatively and flexibly in finding new solutions to our problems, and recognizing that things don't always work out as planned. Getting other perspectives can be helpful. Rigidity can keep us stuck, especially when we need to find a way to move forward that's different from our original plan.

- **Social engagement** – We are social creatures by nature. When we are engaged positively with others, this in turn regulates our nervous system to create more joy, resilience, tolerance, and more. It is helpful to connect with your support networks in times of stress. It's been more challenging to connect socially with others during the pandemic, but thanks to technology there are many options for social connection even from afar.
- **Meditation** – this can be done in as little as 3 minutes. It doesn't have to be a big commitment. There are several forms of meditation, but one way to do this is to get in a comfortable position and let thoughts come and go without judgment, and without doing or fixing anything. Letting them "be". There are several helpful meditations apps out there (i.e., Down Dog, Calm, Headspace), and there's a lot of free content on Youtube (can search for guided meditations or sound meditations for example). We even have a meditation room on campus through the Rise Center (it's closed now, but students can check the website for updates - <https://www.lwtech.edu/campus-life/meditation-room/>).

Lastly, here are some articles that can also be helpful –

1. <https://buckeyerecoverynetwork.com/college-anxiety-guide/>
2. <https://www.verywellmind.com/anxiety-and-college-1393080>
3. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/news/2020/dec/living-away-home-managing-homesickness>

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Please click [here](#) for information on our counseling services. If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call the 24-Hour Crisis Clinic hotline: 866-427-4747. TTY: 206-461-3610