

## HANDOUT

# Tools for Anxiety

Often anxiety can mean we are thinking about something in the past or future. The following exercises and tools can support you in bringing yourself back into the present moment.

### 5-4-3-2-1 Coping Technique for Anxiety

Before starting this exercise, pay attention to your breathing. Slow, deep, long breaths can help you maintain a sense of calm or help you return to a calmer state. Once you find your breath, go through the following steps to help ground yourself:

- 5** Acknowledge FIVE things you see around you. It could be a pen, a spot on the ceiling, anything in your surroundings.
- 4** Acknowledge FOUR things you can touch around you. It could be your hair, a pillow, or the ground under your feet.
- 3** Acknowledge THREE things you hear. This could be any external sound. If you can hear your belly rumbling that counts! Focus on things you can hear outside of your body.
- 2** Acknowledge TWO things you can smell. Maybe you are in your office and smell pencil, or maybe you are in your bedroom and smell a pillow. If you need to take a brief walk to find a scent you could smell soap in your bathroom, or nature outside.
- 1** Acknowledge ONE thing you can taste. What does the inside of your mouth taste like—gum, coffee, or the sandwich from lunch?

Source: University of Rochester, Medical Center

### Focus Feeling

Try Feeling Focusing. Focus your attention on where the feeling of anxiousness is in your body and keep your attention there until the feeling moves or dissolves. For example the tension could be in your abdomen or your neck. Whenever your attention wanders, bring it back to the place in your body where the physical feeling is. Doing this for five or ten minutes can reduce, if not eliminate, the anxiety.

Source: Psychology Today

## Find a Mantra

Use positive affirmations to help manage your mood when feeling anxious.

Ex: Tell yourself, “This feeling is only temporary.”

“I am..”

“This too shall pass”

Be patient with yourself.

Source: Healthline

## Affirmations

Repeat kind, compassionate phrases to yourself:

“You’re having a rough time, but you’ll make it through.”

“You’re strong, and you can move through this pain.”

“You’re trying hard, and you’re doing your best.”

Say it, either aloud or in your head, as many times as you need.

Source: Healthline

## Meditation

Mindfulness meditation can help relieve anxiety. For those who are not used to mediating, below are apps for smart phones that can support with guided meditation:

\* **Headspace**

\* **Rootd**

\* **Acupressure**

\* **Stop Panic &  
Anxiety Self-  
Help**

\* **Sleep Time**

\* **Relax & Rest  
Guided Meditations**

\* **Calm**

\* **Stop, Breathe, and  
Think**

\* **Colorfy**

\* **Dare**

\* **Nature Sounds  
Relax and  
Sleep**

\* **Balance**