

Stress and Anxiety coping skills

Anxiety is perceived threat – body reacts as if the threat is real

Coping strategies are based on the concept of moving from sympathetic response (fight, flight, or freeze) back to parasympathetic (rest & digest) - (switching from fight/flight to rest/digest)

Getting back to the “Window of Tolerance” – (Hyper = fight, flight & Hypo = freeze responses) see graphic doc

3 Coping skills (preferably all three at once).

- Deep Breathing
- Bi-lateral rhythmic stimulation
- Refocusing thoughts to positive or neutral content

1. Deep OUT breaths – breathing app (B2R)
2. Vibration in throat to activate Vagus Nerve to signal relaxation – Singing, humming, gargle
3. Grounding (5 senses) – for panic
4. Kids- butterfly hugs/blowing bubbles
5. Pacing/walking
6. Exercise (cardio-vascular)
7. Yoga
8. Tai Chi
9. Massage
10. Acupuncture
11. Foot roller, reflexology
12. Music (listening & playing – instrumental)
13. Smile yoga
14. Dancing
15. Shaking, patting pressing body container – Peter Levine (Waking the Tiger)
16. R hand under left arm/cross arms (Levine)
17. Hand on forehead and heart (Levine)
18. EFT Tapping
19. Noise cancelling headphones
20. Notice HALT – Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired?
21. Guided meditation bit.ly/EAPMeditation
22. Mindfulness practices (here and now) – Fabulous or Headspace or Mindfulness Coach Apps
23. Fidget toys
24. Puzzles
25. Avoid caffeine, and sugar
26. Avoid negative inputs (people, media, news etc., social media)
27. Water – bathing/swimming/shower
28. Aromatherapy
29. Journaling (track mood & sleep journals)
30. Gratitude list
31. Talk it out with friends/family
32. Weighted blanket
33. Swinging/hammock
34. Reading (Fiction/Poetry)
35. Audio books/learning/Podcasts
36. Card/Board games/Video games (non-activating)
37. Drawing/coloring
38. Arts & crafts (knitting)
39. Gardening
40. Cooking/baking
41. Cleaning/organizing (make lists)
42. Time in nature
43. Movies/shows (non-activating)
44. Laughter & humor
45. Playing with pets/kids
46. Outdoor activities (hiking/fishing/kayaking/biking/golfing for some)
47. Identify triggers
48. Thinking loops – notice, interrupt & replace negative loop with positive
49. Brain Lock 4 steps - Jeffrey Schwartz (YouTube)
50. For sleep hygiene avoid electronics 30 minutes before and at bedtime

51. Full Spectrum Light (Happy Lamp for SAD)