

5 EASY EXERCISES

TO REDUCE ANXIETY



Eddins Counseling Group
ADULT, CHILD, COUPLE & FAMILY COUNSELING

ANXIETY LIES TO YOU!

Anxiety convinces us that we have control -- that it can be stopped by avoiding anything that triggers it. Don't fall for it! The more you avoid triggers, the worse your anxiety gets. Instead, be brave and confront your anxiety. That's the only way to truly gain control over it.

This eBook contains five easy exercises you can do to quell your anxiety.

You can do any of these in the moment to help reduce anxiety. More importantly, you can make a daily practice out of doing exercises like these. This will help prevent anxiety and reduce its impact on your life.

If you need help along the way, please reach out to us today to learn more about how we can help with anxiety.





1. INDULGE IN 2 MINUTE VACATIONS

Set a timer on your phone to go off every ninety minutes. When it goes off, take a two-minute vacation. Spend those two minutes doing something that makes your mind, body, and spirit feel amazing. Ideas include:

- Light a scented candle and inhale the smell.
- Focus on a photo of someone or something that makes you smile.
- Have a super-quick phone call with a loved one.
- Slowly, mindfully sip on water with lemon or tea with honey.
- Dance to a favorite song.
- Give yourself a hand massage.

Brainstorm a long list of ways to enjoy your two-minute breaks. It'll be easier to indulge in them if you can just pick off of a list.

Play with the timing. During stressful days, you might want to take a break every hour. Alternatively, you might find that taking a break every two hours is enough.



2. 2-4-6-8 BREATHING EXERCISE

Breathing exercises bring you back into your body. They release tension. And they bring your heart rate down to a manageable rhythm which is important for reducing anxiety. Here is one simple breathing exercise.

- Pause and focus on your breath.
- Breathe in to the count of 2.
- Exhale to the count of 2.
- Breathe in to the count of 2.
- Exhale to the count of 4.
- Breathe in to the count of 2.
- Exhale to the count of 6.
- Breathe in to the count of 2.
- Exhale to the count of 8.
- Breathe in to the count of 2.
- Exhale to the count of 10.

You always breathe in for just two seconds, exhaling longer and longer each time. Your anxiety should decrease as you do. This is just one example of a breathing rhythm that can calm anxiety.



3. PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

This body exercise is especially effective for people who experience physical anxiety symptoms including headaches, stomach problems, and muscle pain.

You will tense and then release every major muscle group in the body, “progressing” from the bottom of the feet to the top of the head. Notice the difference between the tension and the release.

- **Toes:** Curl them tightly into your feet. Release.
- **Calves:** Point your feet. Release. Flex your feet. Release.
- **Thighs:** Squeeze thighs tightly together. Release.
- **Torso:** Suck in your abdomen. Release.
- **Back:** Squeeze your shoulder blades together. Release.
- **Shoulders:** Lift and squeeze your shoulders towards your neck. Release.
- **Arms:** Make fists and squeeze them up towards your shoulders. Release.
- **Hands:** Tighten your fists. Release.
- **Face:** Scrunch your face together. Release.
- **Body:** Squeeze all of your body muscles at once. Release deeply.

Here's an audio file to lead you through the steps in more depth.
eddins.info/muscle-relaxation



4. PUT YOUR WORRIES IN A CONTAINER

Anxiety is overwhelming worry. If you can contain your worry so that it doesn't overwhelm you then you'll experience less anxiety. Try this:

- Visualize a container sitting in front of you, ready to hold all every worry that you have.
- Mentally list an immediate worry, then visualize putting that worry into the box.
- Repeat with every worry that comes to mind. Give the worry a name, then give it to the box.
- Visualize putting a lid on the container.
- Then visualize putting the container on a shelf.
- Now that your worries are contained, invite your mind to focus on something peaceful, pleasant, or productive.

This is just one example of how visualization can make your anxiety more concrete, less amorphous, and therefore more manageable.

Get tips on how to reduce worrying and anxiety
eddins.info/stop-worrying



5. PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION

The harder that you are on yourself, the worse your anxiety will be. Practice self-compassion by writing a letter to yourself.

Start by connecting with the compassion and kindness you have for a loved one, young child, or someone else you can't imagine being harsh with. From that place, write yourself a letter about a specific situation. Here's a sample:

"I can see you feel angry about XYZ. It is natural to feel angry." *You can go into detail about why those feelings are valid.*

"I want you to know that ..." *For example, "I want you to know that feeling angry is very common. It is a red light warning you that something doesn't feel right for you."*

"Some reasons you might feel this way are ..." *For example, "you have a history of trauma or you've been stretched too thin this week and this has triggered you."*

"Some gentle and compassionate things you might do for yourself include ..." *Brainstorm a list of things that you could do in this moment, this day, this week to help yourself through the situation.*

When your letter feels complete, read it aloud to yourself. But first, get comfortable. Take a sip of tea, light a candle, put on soft music ... whatever it takes.

The goal is to try and hear yourself from a compassionate place – to treat yourself gently. Relax. Then, start reading.



Struggling with anxiety?

Not sure how serious your symptoms are?
Take our anxiety test and find out more

www.eddinscounseling.com/anxiety-test

Call or visit us online to schedule a free consultation
and find out how we can help.

Online therapy services are available in multiple states
throughout the US.

In person therapy services are available in Houston, TX

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