

3 Mindful Practices to Help with Anxiety

Mindfulness is the practice of present moment, non-judgemental awareness of our thoughts, emotions and bodily sensations.

1

Grounding

When our mind is caught in a thought spiral, and it feels like we are experiencing a situation within a virtual reality, grounding helps us to connect back to the present moment and what is happening here and now.

Practice 1: Take a moment to connect to each of your senses: what can you see, hear, taste, smell and touch in this moment?

2

Physiological Sigh

Anxiety is an emotion, but associated with it are a whole host of physical sensations we experience in the body.

When we feel anxious, our nervous system has shifted into a sympathetic (fight, flight, freeze, fawn) state causing our heart rate, blood pressure and breathing rate to increase. We are also likely to be breathing short, sharp, shallow breaths which increases the levels of CO₂ in our bloodstream.

Practice 2: To help you move into a calmer state, take 2 inhales through the nose, a short pause at the top, followed by a long, full sigh out through the mouth.

3

Use LIFE to question our thoughts

When we are in an anxious and hyper-vigilant state, it is really challenging to "just think positively".

Practice 3: Instead of putting pressure on yourself to think differently, can you question the thoughts that are arising instead?

- **Like** - Do I like this thought? Is it helpful in this moment?
- **Insightful** - What is this anxious thought telling me? What needs to change?
- **Forward** - Is this thought helping me move forward, or is it keeping me stuck?
- **Else** - What else can I feel in this moment? Is there another emotion I can invite in? Remember emotions are temporary, and it's possible to feel more than one emotion at once.