

Quick tips to beat stress and anxiety

Remember CLANG

CONNECT

Talk to your friends, family, colleagues via text, WhatsApp, phone calls, FaceTime etc. Stay connected, share feeling, share ideas on things to do when at home that help with relaxation, provide encouragement. Now more than ever we need to talk more, support one another even more and be caring and understanding towards one another.

LEARN

Learning new things is actually really good for our mental health. When you are at home, challenge yourself to learn something new, it could be a new language, a new recipe, researching something historical or geographical that you don't know much about, learn a new skill such as drawing or poetry writing. Play games, do crosswords or word searches or Sudoku, these activities are great for stimulating the intellectual part of our brains and soothing the emotional part of the brain.

ACTIVE

Increase activity. Exercise at home. Use YouTube for guidance, learn something new like yoga or circuit training. Dance about to your favourite music. Activity is so good for our mental health and for releasing stress hormones and increasing relaxation.

NOTICE

What does notice mean? It actually means stay in the present moment, in the now. Don't allow ourselves to dwell on the past or the future too much. Mindfulness practice helps so much with this and has been proven to reduce stress and anxiety. <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/people/mark-williams>

GIVE

Giving kindness to others has been proven to be good for your own mental health. Find small ways to give kindness to others such as a smile, a thank you, a cup of tea. This increases our bonds to others and helps us to feel much better in ourselves. Also remember to give kindness to yourself as well 😊

FINALLY: REMEMBER TO BREATHE!

Never underestimate the power of a few slow deep breaths! When we take a deep breath in to a count of 4, hold that breath for 3 seconds, then release the breath to a count of 4, our parasympathetic nervous system is then activated. This is the system that helps to clam us down. It seems like the simplest strategy in the world doesn't it and yet it is mighty! Practice daily, as much as possible to keep yourself calm.

BREATHE IN FOR A COUNT OF 4

AT THE TOP OF THE BREATH HOLD ON FOR A COUNT OF 3

RELEASE THE BREATH FOR A COUNT OF 4

REPEAT A FEW TIMES

You can also gradually increase the breath count each time to a count of 5 and then 6. The act of counting as you breathe also helps to keep your focus on your breath and is even more emotionally soothing.