



“Anxiety and Panic”

When stress is high it can result in discrete periods of intense fear or discomfort. These emotions can be the result of high performance demands, perceived capabilities, or unpredictable outcomes. Symptoms can include accelerated heart rate, sweating, shaking/trembling, difficulty breathing, nausea or dizziness, negative thoughts, hot flashes, and numbness to name a few. When anxiety or panic emotions surface they can be debilitating, they can disrupt normal function, or change behavior resulting in poor performance.

Below are grounding techniques. These simple strategies help focus and readjust stressful emotions so that we remain in control. They allow us to not face disruption and achieve the goals we have set. Environmental stressors can trigger irrational thoughts/emotions and result in maladaptive responses. Instead, use the tips to get centered, anchor yourself in reality, and utilize your skills/resources to overcome difficult times.

1. FOCUS YOUR MIND

- Describe the environment (colors, shapes, textures, smells, temperatures...)
- Say the alphabet backwards
- Skip count by 3's (3,6,12...) or count backwards from 50 by subtracting 4 each times (50, 46, 42...)
- Name cities that you have recently visited

2. FOCUS YOUR SENSES

- Run cool or warm water over your hands
- Clench your fist for a few seconds then release
- Tap your foot on the ground, literally “grounding” them
- Reach in your pocket and recognize the object (keys, coins, papers)
- Stretch
- Eat something, describing the flavors
- Take slow, deep breaths

3. RE-WRITE THE SCRIPT

- Say kind statements
- Think of your favorites (color, animal, food, tv show...)
- Picture someone you care about
- Remembering the words to an inspiring song, quotation, or poem
- Think about the future (what are you looking forward to in the next week)

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