

Panic Attack Relief

Panic attacks can be intrusive and happen unwelcome. Notice when you're beginning to panic and remember you can utilize coping techniques early. It can be helpful for you to have a prepared list of strategies, so there's minimal thought necessary while you're in a high state of anxiety. Try many (or all) of the techniques listed and see which you find most effective.

Box Breathing

This is one of the top breathing exercises for panic attacks. It's an easier technique to remember and can be subtle when you're in public spaces. Counting the breaths out loud or in your head can help redirect your focus from intrusive thoughts.

What to do:

Inhale for **4** seconds.

Hold for **4** seconds.

Exhale for **4** seconds.

Hold for **4** seconds.

478 Breathing

A breathing exercise developed to be a “natural tranquilizer for the nervous system”. This is commonly used for reducing anxiety and falling asleep fast.

What to do:

Inhale for **4** seconds.

Hold for **7** seconds.

Exhale for **8** seconds.



Holding Ice

An effective grounding technique, in which the intense cold of ice “shocks” your nervous system, interrupting spiraling thoughts. **What to do:** Hold an ice cube in the palm of your hand and close your fist tightly. (If holding the ice is too intense, wrap it in a paper towel.)



54321 Grounding

A mindfulness exercise for calming racing thoughts and grounding you in the present by redirecting your focus to your surroundings. This technique engages all 5 senses.

What to do:

Notice **5** things you can **see**.

Notice **4** things you can **touch**.

Notice **3** things you can **hear**.

Notice **2** things you can **smell**.

Notice **1** thing you can **taste**.



Progressive Muscle Relaxation

A simple, mindfulness exercise that aims to bring awareness to the body and relieve muscle tension connecting the mind and body. **What to do:** In a safe, relaxing place, sit or lay down. Bring awareness to each part of your body, tightening and loosening the muscles there. (Example: Hard clenching your fists.) Start from the top of your head and make your way down to your toes. A guided video is recommended for beginners.



Focus on an Object

A simple, grounding exercise to redirect intrusive thoughts to your surroundings. **What to do:** Choose any object in the room. Focus all of your attention on that one object. Notice all the shapes, textures and other qualities of the object, and describe them out loud or in your head.



Recite a Mantra

A word or phrase that's repeated to help focus your mind, calm your nervous system, and set intentions. **What to do:** Choose a word or phrase that gives you a sense of safety and control. (Example: "This is just anxiety, and it will pass." or "This is uncomfortable but not dangerous." or "I am safe right now.") Repeat your chosen mantra out loud or in your head.



Elevate your Feet

If you're at home or somewhere safe, you can lay flat on the couch, bed, or soft floor. Use pillows or something else comfortable to elevate your feet. If you're able to, you can also use the wall next to where you're laying to raise your feet.