

Coping Mechanisms And Relaxation Techniques

Exercise 1: Butterfly hug

Self soothing, cross arms over and alternate gentle tapping of the shoulders. You can also stand behind someone and gently alternate tapping of their shoulders (with permission) to help calm them down.

Exercise 2: Calm place

Think of a time in a place that you felt calm, if you can't remember one imagine one. Preferably where you are by yourself. What could you see? What can you hear? What temperature is it? Relax with your eyes closed remembering being in that place, link it with a word. Hold the place and the word together in your mind. Continue to hold the place and word together and do the butterfly hug. When feeling anxious / stressed you can use the word to help bring the memory of calm back.

Exercise 3: Breathing

How do we breathe? Try breathing from the belly. Counting - can we count the in breath and out breath – try having a longer out breath. In for 6 out for 8.

When feeling tension rising you can concentrate on breathing, with counting, and a longer out breath.

Exercise 4: Breathing with movement

Standing and breathing from the belly but also using arm movements to help increase the strength of the breath. Inhale and raise the arms in front, exhale and lower the arms.

You can use an extra downward movement on the exhale to release all breath.

Exercise 5: Open palm

If your fist is clenched open your palm, sending a signal to the body and brain that you are relaxed.

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Exercise 6: Release tension

Leading on from the open palm technique, tense the muscles in your arms and legs and then relax them. This might have a similar feeling to open palm, but releasing tension from the whole body.

Exercise 7: Relax the jaw

Touch the roof of your mouth just behind your front teeth with your tongue, to help relax your jaw.

Exercise 8: Body Scan

Sitting comfortably, feel your weight in the chair, feet on the ground. Close your eyes and just notice how your body is feeling. Start at the top of your head, and work your way down to your toes.

Exercise 9: Light stream

Continue sitting in your seat, with your eyes closed and aware of your weight in the chair. Imagine a light from the sky, coming down onto your head, into your body and moving all the way to your toes. This can be whatever colour you like. A warm and calming light passing through your body to your toes and into the ground, sweeping away any tension.

Quick tips for grounding oneself

- Feel your feet on the floor
- Have a mint or a citrus sweet
- Sip some cold water
- Reflective / free writing
- Remember a place or time you felt calm