

8 LITTLE-KNOWN TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH ANXIETY

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We have lots of reasons to worry. A certain amount of worrying can be useful. It directs our attention to issues that might need to be managed. **However, when worry leads to constant anxiety, things have gone too far to be useful.**

We've all heard that we should breathe deeply when we're feeling anxious, but there are other possible solutions you may have never considered.

Try these ideas to deal with anxiety in a way that works for you:

- 1. Cold showers.** When you're anxious, your mind is racing and focused on negative thoughts. One quick way to bring your mind back to reality is to take a cold shower. It can take your breath away, but it certainly brings your mind back to the presently quickly!
- 2. Hold ice in your mouth.** This has a similar effect to taking a cold shower. In addition, breathing in that cold air that has passed over the ice is soothing to many people.
- 3. Pretend you're someone that handles stress and anxiety with ease.** Pick someone you know that exudes calm. Imagine being in their body.
 - What would you feel? What thoughts would you notice? **How do you think they would view and approach the situation that's causing you to feel anxious?** Maybe you'll discover something you can use.

4. **Imagine yourself in a peaceful setting.** What would be the most relaxing scenario for you? Would it be the mountains? The beach? A field of flowers? Who else would be there? What would they say? What would you smell and hear? What would the weather be like? Experience it fully.

5. **Do something that takes your full attention.** Whether it's doing a crossword puzzle, playing chess, or walking on a slackline in the backyard. Anything that fully occupies your attention for a while will give your mind a break from whatever is bothering you.

6. **Schedule worry time.** Instead of worrying throughout the day, why not schedule some worry time? You can worry all you want for 30 minutes, but you can't worry the other 23.5 hours of the day. **Just knowing that you can worry later will ease your mind and allow you to accomplish more.**
 - How much time do you need to worry? Do you think that worrying for an hour would accomplish more than 30 minutes? Maybe 15 minutes is enough.

7. **Go to bed earlier and get up earlier.** Going to bed earlier will allow you to get more sleep. Getting up earlier will allow you to start your day with less rushing around.
 - Try going to bed an hour earlier and get up 15 minutes earlier. The extra 45 minutes of sleep will do your mind and body some good. The extra 15 minutes of the morning will make your morning more relaxing.

8. **Go camping.** Or just get out of town. Sleeping on the ground or in a different bed in new surroundings can do a lot to change your perspective and alter your mood. If you need a change of pace, give yourself one. A weekend can do wonders.

- Where could you spend a weekend that would be a drastic change from your normal environment?

Anxiety can take all the joy out of life. **When you're worrying all of the time, it's challenging to find any enjoyment.**

Just as creating a feeling of anxiety is a skill, you can also develop the skill of calming yourself. Consider anxiety-reducing ideas that might seem a little unusual. There's no telling what will work for you until you try.