

Be honest—Can you identify with any of the following unhelpful ways of thinking?

Making assumptions:

Assuming you know what others are thinking or what is going to happen, jumping to conclusions and becoming convinced that these beliefs are reality.

'Should' and 'Must'

Thinking to yourself, 'I must...' or 'I should...' applies a lot of pressure. If you then don't fulfil the task it can make you feel like you have failed. Instead try saying 'I could' or 'I'd like to'

Remember

I am not alone, everything will be ok, anxiety is never something to be ashamed of, I am more capable than I believe, I am loved, I will be kind to myself, how I am feeling isn't going to be forever, I can do this!

Negative self-talk:

We all have inner voices and if you are always telling yourself 'I can't do it' or 'I'm stupid' the you will come to believe it over time. Ask yourself if you would speak to a friend like that? Try to catch the way you think about yourself and turn it into something positive. For eg changing 'I can't' to 'I will try'

Thinking in black and white:

If something doesn't go the way you wanted then you believe it to be a complete loss or failure, when in reality, there are usually positives to take from any situation

Personalisation:

Saying 'It's my fault' or taking complete responsibility. Is this really true?

Filtering:

Not seeing the positives in a situation and giving more attention and weight to the negatives

Making a mountain out of a molehill (catastrophising)

Working something up to feel more of a big deal than it really is and realising later you worried unnecessarily.

Handy helpers to come out of a PANIC ATTACK

- Slow your breathing as much as you can. Take deeper even breaths
- Remind yourself that you are safe and this will pass
- Ask a loved one to reassure you throughout the attack
- Get yourself somewhere safe/quieter if the environment is overwhelming
- Sit down and lean forward (as you would if feeling faint)

Mindfulness exercise to keep yourself grounded in the moment try this:

Breathe slowly and deeply, identify **5** things you can see **4** things you can hear **3** things you can feel **2** things you can smell and **1** thing you can taste

The idea is to keep you focussed on the present not your anxieties.

Here are some strategies you can use to feel less anxious, see what works for you.

- **Take your mind off of things with a hobby or fun activity**
- **Talk to someone you trust**
- **Spend time with nature**
- **Repeat positive affirmations eg YES I CAN**
- **Question anxious thoughts**
- **Practice mindfulness**
- **Learn to accept less than perfection**
- **Write down your thoughts and feelings**
- **Allow yourself time out and time to relax**



ANXIETY FIRST AID