

ANXIETY

Introduction

Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear that can be mild or severe. Everyone has feelings of anxiety at some point in their life, and usually this is a necessary feeling in order to help us cope with challenges and to keep ourselves safe. For example, you may feel worried and anxious about sitting an exam or having a medical test or job interview. During times like these, feeling anxious can be perfectly normal. General anxiety symptoms can last for extended periods; it is more than just being nervous.

Following on from last week's article on dedicating 'worry time' to think about your worries rather than worrying all the time, we are going to look at how to improve your quality of life.

Activities

Doing something you enjoy will give you less time to spend worrying and make you feel better overall.

Suggestions

- Do some exercise, like going swimming or cycling
- Spend time with a friend or family member
- Read a book
- Watch your favourite TV show
- Go to the cinema or theatre
- Do something creative, like drawing or painting
- Have a bath
- Learn something new

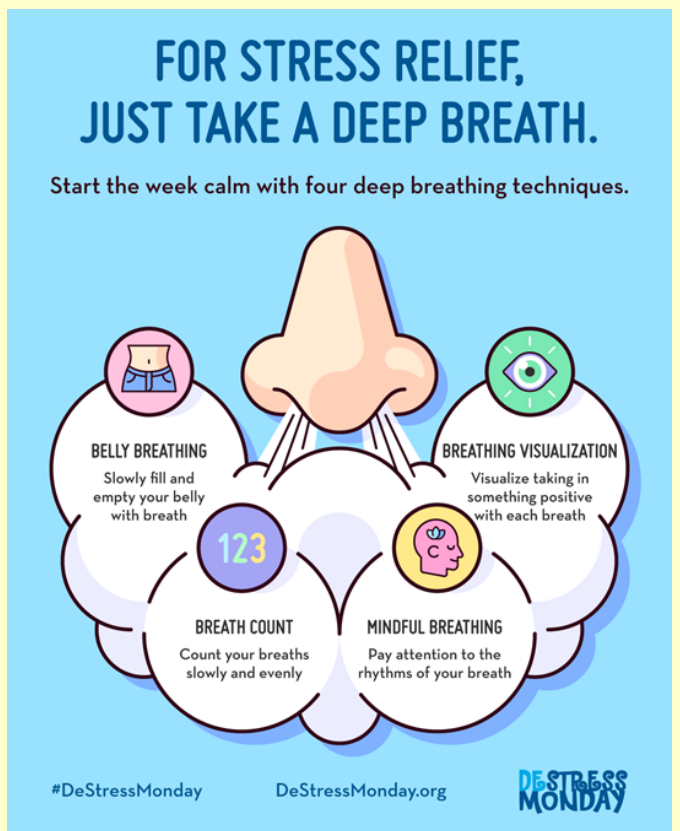
You could do a web search for events happening in Ealing and see if there is anything you would be interested in. Just remember it is important to pace yourself – you do not have to do everything at once. You will know what works best for you.

Feeling calmer

Breathing exercise can help you feel calmer and reduce your anxiety.

The controlled breathing technique involves focusing on and slowing down your breathing. It is particularly helpful if you feel dizzy or light-headed when you get anxious.

- Get into a comfortable position – you could lie on your bed, or sit on a comfortable chair
- Try to breathe in a steady rhythm. Perhaps try to breathe in for three seconds, hold this breath for two seconds, and then breathe out for three seconds. It can be helpful to count as you do this = for example 'in 1,2,3.... Out 1,2,3'
- Repeat the steady breathing for a few minutes
- You should soon begin to feel more



relaxed. If you were feeling dizzy, then this should also get better after a few minutes.

There are a number of other breathing and relaxation exercises on NHS inform that can help with anxiety and stress. Try doing one of these when you are feeling anxious.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/mental-wellbeing/stress/breathing-and-relaxation-exercises-for-stress>

Working together to keep our children safe and happy.

Halina Rooney

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