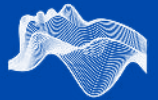




Top 10 Anxiety Tips by Tamsin Embleton

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1) A warped lens

Anxiety **overestimates** danger & **underestimates** your ability to cope. Don't sell yourself short! Despite what the gremlins in your mind say, you can still function well when you're anxious.

6) Accept and allow

You can notice anxious thoughts and not engage with, or battle, them. You don't have to give them your full attention. Take a step back, and move your focus elsewhere. Picture turning the volume down. It's just background chatter.

2) A faulty alarm system

Anxiety is like an oversensitive house alarm that goes off whenever the postman comes. Ask yourself: am I in real danger here? Is this a genuine threat or is it a challenge?

7) Tolerate uncertainty

You tell yourself worrying helps you prepare for future threat. This gives the illusion of control. Your mind is not an oracle - it can't predict the future. Worrying interferes with the present. Make peace with uncertainty & prioritise your present mental health. Be compassionate - we're all a WIP!

3) Cognitive Distortions

Anxiety stops you thinking clearly. You may catastrophise, generalise, think in all good/all bad terms, or jump to conclusions. Choose whether the thought has value. Is it helpful or a hindrance? Remember: thoughts aren't facts!

8) Rule of opposites

Anxiety might tell you to isolate, cling, avoid or consume substances. This is not helpful to you in the long run and it doesn't resolve anxiety. Do the opposite (if it's safe). Seek connection, and lean in to the discomfort. It will pass.

4) Measure your anxiety level

Monitoring your anxiety helps you to learn that you can influence your mental state. Use a scale of 0-10. Zero means no anxiety is present, ten means panic. Where are you now? And where are you after you try a strategy?

9) Toolbox

There are lots of grounding techniques online you can google. They help bring the focus back to the present, using your senses. Look them up and write them down. Try them out when you feel your anxiety start to spike.

5) Breathwork

When you are anxious your breathing often becomes shorter, shallower, or you hold your breath. This fuels anxiety. Elongating the out-breath reduces it. Try 2 mins of 4-7-8 breathing - in for 4, hold for 7, out for 8 (or as long as possible)

10) Dream team

When you're struggling, imagine a supportive figure and how they'd support you. This can help balance out an inner critic. What reassuring words would they give to you? Think: Maya Angelou, Brian Eno, Gandalf - real or imagined.