



My coping skills for anxiety

Rate your worry, try skills from the body, mind and people groups, then build a short list and a plan. For everyday worry, not a diagnosis. If anxiety is constant, stops you doing things you need to do, or comes as panic attacks, see a GP.

01 Before I start

This sheet is for everyday worry. If any of these is true, set the sheet aside and get help first.

Get help first if:

- ☐ I have chest pain or trouble breathing (call 999 (UK) or 911 (US); use NHS 111 if you are unsure)
- ☐ I am having thoughts of harming myself (Samaritans 116 123 in the UK and Ireland, 988 in the US, findahelpline.com)
- ☐ Someone I live with or depend on scares me (this sheet is not for that, see selfgrowth.org/help)
- ☐ My anxiety is constant, is stopping me doing things I need to do, or comes as panic attacks (book a GP appointment)

The person or line I will turn to first if I need to:

02 How worried do I feel right now?

A quick, honest check. There is no right number.

How worried or anxious do I feel right now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Calm

As bad as it gets

What is on my mind, in a few words?

Where do I feel it in my body?

For example a tight chest, a knot in the stomach, tense shoulders, restlessness.

03 Body skills

These work on how your body feels. Try one for a few minutes, then see how the rating moves.

Tick the ones I tried or want to try:

- ☐ Slow breathing: in through the nose, then out for longer than I breathed in
- ☐ A walk, a stretch, or any movement I can manage
- ☐ Letting my shoulders drop and unclenching my jaw and hands
- ☐ Cold water on my hands or face (only if it feels safe: stop if I feel dizzy or unwell, and ask a doctor first if I have a heart condition)
- ☐ A drink of water and a proper meal, rather than skipping food
- ☐ Cutting back on caffeine if it makes me jittery

Body skill I tried, and what happened:

04 Mind skills

These work on the worry itself. They will not make worry vanish, but they can give it less room.

Tick the ones I tried or want to try:

- ☐ Naming it: 'I am having the thought that...' or 'This is worry'
- ☐ Writing the worry down so it is on paper, not circling in my head
- ☐ A set worry time: I save worries for a set slot each day and go through them then
- ☐ Asking whether this is something I can act on, or something I cannot change
- ☐ Choosing one small next step I can take today
- ☐ Looking at the situation from someone else's point of view

My worry time (when and where), if I want to try one:

One small next step for something I can act on:

05 People and places

Some skills are about who and where you are. You do not have to explain everything to anyone.

Tick the ones I tried or want to try:

- ☐ Telling a friend or family member how I feel
- ☐ Being near someone, even without talking about it
- ☐ Going somewhere that feels calmer: outside, a library, a quiet room
- ☐ Putting on music, a podcast or something familiar
- ☐ Slowly spending a little more time in a situation I have been avoiding

Someone I could text or call, and a place that helps:

06 How worried do I feel now?

Re-rate. It does not need to reach zero. Lower is a real result, and so is 'no change': it tells you that skill is not for you today.

How worried or anxious do I feel now?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Calm					As bad as it gets				

What helped most, and what did nothing?

07 My short list and my plan

Pick the skills that helped most, then decide now, while you are calmer, what you will do next time.

My short list of coping skills

A few is plenty.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

If-then plan

If I notice...

A sign, a place or a time of day

Then I will...

One skill from my short list

08 When I used a skill

A short log shows you what works for you. Rate before and after, 1 to 10.

When Day, and what was happening	Before 1 to 10	Skill I tried	After 1 to 10
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Which group of skills (body, mind, or people and places) helped you most today?
- When does worry tend to be loudest for you, and which skill could you use there?
- Is there something you have been avoiding because of worry, and could one small step toward it be possible?
- What would you say to a friend who felt the way you do right now?
- If worry has been taking up a lot of your days, who could you talk to about it?

Free worksheet from selfgrowth.org. Free self-growth worksheets for real life. Fill it in online and it saves as you go: selfgrowth.org/worksheets/coping-skills-for-anxiety-worksheet



If things feel heavier than a worksheet can hold

These are self-reflection tools, not therapy. If you're struggling, especially if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out to someone now. In the US, call or text **988**. In the UK & Ireland, call **116 123** (Samaritans). Elsewhere, find a free helpline at findahelpline.com. If you're in immediate danger, call your local emergency number.