

# Managing Anxiety

## Identify How Your Anxiety Feels

The first step to managing anxiety is to know when you are anxious. For many people, when they feel anxious, they begin to experience certain physical symptoms including sweating, difficulty breathing or shaking.

**What are the physical signs that you are feeling anxious?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## What Is Your Anxious Narrative?

Now that we know what your anxiety feels like, let's take a moment to explore how your anxiety thinks. When we take the time to list what our anxious thoughts are, we often find that there is an underlying belief about ourselves.

**What are some of your anxious thoughts?**

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**What do your anxious beliefs imply about your belief about yourself?**

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## Challenging Anxious Thoughts

Now here is the medicine. Let's challenge your anxious thoughts by a method called *reality testing*. *Reality testing* takes our anxious thoughts and puts them side-by-side with what we *know is true (reality)*.

Here are some examples:

Anxiety-Producing Thought	Reality Test / Rational Counterstatement
1. I didn't study enough for my test. I am going to get a bad grade.	1. I studied as much as I could for my test. Whatever grade I get, I will be able to work with it, even if I have to do extra credit.
2. My partner did not text me back. They don't want to be my partner anymore.	2. My partner hasn't texted me back but that doesn't mean they don't want to be my partner anymore. My partner could be preoccupied and away from their phone.

Now, I'd like you to try challenging your anxious thoughts. Try using the ones you listed above:

Anxiety-Producing Thought	Reality Test / Rational Counterstatement
1.	1.
2.	2.

Now, take a deep breath in and internalize your reality/rational counterstatement.

**Now let's end with an affirmation that directly counterbalances what your anxiety's narrative *tries* to get you to believe about yourself. For example, if your anxiety's narrative tries to convince you that you are not worthy of love, your affirmation can be: "I deserve to be loved."**

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