

Free NLP & Mindset Resources

A curated collection of practical worksheets, guides, and tools designed to help you master your mind and create lasting change.



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The Anxiety First-Aid Kit

Your Immediate Guide to Finding Calm in Moments of Overwhelm

Introduction: Your Pocket Guide to Calm

Anxiety can feel like a sudden wave that pulls you under. Your mind races, your body tenses, and it can feel impossible to find solid ground. This Anxiety First-Aid Kit is designed to be your lifeline in those exact moments.

Think of these techniques not as a cure for anxiety, but as powerful, practical tools you can use immediately to interrupt the cycle of overwhelm. They work by speaking directly to your nervous system, helping it shift from a state of "fight-or-flight" back toward a state of "rest-and-digest."

Breathing exercises signal safety to your brain and body, while grounding techniques pull your focus out of the storm of anxious thoughts and into the safety of the present moment.

This guide is meant to be kept close—on your phone, printed on your desk, or in your bag. It's a reminder that even when you feel overwhelmed, you have the power to influence your state and guide yourself back to calm. You are more resilient than you think.

Section 1: Breathing Exercises (Signal Safety to Your Brain)

Choose one and focus on it for 60-90 seconds. The exhale is the most important part for relaxation.

1. The Physiological Sigh

(Fastest way to calm down, based on neuroscience)

- Take a deep breath in through your nose.
- Without exhaling, take a second, sharper "top-up" breath in through your nose to fully inflate your lungs.
- Exhale slowly and for as long as possible through your mouth, letting all the air out.
- **Repeat 2-3 times.**

2. Square Breathing

(Excellent for restoring order and focus)

- **Inhale** through your nose for a slow count of **4**.
- **Hold** your breath for a count of **4**.
- **Exhale** slowly through your mouth for a count of **4**.
- **Hold** the empty breath for a count of **4**.
- **Repeat the square 4-5 times.**

3. The 4-7-8 Breath

(Deeply relaxing and ideal for before sleep or a stressful event)

- **Inhale** quietly through your nose for a count of **4**.
 - **Hold** your breath for a count of **7**.
 - **Exhale** completely and audibly (making a "whoosh" sound) through your mouth for a count of **8**.
 - **Repeat 3-4 times.**
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Section 2: Grounding Techniques (Anchor Yourself in the Present)

When your mind is spinning, use your senses to root yourself in the here and now.

1. The 5-4-3-2-1 Method

(Engages all your senses to pull you out of your head)

- **Look around and name 5 things you can SEE.** (e.g., "I see the blue pen, the crack in the ceiling, the green leaf on the plant...")
- **Acknowledge 4 things you can FEEL.** (e.g., "I feel the soft fabric of my shirt, the solid chair beneath me, the cool air on my skin...")

- **Listen and identify 3 things you can HEAR.** (e.g., "I hear the hum of the computer, the distant traffic, my own breathing...")
- **Notice 2 things you can SMELL.** (e.g., "I can smell my coffee, the scent of hand soap...")
- **Identify 1 thing you can TASTE.** (e.g., "I can taste the mint from my gum," or simply the neutral taste in your mouth).

2. Physical Anchors

(Use physical sensations to interrupt the mental spiral)

- **Temperature Shock:** Go to a sink and splash cold water on your face and wrists. The sudden temperature change is a powerful physiological reset.
 - **Pressure & Texture:**
 - Press your feet firmly into the floor. Feel the ground supporting you.
 - Push your palms flat onto a desk or your thighs. Feel the solid pressure.
 - Find a textured object nearby (a stone, a piece of wood, the seam of your jeans) and focus entirely on how it feels under your fingertips.
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Section 3: Personalize Your First-Aid Kit

Anxiety is personal, and so is your path back to calm. Take a moment now, when you are calm, to prepare for the future.

My Go-To Techniques

After trying the exercises above, which one or two feel most effective for you?

My #1 Breathing Technique:

My #1 Grounding Technique:

My Early Warning Signs

How do you know when a wave of anxiety is starting? Identifying the first signs allows you to use your kit sooner.

(Examples: A tightness in my chest, my thoughts start to speed up, I feel a pit in my stomach, my shoulders tense up.)

Section 5: Beyond First-Aid: Building Your Resilience

Your Anxiety First-Aid Kit is a powerful tool for immediate relief, but its true power is unlocked through practice. The best time to get familiar with these techniques is when you are calm. Take a few minutes each day to practice one breathing exercise or grounding technique. This builds the "muscle memory" for your nervous system, making it easier and faster to access these tools when you truly need them.

*Every time you successfully navigate a moment of overwhelm using this kit, you are sending a powerful message to your brain: **"I can handle this."** You are proving your own resilience.*

Remember: You are not your anxiety. You are the person experiencing it, and you have the power to guide yourself back to safety. **You are the calm within the storm.**

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