



BODY - MIND TOOLS FOR ANXIETY & STRESS

BY

MADDY BORTES

Stress and anxiety go hand in hand. Stress occurs from situations and anxiety continues after the moment of heightened stress passes. Anxiety feeds the energy of stress. They are both experienced through the body yet also take you out of your body. To get a handle on stress and anxiety we have to use our body as an ally. Here are some tips:

1. IDENTIFY

When I experience stress or anxiety:

My breath _____

My hands _____

My body _____

My markers: _____

2. INTERRUPT

Interrupt the mental cycle of stress and anxiety through body-centered interventions:

- stand up and wiggle
- balance
- body opening: neck, chest, hands, pelvis, feet
- breath-work
 - * touch thumb to fingertip (one complete breath per touch)
 - * soft belly with open-mouth exhale
 - * box-breathing
 - * alternate-nostril breath (for focus)

3. PROCESS

- Come back into the room, into your body. (Can I feel my feet, hands, my breathing?)
- Write. (What is with me now? What part can I do?)
- Body-centered meditation.

RESOURCES

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TIPS FOR ANXIETY & STRESS

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1. WRITE IT OUT

Write down everything that is at the front of your mind, Make the to-do list, make the rant list, make the miscellaneous list. Then feel the internal space you've created in your mind.

Morning Pages: three pages of free-form writing; before you leave home; every morning. (Get more details: Julia Cameron, The Artist's Way)

2. TECHNOLOGY FREE TIME

- Try two-hour chunks without your phone.
- Set social media checking times and/or alarms (i.e. three times/day for 20 min tops)
- Use night-shift mode on phone & computer (Flux is a free app for computers)
- Tech-free from 8:30 / 9:00 pm, leave the phone in the other room, in the car, etc.
- Phone free until 8:30 / 9:00 am (schedule Do Not Disturb for iPhones)

3. MOVE EVERY 2 HOURS

- Set a timer. Don't ignore it.
- Dance, wiggle, walk, massage your feet and neck, etc. for 10 min.
- Try dancing to one song each morning before leaving the house, or before 11am.
- Continue the conversation with your body; develop that relationship regularly.

4. NOURISH

- Caffeine-free after 4pm.
- Food-free after 8 / 8:30 pm
- Warm water with lemon or lime first thing in the morning
- Monitor daily sugar intake
- Dance in the kitchen with your breakfast. Try it at least once a week.

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