ANXIETY RELIEF KIT

This anxiety relief kit serves as an anxiety first aid that can hopefully help you learn more about anxiety and also helpful strategies to cope with anxious feelings. Especially when you are faced with stressful situations such as exams preparations, exams and approaching assignment deadlines.

For more details, kindly contact your welfare officer - Ms. Evelyn Beh by email or whatsapp.
email: ruak@reading.edu.my
Call/sms/whatsapp: 016-2084012
How to use this kit?

1) You can read on the anxiety facts to learn more about anxiety
    OR
2) Choose some of the exercises included to help you cope with your anxious feeling when you feel anxious or worried about a possible future event.
    OR
3) Practice some of the exercise consistently before you feel overwhelmed with anxiousness.
Some facts about anxiety

Feeling anxious is a normal response to:

- Exams
- Presentations
- Deadlines
- A new pandemic (COVID-19)

Anxiety responses can be dated back to our evolutionary survival mechanism of "fight", flight or "freeze", triggered by our stress hormones.

Anxiety levels may vary from low levels of worry to higher levels of panic depending on one's circumstances, emotional health and physical health.

Note:

Usually acute anxiety is relatively short lived and with helpful strategies, can dissipate in time.
Feeling Anxious Can Lead To

- Shortness of breath
- Increase in heartbeat
- Trembling
- Digestive issues
- Headaches
- Procrastination
- Social avoidance
- Difficulty sleeping
- Increased negative thoughts
- Poor eating habits
WHEN FEELING ANXIOUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRY NOT TO</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking of the situation as a catastrophe, not accounting grey areas and the fact that the feeling will pass one day.</td>
<td>When you have catastrophic thoughts, literally say “STOP” to yourself, take few deep breaths &amp; bring yourself back to the present moment.</td>
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<td>Be hard on yourself. No one is perfect and no one expect you to be perfect.</td>
<td>Be satisfied with doing your best and be realistic of what your best mean AND Set achievable targets.</td>
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<td>Comparing yourself to others as judging yourself against others is a recipe for unhappiness.</td>
<td>Embrace and try to accept yourself as who you are. Understand that everyone is unique and have different approach on getting things done.</td>
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<td>“What if”-ing as you may find yourself spiralling to negativity, until your predictions becomes irrational</td>
<td>Focus on things you can control. Often, the things you worry about will fall into place sooner or later</td>
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When overwhelmed with anxiety, try these exercises:

Exercise 1: Deep breathing exercise to lower down emotional arousal

7/11 Breathing

Steps
1. Breathe in slowly for a count of 7 and hold your breath for as long as it is comfortable.

2. Breath out slowly to a count of 11.

3. Repeat until panicky feelings subside.

When breathing, imagine filling in air into your stomach first and then your chest.

If you find it difficult to lengthen your breaths to a count of 11 or 7, then lower the count to breathing in for 3 and out to 5, or whatever you feel comfortable, as long as the out-breath is longer than the in-breath.

images used retrieved from www.stock.adobe.com
Exercise 2: Mindfulness meditation

You may watch the video below and carry out this exercise in the morning to help you feel more relaxed, have more self-compassion and be prepared for the rest of the day.

Click link for video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inpok4MKVML&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR0-S9UTJ4nvOw6tK7yXQw8zNnr6mCuOVSqyXRqEBN3S8dntCB2myZMhtiY
Exercise 3: Mandala coloring for anxiety or stress relief

Sometimes, anxiety manifest itself into physical symptoms such as a headache or muscle pain. You may use the mandala coloring activity below to help you feel more aware of your bodily sensations and tune in to your body to target anxiety treatment to specific body parts for some relief.

From the brain, to your body

Steps:
1) Observe and reflect on the body parts you experience anxiety. e.g. does anxiety manifest itself as a constant headache
2) Pick a color to represent each part of the body and color the mandala according to your physical symptoms.

For example, If you choose red to represent your stomach and you have trouble with gastric pain, use red more to color the mandala. If you choose blue to represent headaches and you only have minor headache, use less blue when coloring.


Image retrieved from www.free-mandalas.net
Exercise 4: Mandala coloring for anxiety or stress relief 2

It is perfectly normal to worry when you are faced with stressful situations. Anxious thoughts can be overwhelming at times. When you try to ignore or force them away, it may be ineffective or worrying thoughts may get stronger. Hence, allocating some time to face worrying thoughts can surprisingly, be helpful in helping us gain more control on worrying.

Say hi and control your worry using mandala

Steps:
1) Choose a worrying thought. If you find it difficult to concentrate on only one worry thought, it is fine to let other anxious thoughts wander through the activity.
2) Select a color tone (e.g. warm colors), set a timer (e.g. 10 minutes) and start coloring the mandala. Allow your anxious thoughts to come and go during the time frame set. You will feel anxious when coloring but it is okay to feel so.
3) When the time is up, choose a different color tone (e.g. cool colors), and finish the mandala. This time, when worrying/ anxious thoughts interrupts, consciously replace them with a more positive or less anxious thoughts.
4) When the activity is complete, know that you have acknowledged your worry and have the choice to see it in a less intimidating and more realistic perspective. Then, choose to do the next right thing in the present that you can control.
Exercise 5: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- Our muscles are often tensed up when we feel stress or anxious. Consciously tensing our muscles and relaxing them can help us to relieve tension built in our muscles and bring mental calmness.
- When done before going to bed, this exercise may also help those who experience difficulty sleeping in stressful times.

Click the link below for a video example on how this can be done

[Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBKAnxztTUU)

![Progressive Muscle Relaxation](image-retrieved-from-www.tykesoftomorrow.com)
Further Help & Support

If you find your anxiety prolonged and symptoms severe or difficult to control, despite trying out these strategies, please seek help:

- Speak to your GP, a trusted friend, family member, tutor or supervisor.

- Contact the university counselling service on: 0162084012 or email: ruok@reading.edu.my

- Befrienders Johor Bahru Helpline (call & whatsapp): 07-3312300, email: sam@befrienders.org.my
Happy Trying!

Hope this helps you cope with your anxiety

Kindly scan the QR code and give us your feedback if you have used the kit, for future improvement.