

# Coping with Anxiety



## 1. Get plenty of sleep.

- Have a regular sleep schedule. When you're rested you have more energy to deal with stressful events.
- If caffeine keeps you awake at night, cut down on coffee, soda and other caffeine-containing drinks.



## 2. Be physically active.

- Regular exercise is powerful. It improves mood, relieves stress and makes you healthier. It can even help prevent depression.
- Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (such as a brisk walk) at least 5 days a week.



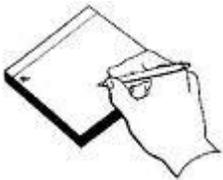
## 3. Breathe!

- When people get anxious, they sometimes hold their breath, or breathe fast and shallow.
- Practice deep breathing. Relax your belly and breathe deeply into your abdomen. Inhale and exhale s-l-o-w-l-y.
- Yoga, meditation and other relaxation techniques also relieve stress.



## 4. Talk about it.

- Talk with a trusted friend, family member, or religious advisor.
- Talking puts problems in perspective. Worries decrease, and solutions emerge.
- Spend more time with people who support you, and less time with people who *don't*.



## 5. Write about it.

- Keep a "stress journal" for a week to help you identify your triggers.
- Describe what makes you tense. What happened? How did you feel?
- Look at the events that were most stressful. Pick ONE thing to work on.



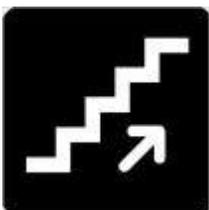
## 6. Treat yourself well.

- When you're overwhelmed, everything feels more difficult. It's harder to be good to yourself. *But now is the time to try.*
- Eat as well as you can. Get to bed on time. Keep your medical appointments. Take your daily medicine.
- Can't do it ALL today? Nobody's perfect. Try again tomorrow.



## 7. Make time for yourself.

- Do something you enjoy *every day*.
- Get somebody to watch the kids for awhile. Go to the movies or take a walk.
- Take short breaks at work. Take a long weekend. Take a real vacation for once.



## 8. Keep it simple.

- Set realistic expectations and goals. Take small, not big, steps. (Reorganize a drawer, not the whole house.)
- Try to change the way you see things:
- Don't mistake temporary problems ("*I'm tired today*") for permanent ones ("*I'm too old to change*").
- Don't mistake specific problems ("*I have a bad habit*") for general ones ("*I'm a bad person*").