FREE GUIDE · ASK DR. PENNY

The Anxiety First-Aid Card

A one-page reset for the moments when anxiety rises. Read it slowly, one step at a time. You do not need to do them all.

1 Breathe out longer

Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4, then out through your mouth for a count of 6. Repeat five times. A longer out-breath helps your body settle.

2 Ground yourself: 5-4-3-2-1

Name 5 things you can see, 4 you can feel, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell and 1 you can taste. It brings your attention back to now.

3 Name it

Say to yourself, "This is anxiety. It is uncomfortable, but it is not dangerous, and it will pass." Naming a feeling makes it smaller.

4 Relax your body

Drop your shoulders, unclench your jaw, and press your feet into the floor. Squeeze your fists for 5 seconds, then let go.

5 Move a little

Walk to another room, step outside, or stretch. Gentle movement helps use up the extra energy anxiety brings.

6 Choose one next step

Ask, "What is one small thing I can do now?" Drink some water, send one text, or write the worry down for later.

Anxiety rises, peaks and falls. You have ridden this wave before.

KEEP IT WITH YOU

Cut out, fold, and keep handy.

Save a photo of this card on your phone, or cut it out and keep it in your wallet or on the fridge. The fewer decisions you have to make in an anxious moment, the better.

In an anxious moment

1. Breathe in for 4, out for 6.
2. Find 5 things you can see.
3. Say: "This is anxiety. It will pass."
4. Drop your shoulders, feet on the floor.
5. Move: walk, stretch, step outside.
6. Pick one small next step.

Crisis? Call or text 988 (US) or call 911.

When anxiety needs more than first aid

- Anxiety is getting in the way of sleep, work, school or relationships.
- You are avoiding places or people because of fear of feeling anxious.
- You have panic attacks, or worry most days for weeks at a time.
- You are using alcohol or other substances to cope.

Talking with someone helps

Anxiety is very treatable. If it keeps getting in the way of sleep, work, or the things you love, a counselor can help you find tools that fit your life. You can book a session at askdrpenny.com.