

Anxiety and stress

Anxiety = a feeling of **worry** or **fear**.

Stress = feeling **overwhelmed** or **overloaded**, which means having too many things going on.

Anxiety and stress are normal feelings that everyone has at some point. We just need to learn how to deal with them so that we can feel better.



How you might feel if you are anxious or stressed

Our minds and our bodies tell us when we are anxious or stressed. Here are some things that you might feel:

In your body:

- Sweating
- Shaking
- Finding it hard to breath
- Having a fast heartbeat



In your mind:

- Feeling nervous or panicky
- Having upsetting or scary thoughts
- Feeling overwhelmed



How to cope with feeling anxious or stressed

The first thing to do is try to **feel calmer**. Here are some things that might help:

Breathe

This is really important to get your heart rate down. So stop, go somewhere safe and quiet (if possible) and close your eyes if it helps. Breathe in and count to 3, then breathe out and count to 5. Do this for as long as you need to.

Look around

To stop our thoughts spinning out of control, it is good to focus on what is around us right now. Try using your senses and make a list in your head of:

- Things you can see.
- Things you can hear.
- Things you can touch/feel.
- Things you can smell.
- Things you can taste.

Positive phrases

Have a positive phrase ready to repeat to yourself to remind you that you will be OK. Here are some ideas:

I've got this!

I'm going to be OK

This feeling won't last forever

Then, when you feel calmer and can think clearly, it is a good idea to **make a plan**. Sometimes writing a worry down can help it to feel smaller. Think about:

What is making me feel like this?



What can I do to feel better about it?



Can anyone help me?



Feeling calm and relaxed again

When you have made a plan for how to deal with the things that are making you anxious or stressed, you need to try to move on and feel good again. One way to do this is to **do something that you enjoy**. This will take your mind off your worries! Here are some ideas:

Listen to music



Read a book



Watch TV



Paint or draw



Have a nap



Go for a walk



Useful websites and helplines

Here are some websites that you could look at, or numbers you can call, if you want to know more about anxiety and stress, or need some help:

WF-I-CAN

<https://wf-i-can.co.uk/o13/support/managing-your-feelings/>



Childline

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/anxiety/>

Phone number: 0800 1111

The Children's Society

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/information/young-people/well-being/resources/anxiety>

Young Minds

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/anxiety/>

And don't forget, you can contact WESAIL/SENDIASS for help too....

<https://barnardosendiass.org.uk/wakefield-sendiass/>

Phone number: 07961 897036

Email: wesail@barnardos.org.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WESAILWakefield/>

Local Offer: <http://wakefield.mylocaloffer.org>

