

Resources for coping skills and mindfulness

Apps for Mindfulness:

Headspace

“Headspace is your personal guide to health and happiness. It can help you focus, breathe, stay calm, and create the conditions for a better night’s sleep by practicing meditation and mindfulness. When you need some stress relief or lessons on creating a better sleep cycle, Headspace can help. Just download this free meditation, mindfulness, sleep app, then sit back and breathe to relax.”

Available for download on [Android](#) and [iOS](#)

Calm

“Calm is a leading app for meditation and sleep. Join the millions experiencing lower stress, less anxiety, and more restful sleep with our guided meditations, Sleep Stories, breathing programs, masterclasses, and relaxing music. Recommended by top psychologists, therapists, and mental health experts. Calm is the perfect mindfulness app for beginners, but also includes hundreds of programs for intermediate and advanced users.”

Available for download on [Android](#) and [iOS](#)

Stop, Breathe & Think

“Slow down, take a deep breath...how are you feeling, what are you thinking? Check-in with your emotions to receive daily meditation and mindfulness recommendations tuned to how you feel. This calming meditation app experience is uniquely designed to help you stay mindful, de-stress, sleep better, and build the emotional strength and confidence to handle life’s ups and downs. Mindfulness & meditation is the practice, Stop, Breathe & Think is the process.”

Available for download on [Android](#) and [iOS](#)

Insight Timer

“Guided meditations and talks led by the world's top meditation and mindfulness experts, neuroscientists, psychologists and teachers from Stanford, Harvard, the University of Oxford and more. Music tracks from world-renowned artists. Join millions learning to meditate on Insight Timer to help calm the mind, reduce anxiety, manage stress, sleep deeply and improve happiness.”

Available for download on [Android](#) and [iOS](#)

Quick Ways to Calm Down

FROM: <https://copingskillsforkids.com/calming-anxiety>

Sometimes you'll need a quick way to help your child calm down and you don't have much with you.

- Imagine your favorite place - it's like taking a mini vacation wherever you are
- Think of your favorite things
- Name animals alphabetically (alligator, bear, cow, dog, etc...)
- Squeeze something (play dough, clay, silly putty, your fists, a stress ball)
- Get a cold drink of water
- [54321 Grounding - go through each of your 5 senses](#)

5 4 3 2 1 Grounding Exercise



Name 5 things you can see



4 things you can feel



3 things you can hear



2 things you can smell



1 thing you can taste

- Give yourself a hug - squeeze tight!
- Remember the words to a song you love
- Do a hook up
 1. Put your arms straight out in front of you, palms facing out.
 2. Put one hand over the other at the wrists and interlace your fingers.
 3. Swoop your hands and arms toward your body and then place your interlaced hands on your chest.
 4. Cross your feet at the ankles and put your tongue on the roof of your mouth.
 5. Stay still for one minute.

This is not an endorsement of these products or techniques, just a list of resources.
Created by Becky Parton, MSW, LICSW, Dartmouth Trauma Interventions Research Center



Some coping mechanisms for kids

FROM: The Coping Skills for Kids Workbook, excerpt from <https://www.anxioustoddlers.com/coping-mechanisms-for-kids/#.Xk2BRShKg2w>

1. Deep breathing using bubbles
2. Remember the words to a song you love
3. Calming jar
4. Play with a pet
5. Create a music playlist
6. Write what is bothering you and throw it away
7. Make a comic strip of what happened and what you can do next time
8. Jump rope
9. Yoga
10. Make an obstacle course
11. Talk to someone you trust
12. Use positive self-talk
13. Take a shower or a bath
14. Bake or cook
15. Laugh [watch YouTube videos or movies that encourage laughter]

Grounding Techniques

ADAPTED FROM: <http://www.ibiblio.org/rcip/copingskills.html#ground>

Try to notice where you are, your surroundings including the people, and the sounds, like the t.v. or radio.

Concentrate on your breathing. Take a deep cleansing breath from your diaphragm. Count the breaths as you exhale. Make sure you breathe slowly so you don't hyperventilate.

Mentally remind yourself that the memory was then, and it is over. Give yourself permission to not think about it right now.

Hold something that you find comforting, for some it may be a stuffed animal or a blanket. Notice how it feels in your hands. Is it hard or soft?

During a non-crisis time make a list of positive affirmations. Print them out and keep them handy for when you are having a flashback. During a flashback read the list out loud.

Go online and talk with an online friend. Write an email.

Imagine yourself in a safe place. Feel the safety and know that you are safe now.

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Box Breathing/ Square Breathing

ADAPTED FROM: <https://www.healthline.com/health/box-breathing#getting-started>

Before you get started, make sure that you're seated upright in a comfortable chair with your feet flat on the floor. Try to be in a stress-free, quiet environment where you can focus on your breathing. Keeping your hands relaxed in your lap with your palms facing up, focus on your posture. You should be sitting up straight. This will help you take deep breaths.

Step 1: Slowly exhale

Sitting upright, slowly exhale through your mouth, getting all the oxygen out of your lungs. Focus on this intention and be conscious of what you're doing.

Step 2: Slowly inhale

Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose to the count of four. In this step, count to four very slowly in your head. Feel the air fill your lungs, one section at a time, until your lungs are completely full and the air moves into your abdomen.

Step 3: Hold your breath

Hold your breath for another slow count of four.

Step 4: Exhale again

Exhale through your mouth for the same slow count of four, expelling the air from your lungs and abdomen. Be conscious of the feeling of the air leaving your lungs.

Step 5: Hold your breath again

Hold your breath for the same slow count of four before repeating this process.

Tips for beginners

-If you're new to box breathing, it may be difficult to get the hang of it. You may get dizzy after a few rounds. This is normal. As you practice it more often, you'll be able to go longer without the dizziness. If you get dizzy, stay sitting for a minute and resume normal breathing.

-To help you focus on your breathing, find a quiet, dimly lit environment to practice box breathing. This isn't at all necessary to perform the technique, but it can help you focus on the practice if you're new to it.

-Ideally, you'll want to repeat the box breathing cycle four times in one sitting. Do box breathing several times a day as needed to calm your nerves and relieve stress.

ALTERNATIVE DEEP BREATHING TECHNIQUE:

1. Breathe in for a count of 4; Breathe out for a count of 8. Repeat at least 3 times.

The long exhale has the powerful effect of calming your body down quickly. For younger children try 2 seconds in, 4 seconds out or 3 seconds in, 4-5 seconds out. You can think about a rectangle as you do it, and can even trace a rectangle with your finger in the air.



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