

Helping Reduce Anxiety Resources

General Support

Alberta Health Services (AHS) has supported the Text4Hope initiative. Suggest this is one aspect of support to follow.

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17019.aspx>

There has been released a free 4-hour online course by a Professor of Psychology in Toronto, covering many aspects of how to gain help during the Covid-19 crisis

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/manage-health-covid-19?>

Free resource from Anxiety Canada focused on coronavirus

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/covid-19/>

There are other specific supports which were mentioned or discussed in the program.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

This is the leading recommended and tested psychological intervention for anxiety. Has many components. There are some very good free resources.

CBT – Self-Help Information and Worksheets, help guide you through the process of CBT.

<https://www.get.gg>

Free resource from United Kingdom

<https://mindspacemk.com/free-cbt-worksheets/>

Some specific CBT activities to consider are:

Journaling – keep diary and focus on looking at activating events (situation and initial thought), your negative beliefs, what the consequences are, and how to challenge your negative thoughts. Information on these can be obtained from the links above.

SMART goals (or S.M.A.R.T.). This is a method for setting goals that help cope with stress. The letters stand for goals that are **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time frame. This lists reasons for doing them:**

<https://manhattancbt.com/archives/544/cbt-uses-goal-setting/#.Xo3fsy-z1UM>

This is a free (and detailed) guide from respected UK source on why and how to set sensible goals.

https://cedar.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/schoolofpsychology/cedar/documents/Goal_setting_workbook_website.pdf

Exercise and/or Yoga

This is incredibly important, and the need to keep doing this should be part of a daily routine.

If you have younger children at home consider doing this as part of a Simon Says challenge daily (then everyone does some exercise).

There are multiple exercise and yoga classes available on YouTube. Please find one or more that work for you and try and follow them.

The goal is to increase the amount every day, by at least 1 minute.

Mindfulness, Meditation, and Relaxation

Coping resources for: Relaxation, Meditation, Anxiety and Kids relaxation section are at this link - audio presentations to guide you through strategies for calming the brain and relaxing the body.
<https://www.innerhealthstudio.com>

Mindfulness resources - strategies to help you through mindfulness
<https://mindfulness Exercises.com>

There are some online free courses, but most require payment. All have similar themes, so find one that works for you. This is one example of a free course, but cannot comment on effectiveness of this one specifically
<https://tiigroup.com/free-course-online-mindfulness-based-stress-reduction-mbsr/>

However, the best instruction and outcomes for Mindfulness seem to be those involving a live individual with feedback, either individually or in a group. Unfortunately, this usually comes with a cost.

Breathing exercises

Two that are recommended are the Candle and Rose (also called Flower and Candle) and also Box-breathing, which is timed. These can be further practiced using these online YouTube videos. Suggest practicing them 2 – 3 times each day for up to a minute so that you can easily use them when you find symptoms increasing.

Flower and Candle (here being taught to a classroom - you can also utilize this in younger children at this time).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wc9pBYI1-Mk>

Distraction

There are many possible things to do, but putting aside a part of your day to immerse yourself in something different can help. Here are a few suggestions.

- Cooking
 - Baking
 - Vegetarian
 - Cocktail
- Crafts
 - Knitting
 - Cross-stitching
 - Paint (online?)
 - Colouring
- Reading
- Books
- Magazines
- Indoor Garden
- Archive photos
- Make lists of favorites (anything – movies, books, online games, superheroes, etc.)
- Learn card or magic tricks

Here are ten things discussed that can be considered (in no specific order)

1. Exercise
2. Yoga
3. SMART Goals - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
4. Journaling - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
5. Daily Schedule with activities
6. Animal Therapy (substitute soft-toy if no pet)
7. Mindfulness
8. Self-Care
9. Social Interactions
10. Breathing techniques - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdBSmERWLp4>