



Today's Tip

Strategies to Use When You're Feeling Anxious

It's normal to experience occasional anxiety — for example, when we're faced with a high-stakes meeting, a stressed-out boss, or a conflict with a colleague. Feeling anxious can make you more vigilant, engaged, and productive, but it can also exacerbate negative thoughts. To regain control of your internal monologue, there are a few strategies you can try. First, take note of any physical cues: a churning stomach, sweaty palms, or flaring nostrils. When you experience these systems, divert your attention away from the stressor. One technique is to do a tough math problem in your head. Then, identify the “thought trap” you're falling into. Are you catastrophizing (i.e. imagining the worst possible outcome)? Mind reading (i.e. imagining what others might think?) Or black-and-white thinking (i.e. considering only two possible outcomes)? Naming converts the vague threat to something concrete and helps you regain power by realizing you've encountered it before — and survived. Then, separate your uncertainties from the facts. Consider what stories you're telling yourself about the situation and whether there are other angles to consider. Finally, think about what you would tell someone else if they were faced with the same scenario, and follow your own advice. These strategies will help you move from self-criticism to self-compassion, giving you more energy to focus on what's important.

If you are concerned about [an anxiety disorder](#), consult with a medical professional for possible diagnosis and treatment.

This tip is adapted from “[How Anxiety Traps Us, and How We Can Break Free](#),” by Sabina Nawaz
