

10 Practical Ways to Deal with Anxiety

Scan the list for **10 practical ways to deal with anxiety**... If you find one that interests you, read on to find out the details!

1. Talk with a friend
2. Listen to calming music
3. Practice Deep Breathing (download an app for suggestions 3-5)
4. Practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation
5. Practice Inspirational Imagery
6. Pray
7. Get rid of the “if onlys” and “what ifs” in your life
8. Live in the present
9. Take an effective anti-anxiety med
10. Hire someone to worry for you
11. Oh wait, or you can see a counselor...like me!



1. Talk with a Friend

I can relate to the visualization of worry reproducing like rabbits! But do the worrying with someone else involved! “Never worry alone. When anxiety grabs my mind, it is self-perpetuating. **Worrisome thoughts reproduce faster than rabbits**, so one of the most powerful ways to stop the spiral of worry is simply to **disclose my worry to a friend**... The simple act of reassurance from another human being [becomes] a tool of the Spirit to cast out fear — because peace and fear are both contagious.” — [John Ortberg Jr.](#), *[The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God’s Best Version of You](#)*

2. Listen to Calming Music

Calming music is so personal. What may calm me, may stress you . . . Google the music you like. *Close your eyes and let the good times from the music you love wash over your soul.* I recommend a classic song, “[How Great Thou Art](#)” by Carrie Underwood and Vince Gill.

3, 4, 5. Practice Deep Breathing, Progressive Muscle Relaxation, & Inspirational Imagery

Deep Breathing, Progressive Muscle Relaxation and Inspirational Imagery are an amazing part of a new app I highly recommend: *Being. Life Simply* . This app features customizable durations for Deep Breathing, Progressive Muscle Relaxation and Inspirational Imagery, followed by a time of extended music. Sessions can range from 2 to 22 minutes in length. They also include a “booklet” on causes and solutions for stress. I encourage clients who are struggling with anxiety and/or panic attacks to download the app on their phone so **relaxation can be available at a moment’s notice**.

6. Pray

I love Sarah Young’s thoughts about laying our prayer requests before the Father. She encourages readers to **lay out their concerns before the Father** but then to start thanking Him for the answers even before there are discernible results. It is stated in Sarah Young’s devotional, *Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence* : “Thankful prayers keep your focus on My Presence and My promises.” This is an awesome 365-day devotional written in the first person from Jesus.

7. Get rid of the “if only” and “what ifs” in your life

“If Onlys” are regrets about the past. You or I can’t change a single thing about yesterday. Sometimes I need to look at the past, grieve actions—both mine and others—but then **refocus on the power found in today**. In contrast, the “what ifs” keep me distracted by the future. “What ifs” are mind-reading to the negative—“what if I die on the way to work today?”, “what if my spouse does not change?”, “what if we go bankrupt?”—you get the picture. When you catch yourself on the “if only” or “what if” train, see a **BIG RED STOP SIGN**...stop that thought and **refocus on something positive**. By doing this, you will cut a new neuro-pathway in your brain that will lead to a different destination. A great book for retraining your thoughts is *Telling Yourself the Truth* by William Backus and Marie Chapian.

8. Live In the Present

One of my favorite quotes is “Be fully where you are” by Lucy Swindoll. Anytime you are experiencing significant anxiety, ask, “Is this in my yard?” If it is your responsibility, claim it, make a plan, and take care of it. However, often the responsibility belongs to a spouse, child, co-worker, or other relative. In that case, gently place it back in their yard and **let your peace return**. *You are not responsible for another person’s thoughts, feelings, actions, behaviors, or beliefs—just your own*. For most of us, we have plenty of our own weeds to care for in our own yard.

9. Take an Effective Anti-Anxiety Medication

While one of the most effective treatments for anxiety is cognitive behavioral therapy, sometimes **therapy can be enhanced by medication** to increase its effectiveness. According to WebMD, antidepressants such as Prozac, Zoloft, Celexa, Paxil and Lexapro are often **used to treat a variety of anxiety disorders**. These medicines may need to be taken on a daily basis whether you experience anxiety that day or not. See your health care provider for his/her recommendation.

10. Hire Someone to Worry for You

Lastly, Max Lucado shares a humorous story about a man who hired someone to worry for him. His salary? A whopping \$200,000 a year. After the man accepted the job, his first question to his boss was, “Where are you going to get \$200,000 per year?” To which the man responded, “That’s your worry.”

— *Max Lucado*

11. Come See Me!

While anxiety is no laughing matter, laughter does help decrease anxiety. I hope you will try some of the suggestions in this article to help you live an anxiety-free life. OK...at least lower it a degree or two.



Rachelle’s passion is to see people live abundant grace-filled lives with an undercurrent of joy, peace, and purpose. She believes relationships should be authentic and connected. Rachelle helps couples and individuals discover the reasons their relationships are unsatisfying and partners with them on the journey of rediscovering health and hope. Rachelle specializes in couples work including affair recovery, infidelity issues, and sex therapy. With many years of ministry experience as a preacher’s kid, pastor’s wife,

licensed minister, and missionary, Rachelle has a unique perspective into the struggles of ministry families and has a passion to help them live full satisfying lives while working in the Kingdom.

Her education includes an undergraduate degree in elementary education and a master’s degree in professional counseling. Rachelle and her husband have two sons and reside in Nixa, MO.