

The Educator's Stress & Anxiety Relief Toolkit

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet. I feel confident that by working together, we can help you reduce your feelings of stress and anxiety and help you live life the way you want.

A few notes about the program...

First, repetition of certain key techniques is going to help a long way to helping you get everything you can out of this program. Just as a young child does not learn the alphabet in one day, so too must we reinforce things to make them 'stick' in our subconscious minds. Learning by rote is still one of the most fundamental ways we learn.

Next, you'll notice as you begin to go through the material, that there are a LOT of techniques. I provided several techniques for a couple of key reasons: you may only like certain techniques! So many stress and anxiety reduction classes spend 90% of the classroom time teaching information about anxiety, how the body and mind respond and so on, but when it comes time to actually REDUCING or eliminating the anxiety, the class will only teach one method! They usually teach a Body Scan, which is a GREAT technique and is included in the material, but you can use a body scan while you're in a corporate meeting, or when you're driving, or when...

The point is, I will provide you with techniques you can do anytime, anywhere. I also provide you with techniques you can use when you're in bed and able to really focus in. The point is, you'll have variety. This is important, and this brings us to the second reason why you're provided with several different techniques - quite frankly, you may like certain techniques more than others. That's completely fine - the point is, find stuff you like and use them.

- Cris Johnson, BCH, CI, CT.NLP

Anxiety Reduction Action Plan

Physical Changes

- Get enough sleep.
- Get more physical activity regularly.
- Eat a proper diet and avoid caffeine.
- Take a hot bath or shower.
- Find a project around your home that you can do from start to finish.
- Close your eyes for a few minutes a day and call up an image of a beautiful, relaxing scene from a previous vacation or outing.
- Don't rely on TV as a tranquilizer.
- Take time for yourself every day for non-goal oriented activities.

Attitude Changes

- Change your expectations.
- Stop expecting to be perfect either at home or on the job.
- Expand your support system.
- Find a mentor.
- Be objective.
- Have a healthy attitude toward your job.

Instructions For Obsessive Thought Removal By Thumb Rubbing

(After you have been taught 'thumb rubbing' practice it every day, as many times a day as you can. Practice it even when you have no negative thoughts to permanently implant this 'thumb rubbing trigger' deep into your subconscious mind.)

As obsessive thoughts are the enemies of behavior change, we must address this compelling force now and on a continuing basis. As a result of many years of scientific tests, it has been recognized that most obsessive thoughts last only for under 2 minutes. How many times did you have obsessive thoughts to do something, and then someone called you or something happened to take your mind off of the obsessive thoughts, and thereafter you completely forgot about it?

Well, we know that, in reflexology, every part of the human body is represented in the hands (as well as the feet). The first joint of the thumb is representative of our power to focus, to gain insight into all of the functions of our body and mind. You have the ability to identify the obsessive thought and dispel it, remove it from your body, mind and spirit.

Use the thumb and index finger of either hand and slowly rub or massage on the first joint of the thumb in a circle while slowly counting from 100 down to 1 or 1 to 100, whatever pleases you. Imagine your safe place or anything that is pleasurable to you. There is no need to close your eyes, unless it is safe to do so. Never while driving an automobile. You'll see and feel the obsessive thoughts leave your body and mind if you truly invest in this.

We want your subconscious mind to grasp this repeated obsessive thought removal activity, therefore you must start practicing rubbing your thumb in a slow circle before you have an obsessive thought. The thumb rubbing motion then becomes a very reliable 'trigger,' (a mental reflex which results in psychological or physical activity) and the alleviation and elimination of the obsessive thought will become a conditioned reflex occasioned by your mind and emotional state. Start as soon as you learn the process and repeat it often. Repetition, repetition, repetition.

We all receive body and mind signals but sometimes do not pay attention to them, nor interpret them when we receive them. Every person who has obsessive thoughts about anything knows when they are coming on before they take root or take a grip. This is the time to reap the benefits of this tool with repeated practice. With the thumb and forefinger of either hand, start rubbing the first joint of the thumb in a slow circle while slowly counting from 100 down to 1. See and feel the thoughts disappear.

Several Anxiety Reduction Strategies

As you go through these techniques, remember that I also cover them on the videos included. While the videos are more detailed, these “snapshots” can serve as a quick reminder when you’re in a hurry and simply want a quick refresher on a given techniques.

#1: Thumbrubbing

We cover this in detail in greater detail earlier in this workbook and it’s one of the most effective methods there is to interrupt feelings of anxiety. The technique occupies the cognitive function of your mind, is soothing, is a great distractor and so much more. It’s simple, which is good, because in our hectic world, people NEED simplicity!

#2: Breathing Techniques

Try this super-simple stress reduction technique:

Take a SLOW deep breath...hold it just a moment....let it go. Repeat. As you continue doing these slow, deep breaths, picture, imagine or think the word “CALM.” Repeat!

This simple stress reduction method works incredibly well because most people do not breathe deeply in a relaxed state like this. Therefore, we have to devote attention to this way of breathing...meaning we are devoting our conscious thought to it...and keeping our attention off of what stresses us. This is simple and can be done anywhere, any time.

There are many variations to this simple deep breathing technique. Here’s another:

- 1. Sit down & close your eyes.***
- 2. Place right hand on stomach & left hand on your chest.***
- 3. Imagine a blue balloon in your stomach.***
- 4. Breathe slowly ten times using the following technique:***

- Breathe in through your nostrils & imagine the balloon filling

up in your stomach.

- *Exhale and allow all the air to flow out of your body.*
- *Repeat to yourself silently “Relax, relax, relax” and say the number ten. (Note: Repeat the above 10 times counting backwards from 10 to 1.)*
- *The exercise should take 3 minutes.*

#3: Jaw Drop

Have you ever heard the phrase “jaw droppingly beautiful?” or words to that effect? Certain ways of phrasing things become commonplace when they reflect something true about how we feel or our thoughts. Practice simply leaving your mouth and lips closed, but gently allowing your jaw to become slack. It’s easy and is a signal in your body for relaxation. You can use it anytime, anywhere.

#4: The One-Minute Stress Reliever Method

This little method is actually the first part of my standard hypnosis induction technique. This technique is great because it’s so simple. Anywhere or anytime that you can safely close your eyes for just 60 seconds, and you can do this.

1. Relax your eyes to the point where as long as you hold onto this relaxation, your eyelids simply won’t work.
2. Once you’re sure you’ve done that, give them a test.
3. Relax for 60 seconds.

#5: Mental Vacation

This simply involves using your imagination and simply “visiting your happy place.” It’s that easy! Other than when you’re driving, you can do this pretty much anywhere for just a few moments or for several minutes depending on your situation.

1. ***Sit quietly in a comfortable position.***

2. **Close your eyes.**
3. **Think about a safe, relaxing place you have been or wish to visit.**
4. **Think about what you would be doing.**
5. **Enjoy the sounds, smells, and feelings of being there.**

#6: Body Scan

This relaxing exercise can be done virtually anywhere where you can safely close your eyes. It focuses your attention on the different parts of your body and systematically relaxes everything. To do this properly, you must be seated, preferably reclined. You can either have someone read the instructions below to you, memorize them yourself, or read them into a tape recorder. You'll be amazed at how effective this technique really is!

First, close your eyes...Make yourself comfortable in your chair. Feel your shoulders, middle back, lower back and hips settling into the chair.

Relax your upper arms, lower arms, hands, thighs, calves and feet. Let your feet totally relax and even slouch to the side. Relax your neck and let your head tip back or to the side. Breathe deeply...

Become aware of your feet. Are they relaxed? Search for tension in your feet and let it go. Release all tension and strain from your feet. Don't forget to breathe...deeply...

Feel your lower legs and calf muscles, from your ankles to your knees. Are your lower legs relaxed? Search for tension in your ankle. Let it go. Search for tension in your calf muscle. Let it go. Search for tension in your shin. Let it go. Search for tension in your knee. Let it go. Release all tension and strain from your foot. Keep breathing...

Now, bring your attention to your upper legs – the muscles on the front of your thighs, the muscles on the backs of your thighs, and your hip joints. Search for tension. Let go of the tension in the fronts of your thighs. Let go of the tension in the backs of your thighs. Breathe it away. Let your hips go, relaxing them even further into the chair. Let all tension out of your hip joints. Breathe deeply.

Feel the muscles of your lower abdomen. Feel how those muscles hold tension, then let that tension go. Let the muscles relax completely, releasing all strain. Breathe...

Now, bring your attention to the muscles over your stomach. You probably hold those muscles in all day. Let them go. Fully relax and release your abdominal muscles. Breathe deeply and release, as you exhale, all tension.

Feel the muscles that radiate around the sides of your body and extend into your upper back. Feel your shoulder blades, ribs, chest and upper spine relaxing. Let the tension go. Breathe out the tension...

Bring your attention to your shoulders and neck. Feel all the stress and tension lingering there, making your neck and shoulder muscles tight and tense. Slowly let it go, taking several long deep breaths. Completely relax your shoulders and your neck...

Feel the muscles in your upper arms – your deltoid muscles at the top, and your biceps and triceps around your upper arms. Search out hidden pockets of stress and tension in your upper arms. Let it go. Relax your upper arms and breathe...

Feel your elbow joints, the muscles of your lower arms, your wrists, your hands, and each one of your fingers. Imagine a radiating circle of warmth moving down each arm and dissolving all tension from your elbows, lower arms, wrists, hands and each finger and thumb...

Now, feel the muscles in your head, feel your scalp, your facial muscles, your chin, your jaw. Release the tension in your scalp, along your temples, around your ears, in your forehead, around your eyes, your cheeks, your jaw, your mouth, your chin. Let it all go. Relax. Breathe...

Now, imagine a warm radiant of light moving slowly up your body, starting around your toes, moving to the crown of your head, then slowly moving back down again. As it moves over you, it scans for any remaining areas of stress or tension and immediately dissolves them. You feel warm, deeply relaxed, and infused with a sense of well being...

All right...now open your eyes. Now, wasn't that relaxing?

#7: The Relaxing Breath

Have you noticed that when you feel tense, you sometimes forget to breath? You think you are having an anxiety attack when, in reality, you just haven't remembered to breath! This might sound silly, but it is one of the most profound secrets of remaining calm. So when you feel anxious - remember to breath! (We all feel anxious when we stop breathing!)

So, providing you are breathing, this is a quick and easy technique to handle stress. (This method also is more involved than the previous breathing exercise

#2 in that this method even more tightly focuses attention away from stress by giving you more to do.)

Here are the simple steps:

Sit up comfortably and place the tip of your tongue against the bony ridge near your upper front teeth; you'll keep your tongue in this position throughout the exercise. With your eyes closed (NOT WHILE DRIVING!) imagine a relaxing scene of some sort.

Exhale with a whoosh through your mouth.

Now close your mouth and breathe in quietly through your nose to the count of four.

Hold your breath easily to the count of seven. Then exhale through your mouth with a whoosh to the count of eight.

You have completed one breath. REPEAT the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths. DO NOT DO MORE THAN FOUR BREATHS at one time for the first month of practice. Over time you can work up to eight breaths.

This works so well because we're engaging different senses: Auditory for the "whoosh," Visual as we imagine the relaxing scene with our eyes closed, and Kinesthetic for the placement of your tongue.

From Andrew Weil's Self Healing Newsletter, Premiere Issue

#8: Anchoring

With practice, the thumbrubbing/counting combined with your Safe Place (Mental Vacation) is a great anchor. If you'd like to set your own anchor, it's easy.

Anchoring is essentially the linking of a stimulus to an emotional response. We set anchors all day without realizing it. Maybe your grandmother wore a certain kind of perfume and any time you smell it, you're instantly taken back to a time when you were a small child. What about auto manufacturers and the rock songs they use in their car commercials? They're linking those good feelings from that classic song to their car. You can set an anchor deliberately. Here's how:

- 1. Find yourself a quiet, private place.***
- 2. Choose an emotional state you want to be able to access any time. Let's assume a calm state.***

3. ***Close your eyes as you sit/lay in a comfortable position.***
4. ***Imagine yourself in a place of peace and comfort.***
5. ***When you feel the MOST peaceful and relaxed that you possibly can, with one hand, squeeze your other wrist.***
6. ***if you've done this correctly, anytime you want to feel calmer, squeeze your wrist...reactivating that anchor.***

#9 Bilateral Hemispheric Stimulation

This is one of the easiest “interruption” techniques out there, because it uses your brain functions in a cool way to do the work for you. Practice passing any small object – a pen, a coin, a Kleenex – from hand to hand, right to left, then left to right, back and forth between your hands, making sure you cross the “center body line.”

An anxiety response is only in one hemisphere of your brain. (So is a craving, so this technique can be used for that, too!) By passing the object back and forth, you are literally stimulating both hemispheres of your brain, which has the effect of easily draining away the emotion.

A GREAT anytime, anywhere technique!

#10 Backwards Spin

When I first learned this, I thought it was the coolest thing!

Many people who have excess anxiety and/or panic attacks often can describe a kind of “spinning” feeling in their bodies, often in their stomachs. By tagging into the spin, mimicking it with your hand...and then reversing the spin, it has the effect of negating and/or interrupting the spin and stopping it!

Again, more details on the how's and why's of this are on the accompanying videos, but this is a great way to interrupt the anxiety feeling.

#11 EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique)

This simple technique has as its roots work in acupuncture and the concept of releasing “blockages” of the natural energy in the body, resulting in negative feelings.

Some hypnotists are really into “energy work” and what may be labeled as “metaphysical.” I never much understood talk of “meridian points” or anything like that with EFT, but people in my field I greatly respect have used this with clients to great effect. Truth is, people DO have energy in the body...in the form of electricity! So there can be energy blockages, as emotions are bio-chemical reactions in the body, so from a scientific standpoint (if that’s your preference) there is something to hang your hat on in terms of why this works. It’s also a GREAT distraction technique as it really gives you something to do to occupy your thoughts.

The cliffnotes version of this involves getting in touch with how you feel (for most people reading this, we’ll use anxiety as an example). Then you would rate how you feel on a 1-10 scale, with 1 being very mild and 10 the most severe.

Then, you would repeatedly tap on various parts of the body in a certain sequence while saying an affirmation of “Even though I feel this _____ feeling, I completely and totally accept myself. And I choose to let this feeling go because I don’t need it anymore.”

The video will go into more detail but the basic tapping sequence is:

- 1. top of the head**
- 2. top of the eye socket**
- 3. to the outside side of the eye socket**
- 4. just under the eye socket**
- 5. under the nose**
- 6. under the bottom lip**
- 7. center of the collar bone**
- 8. on the side, where the bra strap would be on a woman**
- 9. back of the hand, between the ring and pinky fingers**
- 10. on the wrist, just under the palm of the hand**

After going through the tapping/affirmation sequence, check in on your emotions on the 1-10 scale. If you were a “7” before using EFT, where are you now? Run through a few sequences, checking in each time until you work your way down to a “1” or even a “0.”

#12: Altering Submodalities

Focus on the anxiety feeling: if you had to give it a color, what would it be? Is it bright? Is it dark? Imagine as if you could touch it. What would it feel like? What about sounds? Make notes of how the anxiety would look, sound and feel like if it was a separate thing. Got those details? Good.

Now alter them in your mind. If the anxiety was red...fade it to blue, for example. If it was a jagged sharp thing in terms of texture, make it softer, more comforting.

This is a quick intro to “altering submodalities,” a wonderful technique from the world of NLP or Neuro-Linguistic Programming. Basically, it involves shifting things around in your mind...and gaining control over something that perhaps you did not feel as though you even COULD control!

#13: Circle Of Excellence

This NLP technique is taught on a video, as it's tough to just watch and grasp what's going on without doing it, but it's a technique that sports athletes use all the time.

- 1. First, mentally re-enter into a positive feeling associated with a pleasant past memory of being calm and most importantly in control...at your best.**
- 2 Next, assign or tagging colors, textures, sounds and feelings to the memory.**
- 3. Then, in your imagination, you put those details into an “imaginary circle” on the ground that you can use anywhere, anytime.**
- 4. When you feel the anxious feeling imagine bringing your circle back into being and placing it on the floor.**
- 5. Physically step into the circle and imagine all of the colors, sounds and feelings rising up and surrounding you.**

Because these feelings and colors and so forth are anchored (linked) to those memories of that positive event, the process has the effect of pushing out the anxious feeling as people cannot feel two opposite feelings at once.

#14: Positive Self-Talk & AFFIRMATIONS

“Day by day in every way, I am getting better and better.”

Emile Coue

On the accompanying CDs, during our conversations and more, we stress the value of being mindful of what you say to yourself – the fact that our minds are bio-computers and if we focus on bad, we get more bad. Although I go more in depth on this both in person with you and on the CDs, it really is that basic. Remember the 3 basketball team story! Using Affirmations (like the ones below) gives your mind positive programming. In short, good in, good out! It’s that simple.

We can work more on our own individual language. If we say things to ourselves such as “Oh, I’m NEVER going to finish on time!” we are essentially programming ourselves for failure! Our subconscious mind does not know the difference from, “just letting off steam” and true intentions, so telling ourselves we’re “never going to finish on time” is essentially the same as programming a computer for a task...we truly are bio computers in that regard!

Here’s a critical affirmation that we can use for anything:

THERE IS NO PERSON, PLACE, THOUGHT, MEMORY OR THING FROM THE PAST, IN THE PRESENT OR EVER TO ARRIVE IN THE FUTURE THAT COULD EVER PREVENT ME FROM ACHIEVING _____ (your goal).

Oh, one more thing: notice I used the terms “stress” and “stressor” and so forth in the following Affirmations. That is on purpose – “stress” is a more mild word. Just as more and more doctors are learning not to say “pain” to patients, so to by using softer language we can influence ourselves in a positive way.

Stress Management

(Make these Affirmations personal to you. Fill in the blanks on your most troublesome stressors)

I easily and effortlessly identify, avoid and manage my own particular stressors.

I have easily managed and overcome this stressor _____

I am calm and relaxed, and happy with my ability to manage this stressor. I am calm.

I have easily managed and overcome this stressor _____

I am calm and relaxed, and happy with my ability to manage this stressor. I am calm.

I have easily managed and overcome this stressor _____

I am calm and relaxed, and happy with my ability to manage this stressor. I am calm.

It feels so good and healthy to manage stress properly.

I have easily managed and overcome this stressor _____

I am calm and relaxed, and happy with my ability to manage this stressor. I am calm.

I have easily managed and overcome this stressor _____

I am calm and relaxed, and happy with my ability to manage this stressor. I am calm.

I have easily managed and overcome this stressor _____

I am calm and relaxed, and happy with my ability to manage this stressor. I am calm.

I have easily managed and overcome this stressor _____

I am calm and relaxed, and happy with my ability to manage this stressor. I am calm.

I have easily managed and overcome this stressor _____

I am calm and relaxed, and happy with my ability to manage this stressor. I am calm.

It feels so good and healthy to manage stress properly.

I am free from any and all troubling thoughts about these stressors

I am free from obsessive thoughts....I am free.

I really sleep better at night.

I recognize "good stress" and accept it in proper portions.

I am free to think about my own positive choices so that I enjoy a good life.

I am confident in the choices I make and in my ability to accomplish these choices.

I am healthy and getting healthier and healthier every day.

It is my own voluntary and free choice to face stress and conquer it.

It feels so good to be aware and strong, and to be calm in the management of stress.

I am strong in the management of stress. I am stronger and stronger every day.

I am free from being dragged down by stress, and it feels so good to be free.

I am free from all negative reactions to stress, and it feels so good to be free.

I have learned how to “chalk-up” stress as just being a part of life and process it properly

I now feel that I am powerful within myself for I have overcome daily stressors.

My body is calm because it is impossible for stressful thoughts and reactions to enter my body or my mind.

It is “as if” I have an invisible mirror surrounding me which protects me from all stress, and the stress reflects back from the mirror to its source, and I am unharmed by it.

In fact, I laugh when I see where the stress goes back to and how it affects the source.

It feels so good to laugh.

I have an invisible mirror surrounding me which protects me from all stress.

All of the happy and joyous messengers in my brain continue sending the great feelings to all of the cells in my brain.

All of the bothersome messengers are effortlessly overcome by my joyous messengers, so that disturbing messages have no power over me.

Serotonin permits good sleep. I have great amounts of serotonin in my brain to send soothing messages of excellent sleep throughout my entire mind and body.

Noradrenalin creates high energy. I have great amounts of noradrenalin in my brain to send vibrant messages of high energy throughout my entire mind and body.

Dopamine creates pleasure and alleviates pain. I have great amounts of dopamine in my brain to send joyous messages of pleasure throughout my entire mind and body and to help me alleviate any pain.

I can really feel how calm my body is now, and this feels great.

I am immune to any negative effects of stress.

I am calm and getting calmer and calmer every day because I am stress-free.

Everything that I need for psychological strength is within me.

I have all the resources that I need for good life-habits, and I use these resources.

I avoid and process all stress-causing “triggers” effortlessly.

I am healthy and getting healthier and healthier and healthier every day.

Avoiding and processing stress comes real easy as my subconscious mind provides everything that I need to continue with great living habits for excellent health.

Processing stress properly well is my life-long commitment to myself.

I am calm and getting calmer and calmer every day.

I ask and direct my subconscious mind to overcome stress and send calm and victorious messages to my subconscious mind, so that I react properly to all stress.

Processing all stress properly is good for my body, mind, relationships, and well-being.

I always avoid or process stress properly and therefore crummy feelings are eliminated.

I am proud of the stress management that I am doing by and for myself.

I have programmed myself to develop and maintain living habits for excellent

health.

My subconscious mind truly knows the reasons for my past inability to manage stress, and my subconscious mind also knows what to do to help me.

I give permission to my subconscious mind to do what is necessary for me to combat and manage stress in a healthy fashion and to remain calm and collected..

I have a vivid and clear image of a calm me and a peaceful scene, which images act like a magnet, ever drawing me to calmness and tranquility.

This image triggers my Subconscious Mind to send all of the good suggestions and thoughts contained in these Affirmations to my Conscious Mind so that I automatically and without effort continue with my new stress-processing habits for healthy living.

I feel real good and happy with the decision that I have made to take care of myself and manage stress properly.

Because I do manage stress properly, new opportunities in life open for me and I can focus on these opportunities clearly as my attitude about life improves every day.

I honor my commitments and contracts as I am a person of my word.

I have finally found the key to calm and joyous living as the key is always within me.

I love myself and my ability to manage myself and enjoy life.

I love the new me and continue to take care of myself.

My Very Personal Affirmations (Mix and match, and add your own)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Are they in the present tense? Are they positive?

**Say them daily with passion.
Keep a record of when you say them. Journals are great for strength.**

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Saturday _____

Sunday _____

Noteworthy Thoughts & Comments to Myself

These Affirmations are positive statements, and are not intended to replace medical advice. Consult your medical doctor on any health issue, and avail yourself of the best sources to promote your physical & mental well-being.