



Anxiety Coping Checklist

A short list for the moments when thinking clearly feels impossible

Anxiety narrows your options until it feels like there's only one move: brace, scroll, or escape. This list exists so you don't have to generate ideas while flooded. Work top to bottom and stop when something helps.

First 90 seconds

- Put both feet on the floor and lengthen your exhale.
- Drink a full glass of water, slowly.
- Get your eyes on something more than 20 feet away.
- Unclench your jaw, drop your shoulders, soften your hands.

Next ten minutes

- Move: a walk around the block, stairs, shaking out your arms.
- Write the worry down in one sentence. Just one.
- Ask: is this a problem to solve right now, or a feeling to ride out?
- Text one person. You don't have to explain the whole thing.

Question the story, gently

- What's the evidence for this thought? What's the evidence against it?
- What would I say to a friend who told me this exact thing?
- Is this a fact, a prediction, or an old rule I learned somewhere?
- If the worst case happened, what would I actually do next?

Care for the aftermath

Anxiety spikes are physically expensive. Afterward: eat something, lower the stimulation, and be unimpressive on purpose for a while. Recovery counts as part of coping.



A racing mind is not proof that something is wrong.





Patterns matter more than single spikes. If anxiety is running your calendar, your sleep, or your relationships, that's worth bringing to therapy, not white-knuckling alone.

My personal short list

Three things that reliably help me:

One person I can reach out to:

One thing I'll stop asking of myself on hard days:

