



Ways to deal with Anxiety

Anxiety is a normal response to change, things we fear, things we are worried about and when we feel like we have no control.

Anxiety can range from mild to severe. Signs of anxiety can include shaking, sweating, upset stomach and racing thoughts. Most anxiety can be managed with a bit of self-care.

Anxiety only becomes a problem when it begins to affect the way you live.

What can I do if I feel really anxious/ stressed/ overwhelmed?

- **BREATHE:** Breathe really deep until you can feel it in the lower part of your stomach. Breathe in for 3 seconds and out for 3 seconds. Keep going for a few minutes.
- **MINDFULNESS:** Mindfulness is the art of focusing on just one thing in that moment and blocking out all else. It is useful when we feel a bit overwhelmed. Some things to try are focusing on how your feet feel in your shoes when they press against the ground, paying attention to nature such as the sound of birds or leaves on the trees or patting a much loved pet. The goal is for you to think of only one thing at a time and make it something pleasant!
- **PHONE A FRIEND:** Call a friend or family member, call Lifeline, call someone. If you need to talk then make sure you do.
- **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:** Go for a walk, jog on the spot, do some housework (not fun, I know!). Do anything that will get your body moving.
- **DISTRACTION:** Focus your mind on something else. You could name all the words you can think of that start with the letter "A", squeeze a stress ball or use your senses. Have something that feels nice like a smooth pebble or smells nice like an essential oil or have a photo or picture which makes you feel good when you look at it.
- **WRITE DOWN WHAT IS WORRYING YOU:** Sometimes writing down your worries can help you sort through things you can control or change and the things you cannot control. Focus on the things you can control and then take some action.
- **BE KIND TO YOURSELF:** It can be easy in a busy life to end up putting your needs last. Some feel selfish making time for themselves but this is so important. You cannot care for others if you don't care for yourself. Do something nice for yourself on a regular basis. This does not need to cost money, it can be a nice bath, enjoying a quiet cup of tea on the veranda, read a book for a while or listen to your favourite music.
- **SEEK HELP IF NEEDED:** If you find none of the above suggestions are helpful or you want some support, Maari Ma has a team of General Practitioners and a Social and Emotional Wellbeing Team who can provide assistance. Don't be afraid to ask for help.