

## **SELF-CARE & MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES**

Distraction: Distract your mind from worries and repetitive thoughts with preferred activities

Conversation, listening to music, reading, puzzles, TV, video games, cleaning, homework, movies, exercise, drawing or painting

Grounding Exercises: Use body and senses to bring self back to the present moment.

Sensory Awareness: Smell fragrances, taste food, notice colors around you, notice the texture of a blanket or clothing, drink hot tea or coffee, squeeze clay or putty, do yoga, meditate, exercise

5,4,3,2,1 Game

Name 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, 1 good thing about yourself

Cognitive Grounding: Ask questions that are simple but require you to think.

Where are you? What is the date? What is the year? How old are you? What season is it? What street do you live on? Who is your math teacher? Etc..

Emotional Release: Allow yourself a healthy release of emotions through activities that allow you to express those feelings rather than distracting from them.

Yell, run, take a cold shower, let yourself cry, watch something funny, try boxing, exercise, pop balloons, listen to really loud music

Thought Challenging: Write down the negative thoughts or worries to help you think about whether the thoughts are true and logical.

Write down the thought and then list the evidence that supports and disproves the thought. Try to figure out if there are alternative explanations. Identify if the worry or thought is truly as bad as it seems. Think critically and don't just accept that your thought is a fact..

Mindfulness and Meditation:

Basic mindfulness: Being aware of the present moment (e.g., thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations) without judgment and without trying to change it and staying focused on one thing at a time.

Cheat Sheet:

Identify something to focus on (an object, an activity, a sensation).

Bring attention to that object – stay engaged by describing it and focusing on it

When your attention wanders, notice that you are thinking about something else and gently bring your attention back to that object.

Meditation: Guided meditations to aid in the practice of mindfulness can be found on YouTube and phone apps (Calm in the Storm). Search for guided body scans, guided imagery, walking meditations, sitting meditations, and breathing meditations.

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### **COUNSELORS:**

**Mrs. Goodyear**  
School Counselor  
Students Last Names A-L

**Mrs. Zylinski**  
School Counselor  
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## **SELF-CARE & MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES**

### Breathing Strategies:

**Paced Breathing:** Slow your pace of breathing way down. Breathe deeply from the abdomen. Breathe out more slowly than you breathe in (e.g., 4 seconds in and 6 seconds out). Do this for 1–2 minutes to bring down your arousal.

**Deep Breathing:** Lie on your back or sit. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage. Breathe in slowly through your nose so that your stomach moves out against your hand. The hand on your chest should remain as still as possible. Then breathe out slowly through your mouth.

**Breathing Awareness:** Breathe in and out slowly. Focus on each stage of a breath as you breathe slowly and gently. First, notice the breath as it enters your nose, the way the breath feels on your nostrils. Feel the breath as it passes through your nasal passages, and down behind your throat. Feel each time you inhale, the breath passing down your windpipe. Feel the breath going down..... Notice where the air enters your lungs. Feel the air expand your lungs with each in breath. Feel your lungs expand and relax. Now notice the exhalation phase of breathing. Observe as the air leaves your lungs and begins to travel upward.

### Muscle Relaxation:

Stretch muscles

**Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Tense and relax each muscle group, head to toe, one muscle group at a time. Tense (5 seconds), then let go; relax each muscle all the way. Notice the tension; notice the difference when relaxed.

### Panic Attacks Guide:

**AWARE Plan:** **A**cknowledge that the panic attack is happening and **A**cept that, at this moment, there is nothing you can do get rid of it. You must work with the panic attack to overcome it. **W**ait before you react to the panic to allow yourself to think before you act, acting impulsively to flee or struggle against it may make the panic worse. **W**atch and observe how the panic works and how you respond to it. This may include keeping a panic diary to observe the panic attack rather than feeling consumed by it. **W**ork through the panic attack if you are in an activity that requires your attention (driving, taking a test, etc.), staying engaged in the task will help you focus on the moment instead of the panic. **A**ctions that can make you more comfortable will ease the distress

### TIPP:

**Temperature:** Tip the temperature of your face with cold water to calm down fast. Holding your breath, put your face in a bowl of cold water. Or, hold a cold pack or Ziplock bag with ice water on your eyes and cheeks, or splash cold water on your face. Hold for 30 seconds.

**Intense Exercise:** To calm down your body when it is revved up by emotion. Engage in intense aerobic exercise, if only for a short while (10–15 minutes). Expend your body's stored-up physical energy by running, walking fast, jumping rope or jumping jacks, playing basketball, weight lifting, putting on music and dancing. Don't overdo it!

**Paced Breathing:** Slow your pace of breathing way down (to about 5–7 in and out breaths per minute). Breathe deeply from the abdomen. Breathe out more slowly than you breathe in (e.g., 4 seconds in and 6 seconds out). Do this for 1–2 minutes to bring down your arousal.

**Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Tense and relax each muscle group, head to toe, one muscle group at a time. Tense (5 seconds), then let go; relax each muscle all the way. Notice the tension and notice the difference when relaxed.

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