



Bloom Counseling
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How can I manage my anxiety?

Counseling and medication are some treatments for anxiety, but simple lifestyle changes can also help.

- Get enough sleep
- Avoid stimulants such as caffeine
- Exercise regularly
- Relax using deep breathing, muscle relaxation, listening to relaxing music or guided imagery. Below are instructions for using guided imagery.

Relaxation Technique-Guided Imagery

It may help to have an instructor, soothing music, or sounds of nature playing while you use this technique. If you find your mind wandering, this is common at first, just notice that you are distracted and, in a non-judgmental way, return your focus to the task at hand.

- 1) Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit or lay down
- 2) Close your eyes and take a few slow deep breaths to help you relax
- 3) Picture yourself in a setting that is calm and peaceful, like a beach, the woods, or any scene you choose.
- 4) Imagine as many details as possible, focusing on one of the 5 senses at a time, for example, first, imagining the feel of a slight breeze, the feeling of the ground under your feet, etc., then imagine the sound of birds chirping and leaves rustling.
- 5) As you imagine more and more details of your scene, keep taking slow, deep breaths and notice your muscles getting more relaxed, and enjoy the feeling of calm.
- 6) Once you have moved through imagining the details of all 5 senses, take a few moments to put it all together and enjoy these moments of calm.
- 7) Then, when you are ready, slowly take yourself out of the scene, returning back to the present, bringing your sense of calm with you.
- 8) Open your eyes and notice how you feel right now and remember that you can always return to this calm, peaceful place in your mind.

For more examples and information about stress management and relaxation techniques, visit www.bloomcounselingdc.com/get-started