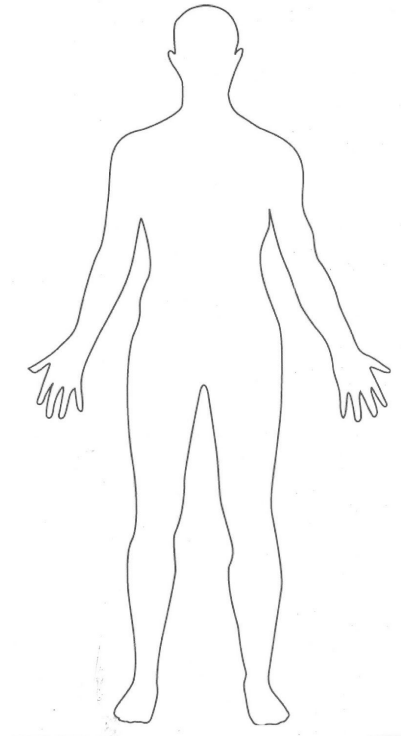


Cheat Sheet to Reduce Anxiety

This cheat sheet to reduce feelings of anxiety and help keep your sanity can be done whenever you want and as many times as you need to get through this strange and difficult time. Print many copies ahead of time, keep them where you can easily find them, and use the supportive information whenever you need a little lift.

Step 1: Take in a few deep breaths and sigh three times.

Step 2: Notice any sensations in your body. You may keep your eyes open or close your eyes. Start from the top of your head, then down to your face, neck, shoulders, right arm, left arm, chest, stomach, buttocks, right thigh, left thigh, right leg, left leg, right foot, and left foot. Mark the area(s) on the figure where you notice something in your body.



Step 3: How would you describe your feelings right now? It is perfectly okay to have more than one feeling or to have mixed feelings.

Anxious

Confused

Scared

Helpless

Lonely

Ashamed

Angry

Hopeless

Bored

Unsure

Crazy

Tired

Hungry

Irritated

Embarrassed

Sad

Frustrated

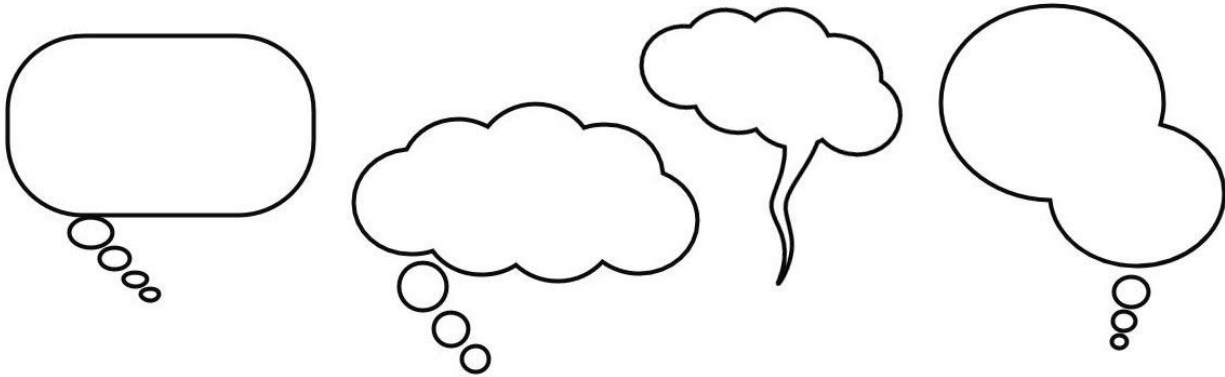
Numb

Lost

Empty

Guilty

Step 4: Are there any thoughts that are bothering you right now? Write each thought in a bubble.



Ask yourself if the thought(s) is/are helpful?

Yes

No

Here is a big needle for you. Whenever unhelpful thoughts arise, imagine yourself putting one thought at a time in a bubble and popping it with the needle.



Step 5: Let's practice each of the following skills for at least 20 minutes.

Pick one that describes you the best in this moment:

- *A Pacing Monkey*
- *A Moody Crocodile*
- *A Walking Zombie*

Feel free to cut out the following suggested skills and place them in jars to create a Monkey jar, a Crocodile jar, and a Zombie jar for future use. This way you can choose which jar you're in the mood for and pick out a skill to practice right away.

Pacing Monkey



Do something that makes you perspire or turn the music on and DANCE away.

Draw a hundred smiley faces on a piece of paper.

Rearrange the furniture in your house.

Start a donation bag and walk around your house to find things you can put inside.

Do a load of laundry.

Watch a sad movie and cry.

Start a list of positive or pleasant things you want to do after this crisis is over.

Practice daydreaming as you watch clouds in the sky and listen to anything that passes by your ears.

Warm up a glass of milk or make a cup of tea and sip it slowly.

Arrange a video call with someone whom you have not talked to for over a year or organize a themed virtual party with family members or a bunch of friends.

Start a pandemic dream journal.

Teach yourself about walking meditation and practice it. Try it with bare feet on the grass, if you can.

Any child would enjoy a memory and matching game to play when they are stuck at home. Make one and send it to him/her.

If you feel overwhelmed and tired, just sit down and rest. It's okay to not do anything.

Moody Crocodile



Stand in front of the biggest mirror you have in the house and start laughing alone or with others.

Take a break and do whatever you want for an hour ALONE, in your own space.

Print out a coloring page you find on the Internet (one that will cheer you up) or a mandala online to color. If you don't know what a mandala is, check it out online.

Organize one area in your house: a closet, a pantry, a medicine cabinet, a bathroom cabinet, a storage room, an underwear or sock area, a desk, a bed, pictures, etc.

Put on a researcher hat and write down 20 things you learned on the internet about **Self-Compassion**.

Look out the window, breathe, and say to yourself, "I am learning to embrace a new normal" and watch your feelings and thoughts, without judging, evaluating, or criticizing.

Write down all your feelings and unhelpful thoughts that pop up on a piece of paper. Tear them up or crumble them up in a ball and throw it in the trash.

Write a little thank you note to a mailman, garbage collector, or whoever you feel grateful for. Or, mail a cheerful note to someone.

Take out three things from your closet that no longer spark joy and leave them in a pile to donate.

Write a letter about your Pandemic experience with the goal that you will read it to someone special in 10 or 20 years.

Make and decorate a sign that says, “Let yourself be human and adopt loving-kindness to your heart.” and stick it somewhere in your house that is easy to see. Or, come up with your own cheerful saying.

Make a crown, large ears, moustache, monster feet, tail, or wings for everyone in your house to wear and take a picture of this special moment. It might not feel special right now, but it will later.

If your best friend tells you that he/she is in so much pain and is constantly feeling angry, guilty, and worried, what could be your advice to help him/her get past this difficult time?

Walking Zombie



Say to yourself or write down on a piece of paper at least 25 times—“Happy-Safe-Calm.”

Eat cookies by yourself in the bathroom so you don’t have to share them 😊 If eating too many sweets is not a good idea for you, pick another activity you enjoy.

Is this a good time to wash your hair? After a refreshing shower, get dressed like you are going somewhere hip and fun.

Get out of your bed, off the couch, or out of your pajamas. Wash your face and give your head a nice massage. Order an essential oil if you enjoy this experience. Then make refreshing ice cubes with interesting scents. Check out recipes online for ideas.

Pick one place in your house to clean and just get up and do it—a counter, an oven, a toilet, a garage, a kitchen floor, a closet—or empty the trash bins.

Put on your face mask and sneakers and take a walk outside for at least 20 minutes. If you can't leave the house, find a picture of a forest or a beach and visualize yourself taking a walk there.

Go online and watch something funny on YouTube. Make sure you get a good laugh.

Call one person or text three people to check in and see how they are holding up.

Set up a reminder on your phone every three hours. Each time it rings, write down one positive thing or what you are thankful for today.

Give your body some love. Take your time to put lotion or oil on your feet and hands or all over your body. Maybe practice hugging yourself very tightly too.

Call someone who knows how to cook or enjoys eating and ask him/her to give you a new recipe to try.

Write down all the feelings that you know or experience the most; then make your own feelings chart. Think of one person that might benefit from a feelings chart and find a way to give him/her one.

If your best friend is feeling stuck and empty, what would be your advice to him/her?

Make a scavenger hunt list for yourself or family members for items in the house. Make it fun/funny!

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