



### Calming Anxiety Handout

Hi there!

Thank you for attending today's session! I'm Jules Hobbs of Hobbs Holistic Health and wanted to create this handout to support what we covered today and provide you with some activities, personal recommendations and resources to continue your self-development and mindfulness journey.



You can contact me @hobbsholistichealth on Instagram or email [juleshobbshhealth@gmail.com](mailto:juleshobbshhealth@gmail.com) if you have any questions or would like to find out more about what I could offer to your wellbeing journey. I offer a range of corporate self-development and fitness sessions via zoom.

### **Your Exclusive Invitation!**

Many of you have asked for longer sessions within the COA feedback and I took this into consideration when creating a goal-focused online Wellness Workshop. After the success of the first session I have arranged a repeat class for anyone who was unable to make the first one that took place last week.

During this session we will explore our "why" and what motivates us, consider barriers to success and challenge our inner critic before creating a plan to succeed. The session will end with a mindfulness meditation.

Join me on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September at 7pm BST, the session is just under two hours long.

You can purchase your ticket on [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com) and use your exclusive promo code "COA" for 20% off, making your ticket just £12 plus a small Eventbrite fee. Ticket sales close an hour before the event start time.

I hope to see you there!

### **Calming Anxiety**

In our session we focused on anxiety again with more of a focus on physical symptoms and techniques to help manage them. This handout should be used in conjunction with the live or recorded COA session to ensure you fully benefit from the content. Please note that this session is not designed to be a replacement for any form of mental healthcare such as medication or therapy.

## **Strategies**

### **1. Voice Your Fears**

Write down what you are worried about, sometimes voicing your fears helps the problem seem less unmanageable and journaling by hand can be very cathartic.

Ask yourself what symptoms of anxiety you're feeling, i.e. jittery, headache, racing heart.

### **2. Exercise**

Move your body, not only will it release endorphins, but it might also help to use up anxious energy.

### **3. Name it to Tame It**

Emotions can be confusing and overwhelming. Naming how you feel can help you to feel more in control and understanding your feelings. This is a technique taken directly from "Overcoming Overthinking" by Deborah Grayson Reigel and Sophie Reigel.

Ask yourself:

How am I feeling? Include feelings rather than thoughts or assumptions, i.e. "I feel nervous about a job interview" instead of "I think my job interview won't go well". Use the emotions list below from Sophie & Deborah to help you.

What is contributing to this feeling?

How would I like to feel instead?

### **4. Challenge Your Thoughts**

This is a CBT method from an interactive CBT toolkit book that I use myself (see sources).

Ask yourself:

How important will this be in my life five years from now?

What would my best friend say I should do about it?

If this were my best friend's problem, what advice would I give to them?

Am I assuming my way of seeing things is the only way possible? What about other points of views/ perspectives?

Am I jumping three steps ahead when step 1 hasn't happened yet? i.e. Am I worrying about something that hasn't come to pass yet?

Am I overestimating the changes of disaster?

### **5. Journal**

The great thing about journaling is that there are no rules! Simply find a quiet space and allow yourself to write. Even ten minutes can make a difference. If you're unsure where to start then take a look at this [article I wrote on LinkedIn](#) for tips.

## **6. Fear Setting**

A way to look at the worst-case scenario (what you're scared of) and what you could do to mitigate it. I'd recommend you give yourself an hour to complete this exercise which is described in detail on [Tim Ferriss' Ted Talk](#). Make sure you have a pen and notepad to hand. When I completed this exercise, I first watched it all the way through and then paused it at the relevant points the second time to complete the tasks.

## **7. Happiness Hour**

Give yourself some much-needed self-care, forget the to-do list and switch off for an hour whether it's going for a walk, baking, sewing, reading – whatever helps you to forget your worries!

## **8. Limit Social Media**

Reduce how often you're exposed to the "highlight reel" you see on social media to prevent comparison and negative reactions such as low self-esteem and envy. Remember, most posts are filtered and not a true representation of real life!

## **9. Anxiety Alchemy**

A fantastic exercise from the Anxiety Journal (see sources).

Change the negative labels that we put on ourselves into optimistic ones where we see the strengths! i.e. A worrier might have great attention to detail or being called hyper could be viewed more positively as energetic.

Write down any labels that you have put on yourself or been called from others and write down how they can be reframed or considered a positive strength.

## **10. Improvise**

Another great strategy from Deborah and Sophie which also features labels. Sometimes, we may focus on our negative traits such as "I'm so anxious!" Sophie says the first rule of improvisation is to never say no and to instead, catch yourself and reply with "yes, and..." i.e. "I'm so anxious... and bubbly and friendly!" You are more than your anxiety!

## **11. Gratitude & Silver Linings**

Optimism at its finest! I talk about gratitude a lot because you can't feel down while you're feeling grateful.

List three things that you're grateful for, it doesn't have to be anything huge. You might be grateful for no traffic in the morning or the nice weather.

Look for silver linings in life. Sometimes something incredible may come out of an experience that you initially perceived in a negative light.

## **12. Anxiety Re-Appraisal**

Change your anxiety into excited by using mantras such as "I am excited!" This is a Rob Dial strategy and the podcast and study backing up the method can be found in the sources section.

### **13. Perfectly Imperfect**

Accept that you will make mistakes and let go of perfection. Celebrate the little victories and allow room for error!

### **14. Anxiety Mindset**

Another great exercise from the Anxiety Journal. Take all those anxiety mindset statements and rephrase them:

What if

If only

Shoulda, woulda, coulda

Write down examples where you might have used this language and re-frame them while being kind to yourself. If you struggle imagine your best friend or child said these statements and write down what you would say back to them to disagree.

### **15. Visualisations**

Visualisations are great for a variety of reasons. With anxiety, I often visualise putting my worries into a box with a lid and storing it somewhere out of sight! You can do this with a physical box - simply write down your worry, place it in a box and hide it away somewhere in the house. This is a great exercise for anxious children!

### **16. Mindfulness – Breathing & Meditation**

Mindfulness is feeling the sun on your skin, feeling the salty tears rolling down your cheeks, feeling a ripple of frustration in your body. Mindfulness is experiencing both joy and misery as and when they occur, without having to do something about it or having an immediate reaction or opinion.

Simple breathing techniques like counting to ten using calming breaths can bring you back into the parasympathetic nervous system (rest and digest).

If you want to start some mindfulness breathing meditations then start with the [Three Minute Breathing Space](#) from Mindfulness, A Practical Guide to Finding Peace In A Frantic World.

## **Sources**

[Why You Should Define Your Fears Instead of Your Goals](#), Tim Ferriss, Ted Talks

Mindfulness, A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in A Frantic World, Mark Williams & Danny Penman (Book)

A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook, Bob Stahl, PHD & Elisha Goldstein, PHD (Book)

The Mindset Mentor, Rob Dial (Podcast) - [How to Change Your Anxiety](#) episode

[Anxiety Reappraisal Berkeley Study](#)

Overcoming Overthinking, Deborah Grayson Riegel, MSW & Sophie Reigel (Book)

Exclusive content to accompany Community Online Academy sessions, Aug/ Sept 2020  
Jules Hobbs, Hobbs Holistic Health

Good Vibes, Good Life, Vex King (Book)

The Anxiety Journal, Corinne Sweet (Book) - available from [Oliver Bonas](#)

CBT, Elaine Iljon Foreman & Clair Pollard (Book)

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2020/jul/22/psychological-toll-coronavirus-britain-visual-guide-anxiety-mental-strain>

### **Book, Podcast & Application Recommendations**

Here are a number of books, podcasts and apps that have really helped me over the years in my journey with managing stress and anxiety through mindfulness. These recommendations are based purely on my own experience.

The Mindset Mentor, Rob Dial (Podcast)

Mindfulness, A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in A Frantic World, Mark Williams & Danny Penman (Book)

A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook, Bob Stahl, PHD & Elisha Goldstein, PHD (Book)

How to Fail, Elizabeth Day (Podcast & Book) – reflecting on how failures make us who we are and helps to build resilience

Happy Place, Fern Cotton (Podcast & Book)

Mastering Your Mean Girl, Melissa Ambrosini (Book)

The Melissa Ambrosini Show (Podcast)

Good Vibes, Good Life, Vex King (Book)

Insight Timer (app) – meditation and mindfulness

Headspace (app) – meditation and mindfulness

Blinkist (app) – Summaries of self-development books in “blinks” that you can read or listen to. Mindfulness, A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World and Resilience, Eric Greitens and Option B by Sheryl Sandberg are featured on here.

### **Support**

Emotions can be overwhelming and I’m very aware that a short session with so many people in attendance could spotlight some intense feelings.

Remember, that it is OK to feel down or to have a good cry. These emotions will usually pass. If you’re still feeling down or uneasy, please contact the person who’s name you wrote down at the start of the session to talk through. Journaling and getting it all onto paper can also help!

Should you still be feeling uneasy there are people who can help, please reach out to a professional, i.e. your GP (General Practitioner). There are also dedicated websites available such as this one to help you during this tumultuous times: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus>.