

# Managing your anxiety

Anxiety is your body's natural response to stress. You can experience anxiety in different ways including feeling agitated, restless, nervous, irritated and worried, or not being able to concentrate. Below are things you can try when you feel anxious.

## Creating a routine

Creating a routine can help you to feel in control of the small things.

- Visual time tables
- Checklists

## Distraction

This is good for moving attention away from anxious thoughts and feelings. Some things to try are:

- Counting and naming different things you can see
- Playing a game of 'I spy'
- Reading
- Watching TV
- Colouring
- Listening to music
- Talking to somebody.

## Exercise

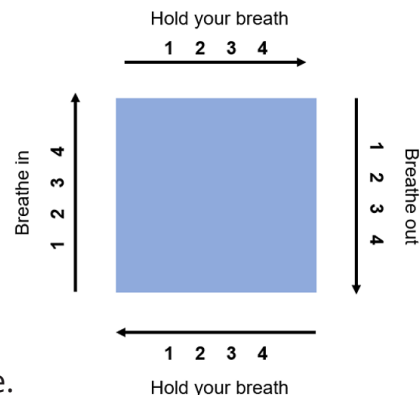
Physical activity can produce anti-anxiety affects. Here are some exercises to try:

- Star jumps
- Playing hide and seek
- Frog leaps
- Kangaroo hops.

## Breathing

Regulating your breathing is another way to manage anxiety.

- Square breathing is a technique you can try to help you to breathe deeply. Try drawing the square in the air with your finger as you practice.
- Bumble bee breathing is another technique. Place the tips of your index fingers in your ears and close your eyes. Slowly breathe in through your nose and then hum quietly as you breathe out.



## Challenging thoughts

If you are feeling anxious, it can be hard to think clearly. Being aware of your thoughts and challenging them is important.

- Is this thought a fact or an opinion?
- Is there evidence to prove it?
- What would I say to a friend who had this thought?
- What are the risks and benefits of thinking like this?
- Is there another way of looking at the situation?