




HOW TO RESPOND TO ANXIETY



THE 5-4-3-2-1 TECHNIQUE

NAME:

- 5 things you can see
 - 4 things you can touch
 - 3 things you can hear
 - 2 things you can smell
 - 1 thing you can taste
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TEMPERATURE RESET

Hold something cold
(like an ice cube or chilled water bottle) or
splash cool water on your face.

→ This activates the vagus nerve and
helps interrupt panic.



FOUR-SQUARE" BREATH



Inhale for 4 counts → hold for 4 → exhale for
4 → hold for 4.

Repeat several times. Slowing the exhale is key
to telling the nervous system you are safe.



GROUNDING TOUCH

Press your feet into the floor and
notice the pressure; or place your
hand over your heart or stomach and
remind yourself:

"I'm here. I'm safe enough right now."



SHAKE IT OUT

Stand up and gently shake arms, legs, shoulders
— like animals do after stress.

This helps release built-up adrenaline.



WEIGHTED OR FIRM PRESSURE

A heavy blanket, firm self-hug, or leaning your
back against a wall can create a sense of
containment.



MOVEMENT

Go for a slow walk, feeling each step.

Anxiety makes us freeze or spin; rhythmic
motion helps regulate the nervous system.

SPIRITUAL / REFLECTIVE PRACTICES

BREATH PRAYER OR MANTRA

Inhale: "Peace of Christ"

Exhale: "Be with me."

Inhale: "God is here."

Exhale: "I am not alone."

GRATITUDE MICRO-MOMENT

Name one thing (no matter how small) that is still okay, still beautiful, or still present.
Gratitude anchors the heart in reality and goodness.

EMBODIED PRAYER OR RITUAL GESTURE

Light a candle, hold a cross, touch your heart, or simply sit in silence.
The physical act can cue safety and sacredness.

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