

Anxiety can be visualised like a jug of water!

- Everybody's level is different!
- Everyday events can make us feel stressed, for example going to a new school, taking a test, or problems in relationships with friends and family. When we already feel stressed (high water level) it does not take much to trigger off the Anxiety Response (overspill).
- But we can learn ways to keep the level down by relaxing and doing things we enjoy, it's like tipping some water out. Even imagining we are doing something fun can help.
- And we can learn to cope better with those things that make us anxious - so our water level doesn't rise too quickly!



Anxiety

People who have anxiety often have feelings of light-headedness and sometimes they even faint.

When this happens, people are often told to relax and lie down for a little while, but this doesn't really help.

In order to prevent them from fainting they can learn a new skill. The new skill is easy to learn and be carried out quickly and easily in almost any situation.

It is called **Applied Tension**.

How to do Applied Tension

- Tense your big muscles in your body (your arms and legs) without holding your breath for 20 to 30 seconds until your face feels warm.
- Let go of the tension now but do not relax further just go back to normal.
- Wait 20 to 30 seconds.
- Now tense your muscles again for 20 to 30 seconds!
- now let go of the tension but remember don't relax.
- Repeat this five times!

If you do these tension exercises regularly (practice five times a day) you will become very good at them. This will help you when you feel anxious. As soon as you start to feel anxious or lightheaded do your tension exercises and you will feel the worry go away.

Learn to Relax

When you feel tense, upset, or nervous, muscles in your body tighten. By practicing tightening certain muscles in your body, you will learn to relax them. Now get comfortable!

Hands and Arms: Squeeze a Lemon

Pretend you have a whole lemon in each hand. Now squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out! Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Squeeze hard! Don't leave a single drop. (Hold for 10 seconds). Now relax and let the lemon drop from your hand. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed.

Arms and Shoulders: Stretch Like a Cat

Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat and you just woke up from a nap. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Now raise them way up high over your head. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher and try to touch the ceiling. (Hold for 10 seconds). Great! Let them drop very quickly and feel how good it is to be relaxed. It feels good and warm and lazy.

Shoulders and Neck: Hide in Your Shell Now pretend you are a turtle.

Try to pull your head into your shell. Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold it tight! (Hold for 10 seconds). Okay, you can come out now. Feel your shoulders relax.

Back: Swing Up High Pretend you are on a swing at the park

Pretend you are on a swing at the park. Swing your upper body back and forth, back and forth. To get really high, use your arms to help you swing! Keep swinging! (Hold for 10 seconds). Great. You're all done on the swing. Sit back and relax.

Stomach: Squeeze Through a Fence

Now pretend that you want to squeeze through a narrow fence. You'll have to make yourself very skinny if you're going to make it through. Suck your stomach in, try to squeeze it against your backbone. Get it real small and tight. Hold it as tight as you can! (Hold for 10 seconds). Okay, you've made it! You got through the fence. Settle back and let your stomach come back out where it belongs.

Jaw: Chew That Carrot

Pretend that you are trying to eat a giant, hard carrot. It is very hard to chew. Bite down on it. As hard as you can. We want to turn that carrot into mush! Keep biting. (Hold for 10 seconds). Good. Now relax. You've eaten the carrot. Let yourself go as loose as you can.

Face and Nose: Get That Fly Off Your Nose

Here comes a pesky old fly and he has landed on your nose! Try to get him off without using your hands. Wrinkle up your nose. Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you can. Scrunch up your nose real hard and hold it just as tight as you can. Notice that when you scrunch up your nose, your cheeks and your mouth and your forehead and your eyes all help you and they get tight, too. (Hold for 10 seconds). Good. You've chased him away. Now you can just relax and let your whole face go smooth.

Legs and Feet: Squish Your Toes in the Mud

Now pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, fat mud puddle. Squish your toes down deep into the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle. You'll probably need your legs to help you push. Squish your toes down. Push your feet, hard! (Hold for 10 seconds). Okay, come back out now. Relax your feet, relax your legs, and relax your toes. It feels so good to be relaxed. No tenseness anywhere. You feel warm and tingly.