

Coping Mechanisms for Life

It all begins and ends in your mind. What you give power to has power over you, if you allow it.

If you find yourself feeling a little stressed or anxious for whatever reason, try a few of these mechanisms to relieve the feelings

- **Deep breathing exercises.** Breathe in through your nose for 5 seconds, hold for 5 and breathe out for 7 seconds. (When breathing out imagine whatever it is that's causing you stress leaving your body as you exhale). You can do this anywhere, even in front of others without them even knowing!
- **Progressive muscle relaxation.** Tense and relax each muscle group. You'll get the best results doing this lying down (but you can do it anywhere – the car, your desk etc.). Start with your feet then your calves, thighs, chest, neck, arms and hands.
- **Meditation.** Guided meditation is best for beginners. There are endless amounts of these to be found on youtube. Search 'meditation for beginners' and pick one that suits you or that you like. You can use them to reduce stress, induce sleep, clear the head etc.
- **Mindfulness.** This put very simply is focusing your awareness on the present moment – acknowledging your feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations. It's a great way of dispelling worries. Instead of worrying about something bring your mind back to the present moment and what's going on in the here and now. This takes a bit of practice but is very beneficial.
- **Journaling.** Write down your feelings, whatever they may be – anger, fear, frustration, loneliness etc. Get the negative thought out of your head and onto paper, this will act as a release (burn the paper afterwards if you want to). This can also be used for positive thoughts and emotions, and reading back over it can help if times get difficult again.