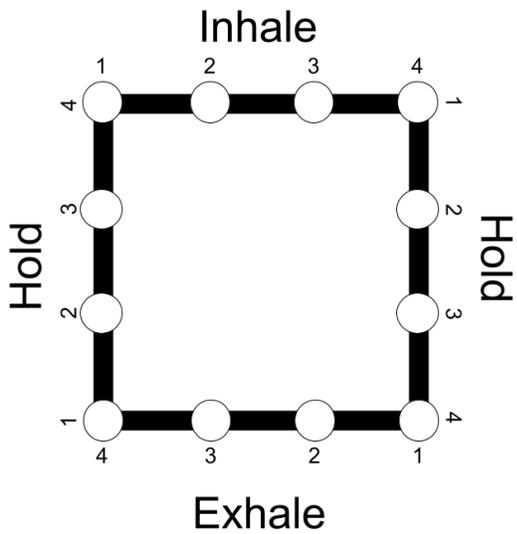




Anxiety is a natural part of the human experience. However, sometimes our bodies interpret the “threat” of a math test or class presentation as the same level as that of a tiger rustling around in the grass waiting to pounce. This handout is designed to give you tools for when you are anxious. Feel free to mix and match these practices to see what best supports you!

Box Breathing

Anxiety can cause your breathing to become shallow which can feed feelings of panic. Try this breathing exercise to interrupt that feedback loop.



You can close your eyes or use your finger to trace the box to the left as you do this:

1. Inhale through your nose for the count of 4.
2. Hold your breath for the count of 4.
3. Exhale from your mouth for the count of 4.
4. Hold your breath again for the count of 4.

Repeat as many times as needed.

Rainbow Noticing

Look around and find one thing for each:

- Red
- Orange
- Yellow
- Green
- Blue
- Indigo
- Violet



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Movement

Movement can help to re-regulate our nervous systems. That can be through dance, yoga, running, or other exercise. Here are a few simple movement practices to try:

- Stand with your feet wide apart and toes angled out. Start with your arms at your sides and slowly bring them up above your head as you inhale. As you start to exhale, bring your palms together and pull them down to your heart. Repeat.
- You can do this one while sitting or standing. Plant your feet flat on the ground. Slowly curl your left toes, hold for the count of three, and then slowly release. Repeat with your right toes and then with both feet at the same time. Repeat.
- Hold your hand out in front of you with your palm up. Count as you tap each of your fingers—starting with the index/pointer—to your thumb. Once you get to the pinkie, tap and count in the reverse order. Repeat.

Affirmations

Affirmations can help you to reframe negative thoughts. You can use them in an anxious moment, to start the day, or before trying something new or challenging.

- I can let go of what I can't change.
- I am practicing and getting better at this.

Write a few affirmations that are specific and meaningful to you:

Journaling

Mindfulness journaling can help you process feelings and increase your self-awareness.

What story am I telling myself? How is that story supporting or hurting me in reaching my goals?

This handout does not constitute or replace professional medical advice.

Free, professional mental health counseling is available for Highline College students: call (206) 592-3353, email counseling@highline.edu, or visit counseling.highline.edu.

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