

CALM

(Calming Anxiety,
Living Mindfully)

Presented by CSUEB Counseling Services
Week 1 - **Introduction to Anxiety**



A FEW ZOOM GUIDELINES

- Please mute your audio and type any questions into the chat box
- Your video can be off or on, whatever makes you most comfortable
- Confidentiality, and Zoom limitations



COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

- Push yourself to participate
- Focus on your own experience
- Share headlines, not details
- Ask others before giving them feedback
- Step forward, step back
- Assume positive intent from others
- Take responsibility for your needs



INTRODUCTIONS

Share your name, year @ CSUEB, major
and a way you took care of yourself on the weekend



INTENTIONS FOR TODAY'S GROUP:

- Practice Gratitude Meditation
- Defining Anxiety
- Understanding Anxiety vs. Fear
- The Stress-Response
- Diaphragmatic Breathing

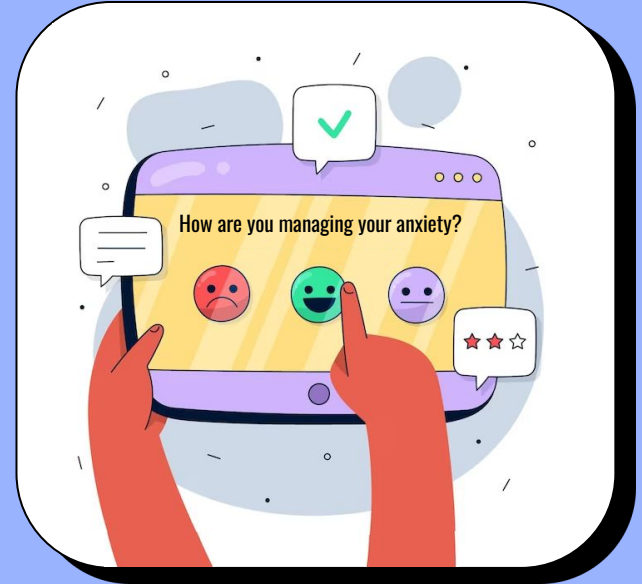
**“Did you set
your intentions
today?”**



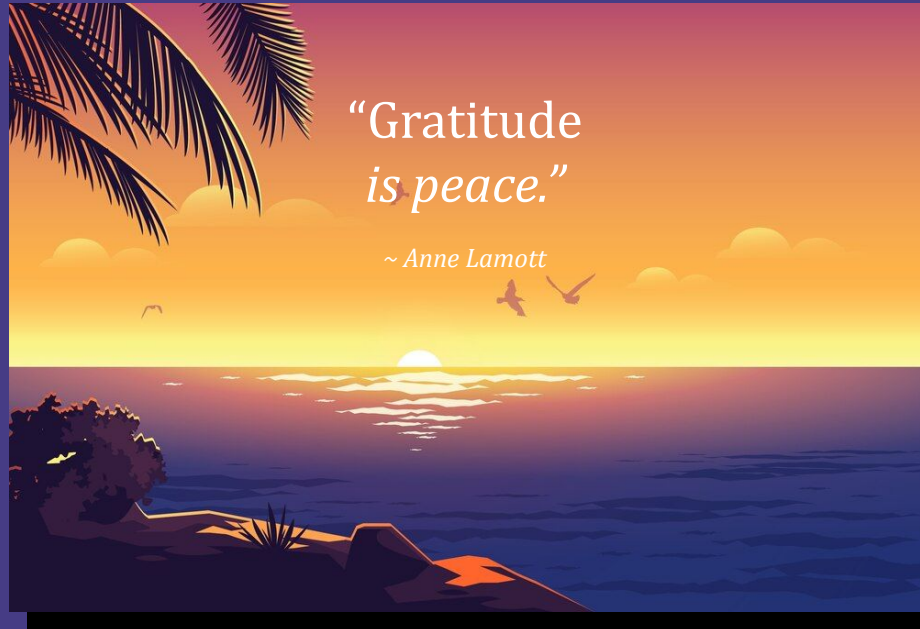
CHECK-IN

My Anxiety Meter

1. Alert and awake, concentrating well
2. Mildly anxious and distressed
3. Moderately anxious and distressed
4. Quite anxious and distressed
5. Extremely anxious and distressed



GRATITUDE MEDITATION



INFORMATION

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is an emotion that functions to help protect our physical, emotional, and social well-being. At the same time, anxiety can limit us and increase suffering.

Here are a few definitions:

The American Psychological Association (APA): *“...an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure”*

Oxford Dictionary describes anxiety as: *“A feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome”*

And some simply describe it as: *“Fear that something bad is going to happen”*

HOW IS ANXIETY DIFFERENT FROM FEAR?

Anxiety is related to an expectation of a future threat. **Fear** is the body's response to immediate danger. So:

- If you see a bear charging toward you, you feel intense **fear**.
- If you worry about a bear attacking you during your hike, you feel **anxious**.

	FEAR	VS	ANXIETY
Nature of Threat	Immediate		Future
Physical Response	Surge of Panic		Tension & Arousal
Function	Survival		Preparedness

What Changes	Adaptive Functions
Faster, Stronger, Heartbeats	Brings more oxygen to muscles (to run or fight)
Rapid Breathing	Brings oxygen to muscles
Cold, Tingling, Lightheadedness, or Numbness	Blood moves away from hands/feet to major muscles. Lessens pain & bleeding. Hyperventilation creates lightheadedness & tingling
Feeling Hot or Flushed	Blood is being pumped throughout your body
Chest Tightness/Discomfort	Many reasons. Increased muscle tightness & breathin to prepare for action
Stomach Aches and Nausea	Blood moves away from digestive system
Shaking or Trembling	Muscles tense & active, ready to be used
Muscle Tension	Body is prepared to use muscles
Trouble Sleeping	Mind is alert for safety
Feeling You Must Do Something	Body is ready to act to protect from danger
Visual Changes	Improved ability to see threats
Feeling Not in Reality (“Derealization”, or Detached from self/body (“Depersonalization”))	Reduces emotional intensity and overwhelm during panic. Can also be related to trauma
Sweating	Prevents overheating; makes body slippery

The Stress Response (Fight-Flight-Freeze)

- Mental and physical reaction to any kind of demand, threat, challenge, or change.
- Can trigger many physical reactions and emotions, including anxiety.

The stress response (“fight-flight-freeze”) is a survival system we all have. This system releases powerful stress hormones like “adrenaline” (epinephrine) and cortisol. This allows us to be more alert and enhances our ability to run or fight for survival. Since the focus is on survival, digestion and immune functioning are reduced. These hormones surge during a “panic attack.” ***It’s considered a “false alarm” if triggered and we’re not in a life-or-death emergency.***

EXERCISE

Diaphragmatic Breathing



When was the last time you really felt **“in the moment”**?

Please take a moment to reflect on a time when you were truly present to the moment (not distracted, worried about future, or stuck in past).

Take a deep breath and be calm.



Smell the flower



Blow out the candle

Diaphragmatic Breathing:
**“Smell the Flower,
Blow Out the Candle”**

A foundational skill for mindfulness practice involves retraining ourselves to breathe, as we naturally did when we were babies. This was before we developed a habit of breathing in a more rapid and shallow way.

EXERCISE

Let's Practice Diaphragmatic Breathing!



- Place one hand on your upper chest and the other on your belly, just below your ribcage. Slowly breathe in through your nose, directing air toward your belly, so that your stomach expands. The hand on your chest should remain still, as the hand on your stomach rises.
- When you breathe out, allow your stomach to fall inward, like a deflating balloon. Exhale through pursed lips- The hand on your belly should move down to its original position.
- Then, start slowing down your breathing.



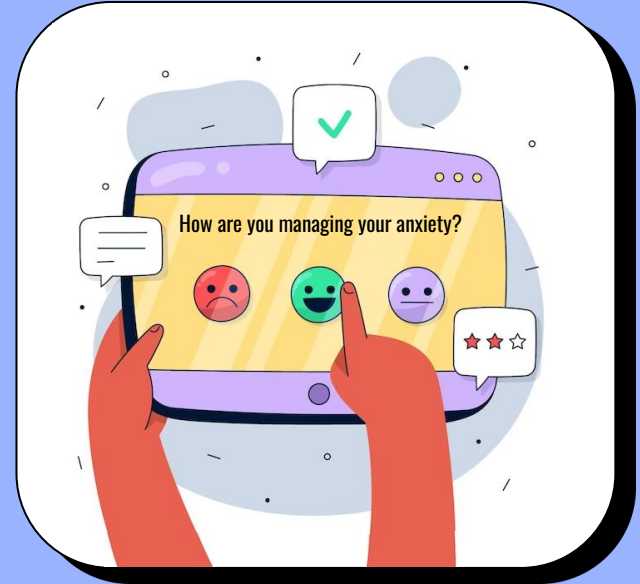
TIPS FOR PRACTICING AT HOME

- Lie on your back on your bed (or any flat surface) with your knees bent. Place a small pillow (or other light object) on your stomach, just below the ribcage.
- Slowly breathe in through your nose, allowing air to go deeply toward your belly. The small pillow should rise as your chest remains still.
- Allow your stomach to fall inward as you slowly exhale through pursed lips. Exhale fully. Let the pillow on your belly drop down to its original position. Practice for five minutes or more, several times a day if possible

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **CBT apps:** Wysa, Calm, Headspace, Thought Diary, Stop Panic and Anxiety, MoodMission, Shine, Happify <https://www.anxiety.org/>
- **Counseling groups** throughout every week
- **Pioneers for HOPE** - support with food and housing
@pioneersforhope
- Follow us on **Instagram** - @eastbayshcs
- Downloadable **slides and group handouts**



TAKE CARE!

You
Can
Do it



Thank you for joining us today!

- Think share about what skills you might want to practice from home this week:
 - **Diaphragmatic Breathing**
 - **Gratitude Meditation**
- It is best to practice these when you are not anxious, so that you have the routines in place when you are feeling overwhelmed.
- See you next week!

