

CALM

(Calming Anxiety,
Living Mindfully)

Presented by CSUEB Counseling Services
Week 2 - **My Signs of 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 something you're looking forward to about this semester



INTENTIONS FOR TODAY'S GROUP:

- Practice Body Scan Meditation
- Understanding My Signs of Anxiety
- Cognitive Distortions
- Cycle of Anxiety
- Thought Cloud Meditation

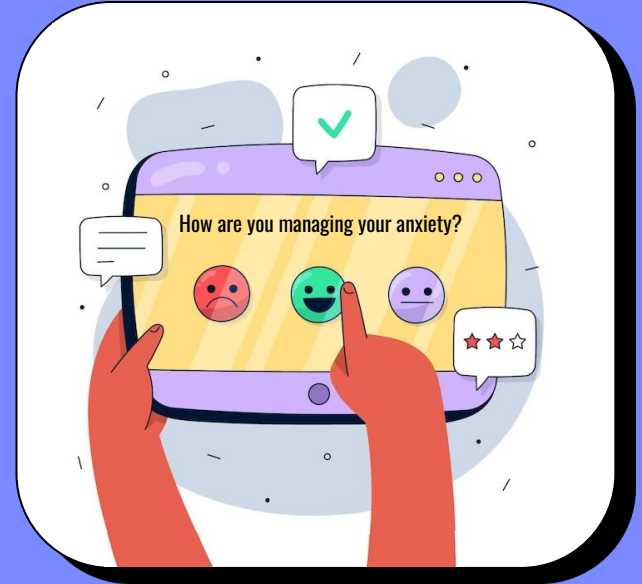
“Did you set
your intentions
today?”



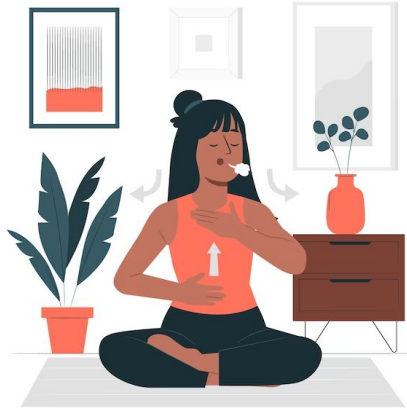
CHECK-IN

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



BODY SCAN MEDITATION



INFORMATION

What Happens When Anxiety is Triggered?

Emotionally, we begin to experience a sense of threat or danger. Feeling tense, overwhelmed, nervous, and restless are just a few common responses.

Physically, the body's stress response ("fight-flight-freeze") is activated. This survival system involves the release of powerful stress hormones, and can allow us to run faster and longer, become motionless, or fight harder to stay alive in an emergency.

Intellectually, clear and rational thinking is impaired as our "primitive" mind is triggered; this is like a bodyguard trying to keep us away from harm. Our bodyguard operates automatically, so it works fast, but doesn't take the time to look at all the facts.

Behaviorally, we try to get away from danger immediately and avoid it in the future. Sometimes this works well. Yet, often we can't avoid the trigger, there's not actually danger ("false alarm"), or avoidance leads to loss of freedom and joy.

WHAT ARE YOUR SIGNS OF ANXIETY?

I notice physical changes like: _____

muscle tension, rapid heartbeat, rapid breathing, shakiness, dizziness, lightheadedness, stomach ache, chest pressure, feeling on edge, fatigue, difficulty focusing, sweating, restlessness, headaches...

My actions and behaviors change like: _____

avoiding friends/school/work, withdrawing from others, irritability, fidgeting, picking at nails/skin/hair, alcohol/substances, avoiding people, eating ...

I feel affected by thoughts like: _____

"I'm going to fail," "I'm losing it," "They probably all think I'm __," ...

Emotionally, I start feeling _____

overwhelmed, frustrated, sad, annoyed, frantic, panicked, worried, afraid, uneasy, numb, scattered, doomed, restless...

Common Cognitive Distortions

Which cognitive distortions are impacting your anxiety the most?

- ❑ **Catastrophizing** (“The snowball effect”): Imagining what has happened, or will happen, will be so awful you’ll be completely unable to handle it. Expecting worst-case scenarios.
Example: *“I bet I’ll mess up this job interview just like the last one. I’ll never get a good job, and I’ll end up all alone and living on the street!”*
- ❑ **Fortune Telling**: A pattern of consistently making negative predictions.
Example: *Even though I studied hard, I know I’ll fail.*
- ❑ **Mind reading**: A pattern of assuming you know exactly what other people are thinking. It involves consistently predicting the worst, without strong evidence it’s true.
Example: *“Everyone probably thinks I’m a loser after that presentation.”*
- ❑ **Emotional Reasoning**: Allowing your mood to bias your interpretation.
Example: *“I feel nervous, so it must be unsafe in this elevator.”*
- ❑ **Negative Filtering** (discounting the positives): Focusing almost entirely on the negatives and dismissing the positives.
Example: *Doing really well on an exam but only focusing on a question you missed.*
- ❑ **Overgeneralizing**: Overestimating a pattern based on insufficient evidence.
Example: *“Everyone in California drives recklessly.”*
- ❑ **Perfectionism**: Unfair and very rigid demands and expectations for yourself.
Examples: *“I can’t make any mistakes”* or *“This presentation must go perfectly.”*
- ❑ **All-or-Nothing Thinking**: Seeing situations and people in all-or-nothing extremes.
Examples: *“I am a total failure,” “I always have bad luck!,”* or *“No one cares about me.”*

INFORMATION

Cycle of Anxiety

Example

Risk Factors

Genetics Health Concerns
Trauma Substance Misuse
Learning: family, culture, society

Triggers

Stress & Change, such as:
School, Relationships
Injustices, Finances

Thoughts

Negative & Unfair
Cognitive Distortions
Worry Habits



Behaviors

Avoidance Over-preparedness
Reassurance-seeking
Substance use Procrastination

Feelings

Guilt Anxiety
Frustration Sadness
Embarrassment Fear

Physical Changes

Muscle Tension Reduced Focus
Rapid Heart rate Stomach Issues
Sleep Issues Restlessness Fatigue



EXERCISE

Let's Examine Our Own Cycle of Anxiety!



My Cycle of Anxiety

Risk Factors

Triggers

Thoughts





Behaviors

Feelings

Physical Changes







CHALLENGE COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

- Which cognitive distortions were coming up for you?
- What is the evidence that the automatic thought(s) is true, and what evidence is there that it is not true?
- You've thought about the worst that can happen, but what's the best that could happen? What's the most realistic scenario?
- How likely are the best-case and most realistic scenarios?
- What would be a more adaptive thought in the future? How would this thought feel different?

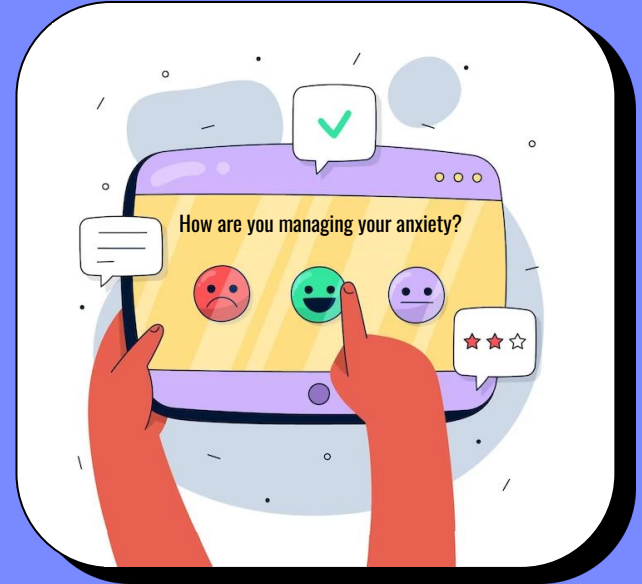
THOUGHT CLOUD MEDITATION



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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:
 - **Body Scan**
 - **Pay attention to my cognitive distortions**
 - **Write out my cycle of anxiety**
 - **Thought Cloud 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!

