

## More Resources & Support

Jill Shartzer, Student Success Specialist  
540-362-6765  
Shartzerjb1@hollins.edu

HU Counseling Center  
540-362-6444  
hcs@hollins.edu

Catina Martin, HU Chaplain  
martincg@hollins.edu  
540-362-6665

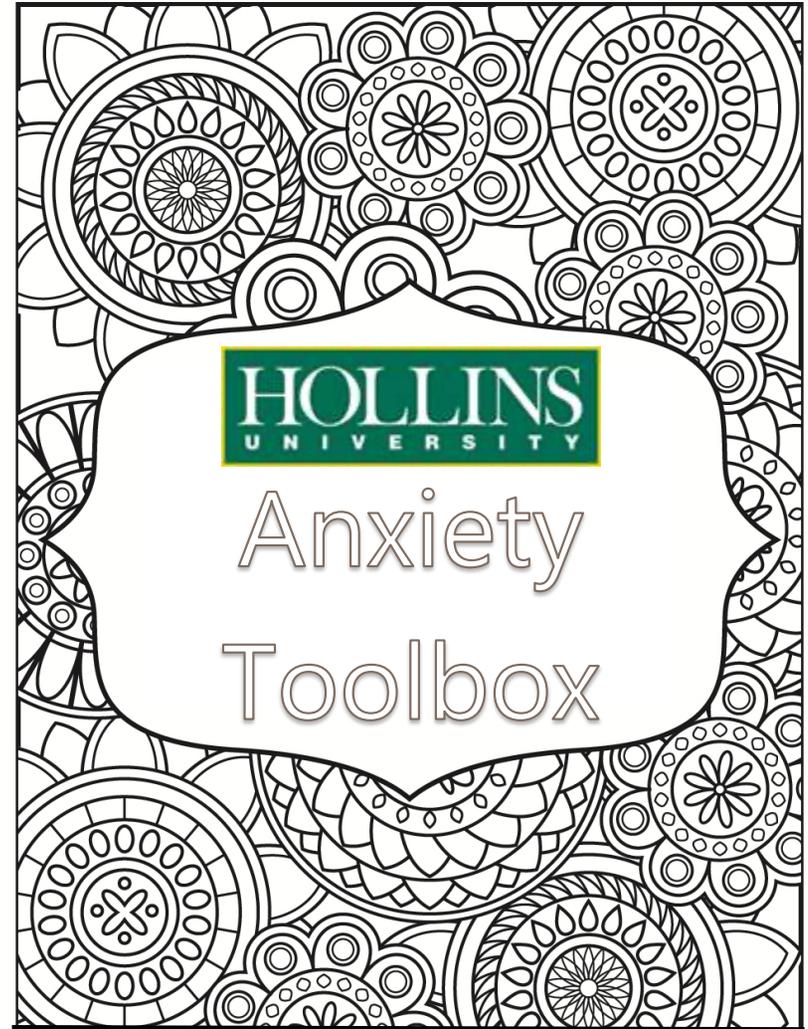
Patty O'Toole, Dean of Students  
potoole@hollins.edu  
540-362-6018

Suicide Prevention Crisis Line  
24 hrs/day: 1-800-273-8255  
Or online chat

OUR WEBSITE FOR YOU:  
[anxietytools.hollins.edu](http://anxietytools.hollins.edu)

OTHER GREAT SITES:  
[verywellmind.com](http://verywellmind.com)  
[therapistaid.com](http://therapistaid.com)

MENTAL HEALTH APPS:  
Headspace. Sanvello. White Noise.



Created especially for HU Students with care by:  
Caroline Mann, PhD. Assistant Professor of Psychology  
Meghan McKinney, B.A. HU Psychology Alumna, '21

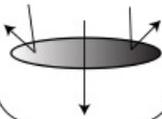
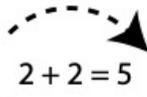
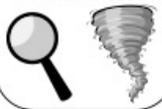
Stress is  
a normal part of life.  
But it doesn't have to take  
over yours.



We made anxiety toolbox to help HU students learn effective strategies for dealing with daily worries. As with physical health, there is no "magic bullet" to make you suddenly well. There are, however, exercises you can do regularly to gradually improve your emotional fitness. There are tools to use in distressing moments, and there are people to help you when you feel stuck.

ANXIETYTOOLS.HOLLINS.EDU

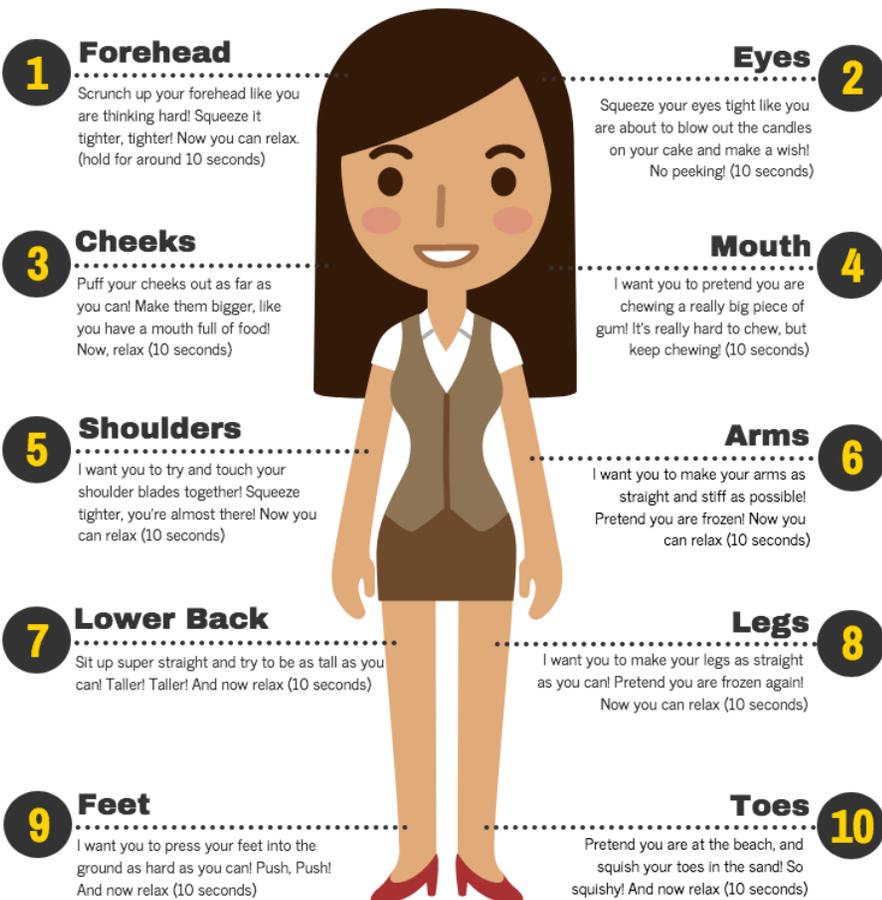
## Cope: Recognize Cognitive Distortions

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>All or nothing thinking</b></p>  <p>Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'.<br/><i>If I'm not perfect I have failed</i><br/><i>Either I do it right or not at all</i></p>  | <p><b>Over-generalising</b></p> <p>Seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw</p> <p><i>"everything is always rubbish"</i><br/><i>"nothing good ever happens"</i></p>   |
| <p><b>Mental filter</b></p>  <p>Only paying attention to certain types of evidence.<br/><i>Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes</i></p>   | <p><b>Disqualifying the positive</b></p>  <p>Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another<br/><i>That doesn't count</i></p>                     |
| <p><b>Jumping to conclusions</b></p>  <p>There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:<br/>• <b>Mind reading</b> (imagining we know what others are thinking)<br/>• <b>Fortune telling</b> (predicting the future)</p> | <p><b>Magnification (catastrophising) &amp; minimisation</b></p>  <p>Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophising), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important</p> |
| <p><b>Emotional reasoning</b></p>  <p>Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true.<br/><i>I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot</i></p>   | <p><b>should must</b></p> <p>Using critical words like 'should', 'must', or 'ought' can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed<br/>If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is often frustration</p>   |
| <p><b>Labelling</b></p>  <p>Assigning labels to ourselves or other people<br/><i>I'm a loser</i><br/><i>I'm completely useless</i><br/><i>They're such an idiot</i></p>   | <p><b>Personalisation</b></p> <p><b>"this is my fault"</b></p> <p>Blaming yourself. Taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault. Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault.</p>  |

# Cope: Easy Meditation

## Progressive Muscle Relaxation

PMR is the easiest meditation; it was invented for heart attack patients! You tense each muscle group for 10 secs and focus on how the sensation feels different between the tensed and relaxed muscle.

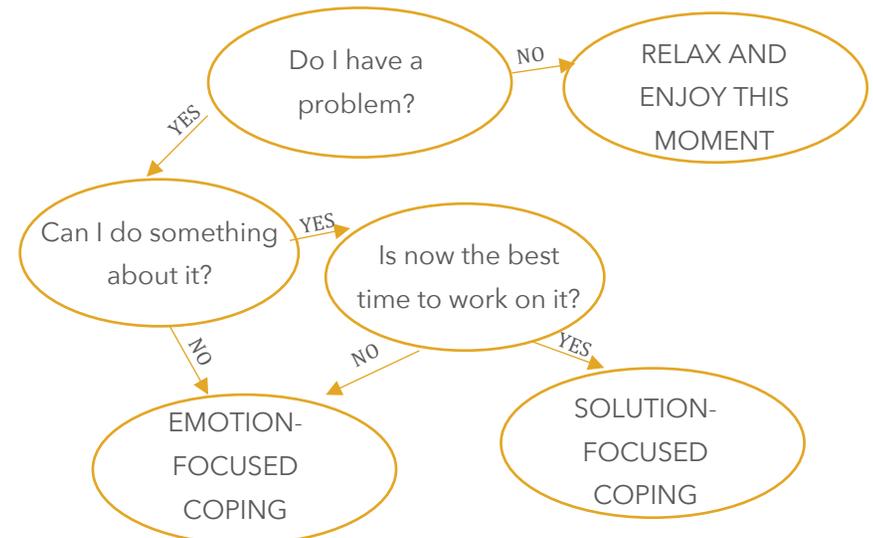


# Expand your Toolbox!



We don't know you (yet), so we are only guessing what you like. For all we know, you could have a phobia of silly putty. **This toolkit will work best if you add your own pieces:** a worry stone, a picture of a pet, a scrap of paper reminding you which song to put on repeat when you need to relax, a note talking yourself down from familiar panic modes, advice from a friend that always works—whatever will help you practice your emotional fitness skills.

## Coping Skills 101



# Anxiety: What is it? Why is it?

Though you may wish you never had **anxiety**, it's **a useful emotion**. Anxiety evolved to help us *prepare* to deal with future threats (fear is for immediate threat). Your ancestors needed to feel some anxiety about the coming winter so they could store food or chop wood. Without it, they wouldn't be motivated to act.

But sometimes we can get stuck in a pattern of anxiety that impairs preparation. For example, instead of readying ourselves to deal with the threat, we avoid it further because we don't like the anxious feeling. Next time we are faced with the threat, it has gotten worse and seems even scarier. Worry is another common stuck point, where the brain attempts to "solve" a problem it does not have much control over in reality (worry is an attempt to feel a sense of control, which humans crave). We end up thinking in circles and increasing the sympathetic nervous system response (which only makes us less logical). Finally, anxiety can also backfire when our arousal level is too high and we begin to enter a heightened state that is out of proportion to the threat at hand (i.e. our body triggers a cascade of fight-or-flight hormones as if we are being chased by a lion when we get an email about a due date.)

Knowing how anxiety works can help you **practice tolerance toward yourself and figure out how to intervene in the stuck points**. There are multiple ways to disrupt the cycle (emotional, cognitive, behavioral, physiological) and it takes some experimenting to figure out what works for you. This booklet offers sample coping tools backed by evidence but the **website has MUCH MORE** (plus videos that make them easier to practice)! So go there!

## Cope: Deep Breathing to regulate your nervous System



### Pursed Lips Breathing

- Inhale through the nose for 2 seconds.
- Pucker your lips, then exhale for 4-6 seconds.
- Repeat several times until you feel a slowed rate of breathing.



**TRY IT WITH BUBBLES!** Same technique, more fun! Pursed lips form bubbles. Practice mindfulness in watching them float away like thoughts.

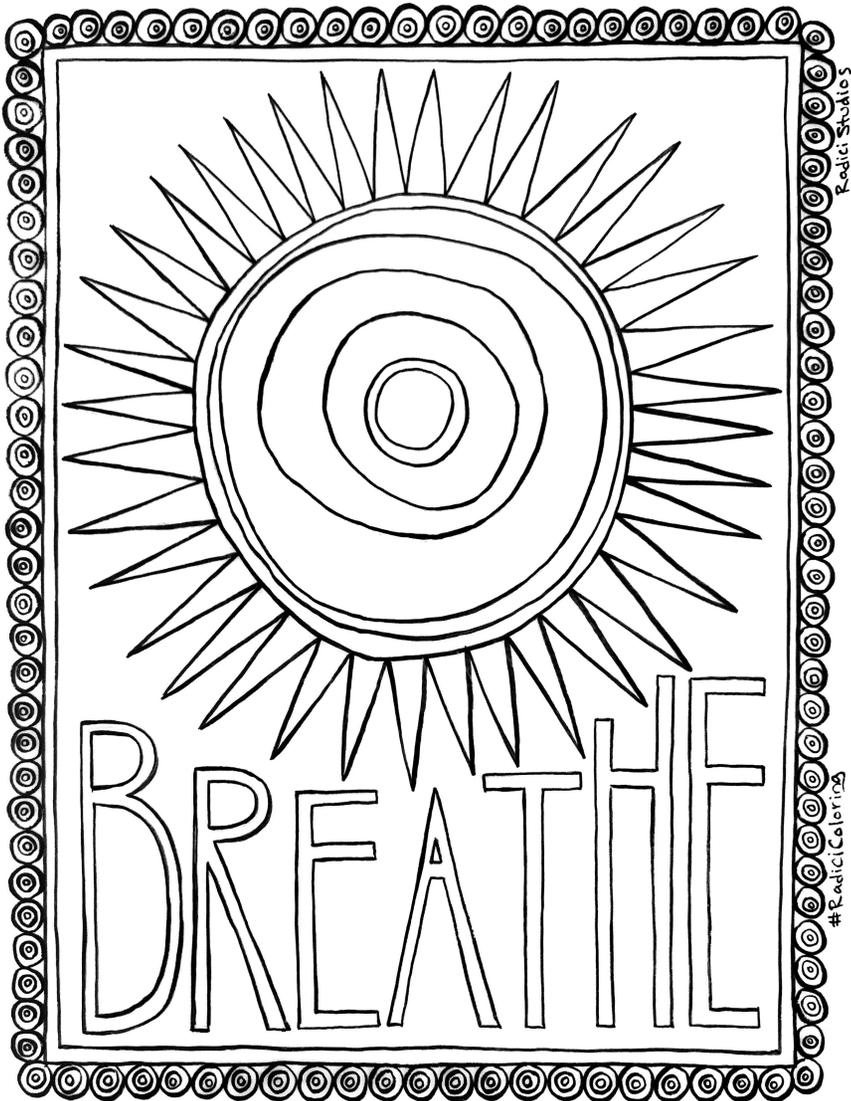


### 4-7-8 Breathing

- Sit upright.
- Put your tongue on the roof of your mouth near your teeth.
- Close your mouth, then inhale through the nose for 4 seconds.
- Hold your breath for 7 seconds.
- Exhale completely through pursed lips for 8 seconds.
- Repeat.



Cope: Color your Stress



GET OUTA YOUR HEAD



Cope: Restore your Focus

Many people find coloring meditative, like jogging or staring at a rushing stream. These things engage our attention at an optimal level and provide a kind of cognitive resting zone. Healthy distraction is also a great tool for redirecting yourself when you're in a rut. Hint: if you feel too stressed to take a 1 minute break, that's a sign you definitely need to reset your attention!

# Cope: CBT Thought Record:

**Situation/Trigger:** {What happened?}

**Feelings** {Use emotion words, Rate 0-100, What did it feel like? Where in body?}

**Unhelpful Thoughts/Images** {What went through my mind? What disturbed me? What did the thoughts or images mean about me? What "button" is this pressing? What would be the worst thing about that, or that could happen?}

**Facts that support the unhelpful thought:** [What facts do I have that the thoughts are totally true?]

**Facts that provide evidence against the unhelpful thought:** [What facts exist that go against the unhelpful thoughts? Is it possible that this is opinion, rather than fact? What have others said?]

**Alternative, more realistic & balanced perspective (wise mind):**  
[Take a breath... what would someone else say? What's the bigger picture? Is there another viewpoint? What advice would I give someone else?]

**Re-rate feelings:** [What am I feeling now? 0-100]

**Re-think approach:** [What could I do differently? What will be most helpful for me or the situation? What will the consequences be? Do what works. Act wisely.]

## Example Thought Record:

**Situation:** Totally forgot about the psych quiz!

**Feelings:** Panic (80), now shame (50). Heart racing, pit in my stomach, want to run and hide. Hard to concentrate even after quiz.

**Unhelpful Thoughts/Images:** I'm a loser. I'm not cut out for college. This is too much. I'll never pass this class now. I'll probably fail college and never get a good job. Why is it so easy for everyone else? They don't mess up like I do. I should just give up. Now the professor is going to think I'm an idiot. She'll hate me now.

**Facts that support unhelpful thoughts:** I've forgotten about quizzes in past, too, and it hurt my grades. Everyone around me is writing on the quiz. Our quizzes count for 20% of overall grade, so that's significant. I knew I needed to look at the schedule yesterday and didn't.

**Facts that go against unhelpful thoughts:** I don't actually know how others are feeling inside just by staring at their outsides. I'm making assumptions they are perfect. The professor did say we get to drop our lowest quiz, so this won't ruin my grade so long as I do well on others. The professor is used to students messing up on quizzes and probably doesn't have much time to focus on hating me.

**Alternative, more balanced perspective:** This is just a minor mistake that isn't the end of my academic career. It's hard to adapt to new things and I probably just need to stop up my organization game. Lesson learned. I'm not a failure and am just being too harsh on myself in the moment cuz I feel bad. I have come back from mistakes before so I can do that here. Failing a quiz does not mean failing life.

**Re-rate feelings:** 20- shame, 20- anxiety, 50- determination, panic-5

**Re-think approach:** Right now I need to try to put this behind me and focus on class rather than obsess over it and miss things more. I'm going to take extra good notes now to distract myself from lingering feelings.

ADD YOUR OWN STRESS COPING TIPS:

A helpful "reset" button for me is: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If that doesn't work, try: \_\_\_\_\_



*In case of stress emergency, **don't** break glass. Instead:*

Listen to this song: \_\_\_\_\_

Call/text \_\_\_\_\_ and tell them I

need: a positive distraction/a moment of empathy/a shared activity/a pep talk (circle one).

Go to this location, which makes me feel better:

\_\_\_\_\_

Remember that one time when things were terrible and I got through them: \_\_\_\_\_

**5-4-3-2-1**  
**JOURNAL EXERCISE**

**5** THINGS YOU CAN  
**SEE**

**4** THINGS YOU CAN  
**HEAR**

**3** THINGS YOU CAN  
**FEEL**

**2** THINGS YOU CAN  
**SMELL**

**1** THING YOU CAN  
**TASTE**

You can use immediate senses to ground, or imagine favorite things to transport.

A FEW MORE ANTI-ANXIETY IDEAS:

1. HUM A FAVORITE TUNE (OUT LOUD TO ACTIVATE VAGUS NERVE)
2. TAKE 5-10 MINUTES TO WRITE A NEWS REPORT ABOUT YOUR WORRY AS IF YOU ARE AN OBJECTIVE JOURNALIST.
3. WALK OUTSIDE & FIND 3 UNIQUE TEXTURES TO FEEL WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED.



