

Six Ways To Start Feeling Better Today – Combat Anxiety, Stress & Depression

I regularly work with clients to overcome anxiety, stress & depression.

Whether your anxiety, stress and depression is related to a specific issue or situation, or something that has just developed and grown over time, these simple changes will help you to start to change that pattern and move forward in a healthy, happy, confident way.

1) Realise that all feelings change

All feelings are temporary and all feelings change.

When we don't feel good, it can seem like there is no way out and that we will always feel bad. However, all feelings do change and pass – what you are experiencing now does not have to be what you feel in the future.

Sometimes people develop a habit of feeling bad – they've done it so often it seems natural or is their immediate response when faced with a challenge.

However, knowing that it's just a habit means you can make the decision to take steps to move you towards a habit of happiness instead. After all, good feelings of happiness are just as real as bad feelings of anxiety and depression.

Recognise that your feelings can and will change and start taking those steps that will let you choose to experience more good feelings.

2) Practice Feeling Calm and Relaxed

A lot of people never take the time to relax. They work all day, get home, watch telly and then go to bed, forgetting that tv is designed to stimulate rather than help you relax.

If you feel anxious or stressed then taking the time to relax can make it that much easier to change how you feel. Practice doing this easy breathing technique and you will have to start to relax – the more often you do it the more natural it becomes and the easier you will find it to relax.

7/11 Breathing

- Sit down and close your eyes
- Become aware of your breathing
- Breathe in for a count of 7 and breathe out for a count of 11
- Hold at the bottom of the out breath if comfortable

You will find that you naturally start to feel more relaxed and calm in situations where, in the past, you may have had old feelings of anxiety, stress or panic.

The more often you practice this (with or without closing your eyes) and other ways of relaxing, the greater the benefit you will experience and the more difficult it will seem to be anxious, relaxed and depressed.

3) Use Your imagination

Every night before you go to sleep, while you are feeling calm and relaxed, imagine watching a movie of yourself going through the next day, doing those things you do in your daily routine.

As you watch the movie of yourself, change the way you think/act/talk/behave to the way you would like things to be so that everything happens perfectly. Train your mind to know how you want things to be and how you want to feel when you arrive at tomorrow.

Your mind cannot tell the difference between something that is vividly imagined and something that is real (which is why you can imagine a future stressful event and feel stressed just thinking about it – it's also why you can jump while watching a scary film!).

So knowing this, take those few minutes to vividly imagine and create your future. Notice everything in detail about yourself – the expression on your face, the light in your eyes, your confident posture, the way you move and the way you talk.

4) Look Up

Many people who suffer with anxiety, stress and depression walk along with their heads down while they look at the floor. Take a look next time you walk down any high street and you'll discover that more people look down than you realised.

When we look down we access our feelings, and if they aren't yet where we want them to be, then we get caught in a loop or habit of feeling low.

So give yourself the opportunity to look up more. When we look up we access more visual parts of our mind and it becomes much more difficult to access negative feelings and thoughts.

Whether it's when you are at work or just walking down the road, you'll quickly find that this makes a great difference to how you feel.

5) Go For A Walk & Move More

It's well recognised that exercise is a great way to start feeling better – not only can it move you out of a stressful or anxious environment, it also releases your body's natural feel good hormones – endorphins (thereby improving how you feel).

Whether you head to the gym, go for a jog or just take 15 minutes to go for a walk, you will soon find that you start to naturally feel more optimistic and more able to tackle the things you need to get done in your daily life.

So when can you find 15 minutes to move more than you currently do and feel better?

6) The Feel Good Focus!

You may have heard people say that what you focus on you bring about in your life. If you spend your time focusing on bad, sad things then you'll find you feel bad and sad. However, if you take the time to pick out the things that you enjoy and that have gone well then you'll soon teach yourself to feel better.

Do this simple exercise and soon you'll find you focus more on the good things in your life so you can find more of them:

- a) Every morning before you get up, think of three things you are looking forward to that day (however big or small you think the things are)
- b) Every evening before you go to sleep, think of three things you achieved that day.

Some people like to write down their three things so they can look back at all their achievements. You may find this exercise quite tricky at first but soon you'll be wondering how you are going to limit yourself to only three things!

Summary

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- 1) Realise that all feelings change**
- 2) Practice feeling calm and relaxed**
- 3) Use Your Imagination**
- 4) Look up**
- 5) Go for a walk and move more**
- 6) The Feel Good Focus**

Need advice or help? Or have you got a suggestion that could help others overcome stress, anxiety or depression? E-mail Dan at dan@elymindcoaching.co.uk