

How to relieve anxiety in 20 minutes or less



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If you are someone who suffers from anxiety it may seem like a far reach to imagine relief inside of 20 minutes, but I'm here to tell you that it can be done. I know, because I used to suffer from

severe, debilitating anxiety and I have personally found fast relief from all the methods presented in this article.

Anxiety stems from a lack of grounding in who we are.

That said, the simple solutions I'm about to share with you are all quick-fix ways of **getting grounded**, no matter where you are or what you are doing.

There are enough suggestions on my list to offer you something to work with no matter what your circumstances are.

When I talk about grounding, I'm talking about a very visceral sense of being in your body and out of your head. I'm talking about a return to the sanity of an open, calm heart from the chaos of a panicked mind.

When I say grounding, I'm talking about the slowing of your pulse, the regulation of your breathing, and the sense of safety that is felt when there are no enemies lurking about.

When we are suffering from anxiety, the only enemy we truly have is fear.

When I was in my early 20's, I suffered from severe anxiety to the point of entertaining a suicidal ideology. I had entered a spiritual and psychological crisis and I could not see a way out of the inner-blackness I was drowning in.

Luckily I had some very wise people in my life who brought me to a healer and got me the help I needed. Believe it or not, there is often a silver lining to the experience of anxiety, because it pushes us to learn about inner peace.

But let's face it. When you're in the middle of it, anxiety sucks. It is immobilizing and life draining. It has the power to stop us in our tracks.

Anxiety freezes us on the inside, and subverts our functionality on the outside.

So what are these incredibly simple sanity-saving exercises that relieve anxiety in 20 minutes or less?

Here they are — NOT necessarily in order of importance or effectivity. That all depends on the unique make-up of your particular circumstances. I encourage you to try each one and see what works best for you.

Watch a great movie.

The key here is to pick a movie that will completely captivate you. I know most movies are 2 hours long, but if you've selected the right movie, your mind will be in a totally different place inside of 20 minutes. Be sure to pick a film with a good ending, a plot line and characters you can really rally for. Don't underestimate the power of a good film to completely shift your mood and your outlook on life.

I cannot tell you how many times I put on a great movie when I was totally gridlocked with fear and by the end of it, I had completely forgotten about my own problems. Whatever my worries were, they lost their grip on my mind while my attention was elsewhere. Post movie, the same problems just didn't seem half as big as they had before the popcorn.



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Exercise... Exercise... Exercise...

Go to the gym, go running or walking, or go swimming. Do whatever you like, but keep it upbeat and moderate for 20 minutes. During exercise certain endorphins get released within the body at about the 15 to 20 minute mark. There is something called a runners high, defined by the release of these endorphins.

I used to be a runner, and found that after 15 minutes I felt so good, that I didn't want to stop. By the time I had run for an hour, I felt like I could keep on going. Exercise literally clears negativity out of your system. It moves the blood, increases

circulation and literally burns off negative emotions through your pores when you sweat.

I cannot stress enough how important exercise is for the relief of all negative mood states.

Lay on the Earth.

This is my personal favorite. There is nothing more grounding than a piece of earth. I have found this effective in the garden, at the beach, on my front lawn, at a park, on the center divider of grass in a parking lot, and even on a slab of cement (which is made of gravel and sand).

When I lived in London, I would walk a couple of blocks to the nearest park if I was anxious. I would lay down on the ground, consciously intend to give all my pain to the Earth, and would actually begin to feel calm enough to fall asleep. 5 to 10 minutes later I'd wake up and find that the anxiety was completely gone.

All I did was lay down and intend for the planet to metaphorically compost my pain. And it worked! Time after time it worked.

No matter what I was terrorizing myself over, it had disappeared after about 15 to 20 minutes of laying on the Earth. It always seemed miraculous to me. No matter what the stressful thought was, it just didn't matter any more because it was simply gone.



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Get into Nature

When you spend time outside in nature, you get the added benefit of breathing in the fresh air and the energetically cleansing negative ionization process that takes place in forests, beaches, the ocean and other natural bodies of water, jungles, and any natural landscape.

When I lived in Maui, there was a sacred pool that I used to hike to. After only a couple of minutes of floating in the water of that pool I'd feel so deeply peaceful that I would enter a state of meditation. I can even float in a bathtub or another body of

water and recall the peaceful experience of being in that sacred pool and invoke the same meditative peaceful state of mind.

For an interesting read on the scientific view regarding the benefits of negative ionization, [read this](#) from [webMD](#).



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Make a positive contribution to someone or something else.

There is a wonderful story I once heard by Gay Hendricks about a young man who was contemplating suicide. Gay was speaking with

him on the phone and asked him if there was something simple that he could do to make a positive contribution to somebody else.

The young man thought about it and considered an old woman who had an apartment down the hall. There was always a lot of debris, leaves and dirt cluttering up her doorstep. He could go and sweep it off for her. Gay instructed him to set the phone down, find a broom and go and sweep off the woman's porch.

The young man went to sweep off the porch and when he returned to the telephone he sounded like a different person. He felt totally different and had shifted into a different frame of mind in a matter of minutes, simply from making a positive contribution.

I have unplugged from anxiety through activities as rudimentary as cooking a really great meal, working in the garden or helping an elderly neighbor to take her garbage out. The vibe of contribution is akin to gratitude and love. And fear is rendered impotent in the presence of such positive feelings.

You might notice that these are not long-term solutions as much as fast ways to help your mind to unplugged from the intense circling of anxious thoughts that feed on each other, keeping you locked in a loop of fear without a clear-thinking mind to get yourself out.

I have used the methods I've described countless times to disengage my mind from cycling thoughts of self-condemnation and fear, thus allowing my awareness some breathing room with which to reassess the issue at hand.



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The Silver Lining...

In the end, my anxiety crisis turned out to be a pivotal catalyst in my life that turned me towards a far more creative, productive, and harmonious way of living.

Learning how to disengage my mind from the tyranny of fearful thoughts, showed me that my mind was not in charge of me, but that I was in charge of my mind. It also showed me that I was in charge of my body, which became the vehicle through which I found grounding and relief.

Over time I began to see how my anxious patterns were operating. I observed that there was always a sense of being ungrounded coupled with self-doubt. This often had to do with stepping out of my comfort zone when I was pushing the envelope of my life in a new direction where things were unfamiliar and out of my control.



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Be proactive and win.

Seeing this pattern allowed me to be more proactive in preventing anxiety from developing in the first place. When we are proactive in life, we engage in strategies that set us up to win.

For the prevention of anxiety, this means doing what I need to do to stay centered in myself. When I'm centered (aka: grounded) in myself, anxiety can't get a strong foothold in my mind.

Proactive strategies are things like meditation, having a spiritual path with a daily practice, yoga, regular exercise, spending time in nature, and talking out my problems with a trusted friend.

A little self-care on a regular basis can go a very, very long way.