

Some helpful ways to remain calm in difficult times:

1. **BELLY BREATHE** - Inhale deep into your belly. Belly breathing is the best way to slow anxiety. A deep inhale and a long sighing out of air is different to short, quick panicked breaths into the upper chest. This tells your body you are safe. The production of adrenalin slows as your parasympathetic nervous system regulates. Belly breathing calms your nerves.
2. **USE EFT or TAPPING** – this soothing technique combines acupuncture points along with messages delivered to your subconscious mind which are reassuring and calming.
3. **MOVEMENT**- Try some grounding yoga poses or some stretching. These practices are great for lowering the body's stress hormones. When you are curled into the pose of the child placing your forehead on the floor stimulates your pineal gland and calms the nervous system.
4. **PROTECT** – Shield your energy by imagining a white light or forcefield around you. If you want to you can put on a cloak of invisibility like Harry Potter or build your own suit of armour when you feel particularly vulnerable. Another way to deflect negative energy is to imagine you are holding a mirror and sending the energy back to the person.
5. **CONNECT** – Talk or text someone. Speaking about how you are feeling to a trusted friend or family member. This will help them understand how you are feeling and what types of things can be emotional triggers for you. Working out what your triggers are can help others detect when you might become heightened. e.g. – being in a very noisy environment or a crowded shopping centre can cause stress for some people as they become overstimulated.
6. **WATCH SUGAR** - Be mindful of your sugar intake, also for adults too much caffeine or alcohol. These beverages can heighten anxiety and can sometimes trigger panic attacks. Try a glass of water or herbal tea with camomile.
7. **REST** - Make sure you get enough sleep. Being overtired can be stressful. If you are worried and finding it hard to sleep because of your circling thoughts, try a meditation or choose one of the many free apps like *Calm*, *Insight Timer* or *Headspace*.
8. **FLIP YOUR THINKING** - Use Byron Katie's technique of inquiring into your thoughts, are they true? Then try flipping your negative thoughts to positive. Change "I can't do this" to "I can do this" and think of how you've handled something like this in the past.
9. **MEDITATE** – It's not as hard as you think. You don't have to sit cross legged and chant OMMMMM. Start with something simple like a body scan. Lie down and start by scrunching up your toes and letting go, your legs and go up your whole body contracting and releasing right up to your head until you can completely let go.
10. **SELF CARE** - Essential oils are known to have a calming effect. Take a bath with some Epsom salts to soothe your muscles and nerves. Apply some uplifting essential oils like citrus or lemon or try some grounding oils like cedar and frankinsense. Candles with essential oils can also help you create a sense of calm.

