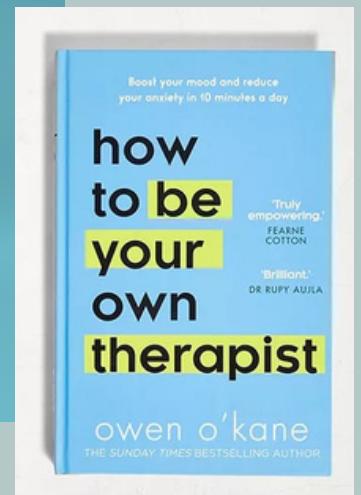


→ JUST 10 MINUTES

Daily action plan for self care in just 10 minutes (or however long you want to give yourself) to help reduce anxiety and boost your overall mood.

Don't make time the barrier between to self care. This booklet contains some ACTIONS you can perform to start and end your day in a positive way.



MIND, BODY, SPIRIT



The first three minutes are used to check on your mind, body and spirit (or emotions) and then to think about what you need for the day ahead in all these areas. Get yourself a note book so that you are ready to start journaling. To make it easier I've included an example (you can write as much or as little as you like, just be honest with yourself). Remember that this time is for you, focus on these areas:

Question - What is my mind doing (what thoughts are flowing through, is my mind busy or quiet)?

Example Answers - jumping to negative thoughts, worrying about the day OR ready for the day, feeling calm and rested

Question - How does my body feel (are there any aches or pains, is there tension or are you fully relaxed)?

Example Answers - clenched teeth, clenched shoulders, physical pain in my leg OR fully relaxed and ready to get the day started

Question - How am I emotionally today (do I feel calm, irritated, happy, sad, low, ready for the day)?

Example Answers - low mood, anxious, scattered OR hopeful, calm, motivated, excited

Question - What does my mind need from me today?

**Example Answers - space, peace, focus on challenging those negative thoughts and changing them to positive thoughts
OR I'm going to continue to be consistent and build in those positive habits, I'm going to be patient with myself**

Question - What does my body need from me today?

Example Answers - some breathwork to remove the tension, Pilates for the pain, eating and being healthy (I'll smash my 10K steps today and choose food that nourishes me)

Question - What does my spirit need from me today?

Example Answers - continue working on challenging my negative thoughts and changing them, calm, self care, self love and patience (changes don't happen overnight)

GRATITUDE AND INTENTION



Psychology Today states that gratitude is the expression of appreciation for what you have. It is a recognition of value independent of monetary worth. Spontaneously generated from within, it is an affirmation of goodness and warmth. This social emotion strengthens relationships, and its roots run deep in evolutionary history—emanating from the survival value of helping others and being helped in return. Studies show that specific areas of the brain are involved in experiencing and expressing gratitude. Brain scans of people assigned a task that stimulates expression of gratitude show lasting changes in the prefrontal cortex that heighten sensitivity to future experiences of gratitude.

Setting a positive intention for the day means taking a moment to pause before the day begins and asking myself what I want to get out of it. When you set your intention you clearly state what you want to experience and achieve through your actions. This can be related to your work, personal life, dreams, thoughts, mindfulness practice, or whatever you choose. As long as it is clearly defined and customized to your life

Here are a few examples of gratitude and setting intentions for the day:

Question - What am I feeling grateful for today?

Example Answers - my family, friends, good health, freedom, choice, a new day, love, nature, food, the chance to change

Question - What are my intentions for today?

Example Answers - no excuses today, positive mental attitude, remember to challenge those negative thoughts, I will be kind to myself and patient and recognise all the small changes I'm making, I am worth it

GROUNDING

Grounding is a self-soothing skill to use if you are having a bad day or if you want to start (or finish) your day in the present. It is a way of helping you to deal with stress or overwhelming feelings and helps you calm down quickly.

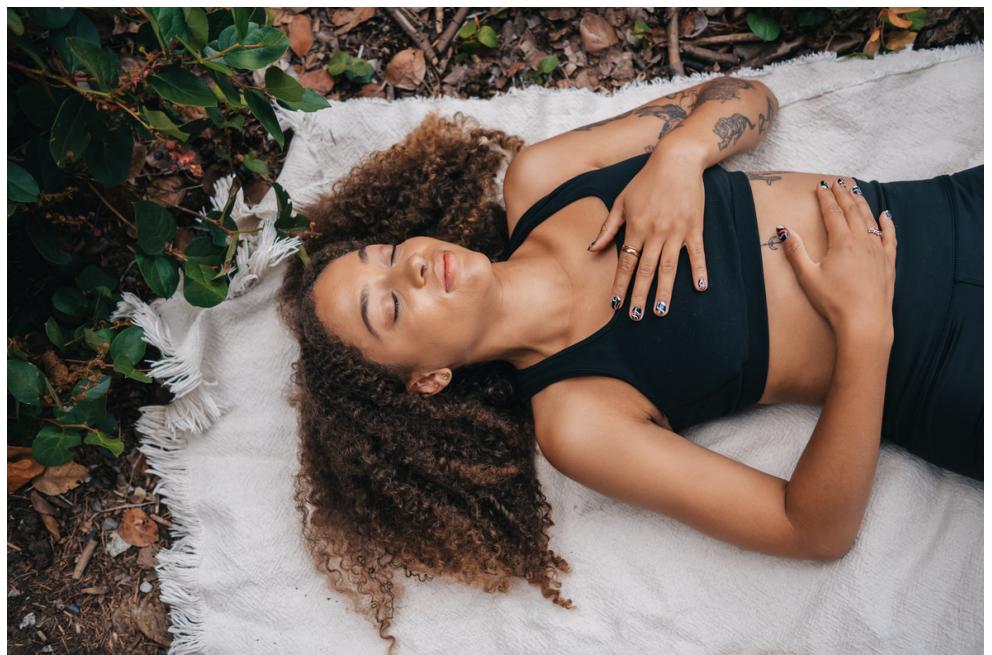
There are lots of ways in which you can ground yourself. If the following technique doesn't work for you then google it, there will be a technique that resonates with you (there are also a few on my website too).

Either sit or lie in a comfortable place. If I'm lying down I like to lift my knees so my feet are firmly on the floor. Take a few deep breaths in through your nose and into your stomach (place your hands on your stomach and chest as it will help you direct the breath to the right place). Hold the breath for a few seconds and release it.

If you have an object that is important you might want to hold that (I have a few crystals I use at this time). You can either start to focus on your positive intentions for the day or if you meditate frequently and have a special place you visit then go off to that special place. If this is your first time trying this out then maybe you can visualise a special place (an old holiday destination, the forest, the beach, bobbing along on the sea, a special place that you either imagine or is real to you. Whilst you are in your special place focus on your intentions for the day or repeat your gratitude statements.

You can bring all your senses into play here if you like (smell, touch, feeling/emotion, taste, sound). Maybe you want to add some colour to your image. Make the thoughts and intention positive just for you. You can also sit in this space for longer than two minutes if you have the time.

I sometimes receive messages when I ground myself (or meditate). I write these down in my journal too.



TWEAK AND JOURNAL



You can do this in the middle of your day, at the end of your day or if you have time do it twice.

You've started your journaling now. You are noticing your thoughts (what is going on in your mind), you are noticing your body (how your body is reacting to the thoughts and events of the day) and your spirit/emotions (how you are coping with the thoughts and events of the day mentally).

This is the opportunity for you to think about the events of the day, what thoughts were running through your mind (those pesky automatic and sometimes unhelpful thoughts) which then kick in an emotion and then the behaviour. Write down any positive or negative events then what thoughts came up, how those thoughts made you feel. Were the thoughts unhelpful or negative? If they were are they factual or are they just your opinion based on how you were feeling at that time or based on old triggers and habits? How did those unhelpful thoughts make you feel and did they kick in a behaviour you want to change? Here's an example:

Event - a meeting pops into my calendar with someone who is well outside my moral compass (a narcissist maybe)

Thoughts - oh no... doom... how is this person going to react at the meeting... shall I just throw a sickie that day... that person is awful, no-one likes them, they should just leave, why don't HR do their job and speak to them... maybe I'll resign

Emotions - negative, angry, frightened, vulnerable, passive/aggressive, anxious

Behaviour - spend the rest of the day ruminating, filtering, over generalising, labelling, disqualifying all the positives

Maybe other ways of thinking would be - it's only half an hour, you never know it might be a good meeting, I'm going to go in with a positive attitude, I can take control of my own actions and sit within my own value system

Thinking in this way (or tweaking your thoughts) could have a positive impact on your emotions and your behaviour. Journaling enables you to maybe let go of the unhelpful thoughts (releasing them from your mind onto the paper)?

LETTING GO

At this stage you might be thinking about some of the negative things that you've dealt with today, some of the negative thoughts, some pain, fear, hurt, sadness, anger.... whatever it is.

Finishing the day with these thoughts or feeling these emotions again is something that you can change.

There are lots of ways in which you can work on letting go of any negativity from the day. Here are just a few suggestions:

ASK YOURSELF - Why am I holding onto this? Does it serve me a positive purpose? Are there any lessons I need to take away (write them down if there are)? Am I holding onto this because it's familiar (a habit)? Is there anything I can do to change it (and if there is add it to your action list)? If I can't fully let this go I'm going to move it aside and make way for some end of day positive thoughts

FORGIVENESS - I forgive myself, I forgive X/Y/Z and I give myself love or I give X/Y/Z love

FEEL IT- allow yourself to feel a little pain/loss/anger/fear etc... for a few seconds, then visualise it leaving your body. You can maybe visualise this as a balloon being filled with the unwanted emotions or unwanted thoughts and then letting it just float away, feel the lightness

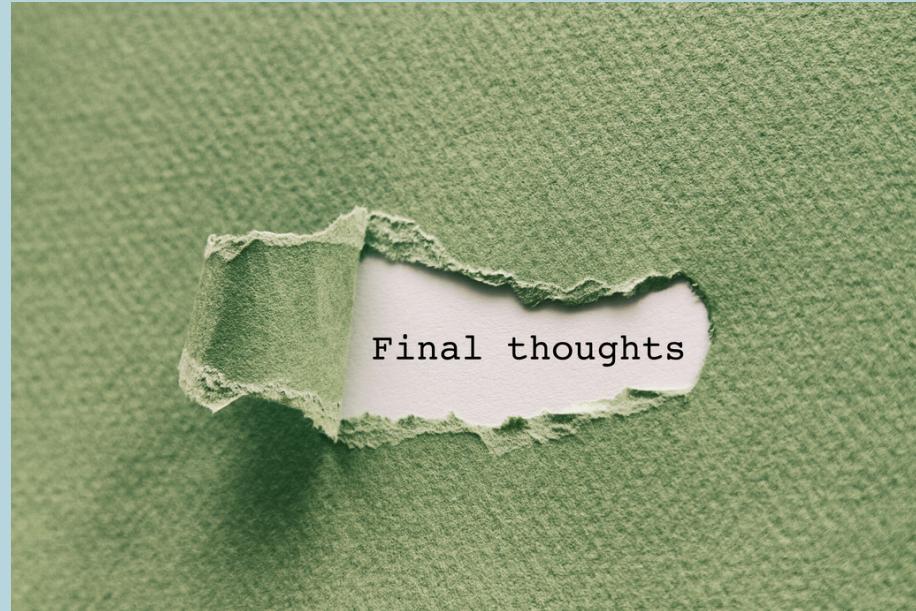
PATIENCE - I am on a journey, I give myself patience, time

TAKE A BREATH - do a little guided meditation or breathe work (maybe a gratitude mediation)

MANTRA - create a mantra for the end of day 'letting go' exercise, something that helps you release any unhelpful thoughts or emotions



SOME FINAL POINTS



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT (MOST OF THE TIME)

Unfortunately, there is no magic wand to change. One of the first things I tell the clients I support is that YOU need to want to change. Things will not change overnight, you need to put the effort in. You need to ride the bad days and carry on again the next day. Someone said that it takes 21 days to break a bad habit and replace it with a positive habit. That's not strictly true, it takes as long as it takes. Some habits you've been carrying around since childhood might take a little more convincing to change.

BE CONSISTENT

Even if you wake up feeling wonderful, journal it. Keep being consistent with your self care. Life will get in the way and it will throw you curve balls. You might stop being as consistent for a few days, maybe a week. Start again. You are worth it.

STILL STRUGGLING?

Sometimes we experience trauma in our lives that mean we may not feel worthy of this self care or this time. If this is you then seek some professional help. Call me if you need some guidance, I'll always find time to listen.

SELF LOVE, SELF WORTH, SELF CONTROL XXXX