

# Challenging Anxiety

- Anxiety is our body's response to a threat- real or not.
- Anxiety can be a beneficial emotion but sometimes it can become too much and lead to illogical fears. It is important we learn how to benefit from feeling anxiety.

Name something that makes you feel anxious or fearful.  
(Example: Starting a new school or trying out for a sport)

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Now think of the WORST outcome and list it below

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Now think of the BEST outcome and list it below

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Let's say you picked getting anxious trying out for a sport or part in a play. Your BEST outcome is getting on the team or getting the part but the WORST fear was not getting it and breaking your leg while trying out (this would be an ILLOGICAL fear).

On the other hand, if you mentioned picking up a rattlesnake as causing you to be anxious and you could DIE if you got bit, you might want to stay away from rattlesnakes (this would be a RATIONAL fear). This is where your anxiety is beneficial.

Turn this page over to find ways to reduce your anxiety and turn ILLOGICAL fears into RATIONAL thoughts.



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Take the examples below and turn them from an **ILLOGICAL** fear (it probably won't happen) to a **RATIONAL** thought. We will do the first one for you. In the last two columns, use your own irrational fear and change it to be rational.

IRRATIONAL	RATIONAL
If I don't pass this test I will fail out!!!	If I don't pass this test, I will need to study harder next time.
If I start to drive, I will lose control of the vehicle and hurt a bunch of people!	

**Suggestion #1 to reduce anxiety: Deep Breathing-** This helps you slow down and catch your breath- literally!

**Try this:** Breathe in through your nose for 5 seconds, hold for 5 seconds, and breathe out of your mouth for 5 seconds. Repeat.

**Suggestion #2 to reduce anxiety: Progressive Muscle Relaxation-** This will help your body relax when you are feeling tense.

**Try this:** Starting at the bottom and working your way up, clench the muscles in a specific part of your body and then relax. Start with toes and move on to calves, thighs, torso, back, shoulders, arms, hands, face, and then full body.

