



High-Functioning Anxiety Workbook

Managing high-functioning anxiety can feel exhausting, especially when it constantly runs in the background, affecting your thoughts, emotions, and daily life in subtle but persistent ways. With practical strategies and some regular practice, though, you can start to reduce anxiety's impact and create more calm and balance in your everyday routines. **This workbook offers a series of worksheets tailored to help you understand your high-functioning anxiety, develop effective coping skills, and build confidence in managing those moments when anxiety feels overwhelming.**

Here is a brief introduction to each worksheet included in this package:

Identifying Your Triggers

Learn to recognize the specific situations, thoughts, or events that trigger your anxiety. Understanding your triggers is the first step toward managing them more effectively.

Cognitive Restructuring

This worksheet guides you in challenging negative thoughts and replacing them with more balanced, realistic ones. By changing how you think, you can reduce anxiety and improve your overall mindset.

Self-Care Inventory

Assess your current self-care habits and identify areas where you can make improvements. Prioritizing self-care is essential for reducing anxiety and maintaining mental well-being.

Practicing Gratitude

This worksheet encourages you to focus on the positive aspects of your life, which can shift attention away from anxiety and promote a more optimistic outlook. Consistent gratitude practice builds resilience and enhances emotional well-being.

Nervous System Regulation

This worksheet helps you understand how emotions show up in your body and guides you in practicing techniques to calm your nervous system. Regulating your nervous system can reduce anxiety and improve your emotional responses in challenging situations.



Identifying Your Anxiety Triggers

Anxiety triggers are specific people, places, situations, or stimuli that can provoke feelings of anxiety, sometimes reminding you of past stressful or overwhelming experiences. Some triggers may be obvious, while others are subtle and harder to pinpoint. Becoming familiar with your triggers can help you build effective coping strategies to manage anxiety in healthy ways.

You might already recognize some of your triggers. List them below:

Sounds

Sights

Smells

Emotions

Locations

Situations



Identifying Your Anxiety Triggers

Tracking a specific trigger allows you to become more aware of the patterns surrounding it, giving you insight into what sets off the reaction, why it feels overwhelming, and how it affects you. With this information, you can start to practice coping strategies that directly address the specific elements of the trigger. To get started, think of a recent experience where you felt triggered, and map out the details of that situation to gain more clarity on its impact and meaning.

1

What was the situation?

Describe the setting, including where you were, who was there, and what was happening.

2

What emotions came up when you felt triggered?

Identify specific feelings, such as fear, anger, sadness, or shame.

3

What thoughts ran through your mind when the trigger occurred?

Note any specific thoughts, beliefs, or memories that surfaced in that moment.

4

How did your body respond physically?

Describe any physical reactions, such as a racing heart, muscle tension, sweating, or feeling cold or hot.

5

Were there people, sounds, smells, or sights involved that seemed to make the reaction stronger?

Look for specific sensory details that may have amplified the trigger.



Identifying Your Anxiety Triggers

Look for patterns in the situations or thoughts that trigger your anxiety. Recognizing these patterns will help you anticipate when anxiety might arise and prepare yourself to manage it more effectively.

Are there common themes, people or situations that often trigger anxiety?

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Are there any early warning signs or cues that help you recognize when you're being triggered?

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What thoughts go through your mind when you feel triggered?

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How do your anxiety triggers affect your behavior or decision-making?

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Identifying Your Anxiety Triggers

To work through a trigger, it's essential to remind our body that we're not in danger, helping it to return to a state of calm. By grounding ourselves in the present and assuring our body of safety, we can start to rewire our response to triggers, gradually reducing their intensity and reclaiming control over how we feel and react.

How can you remind yourself that you are safe when you're experiencing a trigger?

Examples of Coping Strategies

To learn more about coping skills you can use, scan the QR code below.

- Take some deep breaths. Try to inhale through your nose for a count of 4, hold your breath for a count of 7, and then exhale slowly through your mouth for a count of 8. Repeat 5 times.
- Ground yourself with the 5-4-3-2-1 method. Identify 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.
- Ask yourself if your fears are based on facts or assumptions. Look for evidence that supports or contradicts these thoughts, and consider more balanced, realistic perspectives.
- Treat yourself with the same kindness and understanding you would offer a friend.

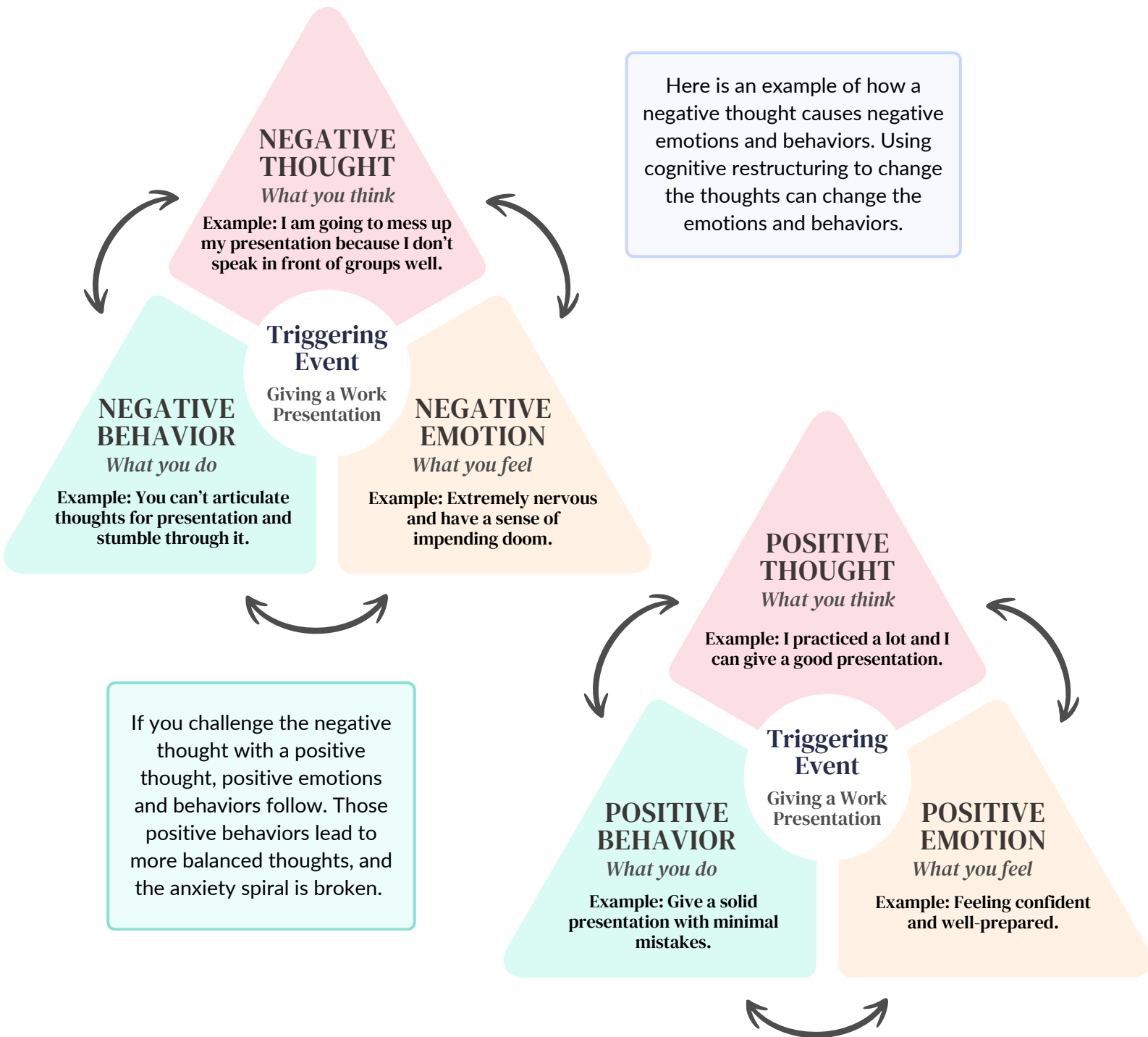
- Keep a journal to document your anxious thoughts. Writing them down can help you analyze and understand their patterns and triggers, making it easier to manage them over time.
- Gradually tense and then relax different muscle groups in your body, from head to toe, to release physical tension and promote relaxation.
- Use positive affirmations to counter anxious thoughts and affirm your ability to handle challenges.
- Create a list of your strengths, skills, and past achievements. Review this list whenever anxiety arises to remind yourself of your abilities and successes.



Scan or [click here](#) to learn more about managing anxiety triggers.

Cognitive Restructuring

Cognitive restructuring is a CBT technique that involves recognizing negative and unhelpful thoughts, examining the evidence for and against these thoughts, and developing more helpful alternative thoughts. **For someone experiencing anxiety, cognitive restructuring can help challenge and change the anxious and often irrational thoughts that contribute to their feelings of fear and worry.**



Here is an example of how a negative thought causes negative emotions and behaviors. Using cognitive restructuring to change the thoughts can change the emotions and behaviors.

If you challenge the negative thought with a positive thought, positive emotions and behaviors follow. Those positive behaviors lead to more balanced thoughts, and the anxiety spiral is broken.



Cognitive Restructuring

THOUGHT

What you think in a situation
Ex: I'm going to fail at this task.

EMOTION

How you feel
Ex: I feel anxious and scared.

BEHAVIOR

How you act in the situation
Ex: Procrastinate or over-prepare to the point of exhaustion.

It's important to understand that our automatic thoughts affect our feelings and influence our behavior.

You can recognize unhealthy thought patterns that are causing you increased anxiety by practicing cognitive restructuring. Use the questions below each time you're experiencing unwanted thoughts that lead to unhealthy behaviors.

Thoughts	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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Is my thought factual?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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What evidence do I have to support my thought?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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What would someone else say about the situation?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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Is it possible to view this situation differently?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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Self-Care Inventory

Self-care is any technique that enhances your well-being and replenishes your mind and body. For example, practicing daily gratitude, laughing with a loved one, and taking daily walks can boost your mood and improve overall well-being. A self-care routine is not one-size-fits-all but requires experimenting with different strategies to understand what works best for you.

This worksheet is designed to help you explore a variety of specific self-care activities that can improve your well-being. You will be asked to rank each activity on a scale from 1-3 to determine how well you are currently engaging in these practices. After ranking, you can “star” the activities you would like to do more often. The goal of this worksheet is to help you recognize the different types of self-care available to you, identify what you are doing well, and pinpoint areas where you can improve to feel better overall.

Ranking

- 1 I rarely engage in this, and it is not a regular part of my routine.
- 2 I occasionally engage in this, but it is not consistent.
- 3 I regularly engage in this, and it is a frequent part of my routine.
- ★ I want to do this more frequently.

1 2 3 ★ Physical Self-Care: Improving your physical health.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engaging in regular physical activity such as walking, running, yoga, or strength training.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensuring you get enough restful sleep each night to rejuvenate your body.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eating a balanced and nutritious diet, including plenty of fruits, vegetables, and grains.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drinking enough water throughout the day to stay hydrated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintaining good hygiene practices such as bathing, brushing teeth, and grooming.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attending regular check-ups and following medical advice from healthcare professionals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taking time to relax and unwind, through activities like taking a bath and getting a massage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Limiting or avoiding the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spending time outdoors in natural sunlight to enhance vitamin D levels and improve mood.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paying attention to your body's needs, such as stretching when tense or resting when tired.



Self-Care Inventory

1 2 3 ★ **Emotional Self-Care: Processing & expressing your emotions.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participating in activities you enjoy to boost your mood and provide a sense of fulfillment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spending time with friends and family to build support and reduce feelings of isolation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Practicing mindfulness to stay present and manage negative thoughts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing down thoughts and feelings to process emotions and gain insights.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keeping a gratitude journal or reflecting on things you are thankful for.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Using positive affirmations to counter negative self-talk and build self-esteem.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Using music to relax, uplift your mood, or express your emotions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Expressing your emotions through art, music, writing, or other creative outlets.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set achievable goals and celebrate your progress, no matter how small.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular sessions with a therapist or counselor to explore and address emotional challenges.

1 2 3 ★ **Social Self-Care: Fostering & maintaining healthy relationships.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spending time with people you like and make you feel good about yourself.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asking for help from friends or family when you're feeling down or overwhelmed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning to say no and establishing boundaries to protect your emotional well-being.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participating in support groups to gain insight and emotional support from others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participating in clubs or organizations that align with your interests to meet new people.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Giving your time to help others in your community to foster connection and purpose.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Going to social gatherings, parties, or community events to build your social network.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scheduling regular get-togethers, such as a weekly coffee date, or a monthly dinner.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Actively listening when talking with others, which helps strengthen your relationships.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scheduling intentional alone time with your romantic partner.



Self-Care Inventory

1 2 3



Professional Self-Care: Maintaining a healthy work-life balance and pursuing career development opportunities.

Clearly defining work hours and sticking to them to ensure a healthy work-life balance.

Stepping away from work to recharge, through daily short breaks and using vacation time.

Talking to a supervisor or HR about mental health challenges (if it feels safe).

Exploring available support options, such as employee assistance programs (EAP).

Organizing and prioritizing work tasks to manage workload effectively and reduce stress.

Ensuring your work environment is comfortable and conducive to productivity.

Establishing achievable work goals and celebrating small accomplishments.

Being kind to yourself during work and avoiding excessive self-criticism.

Building positive relationships with coworkers for mutual support and camaraderie.

1 2 3



Spiritual Self-Care: Nurturing your spirit and providing purpose.

Practicing meditation to connect with your inner self and find peace and clarity.

Engaging in prayer or other forms of communication with a higher power.

Spending time in nature to experience connection to the world around you.

Regularly reflecting on what you are thankful for to cultivate an appreciative mindset.

Reading inspirational books, scriptures, or quotes to uplift and inspire your spirit.

Participating in spiritual or religious community activities.

Engaging in artistic activities, such as painting, music, or writing.

Performing acts of kindness and service to others, fostering a sense of purpose.

Acting in accordance with your morals to create a sense of integrity in your life.

Spending time with the people who give your life meaning.



Practicing Gratitude

Gratitude is more than just a positive feeling; it's a practical tool that can help manage anxiety and improve your mental well-being. When you practice gratitude regularly, it can shift your focus away from anxious thoughts and help you notice the good things in your life, building resilience against stress. This worksheet is designed to help you recognize and appreciate the positive aspects of your daily experiences.

PART 1: Daily Gratitude List

Write down three things you are grateful for each day. (Example page).

WEEK 1	Gratitude 1	Gratitude 2	Gratitude 3
M	<i>Example: The taste of fresh coffee in the morning.</i>	<i>The kind text my friend sent me.</i>	<i>The relaxing bath I took to unwind.</i>
T	<i>A productive work meeting where I felt heard.</i>	<i>My cozy blanket keeping me warm while I read.</i>	<i>A surprise call from my mom to check on me.</i>
W			
T			
F			
S			
S			

PART 2: Weekly Reflection

Reflect on your gratitude entries at the end of each week. Answer the following questions:

Which gratitude entries for this week stood out to you the most and why?

The gratitude entry that stood out the most this week was "taking a quiet walk in the park." It felt so refreshing to be surrounded by nature and to have a moment of calm away from my usual busy routine. I realized how much these small breaks can help me feel grounded. Another entry that stood out was "a kind message from a friend." It reminded me that I have a support system and people who genuinely care about me. Sometimes I get caught up in my own struggles, so being reminded of these connections really lifted my mood and made me feel valued.



Practicing Gratitude

WEEK 1	Gratitude 1	Gratitude 2	Gratitude 3
M			
T			
W			
T			
F			
S			
S			

How did practicing gratitude affect your mood and outlook over the week?

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Practicing Gratitude

WEEK 2	Gratitude 1	Gratitude 2	Gratitude 3
M			
T			
W			
T			
F			
S			
S			

How did practicing gratitude affect your mood and outlook over the week?

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Practicing Gratitude

WEEK 3	Gratitude 1	Gratitude 2	Gratitude 3
M			
T			
W			
T			
F			
S			
S			

How did practicing gratitude affect your mood and outlook over the week?

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Practicing Gratitude

WEEK 4	Gratitude 1	Gratitude 2	Gratitude 3
M			
T			
W			
T			
F			
S			
S			

How did practicing gratitude affect your mood and outlook over the week?

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PART 3: Monthly Summary

At the end of each month, summarize your gratitude practice.

What patterns do you notice in the things you are grateful for?

How has your perspective changed since you started practicing gratitude?



Practicing Gratitude

What new gratitude practices would you like to try next month?

What challenges did you face in practicing gratitude , and how did you overcome them?

Which gratitudes can you turn into a daily affirmation?



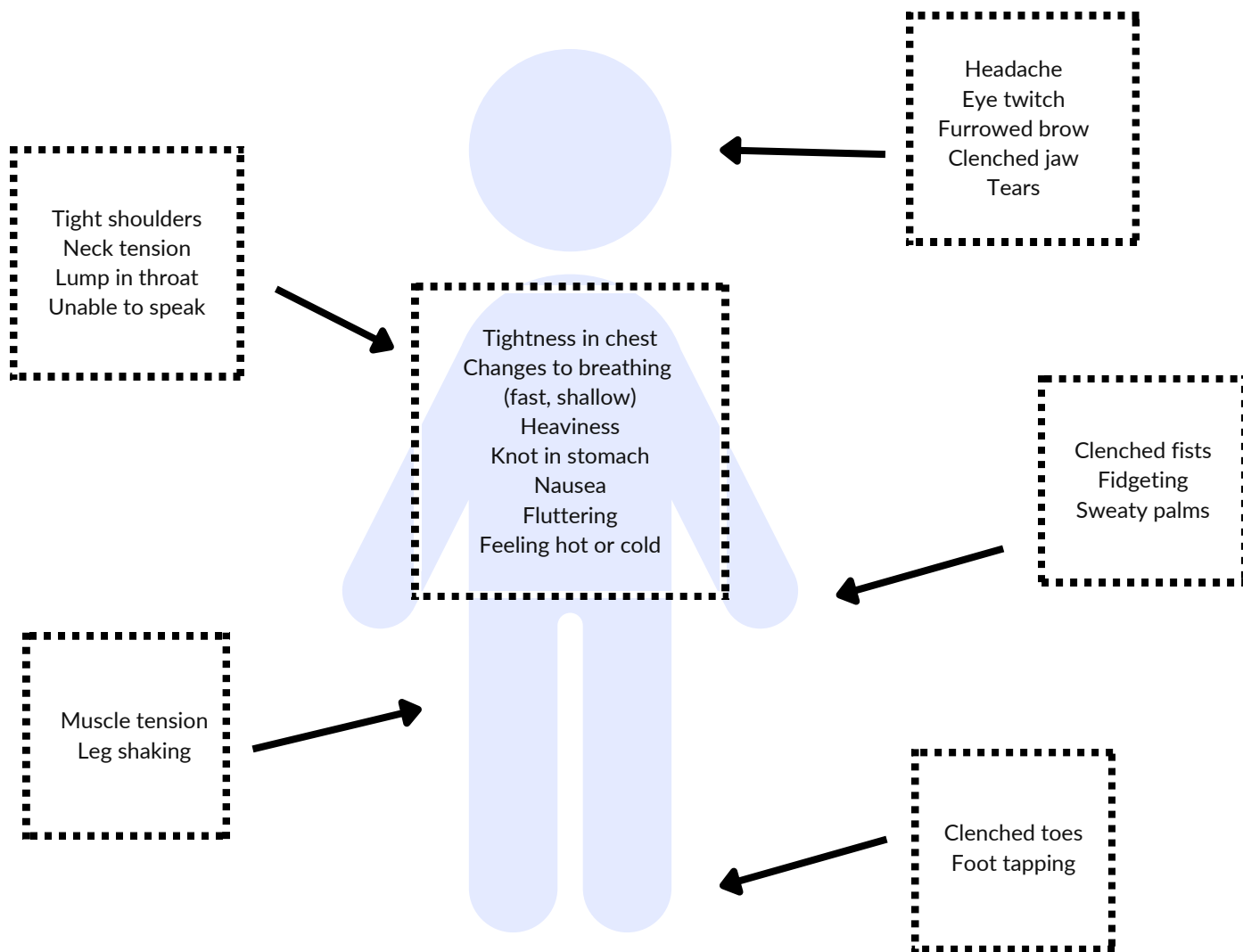
Nervous System Regulation

High-functioning anxiety can cause your body to get stuck in "high alert" mode, where stress builds up and keeps your mind and body in a constant state of worry or tension. This can feel like racing thoughts, restless sleep, feeling on edge, or even physical signs like a racing heart, tight muscles, or a sense of heaviness. Sometimes, high-functioning anxiety can also make you feel exhausted, numb, or disconnected from yourself or others—signs that your body is struggling to find balance.

Learning to calm your body and mind, even when you feel anxious, is called nervous system regulation. It involves using simple techniques to help you feel more centered and stable. By practicing these techniques, you can handle stress in a way that feels more manageable, find a sense of emotional balance, and feel more connected to yourself and others.

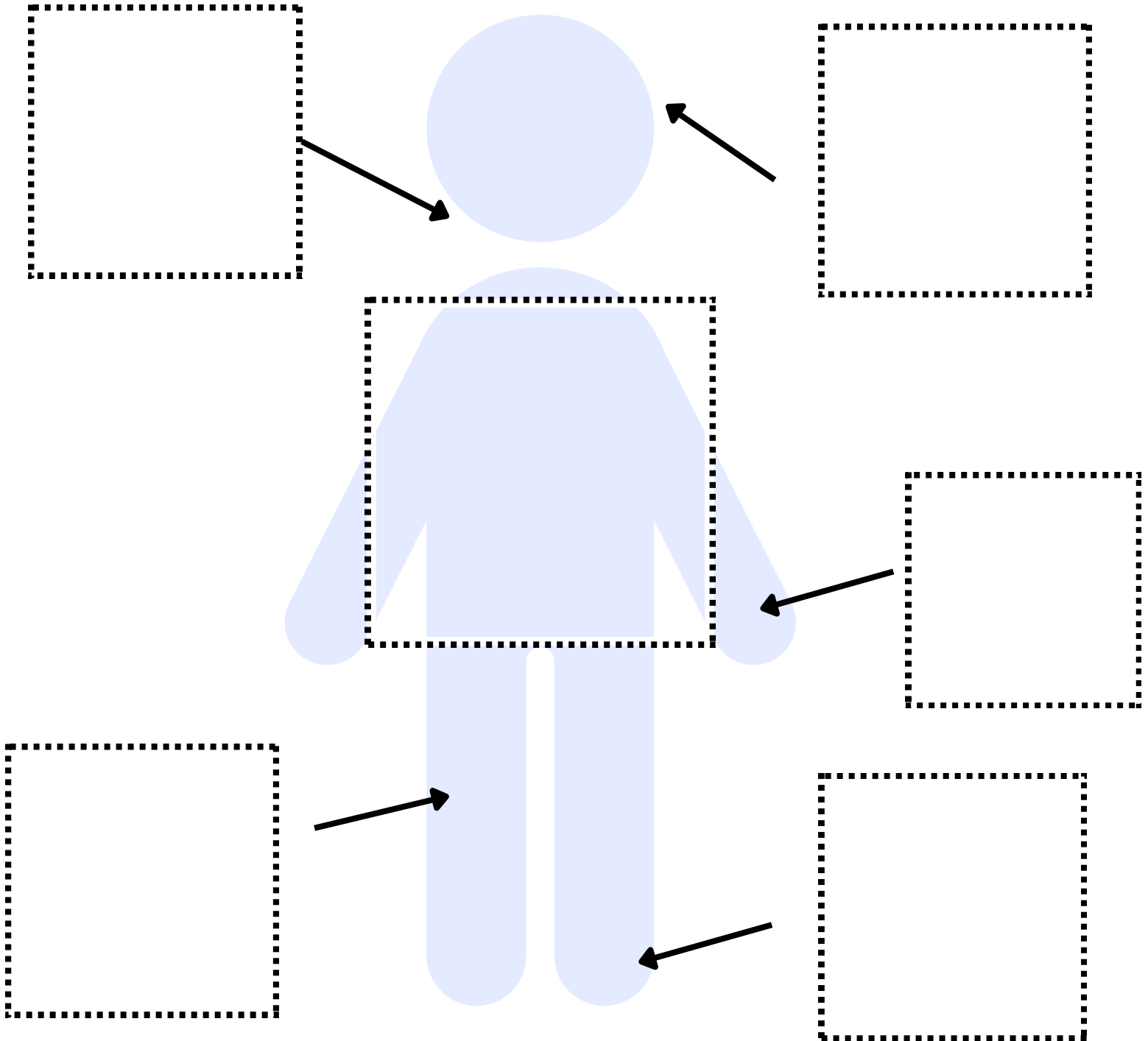
This worksheet will help you recognize how anxiety shows up in your body—like muscle tension, stomach butterflies, or a heavy chest. By understanding these physical signals, you'll learn ways to soothe them, giving you practical tools to manage stress and feel more in control.

Here's an example of how emotions might be experienced in the body:



PART 1: Scan Your Body for Sensations

Starting with your feet and working your way up, notice any physical sensations. These can be positive, neutral, or uncomfortable. There is no wrong answer. Just notice what you notice and write it down. Here's an example of how emotions might be experienced in the body.

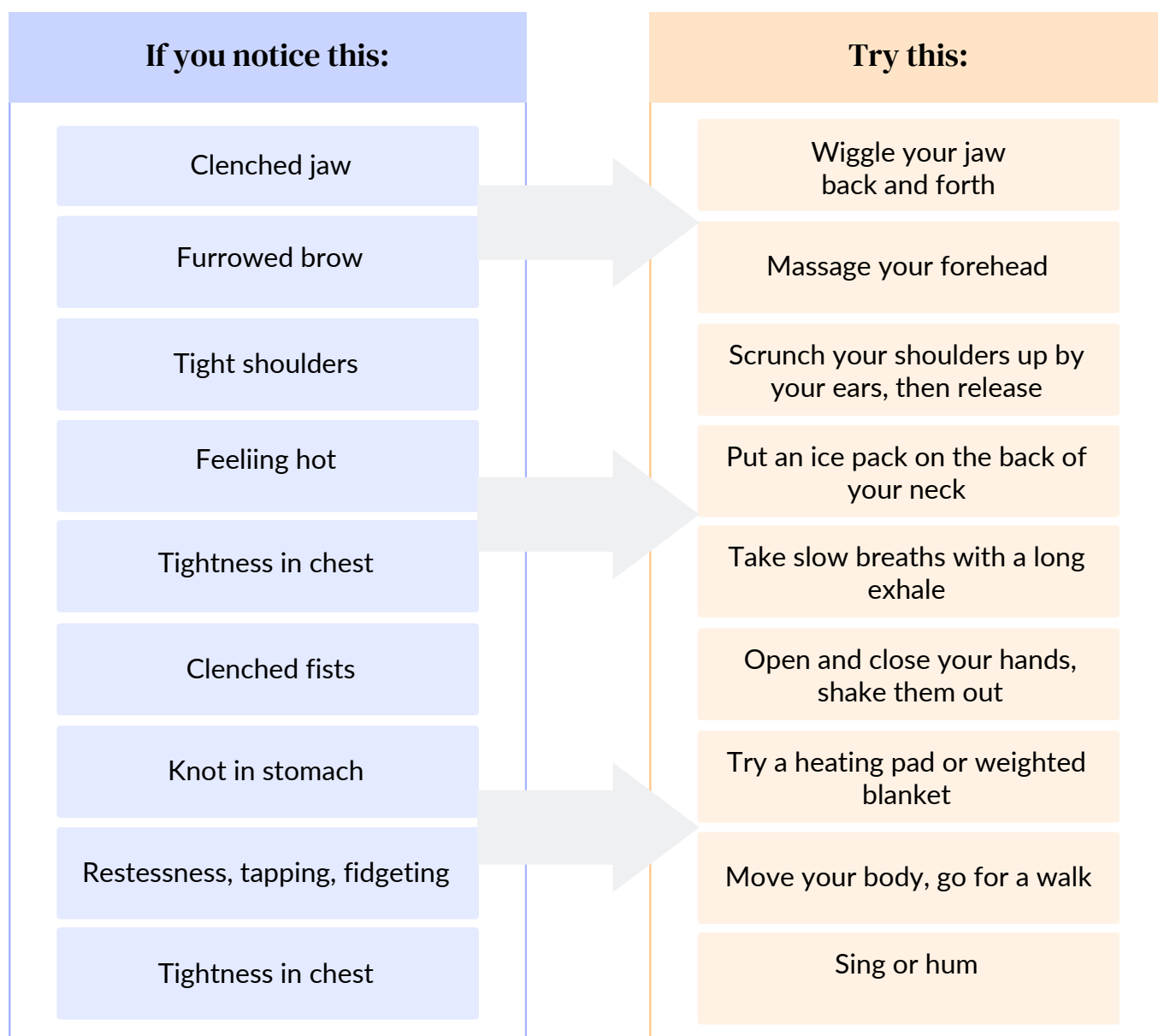


Nervous System Regulation

One way to regulate your nervous system is by addressing the physical sensations that come up when you are feeling strong emotions. This could include changing your temperature, relaxing a muscle, or doing something that feels soothing.

PART 2: Regulating the Nervous System

Now, what to do about it? When you're feeling a difficult emotion, first notice what it feels like in your body then try one of these techniques. Notice how you feel afterward.



Nervous System Regulation

Daily self-care for the nervous system is important for being able to cope with physical and emotional responses to difficult situations. This means engaging in activities that help you feel centered, grounded, present and calm on a daily basis. Stress, illness and even the pressures of everyday life can dysregulate the nervous system, and these activities can help you move through your emotions in a healthy way.

PART 3: Daily Nervous System Self-Care

Nurture your nervous system! Use this worksheet to help you rate how often you do these practices, then add this list to your daily self-care routine.

Ranking

- 1 I rarely engage in this, and it is not a regular part of my routine.
- 2 I occasionally engage in this, but it is not consistent.
- 3 I regularly engage in this, and it is a frequent part of my routine.
- ★ I want to do this more frequently.

1 2 3

★ Nervous System Self-Care

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice breathing including taking slow breaths with a long exhale
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Move your body, stretch or go for a walk
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do 5 minutes of mindfulness meditation, simply noticing your senses
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tense and relax each muscle group in your body starting with the toes and working up
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a break from screens and any over-stimulating media
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listen to soothing music or sounds
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a warm bath or shower
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do aromatherapy with essential oils or a favorite candle
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend time outdoors in nature
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drink a cup of comforting tea or another soothing ritual before bed



Journaling can be a powerful tool for building new habits that support nervous system regulation. It allows you to explore which techniques or coping tools are most effective, so you can refine your routine.

PART 4: Daily Reflection

Reflect on how you feel each day as you practice these techniques. Track the techniques you are using, how effective they were, and any patterns of changes you have noticed. Create extra copies of this page for each day of the week.

Which techniques did you use today?

Which technique was the most effective?

Which techniques were not effective and need to be adjusted?

Rate your nervous system
regulation today (1-10)





Additional Resources to Support Your Mental Health Journey

It can be hard to know where to begin looking for support in your mental health journey. Getting a referral from a primary care physician is a reliable first step. Also, sometimes family and friends have experienced similar issues and have professionals they would recommend. The experts at ChoosingTherapy.com are here to help as well, with resources we have reviewed and recommend. Our [strict editorial standards](#) ensure our reviews are fair, honest, thorough, and based on firsthand experience.

You Can Trust ChoosingTherapy.com



300+
Companies Reviewed



2,350+
Hours of Firsthand Experience



1,150+
Data Points Analyzed



[Best Online Therapy](#)

Online therapy is a convenient way to connect with a licensed therapist to address mental health issues, reduce unhealthy behaviors, develop effective coping skills, and get more satisfaction out of life. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.

[Best Online Psychiatry](#)

Online psychiatry providers enable patients to consult with licensed psychiatrists and other mental health professionals. They can evaluate, diagnose, and prescribe medication to help manage mental health issues. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.



[Best Mental Health Apps](#)

Apps can be great way to monitor mood, track sleep, journal, and practice healthy coping skills like mindfulness and meditation. There are apps specifically designed to help people reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, ADHD, chronic stress, and burnout.

[Therapist Directory](#)

When you're looking for a mental health provider with a very particular skill set, level of experience, or personality type, a therapist directory can be very helpful. Using the filters, you can refine your search until you find a therapist who feels like a perfect fit.

