



# DIY Guide for Kids

# How to

Learn and Practice CBT Skills for  
Treatment of Anxiety



**MindWeal**

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## How to Learn and Practice CBT Skills for Treatment of Anxiety



Hey there! Anxiety can be really tough, but Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a great way to help you manage it. This guide will show you some fun and easy ways to learn and practice CBT skills at home. Let's get started!

*Disclaimer: This guide is intended to complement, not replace, your psychotherapy with a licensed therapist. It should be used under the supervision of a licensed professional.*

### What is CBT?

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a type of therapy that helps you change the way you think and behave to feel better. It's like training your brain to think differently and handle situations more calmly.

### Why It's Important:

- **Reduces Anxiety:** Helps you feel less worried and more in control.
- **Improves Mood:** Makes you feel happier and more relaxed.
- **Builds Coping Skills:** Teaches you ways to handle difficult situations better.

## Step 1: Identify Anxious Thoughts

Anxious thoughts are negative thoughts that make you feel worried or scared. The first step in CBT is to identify these thoughts.

### What to do:

- **Notice Your Thoughts:** Pay attention to what you're thinking when you feel anxious. Example "I'm afraid I'll fail my math test." Example
- **Write It Down:** Keep a journal of your anxious thoughts. Example "I'm worried everyone will laugh at me if I mess up."
- **Trigger:** Identify any triggers to the thought. Example "Making a mistake in class."

### Why It Helps:

- **Increases Awareness:** Helps you become more aware of your anxious thoughts.
- **Provides Insight:** Helps you understand what triggers your anxiety.

## Step 2: Challenge Anxious Thoughts

Challenging your anxious thoughts means questioning whether they are true or helpful.

### What to do:

- **Ask Questions to challenge it:** When you have an anxious thought, ask yourself questions to challenge it. Example "Is it really true that I'll fail? Have I failed before? What's the worst that could happen?"
- **Look for Evidence:** Find evidence that supports or disproves your anxious thought. Example "I studied hard for the test, and I've done well on other tests."

### Why It Helps:

- *Changes Perspective:* Helps you see things in a more balanced way.
- *Reduces Sadness:* Decreases the power of negative thoughts.

### Step 3: Replace Anxious Thoughts

Replacing anxious thoughts with more positive or realistic thoughts can help you feel better.

#### What to do:

- *Create Positive Thoughts:* Think of positive or realistic alternatives to your anxious thoughts. Example “I’ve studied hard, and I’ll do my best on the test.”
- *Repeat Positive Thoughts:* Practice saying these positive thoughts to yourself. Example “I am prepared, and I can handle this.”

### Why It Helps:

- *Boosts Confidence:* Helps you feel more confident and less anxious.
- *Improves Mood:* Promotes a more positive outlook.

### Step 4: Practice Relaxation Techniques

Relaxation techniques help calm your body and mind when you’re feeling anxious.



## What to do:

- **Deep Breathing:** Practice deep breathing exercises to calm yourself. Click [here](#) to learn in detail how to do it.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Tense and then relax different muscle groups in your body. Click [here](#) to learn in detail how to do it.

## Why It Helps:

- **Reduces Physical Symptoms:** Helps reduce the physical symptoms of anxiety.
- **Promotes Calmness:** Helps you feel more relaxed and in control.

## Step 5: Exposure Therapy

Exposure therapy involves gradually facing the things that make you anxious until they become less scary.

## What to do:

- **Create a Fear Ladder:** Write down a list of things that make you anxious, from least to most scary. Example Least scary: Talking to a friend. Most scary: Giving a presentation in class.
- **Face Your Fears:** Start with the least scary thing on your list and gradually work your way up. Example: Practice talking to a friend, then slowly work up to giving a presentation.

## Why It Helps:

- **Builds Confidence:** Helps you feel more confident in facing your fears.
- **Reduces Anxiety:** Decreases the power of your fears over time.

## Step 6: Problem-Solving Skills

Problem-solving skills help you find solutions to the things that make you feel anxious.

## What to do:

- **Identify the Problem:** Clearly define what's making you anxious. Example "I'm worried about my science project."
- **Brainstorm Solutions:** Think of different ways to solve the problem. Example "I can ask my teacher for help, break the project into smaller tasks, or work with a classmate."
- **Choose a Solution:** Pick the best solution and try it out. Example "I'll ask my teacher for help first."

## Why It Helps:

- **Promotes Action:** Encourages you to take action rather than feeling stuck.
- **Reduces Anxiety:** Helps you feel more in control and less anxious.

## Step 7: Reward Yourself

Rewarding yourself for practicing CBT skills can motivate you to keep going.

### What to do:

- **Set Small Goals:** Set small, achievable goals for practicing CBT skills. Example “I will practice deep breathing for 5 minutes every day.”
- **Choose Rewards:** Pick rewards that you enjoy for reaching your goals. Example “If I practice deep breathing every day this week, I’ll treat myself to a favorite snack.”

### Why It Helps:

- **Increases Motivation:** Encourages you to keep practicing CBT skills.
- **Boosts Confidence:** Helps you feel proud of your progress.

## Conclusion

Practicing CBT skills can help you manage your anxiety and feel better. By learning to identify, challenge, and replace anxious thoughts, practicing relaxation techniques, facing your fears, solving problems, and rewarding yourself, you can take control of your anxiety. Remember, it’s important to practice regularly and be patient with yourself. Always work with a professional therapist who can guide you through this process safely and effectively. Keep practicing, and you’ll see great progress in managing your anxiety!

To further develop and practice the skills you've learned in this guide, please use our CBT workbook for Anxiety. Access the workbook [HERE](#)