

# SELF-TALK TO COPE WITH ANXIETY



Panic attacks can be very frightening, but it is important to know that you are not going crazy and that even though you may feel dreadful, nothing serious will actually happen. Having some self-talk strategies can allow you to calm yourself until the anxiety has passed.

Keep a card with you at all times with 4 sentences on it, one from each of the following sections. Read the appropriate sentence as long as is necessary before going on to the next. Do not forget the final section, when the anxiety has passed, as this helps reduce the likelihood of another panic attack.

## Preparing for a stressful situation

- I am a capable person
- I cope with this.
- Time for a few slow breaths.
- Focus on what I have to do.

## Coping when anxiety builds up

- One step at a time.
- I'll tense my muscles first, then I can relax.
- I can manage this.
- I am choosing to do this.
- Take a slow breath and focus.

## Coping when anxiety starts to overwhelm

- I'll just pause, I can handle this.
- I'll pay attention to the present.
- Right now I feel uncomfortable. That's OK, I can cope.
- Slow down and breathe.
- Check in. Where am I? What do I need to do?

## When it's all over and anxiety has passed

- Some things I did well and I can use them again.
- That was good practice. Next time will be even better.
- I'm getting better at this.
- I did the right things for myself.

If you are driving in the car, sing. This helps breathing and takes your focus away from your anxiety. Nursery rhymes are good.



For more information on this subject or any other **women's health** or **mental health issue** please contact us on (08) 9227 8122, or toll free on 1800 998 399

For information on issues specific to **Indigenous health** or for **drug and alcohol** related issues please contact us on (08) 9227 9032, or toll free on 1800 246 655