

# TOOLS FOR ANXIOUS KIDS

FOUNDED BY SARAH CATNACH IN  
2019, BANANA MOON KIDS YOGA  
OFFERS FUN, IMAGINATIVE  
MOVEMENT AND MINDFULNESS TO  
INSPIRE PEACE, PATIENCE AND  
CONFIDENCE IN OUR CHILDREN  
AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

SARAH FACILITATES 1:1, GROUP  
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IN THE STIRLINGSHIRE AREA OF  
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THIS RESOURCE WAS PUT  
TOGETHER IN JANUARY 2021 TO  
HELP SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE  
FEELING HEIGHTENED ANXIETY  
DURING THE COVID 19  
LOCKDOWN PERIODS.

SARAH IS A QUALIFIED YOGA INSTRUCTOR  
AND MEDITATION FACILITATOR FOR CHILDREN  
AND YOUNG PEOPLE.



The Nest

MOVEMENT. MINDFULNESS. WELLBEING



# BREATHING

Our breath is our anchor. When we're feeling a bit stressed out we are rarely using our full lung capacity. This can have a huge impact on how we feel physically and mentally. Slowing and lengthening our breaths helps to calm us and reduces our level of anxiety.

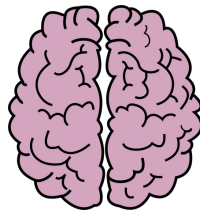


**Exercise to try - alternate nostril breathing.** This is really good to do before bed or any time in the day that you feel anxious.

1. Sit comfortably, either cross legged on the floor or on a chair with your feet flat on the ground.
2. Place your left hand palm up on your left knee.
3. Lightly rest your right thumb on the outside of your right nostril (don't close them over yet), your ring finger on the outside of your left nostril and let your index and middle fingers rest on the bridge of your nose in between your eyebrows.
4. Fully exhale out all your breath and then close over your left nostril with your right ring finger.
5. Keep the right nostril open and inhale through it deeply.
6. At the top of the breath, open the left nostril while closing the right and exhale fully.
7. Stay in that position and inhale through your left nostril then at the top of that breath, close it over and exhale through your right.
8. Keep swapping them over just for 1-2 minutes initially. You can work towards doing it for longer as you practice this technique over time.

# MINDFULNESS

Bringing ourselves into the current moment is the best way to alleviate anxious feelings. One of the most powerful ways to do this quickly is to use our senses to notice what's around us.



**Exercise to try - engaging your senses.** This exercise brings you into the present moment and gives your brain a break from any negative thoughts.

Close your eyes and take 3/4 deep breaths then open your eyes again. Now try to notice:

**5 THINGS YOU CAN SEE AROUND YOU RIGHT NOW.**

**4 THINGS YOU CAN HEAR.**

**3 THINGS YOU CAN TOUCH.**

**2 THINGS SMELL.**

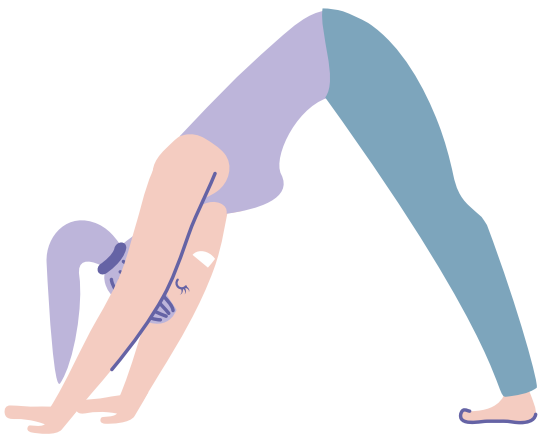
**1 THING YOU CAN TASTE.**

Do this any time things are feeling a bit out of control.



# YOGA

You don't have to be an experienced yogi or super flexible to ground yourself with some really effective yoga postures.

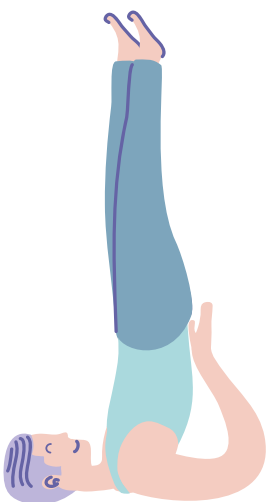
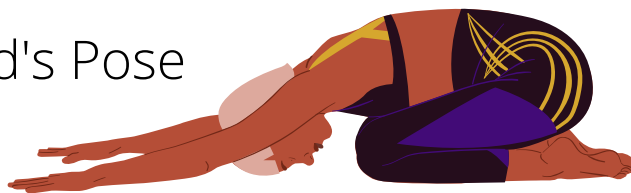


Downward Dog



Tree Pose

Child's Pose



Shoulder Stand/  
Legs up the wall



Easy Pose

# GROUNDING

Affirmations are powerful statements that help you challenge negative talk or beliefs.

Use whichever words you need to keep you where you want to be.

**I AM OK**

**I AM SAFE**

**I AM GROUNDED**

## **Exercise to try:**

Write down 4/5 affirmations that you feel are what you need. Start them with I AM. Look in the mirror and say them out loud to yourself - this will feel a bit silly the first time but stick with it, it really works. (You can also say them in your head or without the mirror). Repeat as often as you like, every day.

**Connecting to the ground or earth through physical touch has lots of benefits and can really help bring us back to ourselves if we feel overwhelmed.**

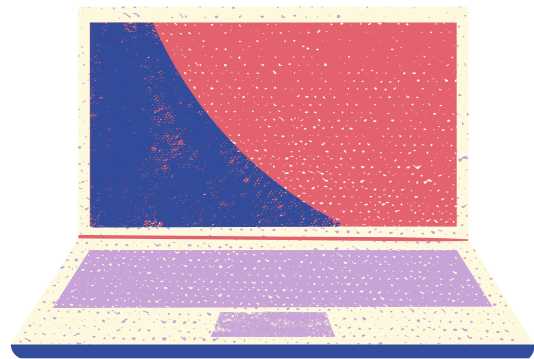
**LAY DOWN ON THE FLOOR. FOCUS ON ALL THE POINTS OF YOUR BODY THAT ARE TOUCHING THE GROUND, SAFELY HOLDING YOU.**

**LITERALLY PUT YOUR HANDS ON OR IN SOME EARTH. TOUCH IT, SMELL IT, FEEL IT.**

**TAKE A WALK IN NATURE - NEAR WATER IF YOU CAN.**

# JOURNALLING

Sometimes if we are finding it hard to communicate about how we're feeling, it can be easier to write than speak. It can make us feel loads better to get something out of our heads and onto paper. Keep it to refer back to later, show it to someone you'd like to tell but have found it hard to, or if it's something you really want to let go of, burn it (safely, with a grown up please!)



## ***Exercise to try:***

Grab yourself a notebook and pen or open a blank doc on your computer.

Try starting with the words ***'Today I am feeling...'*** and see where your pen takes you. Don't overthink it, just write whatever comes into your head - and don't worry about spelling and grammar!

You could then try working with ***'what helps me feel calm is...'*** or ***'I feel good when...'***. Do this as often as you like.

# THE HIPPY STUFF

Some other things you could try if you feel like it. I'm not an expert on these but I do use them and they work for me.



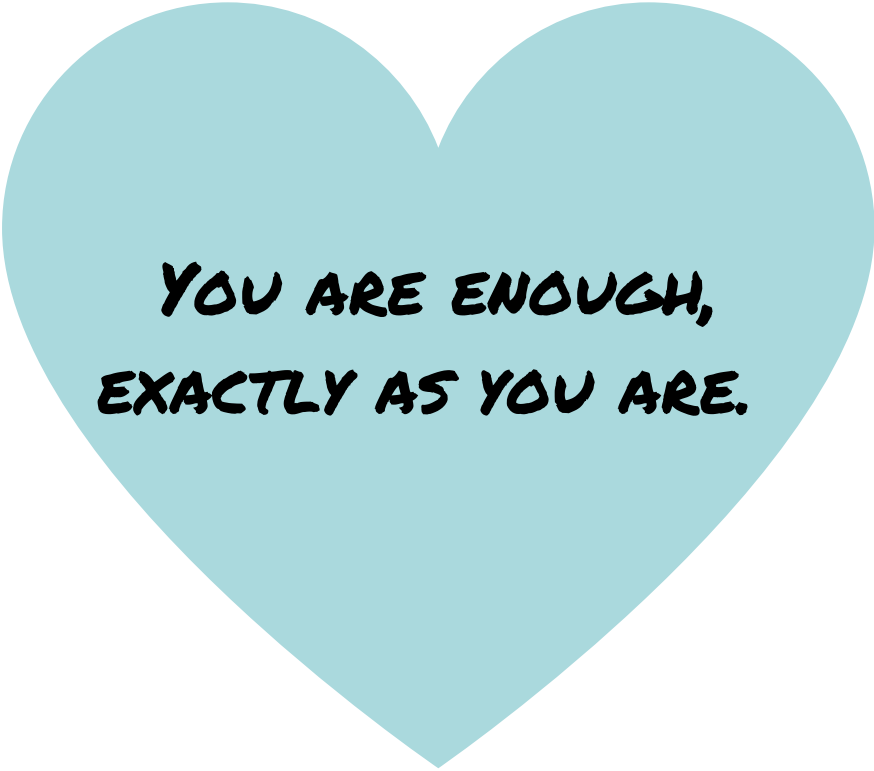
**Essential oils** - Four aromatherapy oils have been determined to be both safe and effective for use with children over age 5: lavender, peppermint, orange and ginger. Lavender oil has magical relaxing properties. 2/3 drops on your pillow at night can aid a calm, deep sleep. Alternatively put a couple of drops on a tissue or hanky and keep with you.

**Crystals** - there are hundreds of crystals which are thought to have different healing properties. Many of them are used by people all over the world to ground and keep anxiety at bay. Amethyst, Rose Quartz, Moon Stone, Fluorite and Tigers' Eye are all thought especially suitable for children. Personally, I find Red Jasper really helps me keep grounded and often have one tucked in my pocket or under my pillow. Crystals can be a really personal preference so go with whatever works for you if you want to try this.



# FINAL WORDS

I hope these ideas help you find some comfort during unsettling times. My number one tip is to simply stay aware of your breath and when you notice it's shallow and quick, take a moment to focus on lengthening and deepening your breaths. It really works. ***And remember...***



***YOU ARE ENOUGH,  
EXACTLY AS YOU ARE.***