Experiencing high levels of anxiety and stress may lead to feelings of panic. Symptoms may include shallow breathing, rapid heart rate, tearfulness, and muscle tension. If you are feeling extreme anxiety, you can try one of the following healthy, coping techniques to reduce worry and panic, and bring you back to the present.

**Grounding with Your Senses**

1. **Ground with your sense of touch.**
   - Put an ice pack or an ice cube and hold in one hand or on the inside of one wrist for 1-3 minutes (careful not to hold too tightly or for too long) while engaging in the next steps.

2. **Ground with the sense of vision.**
   - Describe out loud what you see around you in detail, including colors, shapes, and sizes. When you have completed the grounding exercises with touch and vision, you may notice that you are becoming calmer. If you are still feeling anxious, you may want to continue with the following:

3. **Grounding with the sense of taste.**
   - You can achieve this grounding technique by putting something sour in your mouth such as a sour mint, sour candy, or a squirt of lemon juice on your tongue. Take a moment to note the extreme taste.
Grounding with your sense of smell.

Take a long inhale of an intense natural smell, such as peppermint, eucalyptus, or tea tree oil. Pause to note how the smell makes you feel.

Once you have completed these four grounding techniques, the feelings of panic may have resided.

Grounding with Simple Math

You may continue to calm down emotionally by doing simple math problems for a few minutes such as “5+5=10, 6x3=18, 15/3= 5” or counting backwards from 100 by two (98, 96, 94...). This will help to decrease the intensity of strong emotions.

Grounding Kit

You may consider compiling a “grounding kit” to keep with you when you leave home. You can put together the items needed in a small lunch bag so that you worry less about having a panic attack outside of the house without an effective way to calm yourself.

Prevention with Breathing Breaks

As a form of prevention, incorporate three to five “breathing breaks” throughout your day. A breathing break takes 90 seconds and involves doing five to six deep breaths with a verbal relaxing prompt at the end of each breath. Breathe in deeply through your nose for six seconds, and then breathe out slowly through your mouth for six to eight seconds, and at the end of the exhalation say “Relax.” Repeat four to five times.

Remember that you can call and speak with a counselor at Carebridge at any time for additional support.