

How to Quieten Unhelpful Thoughts: A Guide for Health Anxiety Sufferers

Recognising Unhelpful Thoughts:

The first step is becoming aware of these thought patterns. Here are some common ones:

- Catastrophising: Assuming the worst possible outcome, e.g., "This headache means I have a brain tumor."
- Mind Reading: Believing you know what doctors are thinking e.g., "The doctor looked worried, there must be something seriously wrong."
- Fortune Telling: Predicting the future negatively, e.g., "If I don't get this test done, I'm going to get sicker."
- Should Statements: Placing unrealistic expectations on yourself, e.g., "I should be able to control my anxiety completely."



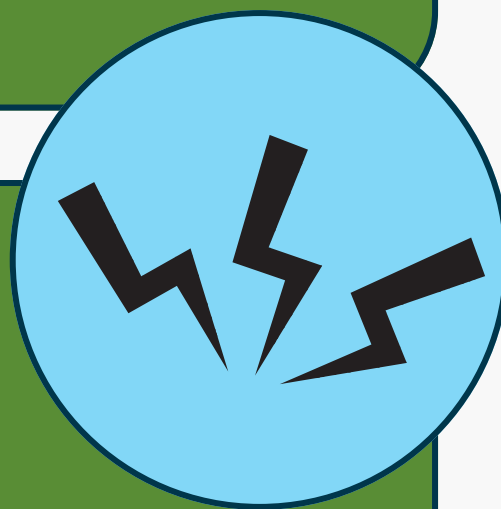
Replacing Unhelpful Thoughts:

Don't just silence negativity, replace it!

Develop Positive Self-Talk: Challenge negative thoughts with realistic and encouraging statements.

Practice Gratitude: Shift your focus to the things you're grateful for in your health.

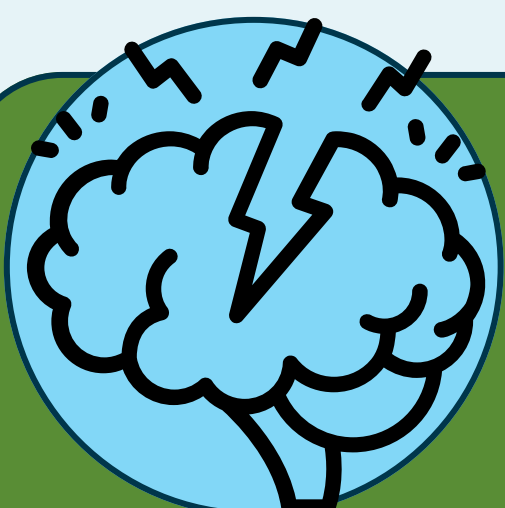
Focus on Solutions: Instead of dwelling on problems, brainstorm coping mechanisms for managing anxiety.



Mindfulness:

Mindfulness techniques help you become aware of your thoughts and emotions without judgment. Consider:

- Meditation: Practice focusing on your breath and letting go of intrusive thoughts.
- Body Scans: Tune into your physical sensations without labeling them as good or bad.



Remember:

You are not alone. Health anxiety is a common condition.

Be kind to yourself.

Progress takes time. Be patient with yourself as you learn to manage your thoughts and anxiety.