

Six ways to ease anxiety

The Economic Times · 12 Jul 2022 · 11

Research has revealed people spend almost five years of their lives worrying. Here are some ways to keep your fears at bay — so that's one less thing to worry about.

Sniff a grapefruit

Breathing in citrus aromas can help reduce stress. In a study at James Cancer Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, US, researchers diffused essential oils in the central nurses' station. Oncology nurses, who can suffer from stress, compassion fatigue and burnout, reported significant improvements — particularly when spritzed with grapefruit, which boosts energy and happiness.

Write off your fears

Getting fears down on paper can help to reduce their effect, according to a University of Chicago study.

Students prone to test anxiety were asked to write about their fears before an exam — and those who did so improved their test scores considerably.

Bore your fears to death

You can kill off your worst worries with what Robert Leahy, of the American Institute for Cognitive Therapy in New York, US, calls the Boredom Technique.

“Repeat a feared thought over and over and it will go away,” he says. “Let's say you are worried you might lose your job. Say, ‘It's possible I can get fired’ hundreds of times over 20 minutes, slowly, focusing on the words and you'll get incredibly bored with your worry.”

Go nuts

Eat more foods that contain vitamin B and omega-3 oils, such as walnuts, and healthy whole-grain carbohydrates. Studies have shown these reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, and can lower blood pressure.

Learn to juggle

The UK Medical Research Council found that keeping our hands busy distracts our minds and can help prevent flashbacks caused by traumas by interfering with the storing of visual images.

You could also take up knitting or try the trick of snapping an elastic band on your wrist to stop your worries

overwhelming you.

Blow up a balloon

It forces you to breathe the way you are anxiety supposed to, stopping