



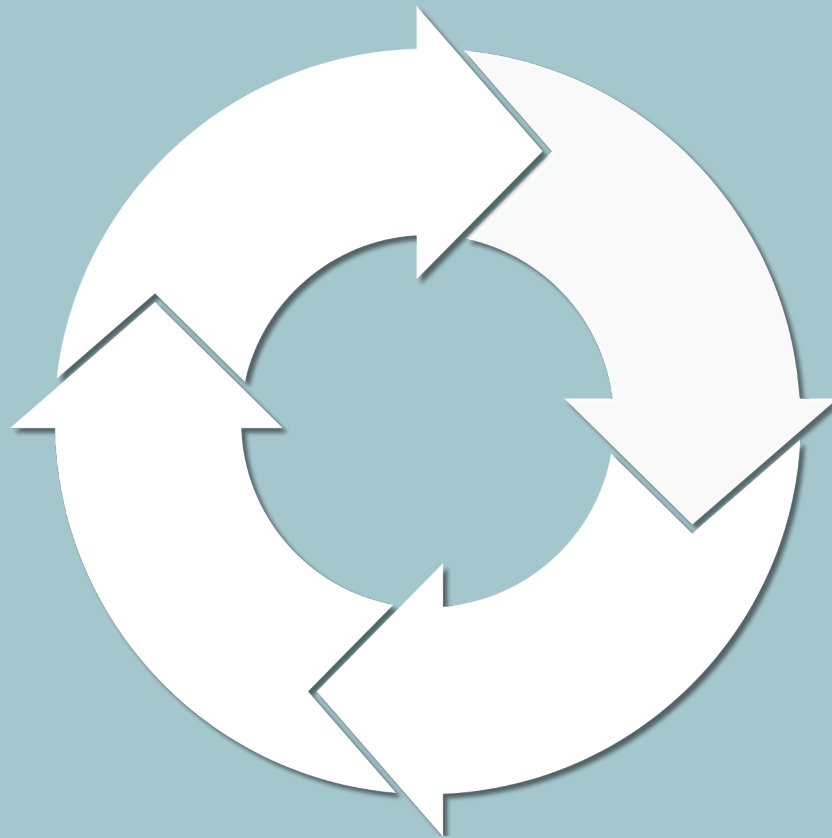
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**COMPLETING THE  
STRESS CYCLE**

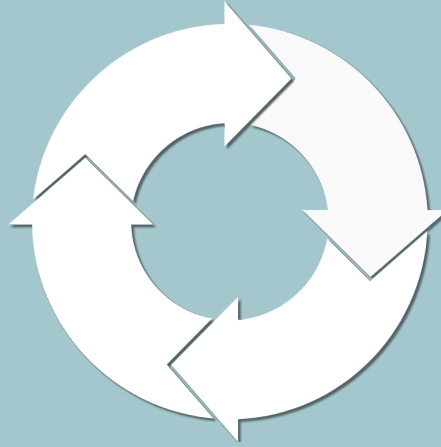
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[www.brynbamber.com](http://www.brynbamber.com)

# Completing the Stress Cycle

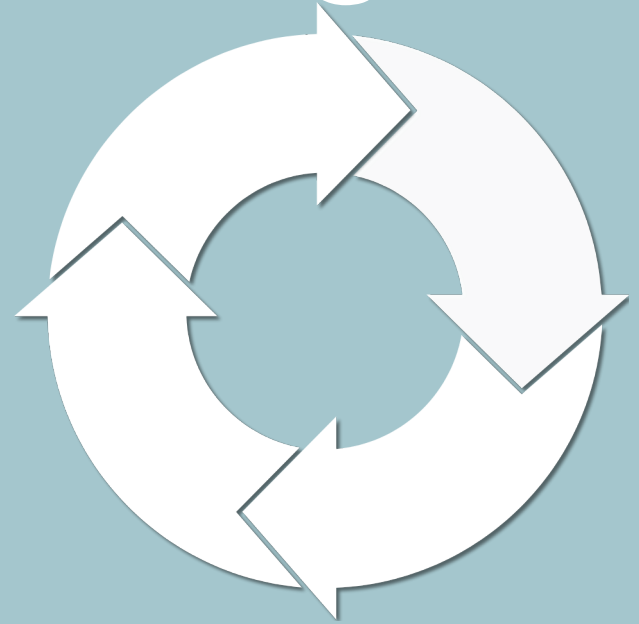


# The Stress Cycle



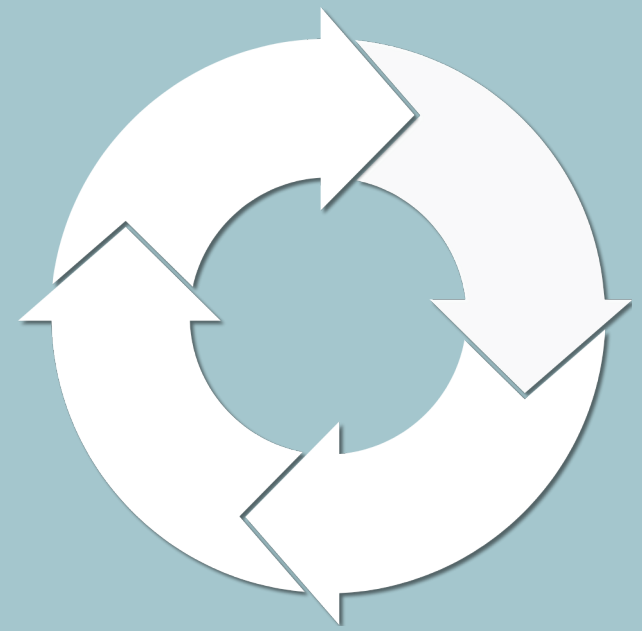
The stress cycle has a beginning a middle and an end, when you get stuck in the middle you have to help your body complete the cycle

# The Stress Cycle during Perimenopause



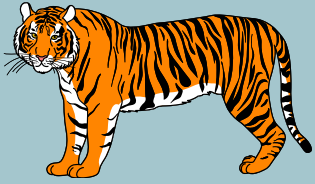
Some people call  
perimenopause second puberty  
because your hormones are more  
erratic during that time, that increases  
the time you're in the stress cycle

# Trauma and the Stress Cycle



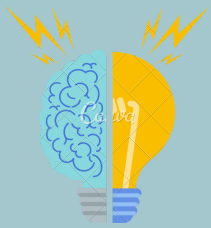
One of the primary symptoms of PTSD is that you go into the stress cycle more often than usual. So combine this with perimenopause, can make this more difficult than ever.

# The Stress Cycle



## External Trigger

- see a tiger
- negative comment
- email from client



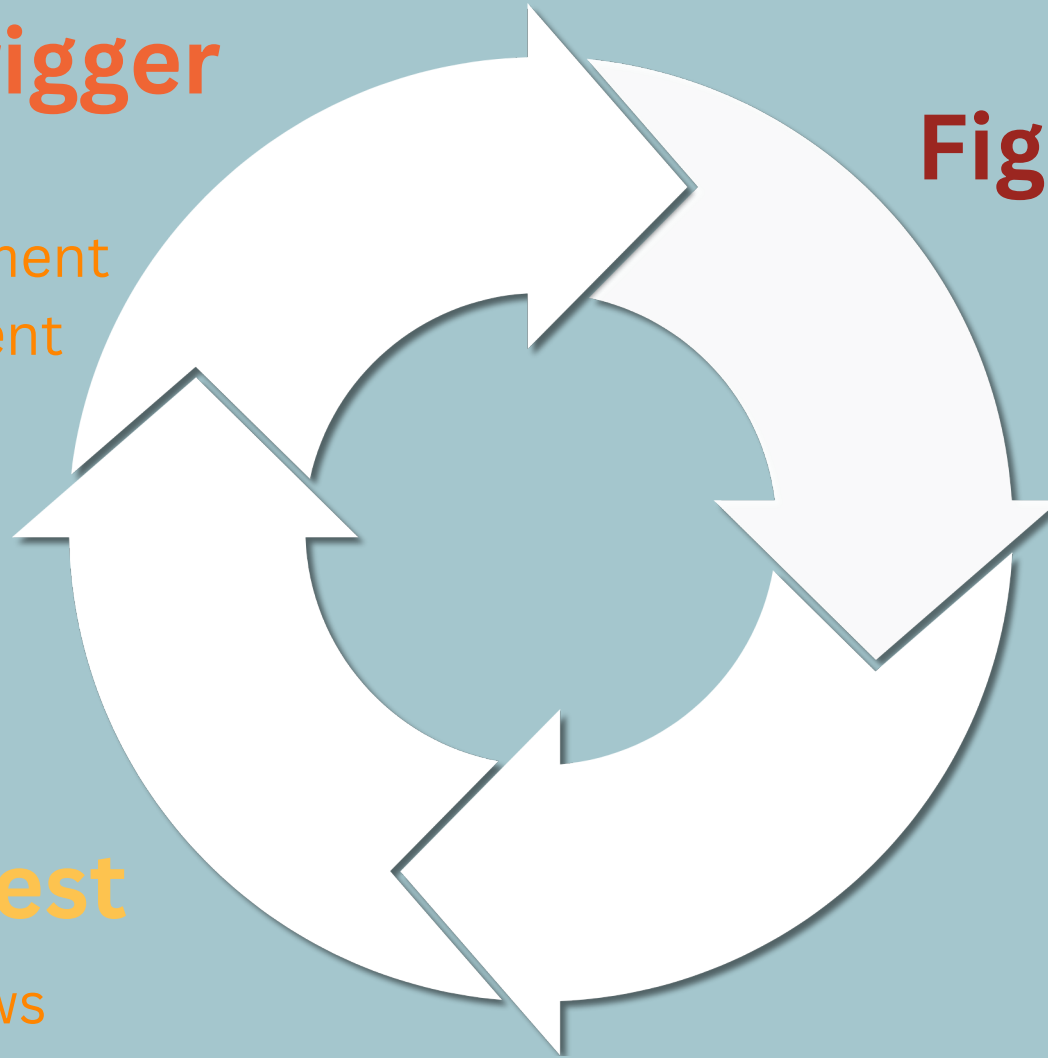
## Rest & Digest

- heart rate slows
- blood flows to digestive system, immune system & prefrontal cortex
- access to better decision making and creative problem solving



## Fight or Flight

- increased heart rate
- blood runs to arms & legs so you can run or fight



## **FIGHT/FLIGHT (Hyperarousal)**

Breathing is shallow, you feel stressed, overwhelmed, you can't calm down, everything seems very urgent. You might feel enraged or terrified.

## **WINDOW OF TOLERANCE**

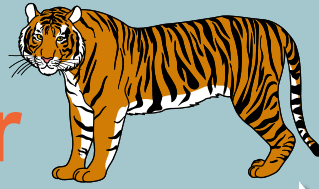
Breathing is deep, you feel safe, you make grounded decisions, your body can heal, digest, relax. You have access to playfulness and joy and also sadness, anger and fear but they don't overwhelm you.

## **FREEZE (Hypoarousal)**

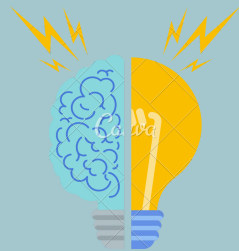
You might feel numb, spacy, depressed, lethargic, shame or hopelessness.

# Stress Cycle in the Workplace

## 1. Stress Trigger



- used to be triggered by a tiger
- but now employees are triggered by bad news about a project, criticism from a coworker or a text about their divorce



## 3. Brain Boost

- they complete the stress cycle and blood returns to digestive system & prefrontal cortex, the most evolved part of the brain
- employees access better decision making & creative problem solving

## 2. Fight or Flight



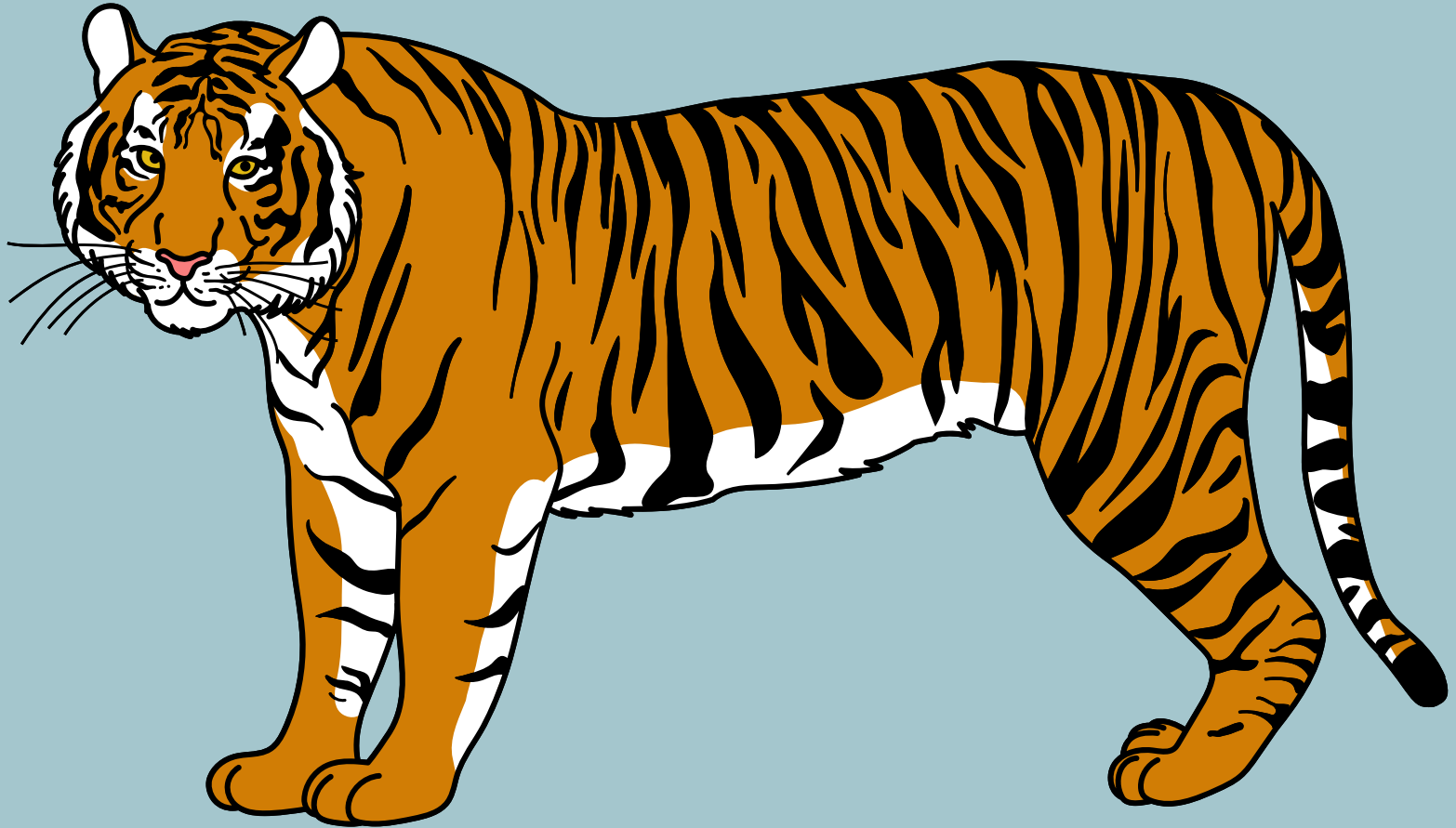
- blood runs from the brain's prefrontal cortex to arms & legs so they can run or fight
- employees have reduced access to the smartest part of the brain & are more likely to argue

# The Stress Cycle



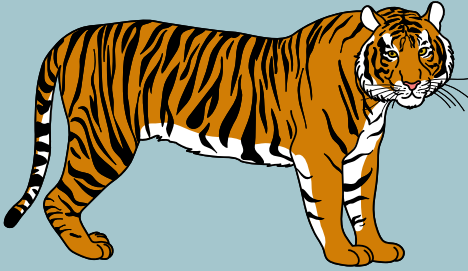
Blood runs away from your digestive system, your prefrontal cortex and towards your arms, legs, jaw so you can run and fight.

In the olden days...



You'd get chased by a tiger...

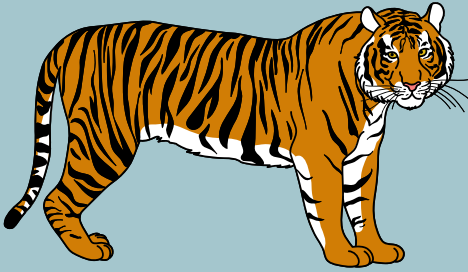
# In the olden days...



You'd run.

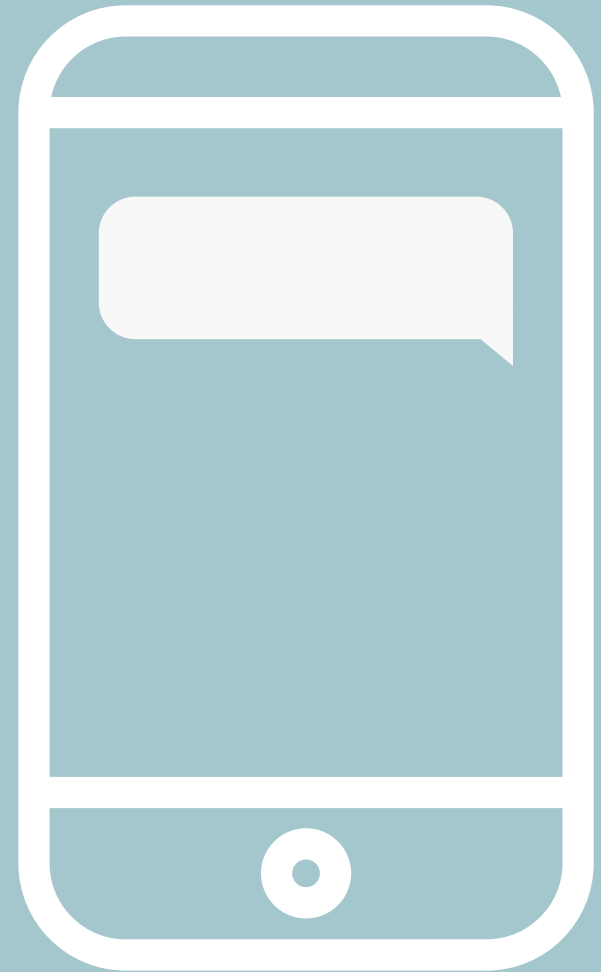
Hopefully your neighbour would let you  
into their house, and you'd hug them  
because they just saved your life

# In the olden days...



And you'd think you feel better because the tiger is gone, but you actually feel better because you ran and hugged.

**But today...**

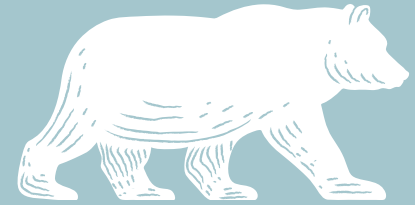


**Decision  
making when  
you're in the  
middle of a  
stress cycle**





**Safe**

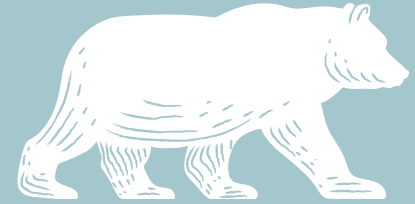


**Unsafe**





Safe

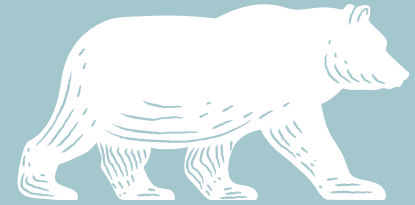


Unsafe

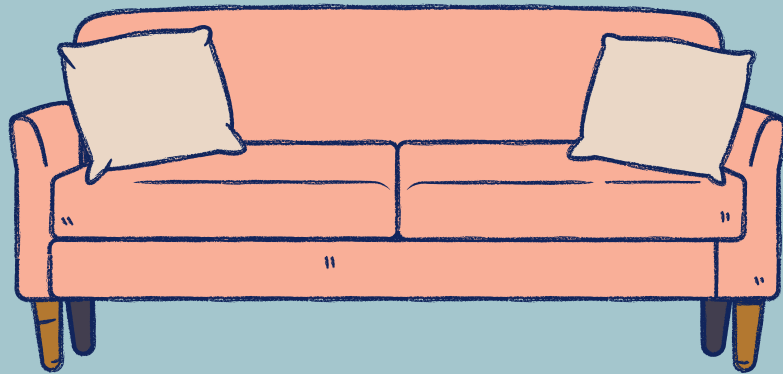




**Safe**



**Unsafe**



**Don't Go to Sister's  
Birthday Party**



**Go to Sister's  
Birthday Party**

It's harder to solve  
problems because  
everything feels like it's  
life and death...



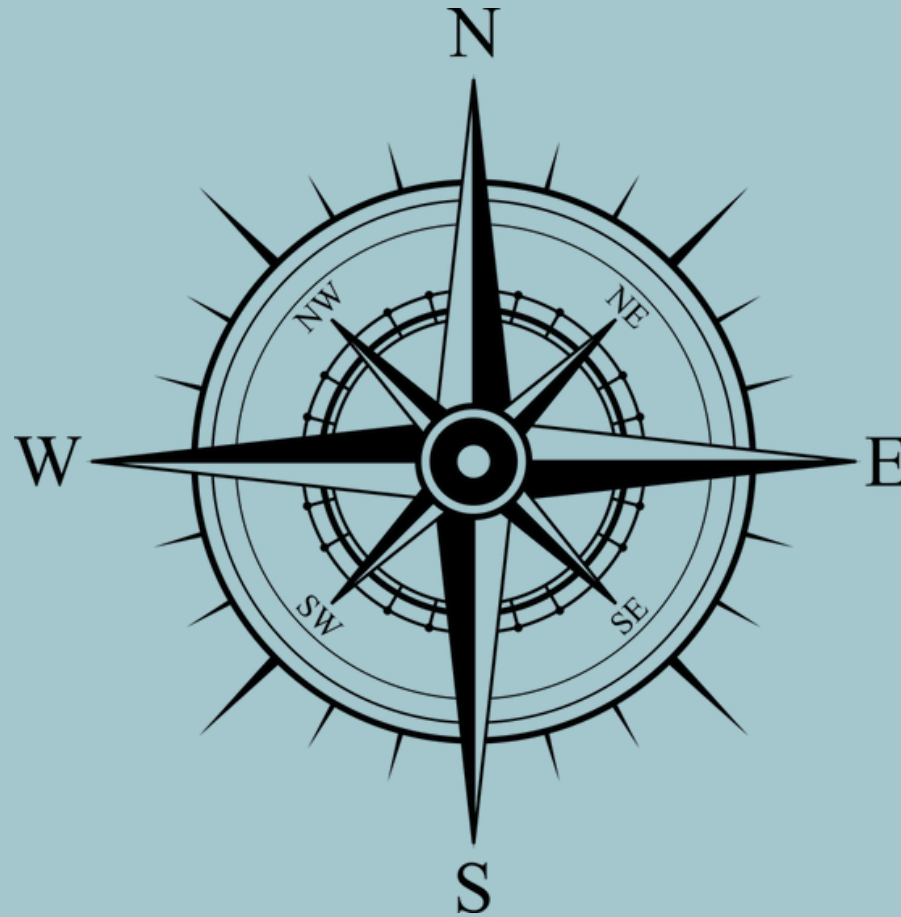


# How to Complete the Stress Cycle

# Signs You're in Fight or Flight

- shallow breathing
- anger or frustration
- anxiety
- tension in the body
- talking fast
- numbness in the body
- what else?

# Detective



What works best for YOU



Exercise - Going for a walk or run, plank, push ups, stomping, doing stairs.

Things that can help when you're in

## FIGHT/FLIGHT OR FREEZE

include:



Looking around and seeing if there's anyone you're attracted to.



Putting on a song you LOVE and dancing or breathing to it



Masturbation or sex with someone you trust can help (if you haven't experienced sexual trauma)



Yoga or breathing exercises



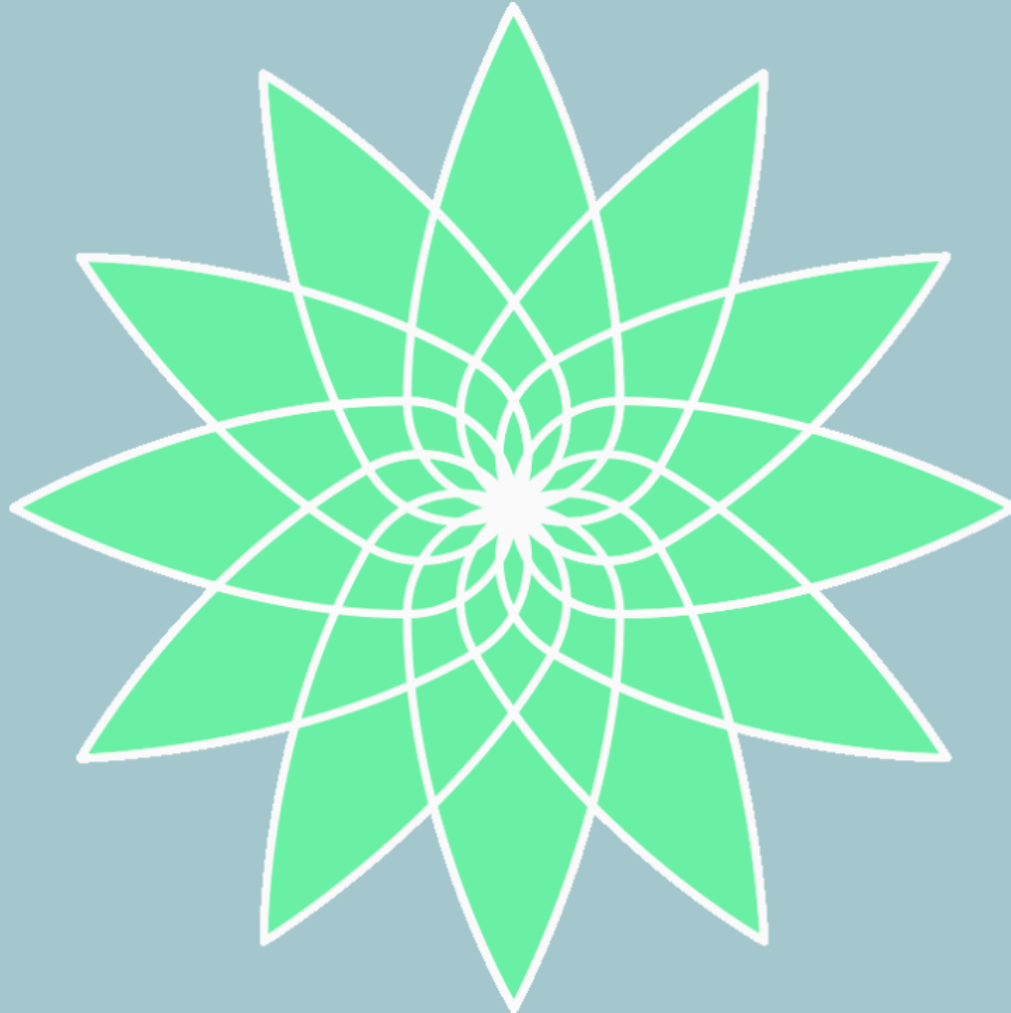
Going to the window or outside and looking at the sky



Talking to a good friend or therapist about what you're going through

# 4-4 BREATH

Inhale-2-3-4



Exhale-2-3-4

Inhale-2-3-4

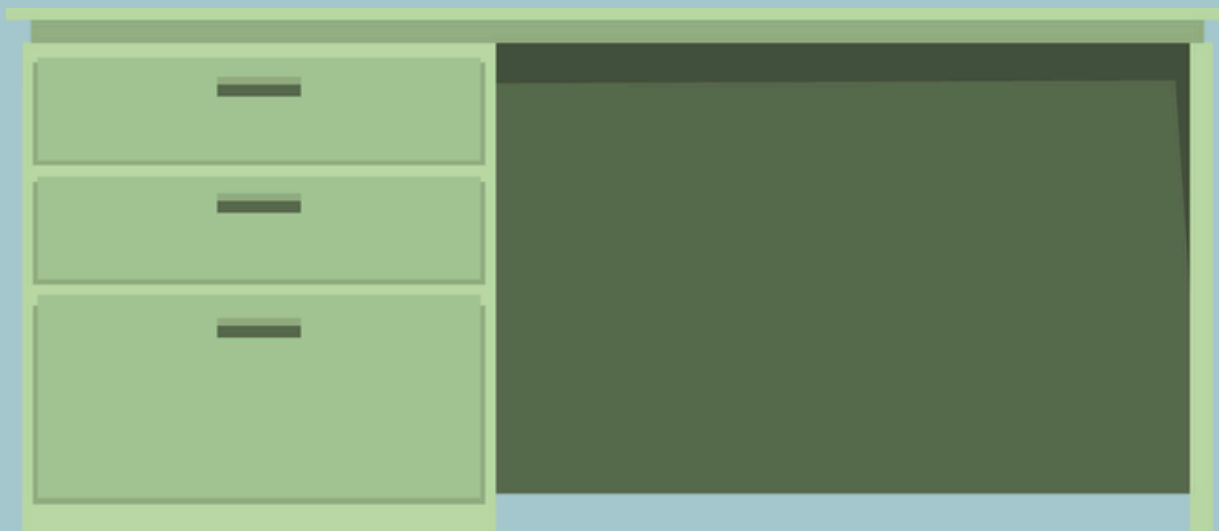
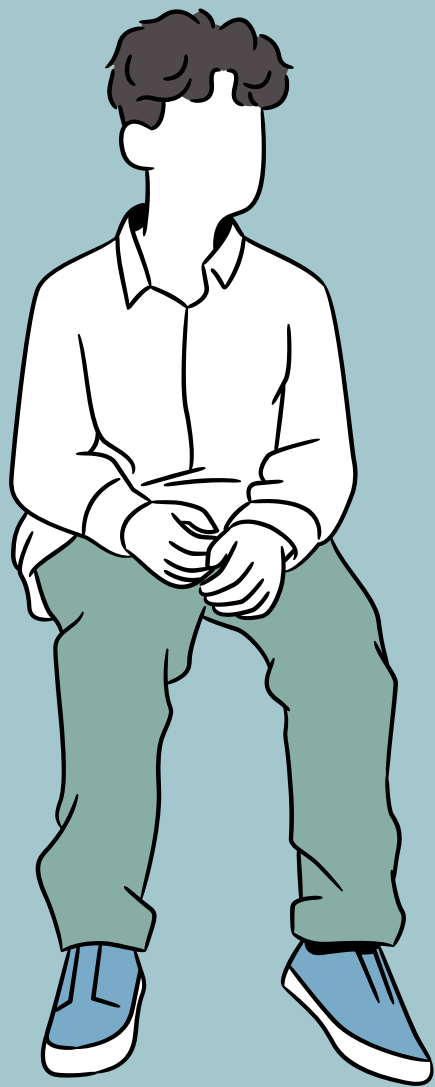
Hold-2-3-4

Hold-2-3-4

**BOX BREATH**

Exhale-2-3-4

# SQUEEZE THE DESK/TOWEL



**JUMP/SHAKE/DANCE**



**RUNNING/KICKING/WALL  
SIT/PLANK**



**5** things you can see

**4** things you can touch

**3** things you can hear

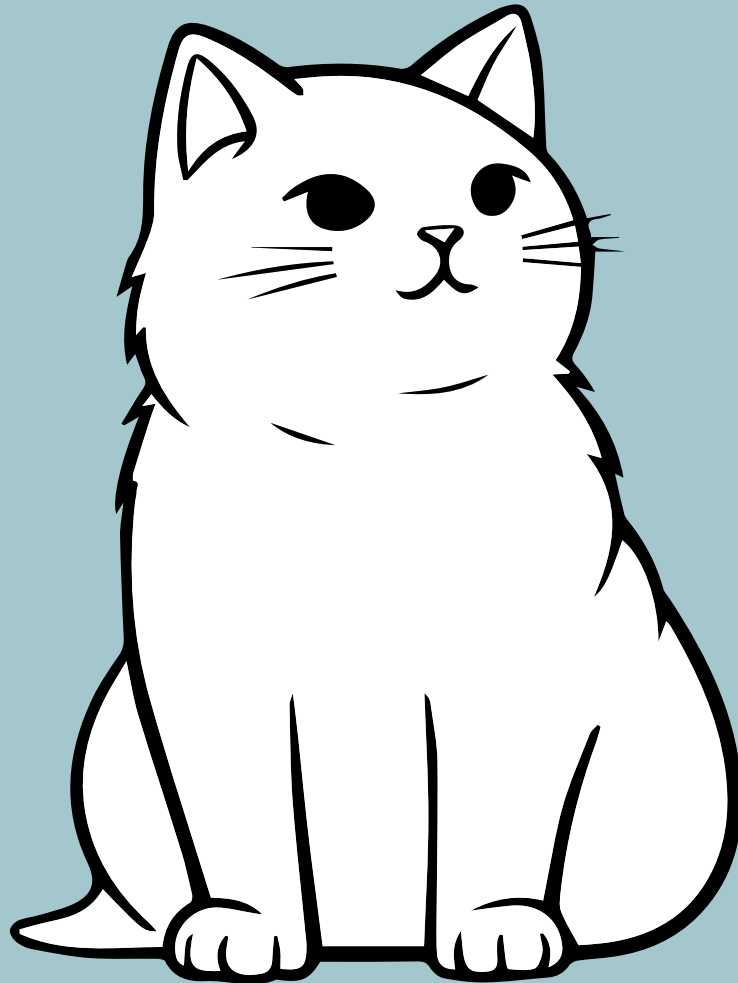
**2** things you can smell

**1** things you can taste

# Peripheral vision, looking at the sky



# Cat videos



# Hugs/Kisses





**Positive social interaction**

# THOUGHTS ABOUT STRESS

- Do you get annoyed by your anxiety?
- Do you dread it?
- Do you feel drained by it?
- Are you scared of your anger?
- Do you welcome it?
- Do you feel depressed by it?



**QUESTIONS?**

**What are you learning?**

**How can you apply this to  
your life?**

# Free Anxiety Training



[tinyurl.com/anxietytraining](https://tinyurl.com/anxietytraining)