

coping tools for racing thoughts at night

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Deep Breathing (4-7-8 Method)

Text

Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7 seconds, and exhale for 8 seconds. This method calms the nervous system and promotes relaxation.



Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

Tense and release each muscle group starting from the toes and working up to the head. This helps release physical tension and brings focus to the body.



Visualization (Peaceful Place)

Imagine a safe, peaceful place such as a beach or forest. Focus on sensory details like the sound of waves, the smell of trees, or the warmth of the sun.



Reframing Negative Thoughts

Mentally list or write down one thing you're grateful for or something you're looking forward to, even if it's a small moment.



Journaling

Write down thoughts or worries in a notebook to "leave them behind" before sleep. You can also use prompts like, "What went well today?" to focus on positives.



Scheduled "Worry Time"

Set aside 15 minutes earlier in the evening to write down worries or concerns. This practice helps "contain" these thoughts and leave them behind before bed.



Consistent Wind-Down Routine

Avoid screens an hour before bed. Engage in calming activities like reading or stretching, and use dim lighting to signal it's time to rest.



Audiobooks or Guided Meditations

Listen to a light, comforting story or a guided meditation. These help redirect focus and create a sense of calm.



Mindful Affirmations

Repeat calming phrases such as:

"I am safe."

"This feeling will pass."

"I can handle this."



Thought-Stopping

Visualize a stop sign when negative or racing thoughts arise. Then redirect your focus to a positive memory or calming thought.