



Christian Grounding Techniques for Anxiety and Fear

Introduction: Faith, Fear, and Finding Balance

Anxiety and fear are challenges that **many people – including Christians – face daily**. In fact, about *one in five* adults experiences an anxiety disorder in a given year ¹, and rates are even higher among teens and young adults. The Bible also recognizes our struggle with fear: it contains *366 verses of encouragement not to fear – one for each day of the year* ². Clearly, **God knows that we battle anxiety**, and He provides comfort and guidance throughout Scripture. Yet He also equips us with practical wisdom and tools to cope.

Grounding techniques are one set of practical tools for managing anxiety. These exercises help "refocus on the present moment" and create mental space away from anxious thoughts ³. Grounding strategies are commonly recommended by mental health experts as a way to *calm the nervous system* and interrupt spiraling worry ⁴ ⁵. As Christians, we can embrace these techniques without reservation – and even enrich them by **grounding ourselves in Christ**. This means pairing proven psychological methods with the reassurance of *biblical truth, prayer, and the presence of God*. In doing so, we address both the physical and spiritual aspects of anxiety, seeking God's peace (John 14:27) alongside practical relief.

In this article, we'll explore how anxiety affects us (body and soul), what grounding techniques are, and specific **Christian grounding techniques for anxiety and fear**. Each technique is reinforced with Scripture and research. You'll find that **faith and modern psychology need not conflict** – they can complement each other in helping us overcome anxiety. By the end, you'll have a toolkit of strategies – from *5-4-3-2-1 sensory grounding* to *prayer and breathing exercises* – to help you or your loved ones stay anchored in peace. Most importantly, you'll see that **seeking help (even through medicine or counseling) is not a lack of faith** but a wise use of God's provision. As Philippians 4:6-7 reminds us, when we present our anxieties to God *with thanksgiving*, "the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Let's begin by understanding anxiety from both a scientific and biblical perspective.

Understanding Anxiety: A Holistic View

Anxiety is more than just "worry." It involves **physical responses** (like a racing heart, tense muscles, rapid breathing) and **mental patterns** (racing thoughts, dread of the future). From a biological standpoint, anxiety activates the *fight-or-flight response* in our nervous system – releasing stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol that prepare the body to face danger. This can cause symptoms like sweating, trembling, shortness of breath, or an upset stomach. While this response is useful for true emergencies, in anxiety disorders it often kicks in unnecessarily or too intensely, causing significant distress. Chronic anxiety can even contribute to health issues like high blood pressure or insomnia if not managed ⁶ ⁷. The good news is that anxiety disorders are **highly treatable**. Most improve with therapy, medication, or a



combination of both ¹. *Dr. Daniel Pine*, a psychiatrist with the NIH, emphasizes that a range of treatments – from **talk therapy (like cognitive-behavioral therapy)** to **medications** – can relieve symptoms, and combining approaches often works best ¹.

It's important to understand that **experiencing anxiety does *not* make someone a "bad Christian" or indicate a lack of faith**. Many faithful believers in Scripture grappled with fear and anxiety. *Elijah* the prophet was so anxious and depressed after Jezebel's threats that he begged God to take his life – yet God gently cared for him and gave him hope (1 Kings 19:3-15). *Gideon* needed repeated reassurance from God to face his fears (Judges 6:36-40). *Martha* was "worried and upset about many things," earning Jesus' compassionate redirection (Luke 10:41-42). Even *the Apostle Paul* admitted to arriving in ministry "in weakness and fear, and with much trembling" (1 Corinthians 2:3). And in the Garden of Gethsemane, *Jesus Himself* experienced anguish so intense that His sweat was like drops of blood (Luke 22:44). **Clearly, God does not dismiss or condemn us for feeling anxious**. Instead, He consistently says *"Do not be afraid, for I am with you"* (Isaiah 41:10) and offers His presence as our source of courage.

"When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy." – Psalm 94:19 (NIV)

The Bible contains numerous commands to "fear not," often coupled with a reason why we need not fear: *God's character and His promises*. *"Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you,"* God says in Isaiah 41:10. *"Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you,"* the apostle Peter writes (1 Peter 5:7). These verses ground us in the truth that **we are not alone in our fears** – the Lord is intimately involved and cares about our well-being. As one Christian counselor put it, *"God is not distant from your struggles—He is right there with you, offering strength when you feel weak."* ⁸ ⁹.

At the same time, the Bible encourages us to take constructive action against anxiety. *"Seek peace and pursue it"* (Psalm 34:14) implies that we should actively **pursue strategies for peace**. We're urged to pray *instead of* worrying, to fill our minds with what is true and good (Philippians 4:8-9), and to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2) by seeking support in community. Nowhere does Scripture tell us to simply ignore anxiety or "just have more faith and it will magically disappear." In fact, the prevalence of those 366 "fear not" verses shows God *knows* we need regular encouragement and practical reminders.

Modern psychology and medicine offer additional practical tools, like therapy techniques and medications, which we can see as extensions of God's grace. For example, **Grounding techniques** have emerged as a highly recommended self-help skill for anxiety ¹⁰. These techniques align with biblical principles of renewing our mind (Romans 12:2) and taking thoughts captive (2 Corinthians 10:5) by actively shifting our focus. Before we dive into specific strategies combining faith and grounding, let's clarify what grounding techniques are and why they work.

What Are Grounding Techniques (and Why Do They Work)?

Grounding techniques are simple exercises that help *"draw a line between what is real and imagined"* when anxiety threatens to overwhelm ¹¹. In plainer terms, grounding means **bringing your attention back to the present reality** – often by engaging your five senses or by focusing on concrete details – so that anxious thoughts and feelings don't carry you away. Anxiety usually involves worrying about the *future* or dwelling on the *past*. Grounding pulls you into the *here and now*. As one health resource explains, *"Grounding techniques are exercises that may help you refocus on the present moment to distract yourself from*



anxious feelings." ³ They are commonly used to manage anxiety, panic attacks, post-traumatic stress, or dissociation ¹² .

Here's a simple example: If you're having a panic attack, you might **literally ground** yourself by pressing your feet into the floor, describing out loud what you see in the room around you, or holding an object and noting its texture. By doing so, you shift your mind's focus away from the scary thoughts ("I'm in danger, I'm losing control," etc.) and toward neutral, observable facts ("This carpet is soft and blue under my feet. I hear the sound of the air conditioner."). This helps interrupt the cycle of panic. **Psychologically, grounding works a lot like mindfulness**, teaching you to observe the present moment rather than being trapped in your worries ⁵ .

From a brain perspective, anxiety "lives" in the amygdala and emotional centers of the brain. When we engage in a grounding task – say, identifying five things we can see, four things we can touch, etc. – we activate the brain's sensory and frontal regions, which **diminishes activity in the fear centers**. As a Christian therapist notes, *"Fixating on sensory details shifts the neural activity away from the brain's emotion centers by engaging another cortex. This redirection interrupts panic responses and allows us to manage our thoughts effectively again."* ¹³ ¹⁴ In other words, grounding gives your brain a chance to *reset* from "panic mode" to a calmer state where rational thinking can resume.

Grounding techniques take many forms. Some are **physical grounding** (using the five senses or movement), others are **mental grounding** (distraction or cognitive tricks), and others are **soothing grounding** (calming yourself with comforting images or phrases) ¹⁵ ⁵ . For example:

- The **"5-4-3-2-1"** method is a classic grounding exercise that uses all five senses. You count down: find *5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell, and 1 thing you taste*. This forces your mind to concentrate on concrete sensory details, breaking the loop of anxious thoughts ¹⁶ ¹⁷ .
- **Deep breathing** exercises are a grounding technique that uses bodily sensation. Slow, controlled breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous system (the "rest and digest" response), which counteracts the adrenaline of anxiety. Inhaling deeply through the nose and exhaling slowly through the mouth can lower heart rate and even serve as a "natural muscle relaxant" by increasing oxygen flow ¹⁸ ¹⁹ .
- **Grounding objects** can be used – for instance, carrying a small cross or a smooth stone in your pocket. In moments of panic, holding or rubbing this object can physically remind you "I am here in the present, I am safe." Many find squeezing a stress ball or touching a familiar object helps center them ²⁰ ²¹ .
- **Orienting to your environment** is another simple approach: describe your surroundings in detail (either internally or aloud). *"I'm sitting in my office chair. The fabric is gray and slightly rough. The desk in front of me is wooden with a slight scratch on the left side..."* This kind of narration engages the logical part of your brain and tethers you to reality ²² ²³ .
- **Mental games** can ground you too – like reciting the alphabet backwards, doing a few math problems, or naming all the fruits you can think of that start with "A" then "B," and so on. These redirect your racing thoughts into a manageable task ²⁴ ²⁵ .

The beauty of grounding techniques is that *they can be done anywhere, anytime, at no cost*. You don't need special equipment or medication to use grounding strategies in the moment when anxiety flares up. However, grounding does take practice. Therapists advise practicing these skills *before* you are in a full-



blown panic, so that it will be easier to use them when you really need to ²⁶. Grounding also **does not solve deeper causes** of anxiety; rather, it helps you *get through the acute wave of fear*. Think of it like this: if anxious feelings are a storm, grounding is like a lightning rod that safely directs the surge into the ground, protecting you from the brunt of it. After the storm passes, you can then address the sky – the bigger picture of what caused the anxiety – perhaps through counseling, prayer, or problem-solving.

For Christians, grounding techniques can be embraced as part of “renewing our minds” (Romans 12:2) and *taking practical steps* to pursue the peace God promises. There is nothing unspiritual about using these methods. In fact, we’ll see that many grounding practices echo biblical wisdom (such as *meditating on what is true*, Philippians 4:8, or *stilling ourselves*, Psalm 46:10). Now, let’s delve into **specific grounding techniques integrated with Christian faith**, so you can manage anxiety in a way that engages **body, mind, and spirit**.

Practical Christian Grounding Techniques for Anxiety and Fear

In this section, we present a variety of grounding techniques with a Christian perspective. These practices incorporate Scripture, prayer, and spiritual truths so that *as you ground yourself in the present moment, you also ground yourself in God*. You can think of this as **“double grounding”**: calming your physical symptoms and thoughts, while also rooting your heart in the unchanging truths of your faith. Each technique is accompanied by real examples and biblical reinforcement. **Try different methods** to discover what works best for you; often a combination is most effective.

1. 5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding with Gratitude

Description: The 5-4-3-2-1 method is a widely used grounding exercise to quickly dial down panic. It involves observing **5 things you see, 4 things you can touch, 3 sounds you hear, 2 scents you smell, and 1 taste**. As a believer, you can enhance this practice by adding **gratitude or prayer at each step**. For example, as you name each item, quietly thank God for it or acknowledge it as part of His creation.

Example: If you are feeling anxious at home, pause and do the following: “*I see five things: a lamp (thank You Lord for light), a family photo (thank You for my family), my Bible on the table (thank You for Your Word), the blue curtains (blue like the sky You made), and my cat sleeping (thank You for this little life). I feel four things: the carpet under my feet (it’s soft), the cool glass of water in my hand, the fabric of the chair arms, the heartbeat in my chest (thank You for sustaining me). I hear three things: birds chirping outside, the hum of the fridge, my own breathing. I smell two things: the coffee in my mug, and a faint scent of laundry detergent on my shirt. I taste one thing: a mint in my mouth.*” By the time you work through these senses, your racing thoughts have been interrupted by concrete observations. **Mentally, you’ve shifted focus from fear to the present** – and even to *thanksgiving*. This is powerful: research shows that **gratitude can significantly reduce anxiety** by engaging brain regions that calm the amygdala (the fear center) ²⁷ ²⁸. The Bible anticipated this connection long ago by instructing us to combat anxiety “*with prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God*”, resulting in divine peace (Philippians 4:6-7). When you pair grounding with gratitude, you are essentially “*reaching for your brain’s remote to deactivate the false alarm*” of panic ²⁷. As one Christian author noted, focusing on the present through your senses can tether a “rogue” mind back to reality ²⁹ – and for Christians, reality includes the reassuring presence of God in that very moment.

Biblical Tie-in: “*Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.*” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Even in anxious moments, there are small things to thank Him for, which shifts our mindset from fear

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to appreciation. Additionally, *"This is the day the Lord has made"* (Psalm 118:24) – by noticing the details of *today* (what your senses perceive right now), you help your mind let go of future "what-ifs" and past regrets. **Ground yourself in *today*, which God has made and in which God is present.**

2. Deep Breathing and "Breath Prayers"

Description: When anxiety hits, one of the simplest but most effective tools is **deep breathing**. Anxiety often makes our breathing shallow or rapid, which in turn signals to our brain that something is wrong and keeps the panic cycle going. By intentionally **slowing your breath**, you trigger your body's relaxation response. Medical experts recommend breathing in through the nose (to filter and humidify the air) and out through the mouth, using your diaphragm (belly breathing) ¹⁸. A slow deep breath (around 4-5 seconds in, 4-5 seconds out) tells your nervous system to calm down. This can reduce the physical symptoms of anxiety – you might feel your heart rate steady and muscles loosen after a few minutes of focused breathing.

For Christians, **pairing breath with prayer or Scripture** can amplify the calming effect. A traditional practice known as "breath prayers" involves choosing a short phrase to pray in rhythm with your breathing. Often these are drawn from Scripture. For example, as you inhale you might pray in your mind *"When I am afraid..."* and as you exhale, *"...I will trust in You."* (from Psalm 56:3). Or inhale *"Lord Jesus Christ,"* exhale *"have mercy on me."* Some breathe in whispering *"Abba"* and breathe out *"I belong to You."* By synchronizing with your breath, these words not only distract you from anxious thoughts but also reinforce spiritual truth. You are *literally breathing in God's peace and breathing out your worries* in a symbolic way.

Example: Imagine you are anxious about an upcoming doctor appointment. You feel that familiar tightness in your chest and dizziness. You decide to step aside for five minutes to do a breathing prayer. You sit down, close your eyes, and slowly inhale through your nose. As you do, you think: *"Cast your cares on Him..."* Then you exhale slowly, thinking: *"...for He cares for you."* (1 Peter 5:7). You repeat this, letting the truth of 1 Peter 5:7 sink in with each breath. After a few cycles, you notice your heart isn't pounding as hard and the nausea has subsided. Physically, the extra oxygen and slower breaths are working – one Christian wellness article notes that **complete breaths increase oxygen and act as a natural relaxant, even improving issues like sleeplessness that often accompany anxiety** ³⁰. Spiritually, you're affirming your trust in God's care with each breath. It's a beautiful integration of body and spirit: *"The Lord is my breath and my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"* (adapted from Psalm 27:1, emphasizing that our life-breath is in His hands).

Another approach is to use breathing to meditate on a specific Scripture. For instance, breathe in on *"Be still, and know that I am God"*; breathe out on *"I will be exalted in the earth"* (from Psalm 46:10). This turns a generic grounding technique into a moment of worship and surrender, echoing the psalm's call to cease striving and recognize God's sovereignty.

Biblical Tie-in: God's Word itself references breath in calming ways: *"Be still and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10) – that "be still" can be taken quite literally as an instruction to pause and calm your body. In Hebrew, it can mean "cease striving." When anxiety makes your mind race, deliberately stilling your body through slow breathing can help you "cease striving" internally and acknowledge God's control. Furthermore, **God's Spirit is likened to breath** – the very word for Spirit (ruach/pneuma) means breath. As you breathe, remember that **the Holy Spirit is as near to you as your own breath**, ready to comfort and help. Jesus breathed on His disciples and said "Peace be with you" (John 20:21-22). So as you inhale and exhale, invite the Holy Spirit to fill you with the peace of Christ.



On a physiological note, **breath is a gift from God to regulate our bodies**. He designed our exhalation to stimulate the vagus nerve, which slows the heart and calms us. So using breathing techniques is essentially leveraging God's design to combat the effects of the Fall (like disordered anxiety). It's perfectly in line with trusting the Designer!

3. "Be Present" – Focusing on the Now (Mindfulness with a Christian Twist)

Description: Anxiety often pulls our minds into the *past* (rehashing old pains or mistakes) or the *future* (imagining worst-case scenarios). One antidote is to deliberately **focus on the present moment**. This overlaps with many grounding techniques already discussed, since grounding by definition brings you to "the now." However, cultivating a mindset of *presentness* can be a broader practice. In secular terms, this is known as mindfulness – paying nonjudgmental attention to what *is*, right now. For Christians, living in the present is closely tied to trusting God moment by moment. Jesus said, "*Do not worry about tomorrow... Each day has enough trouble of its own*" (Matthew 6:34). We have grace for *today*, and we meet God in the *present* (His name even, "**I AM**," speaks to His eternal present existence). Grounding ourselves in the now prevents our minds from catastrophizing about "what if...?" and helps us experience the peace God is offering right here and now.

Techniques to be present: You can do a quick **mental grounding** by narrating to yourself what you are doing *at this very moment*. For example: "*Right now, I am driving to work. I feel the steering wheel in my hands. I see the road in front of me and the sunrise on the horizon. I hear a worship song playing on the radio. I am okay in this moment.*" This internal narrative keeps your mind from running ahead into the meeting you're anxious about later or replaying an argument from yesterday. It's similar to the 5-4-3-2-1 exercise but can be simpler – it's about *fully engaging in whatever you are currently doing*. If intrusive thoughts about past/future come, you gently steer your attention back to now.

Another tactic is a **body scan**: bring awareness to each part of your body and how it feels *right now*, which anchors you in the present sensations (e.g., "My feet on the floor, my back against the chair..."). Therapists recommend body scans to ground oneself; one Christian counselor describes it as centering on "tangibles instead of fearful obsessions" ³¹. You can combine this with prayer by surrendering each part of you to God's care ("*Lord, I relax my tight shoulders – I know You carry my burdens*").

Example: Suppose you find yourself spiraling into "*what if*" thoughts about an uncertain job situation. Your mind is projecting months into the future: *What if I get laid off? How will I pay rent?* The anxiety swells. To ground yourself, you pause and say aloud: "*Right now, I am sitting at my kitchen table. It is Tuesday at 7 PM. I am eating dinner. At this moment, I have a roof over my head and food in front of me. God is providing for me today. I will focus on today.*" You then slowly chew your food, really noticing the flavors and texture (a mindfulness practice often called "*savoring*"). Whenever your brain tries to run back to the future, you gently say, "*I'm not there. I am here now, and God is here with me now.*" This is essentially applying Jesus' instruction from Matthew 6:34. It releases you from the imagined crises of tomorrow by intentionally staying in the present. Often, this will noticeably lower your anxiety because **anxiety feeds on future uncertainty**, and you are refusing to feed it.

For a biblical example, recall how *Jesus directed people's attention*: "*Look at the birds of the air... see how the flowers of the field grow...*" (Matthew 6:26-29). This was a form of grounding! He was literally asking anxious people to *observe nature in the present moment* as evidence of God's care. We can do likewise: step outside



and notice the bird on the branch or the clouds moving, reminding ourselves: *"God is caring for His creation right now, and He cares for me"* (Matthew 6:26).

Biblical Tie-in: Practicing presence resonates with *"Be still, and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10 again) and *"Give us this day our daily bread"* (Matthew 6:11). We learn to trust God one day – even one moment – at a time. When you catch your mind rushing ahead, you might repeat Lamentations 3:23, *"His mercies are new every morning,"* implying that today's mercies are for today's troubles, not tomorrow's. Trust that when tomorrow comes, **new grace will be there, but you don't have tomorrow's grace yet – you only have today's**. Grounding yourself in the present is an act of trust in God's provision and timing.

4. Scripture Affirmations – "Grounding" in God's Word

Description: One uniquely Christian approach to grounding is to **ground yourself in Scripture** – essentially using God's Word as the focus point to anchor your mind. This can be done by **reciting memorized Bible verses, biblical affirmations, or promises** when anxiety strikes. It's a spiritual counterpart to the "recite something" mental grounding technique (therapists often suggest reciting a poem or lyrics; we choose Scripture, which is *living and active*). The Bible is filled with *assurances of God's presence, love, and help*. By intentionally speaking or thinking those verses, you both distract your mind from anxious chatter and *counter the lies* that anxiety often tells (for example, the lie "I'm alone and everything will fall apart" is countered by Hebrews 13:5, *"Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."*).

This practice is sometimes called developing a **"truth list" or "go-to verses"** for anxious moments. *Hiding God's Word in your heart* (Psalm 119:11) prepares you to wield it in times of need. One author who struggles with panic attacks at night shared that she keeps a few Scriptures memorized specifically for when she wakes up in fear. *"I recite them until I fall asleep. The simple act of reciting something from memory forces my mind to stop what it's doing and do something else,"* she says ³² ³³. This is exactly how grounding works – it replaces panic with an ordered task – and with Scripture, that task also pours truth into your soul.

How to do it: Choose a short verse or phrase that calms you and **repeat it slowly**. It could be a direct Bible quote or a scriptural truth paraphrased as an affirmation. Examples of popular anxiety-calming verses include:

- *"The Lord is my shepherd; I lack nothing."* (Psalm 23:1) – a reminder that God is guiding and providing.
- *"When I am afraid, I put my trust in You."* (Psalm 56:3) – a straightforward declaration of trust.
- *"You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are fixed on You, because they trust in You."* (Isaiah 26:3) – a promise of peace as we refocus on God.
- *"Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you."* (Hebrews 13:5) – God's constant presence.
- *"Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."* (1 Peter 5:7).
- *"Do not be anxious about anything... but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God... will guard your hearts and your minds."* (Philippians 4:6-7). Even just the first phrase "Do not be anxious... but pray" might be enough to repeat as you then actively pray.

Write a few of these on note cards or in a note on your phone. When you feel panic rising, **speak the verse (or affirmation) out loud if possible**. Hearing it in your own voice can be even more grounding than thinking it. If you're in a situation where you can't speak aloud (say, a crowded train and you're having a silent panic attack), think it firmly or whisper it under your breath.



Example: Let's say you're lying in bed at 2 AM, wide-eyed with anxiety for no obvious reason (this is a common scenario for many – anxiety often peaks at night). Your thoughts are racing and you feel that familiar chest tightness. You decide to practice Scripture grounding. You turn on a small lamp (soft light can sometimes help orient you), sit up, and open to the Psalms. You start reading Psalm 91 quietly: *"Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge...'"* As you read, you also personalize it: *"He is my refuge and fortress, I trust You, God."* You notice as you focus on the words, the swirl of anxious "what ifs" begins to settle. You then switch to reciting from memory a verse you've prepared: *"I will both lie down and sleep in peace, for You alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety."* (Psalm 4:8) ³⁴. You say this slowly, three or four times. The truth of it combats the vague fears in your mind – it reminds you *God is watching over you, so you can sleep*. In a short while, your eyelids grow heavy, and you drift off, essentially **"grounded" in the peace of God's promise**.

Biblical Tie-in: Jesus modeled using Scripture in times of trial (He quoted Scripture during His temptation in the wilderness to stand against lies and fear). Likewise, *Psalm 119:52* says, *"I recall Your promises to me, and it comforts me."* The Psalms in particular can vocalize our anxious feelings and lead us back to trust. Another angle: Ephesians 6 describes God's Word as the "sword of the Spirit" – an active weapon. Speaking Scripture in anxiety is wielding that sword to cut through mental darkness. It's both defensive and offensive: it defends your mind from panic and offensively asserts truth into the situation. **On a neurological level**, reciting a verse occupies the language center of your brain and working memory, essentially *distracting you from anxious thoughts*. Many believers find that combining **scripture recitation with deep breathing** (Technique #2) is especially powerful – you breathe in God's Word and breathe out your fear.

5. Prayer of Surrender (Acceptance and Hope)

Description: This technique addresses the *content* of your anxious thoughts through prayer. Often, when we're anxious, our prayers (if we manage to pray) might look like: *"God, please take this anxiety away! Remove the problem! Don't let my fears happen!"* That's a natural response – even Jesus asked for the cup of suffering to pass from Him (Luke 22:42). However, if we stay in a loop of begging for the feeling to go away, we can unintentionally **feed the anxiety**. How so? Psychologically, constantly fighting or avoiding anxious feelings sends your brain the message that the anxiety itself is a terrible threat, which can make it spike further ³⁵ ³⁶. Spiritually, if we never move beyond "take it away" to a posture of trust, we may miss the deeper peace God offers.

A more effective approach – both spiritually and therapeutically – is a **prayer of surrender and acceptance**, coupled with hope. This has three steps, modeled by Jesus in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39) and echoed by Paul regarding his "thorn" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10), and interestingly parallel to modern Acceptance and Commitment Therapy techniques ³⁷ ³⁸:

1. **Petition:** First, honestly ask God for what you desire – e.g., relief from the anxiety or resolution of the problem causing fear. (Jesus prayed *"Take this cup from me"*; Paul prayed three times for the thorn to be removed. We too start by pouring out our heart and presenting requests, as Philippians 4:6 says.)
2. **Acceptance:** Next, *yield* the outcome to God's will. If the anxious feeling or situation isn't immediately fixed, pray for the strength to accept that *"not my will, but Yours be done"* (Luke 22:42). Acknowledge that, for now, this anxiety or trial is something God is allowing – and **you will still trust Him through it**. This is not resignation or saying you enjoy it; it's recognizing, *"Even if I must walk*



through this, God is with me and will sustain me." Tell God you accept His answer, even if it's "not yet" to removing the anxiety.

3. **Hope and Gratitude:** Finally, affirm your trust that God will bring good out of this and thank Him in advance for it. Jesus, after surrendering, went forward to face the cross *for the joy set before Him* (Hebrews 12:2). Paul, after accepting his thorn, said, *"I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me... For when I am weak, then I am strong."* (2 Cor 12:9-10). In our context, this means *intentionally refocusing on hope*: for example, praying **"Lord, I thank You that You will use this experience for my growth, and I anticipate seeing Your faithfulness through it."** This step often involves **gratitude**, which, as mentioned, has anxiety-reducing power both spiritually and neurologically.

Example: You're experiencing intense anxiety about your health – say you have some tests coming up and are terrified of the results. The anxiety is manifesting as an upset stomach and constant worry. A grounding approach here is to do a *surrender prayer session*. You find a quiet space and pray aloud: *"God, You know how afraid I am about these tests. I humbly ask, please let them come back with good news. Please heal me of any issue and take away this anxiety."* (Petition). You take a few deep breaths, then continue, *"But Father, even if the news isn't what I want, I trust that You will carry me. If I must go through illness, I trust Your grace will be sufficient. I accept whatever outcome You allow, and I know You will help me deal with it."* (Acceptance). You might even explicitly say, *"I accept this uncertainty right now – I hand it to You. I will not fight the fact that I feel anxious, but I invite You into it."* As you say this, you imagine placing the whole matter into God's hands. Then you move to hope: *"Lord, I thank You for how You have been with me so far and how You will not leave me. I know You can use even bad news for good. I praise You for the strength and peace You are going to give me, and I thank You that no matter what, my future is secure in You."* (Hope/Gratitude). After praying this, you find that the tight knot of resistance inside starts loosening. You've essentially told your brain, *"It's okay, we can handle whatever comes, because God will help us,"* which reduces the panic signals.

This prayer aligns with professional advice as well. Anxiety experts note that **acceptance can reduce anxiety**, because you stop adding the extra layer of "fear of fear" ³⁸. And gratitude activates brain regions that calm down the stress response ²⁷. From a faith standpoint, this prayer is powerful because it mirrors *Jesus' path to peace*: He moved from "let this pass" to "Thy will be done" to "rise up, the hour has come" (ready to face it with resolve). It also reflects *1 Peter 5:6-7*: *"Humble yourselves under God's mighty hand (accept His will), casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."* Notice, we cast our cares because we trust His care – that's surrender.

Biblical Tie-in: *"Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you."* (Psalm 55:22). Surrendering anxiety to God is not a one-time event, but a continual process. Each time anxiety surges, we cast it back onto Him. Jesus said, *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened... Take my yoke upon you... and you will find rest for your souls"* (Matthew 11:28-29). A yoke implies yielding control – letting Him lead. By accepting and trusting, you're essentially taking on Jesus' yoke, which gives rest.

It's worth noting a nuance: **Surrendering does not mean liking the situation or never asking for change.** It means after you've asked, you also release. As one writer pointed out, if we *only* pray "God take it away!" on repeat, but never reach a place of "Even if not, I trust You," we might stay stuck in a loop of fear ³⁵ ³⁶. The *alternate model* Scripture gives – seen in Christ at Gethsemane and Paul's thorn – is pray fervently *and* yield. This yields an incredible promise: *"the peace of God"* stands guard over us (Phil 4:7), and God's *"power is made perfect in weakness"* (2 Cor 12:9).



6. Release Tension: Clench, Release, and Move

Description: Anxiety often shows up in the body as muscle tension – clenched jaws, tight shoulders, fists balled up, etc. A grounding technique to address this is **progressive muscle relaxation** or, in simpler form, the **clench-and-release exercise**. The idea is to *physically express and then release* the tension your body is holding. One easy version is: **clench your fists (or toes) tightly for 5 seconds, then slowly release them**. You can do this with various muscle groups: shoulders (shrug up, then release), face (squeeze eyes shut, then release), etc. This not only provides a distracting physical action, it also sends a signal to your muscles and nerves that it's okay to relax.

Christians can combine this with a symbolic element: as you release the muscle, imagine you are **releasing your anxieties to God**. “*Cast your cares on the Lord*” can be enacted by literally casting off that tight clench. In fact, one Christian counselor suggests: “*Manifest your emotional state physically – for example, squeeze your fists or toes... hold, then release the tension while reciting a message of assurance.*” ³⁹ ⁴⁰ Using a calming phrase or verse as you release can reinforce the effect (we’ve touched on reciting truth already).

Additionally, **movement** is grounding. Doing some quick exercises or stretches can snap you out of spiraling thoughts by focusing you on your body. Even something as simple as walking around your room, doing a few jumping jacks, or stretching your arms overhead can help discharge anxious energy. Exercise releases endorphins and can reduce stress hormones, so it’s both grounding in the moment and beneficial overall.

Example: Let’s say you just received a stressful email and you feel panic building – your neck and shoulders are like a coiled spring. Rather than sitting frozen in dread, you decide to actively intervene. You stand up and deliberately **tense all the muscles in your body** for a few seconds (making fists, tightening legs, core, face). Then you **exhale and go limp**, letting your arms dangle. You might repeat a Scripture as you do this: “*But the Lord is my refuge*” (Psalm 94:22) – clench on “Lord,” release on “refuge.” After doing this twice, you feel some of the adrenaline dissipating. Next, you do 5 slow neck rolls and stretch your shoulders, breathing deeply. In a couple of minutes, your physical state shifts: your heart rate slows, and some of the shaky feeling subsides. Now you are more grounded to deal with the email rationally. Essentially, you *completed the stress cycle* that anxiety activated by giving your body a chance to respond and relax.

From a spiritual lens, this can be an act of *casting burdens*: “*When I tightened up, I was carrying it alone. When I released, I handed it to God.*” It can also be paired with **prayerful movement** – for instance, take a short walk and with each step imagine stepping away from fear and toward God’s peace. Some people find it helpful to literally shake their hands or body and envision “*shaking off*” fear (much like the biblical metaphor of shaking dust off your feet and moving on).

Biblical Tie-in: The Bible recognizes the link between our *physical posture* and our emotional/spiritual state. Think of how **many psalms involve physical acts**: lying down in peace (Psalm 4:8), lifting hands in prayer (Psalm 63:4), kneeling, dancing (Psalm 30:11) – these all involve the body in worship and release. Proverbs 17:22 says “*A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*” Sometimes to get from “crushed” to “cheerful,” we might reverse-engineer it by treating the body – loosening the physical “dry bones” of tension. There’s even a proverb that “*anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up*” (Proverbs 12:25). If we broaden that, any kind intervention (including kind physical release) can lift the weight.



Moreover, **our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit** (1 Corinthians 6:19). Taking care of your body by releasing tension and stress is a way of stewarding that temple. In 3 John 1:2, the writer prays *“that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.”* This shows that physical well-being and soul-well-being are connected. When you practice muscle relaxation and healthy movement, you’re caring for the vessel in which your soul resides, which in turn can help your soul feel more “well.” If anxiety is tensing you up, using the **clench and release** method is a practical fulfillment of *“be still”* – literally, making your muscles still after tension.

7. Use a Tangible Comfort Object (Symbol of God’s Presence)

Description: As mentioned earlier, holding a *grounding object* can be very helpful. Many people naturally do this: a child hugs a teddy bear when scared, or an adult might fiddle with a familiar ring or keepsake in their pocket. The tactile sensation gives a sense of stability. For Christians, an object with spiritual significance can serve a dual purpose: calming through touch and reminding of God’s truth. **Common choices** include a small cross or crucifix, a holding cross (smooth wooden cross designed to fit in the palm), a stone with a word of promise etched on it (like “Peace” or “Be Still”), or even a smooth coin or token that has personal meaning (some carry coins engraved with Philippians 4:6-7, etc.).

The act of **squeezing or touching** this object when anxious can anchor you. It’s almost like a sacramental action – using a physical item as a tangible sign of God’s invisible grace and presence. This is not superstition; the object isn’t magic. Rather, *your intentional use of it* directs your mind toward the comfort it represents. A cross, for example, reminds you *“Jesus is with me; He died for me; I am safe in His love.”* A stone might remind you that *God is your rock* (Psalm 18:2).

Example: One young woman who struggled with panic attacks kept a small wooden cross in her purse. When she felt panic rising at work or in public, she would reach into her bag and wrap her fingers around that cross. It served as a discreet way to **ground herself**. She would press it into her palm and think of Christ’s presence. Sometimes she’d silently pray, *“Lord, hold me as I hold this cross.”* The texture of the wood, the shape of it, gave her something *real* to focus on instead of the vague terror. It often prevented a full-blown panic attack by *“anchoring”* her – both psychologically (physical sensation) and spiritually (faith reminder). In her words, *“Carrying that cross reminds me that I’m never alone in my anxiety. It’s like carrying a piece of God’s promise with me.”*

Not everyone prefers a religious symbol; some might use a soft object like a stress ball or a fidget gadget. That’s fine too – whatever grounds you. But if you do choose an object like a cross or a special stone, you infuse it with prayer and meaning. **Every time you use it, you reinforce the mental association:** *“This means comfort, this means God’s got me.”*

There’s a biblical precedent for physical reminders: the Israelites carried the Ark of the Covenant as a tangible sign of God’s presence, and they set up memorial stones to remember God’s help (1 Samuel 7:12, “Ebenezer” stone). In a personal way, your grounding object is like a mini “Ebenezer” – *“Thus far the Lord has helped me.”*

Biblical Tie-in: *“The LORD is my rock, my fortress... in whom I take refuge.”* (Psalm 18:2). Holding a rock or solid object can call this verse to mind. Similarly, *“Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me”* (Psalm 23:4) – a shepherd’s staff is something tangible that gave sheep comfort because it guided and protected. You might see your object as akin to the Good Shepherd’s staff, reminding you of His guidance. If a cross is your



object: *"May I never forget Jesus Christ and Him crucified"* (1 Cor 2:2) – the cross in hand preaches to you that *you are so loved and valued, Jesus went to the cross; He won't abandon you now.*

In Mark 5:27-34, a woman merely touched the hem of Jesus' garment and was healed – Jesus noted it was her faith that healed her, but the *touch* was the point of contact. While we can't touch Jesus' robe today, we might hold a cross or other token as our *point of contact* for faith. It can help channel our faith toward Him in a moment of panic.

From a neurological perspective, having a routine like squeezing a specific object when anxious can actually become a **conditioned safety signal** for your brain. Much like a child feels instantly calmer with their security blanket, your brain learns "when I hold this, I cope." Over time, the very act of reaching for it might start lowering your heart rate due to that learned association. So, it's a simple yet powerful tool.

8. Worship and Music Therapy

Description: One of the most beautiful ways to re-ground ourselves as Christians is through **worship** – especially music. Worship moves our focus from our fear to God's greatness. It is essentially an act of refocusing, which is exactly what grounding is about. When anxiety claws at your mind, putting on a worship song or singing a hymn can shift the atmosphere of your heart. *"Worship is another way to shift your focus from fear to faith,"* notes one Christian counselor ⁴¹. Music also has well-documented effects on the brain: calming the amygdala, releasing dopamine, and lowering stress hormones. *Laughter and music* are both cited as natural remedies for stress and anxiety ⁴² ⁴³. In fact, an article in *Current Research in Physiology* (2021) highlighted how laughter can suppress stress hormones and boost mood hormones ⁴² – similarly, uplifting music can reduce anxiety by altering our neurochemistry in a positive way.

For grounding purposes, you might keep a **playlist of calming Christian songs** ready for anxious times. These could be gentle worship songs, hymns, or instrumentals that soothe you and remind you of truth. The act of listening intently to the melody, or singing along, engages your senses and mind in the present (the sound, the lyrics) and also declares spiritual truths. Many worship songs are essentially sung prayers or scripture. They remind us of God's power and love, which can dramatically shrink our fears down to size.

Example: Picture a man who suddenly feels overwhelmed by anxiety in the evening – racing thoughts, tight chest for no identifiable reason. He recognizes the signs of an oncoming panic attack. So he goes to his living room, sits down, and plays **"It Is Well with My Soul"** or a contemporary song like **"Peace, Be Still"** by Hope Darst or **"Good Good Father"** by Chris Tomlin (whatever speaks to him). As the music plays, he closes his eyes and takes deep breaths, letting the music wash over him. He begins to sing softly: *"When peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll..."* The very act of vocalizing forces him to breathe steadily (singing naturally regulates breath) and to concentrate on the lyrics. Those lyrics reaffirm trust: *"It is well, it is well with my soul."* As he sings, he notices tears of release coming – which is a good thing, a release of emotion. After a few songs, the tightness in his chest is gone. The anxiety has considerably subsided, replaced by a gentle feeling of God's presence. In this scenario, **worship became the grounding technique**. It redirected his spiraling thoughts onto God's character and promises. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, *"Put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness"* (Isaiah 61:3) – praising God can lift that heavy anxious spirit.

Even if you're not able to sing aloud (say you're at work or somewhere public), listening through earbuds to a favorite worship song and really *paying attention* to the instruments or harmonies can ground you. Hum

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along under your breath, or meditate on the words. Some find that **instrumental worship music or ambient hymns** are great for background calming (for instance, playing softly in your room at night to prevent anxious thoughts from dominating).

Biblical Tie-in: There's a powerful story in 1 Samuel 16: whenever King Saul was tormented by an evil spirit (we might say this included anxiety or distress), the young David would play the harp for him, and *"Saul would be relieved and feel better, and the evil spirit would depart from him."* This illustrates the calming, even deliverance-producing effect of music played unto the Lord. **Praise as spiritual warfare:** sometimes fear and oppression have a spiritual component, and worship is a way to resist that. Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20 famously sent worshipers ahead of his army and God miraculously routed the enemy; while our "enemy" might be internal anxiety, the principle of *praise preceding victory* holds true.

Moreover, singing is a biblical prescription for joy and courage: *"Sing to the Lord, for He has done glorious things"* (Isaiah 12:5). It's hard for the brain to hold extreme fear and the act of sincere singing together; one tends to displace the other. Ephesians 5:19 encourages speaking to ourselves in "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." That can be understood as using sacred music to edify our own souls. So next time anxiety grips you, try *literally* singing a psalm or hymn to yourself – you may find it chases away the dark cloud more effectively than anything else.

From a clinical viewpoint, **music therapy** is recognized for reducing anxiety levels in patients, even pre-surgery or in hospital settings. If it can work there, how much more when combined with *faith-filled* music? Some even dance or lift their hands in worship as a physical expression; this can combine movement (as in technique #6) with praise. Do what feels worshipful and calming to you – it could be kneeling in silence as a worship song plays, or it could be dancing in your living room like King David "with all his might" (2 Samuel 6:14) to shake off the stress. Worship naturally recenters us on God's power: *"I sought the Lord, and He answered me; He delivered me from all my fears."* (Psalm 34:4). Many times, we "seek" Him through songs and prayers of worship.

9. Leverage Humor and Laughter

Description: This might seem surprising in a serious topic, but **laughter is a biblical and scientifically supported antidote to anxiety!** *"A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones"* (Proverbs 17:22). Seeking out something that genuinely makes you laugh can quickly change your brain chemistry and break an anxiety attack. Laughter triggers the release of endorphins (feel-good neurotransmitters) and lowers cortisol (the stress hormone). A 2021 physiology study on "laughter therapy" found that humor literally acts as a *"hormonal intervention"* to reduce stress and anxiety, suppressing stress hormones while boosting mood-enhancing ones ^{42 44}. In practice, this could mean watching a clean comedy clip, reading a funny anecdote, or calling a friend who always makes you laugh.

From a grounding perspective, laughter forces you into the present joy. It's hard to be consumed by anxious terror while laughing at something silly – the brain almost can't do both at once. Of course, this isn't always immediately possible in severe anxiety moments, but even cracking a smile or recalling a humorous memory can start to lighten the intensity. **Intentionally keep some "go-to" funny material** that you know reliably amuses you (perhaps funny pet videos, or a comedy podcast that aligns with your values). This isn't about escapism; it's about giving your mind a needed recess. Often, after a short break of laughter, you return to your problems with a clearer, calmer mindset.



Example: Suppose you're in the midst of a stressful day, feeling anxiety gnaw at you. You've tried a few grounding techniques already, but you still feel on edge. You decide to give yourself a 10-minute laughter break. You pull up a favorite comedic skit on YouTube (one that isn't crude or triggering – something lighthearted). As you watch, you chuckle, then genuinely laugh at a joke. That physical act of laughing causes you to take deeper breaths (bringing in oxygen) and releases tension. By the end of the 10 minutes, you notice you're feeling noticeably lighter. The problems haven't vanished, but your nervous system got a chance to reset. One Christian woman noted that after doing this, she also felt *less guilty* about her anxieties – sometimes we get so tense we forget joy is allowed. Laughter reminded her that **God created joy and humor** too.

You can also combine this with fellowship: call or visit someone who lifts your spirits. As the saying goes, *"laughter is the shortest distance between two people"*. Maybe have a list of friends who are good at helping you "snap out" of anxious spirals by a healthy dose of humor and perspective. Often they might gently make you laugh at the absurdity of some worry (not in a mean way, but helping you see the lighter side). *"We were filled with laughter, and we sang for joy. And the other nations said, 'What amazing things the LORD has done for them.'"* (Psalm 126:2 NLT). Sometimes, laughing in hard times can itself be a testimony of God's sustaining grace, confusing the enemy who expects us to be drowning in despair.

Biblical Tie-in: Joy and laughter are gifts from God. Job 8:21 says of God, *"He will yet fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy."* While anxiety is no laughing matter, laughter can indeed be a holy rebellion against the darkness – an expression of trust that God has the victory, so all is not lost. Remember, *"the joy of the LORD is your strength"* (Nehemiah 8:10). Sometimes finding something to laugh about in the day is a way of reclaiming that joy and thereby regaining strength.

Of course, discernment is needed – avoid crude or harmful humor, as that can actually leave you feeling worse or guilty. Instead, think of *Philippians 4:8* and choose entertainment that is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable – yes, funny can be in those categories! Clean comedians, funny church bloopers, adorable children or pets – whatever uplifts. Even *Sarah* in the Bible, after her long anxiety about infertility, named her miracle son Isaac, meaning "laughter," saying "God has brought me laughter" (Genesis 21:6). Laughter was a sign of God's fulfilled promise. Similarly, allow yourself times to laugh as a sign of faith that *God will ultimately give you joy beyond these fears*.

Scientifically, as noted, **laughter literally reduces anxiety hormones** ⁴³. So when you laugh, you're not just "distracting yourself," you are actively changing your body's chemistry in a way that combats anxiety. It's like a God-designed pressure release valve for the soul. Don't be afraid to use it, even if at first you don't feel like laughing – sometimes *"fake it till you make it"* works here: even forced chuckles can lead to real ones and still help.

10. Seek Community Support and Professional Help

Description: Grounding techniques are excellent self-help tools, but **we are not meant to fight anxiety alone**. God created us for community and also gave wisdom to professionals (doctors, therapists) to aid in our healing. When anxiety and fear become overwhelming or chronic, **reaching out for help is a crucial step**. This might mean confiding in a trusted friend or family member, talking to a pastor or mentor, joining a support or prayer group, or consulting a Christian counselor or mental health professional. Sometimes just *talking* through your anxieties with someone compassionate can be extremely grounding – the other



person can provide reality checks (*"I hear you worrying that you're a failure, but can I remind you of some successes you've had?"*), reassurance, and prayer.

Importantly, **seeking professional therapy or considering medication** is not a sign of weak faith. It's an act of wisdom and courage. A licensed therapist can teach you more advanced coping skills (including tailored grounding techniques and cognitive strategies) and help uncover root causes of anxiety. In some cases, medication can provide relief from the intense physical symptoms of anxiety, enabling you to function and apply other strategies. **Modern psychiatric medications** (like anti-anxiety meds or antidepressants) are tools that, when used appropriately, can correct chemical imbalances or overactive anxiety responses in the brain. As Christians, we can view these as gifts of God's grace through medical knowledge. As one Christian physician-counselor writes, *"Helpers committed to a holistic, God-centered approach can see medications as a gift from God and one potential source of help"* in treating mental health issues ⁴⁵ ⁴⁶. Using medicine for anxiety is no more unfaithful than using insulin for diabetes or wearing glasses for poor eyesight.

It's worth noting that **about 8% of Americans take an anti-anxiety medication** in a given year ⁴⁷ ⁴⁸ – so you are not alone if you go that route. And **studies show best results often come when medication is combined with talk therapy** ⁴⁹ ⁵⁰, plus healthy lifestyle changes. Medication by itself doesn't "cure" anxiety – typically, it helps manage symptoms (by, for example, slowing an overactive nervous system or boosting serotonin) ⁵¹ ⁵² so that you can address thoughts and behaviors more effectively. But it can be a crucial part of a healing process. **It is *not* a sin or failure to use these aids.** In fact, refusing needed medical help out of pride or fear could be more problematic. Scripture praises the use of medicine in several places (e.g., Proverbs 17:22 implies medicine is good; 1 Timothy 5:23 where Paul advises Timothy to take a medicinal wine for his stomach issues).

Example: A man of faith has been struggling with severe anxiety that grounding techniques help only partially. He finds that despite prayer and using all the tools above, he's still having panic attacks that interfere with work and family life. He feels ashamed to admit this at church, fearing people will think he lacks trust in God. However, after confiding in a wise older Christian, he is encouraged to see a doctor and a counselor. He prays about it and senses peace to proceed. The doctor prescribes a low-dose anti-anxiety medication to stabilize his symptoms, and the counselor (who is also a Christian) begins weekly therapy sessions with him. Within a few weeks, the man notices a significant decrease in constant panic feelings. The medication took the edge off his physical anxiety (he's no longer in fight-or-flight mode 24/7), and in therapy he's learning how to challenge anxious thoughts and incorporate his faith in the healing process. He still prays and reads Scripture regularly, but now he also practices CBT techniques from counseling, and the combination is working. He realizes he's *more* able to engage with God and scripture now that the extreme biological symptoms are tempered. He also joins a small support group at church for others with anxiety, where they share struggles and pray for each other. Through this community, the stigma and loneliness he felt begin to fade. He sees that **God often provides help through both spiritual means and practical means together.**

His testimony might echo what many Christian counselors advise: *"Taking anti-anxiety medicine is not morally wrong because you are doing it to find relief and function better – a worthwhile and acceptable goal."* ⁵³ ⁵⁴ It's emphasized that medicine is usually one piece of the puzzle, not the whole answer ⁵⁵ ⁵⁶, and that ideally one also works through underlying issues in counseling and leans on God's strength in parallel. This balanced approach honors God by caring for the body (which might need biochemical help) *and* the soul.



Biblical Tie-in: The Bible encourages us to **bear one another's burdens** (Galatians 6:2). Reaching out for help allows others to fulfill this law of Christ in your life. James 5:16 says *"Confess your faults (or struggles) to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed."* Openness about anxiety with trusted believers can invite both practical support and intercessory prayer that brings healing. Even Jesus in His moment of great distress (in Gethsemane) took along His closest friends and asked for their companionship and prayers (Matthew 26:36-38). Though they didn't do a great job staying awake, the model is there: *don't face fear alone.*

When it comes to medicine, consider that Luke (author of one Gospel and Acts) was a physician – and there's no hint that using his medical knowledge was seen as contrary to faith. In fact, one of Jesus' disciples was nicknamed "Thaddeus" which some think is related to a word for medicine, and early Christians did not shun medical treatment. Ultimately, **all healing is from the Lord**, whether it's through a miraculous removal of anxiety or through a Prozac prescription that lifts the cloud. God often works through means. If your brain needs help rebalancing chemicals, that's no more shameful than a thyroid needing medicine for hormone balance.

It's also important to "guard your heart" (Proverbs 4:23) by avoiding sources of anxiety when possible (e.g., if certain toxic social media triggers panic, it's wise to limit it). Seeking counsel can help identify these. Ephesians 4:23 speaks of being "renewed in the spirit of your mind" – Christian therapy or pastoral counseling can guide you in renewing thought patterns according to truth, a very biblical aim.

Finally, remember *God's grace is sufficient for you*, even if anxiety is a "thorn" that you continue to manage over time (2 Corinthians 12:9). He promises, *"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33). Part of taking heart may involve taking the hand of a brother, sister, or healthcare provider extended to you. **There is no shame in needing others.** In fact, it's often through others that God delivers His help.

Conclusion: Living in the Peace of God

Anxiety and fear may be formidable foes, but as we've seen, **we are far from helpless against them.** By combining *grounded techniques for the mind and body* with the rich resources of *Christian faith*, we can confront anxiety on all fronts. The techniques outlined – from the practical 5-4-3-2-1 exercise to the spiritual discipline of surrendering prayer – are tools you can practice in your daily life. They help create that "space" between **you** and the anxious feelings, so that fear no longer dictates your reactions. In that space, you can hear the still, gentle voice of the Holy Spirit bringing truth and comfort.

Remember that overcoming anxiety is usually a gradual journey, not an instant leap. Be patient and compassionate with yourself as you learn to apply these strategies. **Celebrate small victories:** maybe you managed to halt a panic attack by grounding yourself in scripture and breathing, or you slept a full night because you played worship music and recited a promise until you drifted off. Those are meaningful steps toward freedom. Over time, these godly habits form what one author called *"spiritual muscle memory"*, training your heart to trust Him even in the dark (cf. Psalm 16:7-8) ⁵⁷ ⁵⁸ .

Also, don't neglect the basics that undergird anxiety management: sufficient sleep, a balanced diet, exercise, and time with supportive people. These "ordinary" aspects of wellness strongly affect our mental



state. In many cases, caring for your body through rest and nutrition will make all these grounding techniques more effective (it's harder to fight anxiety when exhausted or pumped with caffeine!). The Bible's holistic view is that we should love God with *heart, soul, mind, and strength* – attending to each of those dimensions.

Above all, **keep your eyes on Jesus** throughout this process. He is called the *“Prince of Peace”* (Isaiah 9:6) and promised, *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.”* (John 14:27). The world's peace might look like temporary relief or denial, but *Jesus' peace* is different – it coexists with trials, it transcends understanding. By practicing these Christian grounding techniques, you are in essence *receiving Jesus' peace* into your immediate circumstances: using the breath He gave you, the truths He spoke, the community He provides, and the laughter and music which are His gifts.

When anxious fear comes knocking, you now have very practical ways to respond: **breathe and pray, recount God's promises, engage your senses, release the tension, seek support, and yes, even laugh.** In doing so, you are not bypassing faith – you are exercising faith. You are believing that God's Word and His created remedies have power to help you. You are refusing to surrender to doom and instead actively “taking captive” those anxious thoughts (2 Corinthians 10:5) and reorienting them toward Christ.

In the end, remember that your identity is *not* “an anxious person” or “a fearful Christian.” Your identity is a **beloved child of God** (1 John 3:1). Even if you feel like a storm is inside you, *Jesus is in your boat*, and He can calm the storm – or calm you until it passes. In moments when you feel weak, lean hard on His promise: *“My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.”* (2 Corinthians 12:9). Many who have walked this road can testify that their anxiety, as painful as it was, became a means of experiencing God's grace more deeply. As one author wrote, *“If having a weakness like anxiety reveals your need for the Lord every minute of every day, then learn to be grateful for the thorn... because in your weakness, He is strong.”* ⁵⁹ ⁶⁰ .

Take heart: **you are not alone in this fight** – not only is the Lord with you, but countless believers around the world (and in Scripture) have fought the same fight and found deliverance and hope. By implementing the strategies above, you are setting yourself on a path toward *shalom* – that full-orbed peace that God intends for His children. Little by little, day by day, you can live more of your life grounded in the present and rooted in Christ, instead of swayed by fear.

“Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.” (2 Thessalonians 3:16)

Go forward with confidence, armed with both the *shield of faith* and the *tools of wisdom*. **A joyful, peaceful life in Christ is possible – even for those of us who have walked through the valley of anxiety.** God bless you as you practice these grounding techniques and grow in the freedom and joy that are yours in Jesus.

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4. Healthline – Adrienne Santos-Longhurst & Medically reviewed by Jennifer C. (Feb 2025 update). *“Grounding Techniques: Exercises for Anxiety, PTSD, and More.”* – A health article explaining grounding techniques, their types (physical, mental, soothing), and how they work similarly to mindfulness. States: *“Grounding techniques are exercises that may help you refocus on the present moment to distract yourself from anxious feelings.”* Also notes these are common strategies for managing anxiety and PTSD, helping *“return your brain and feelings to a place of safety”* during a panic or flashback 3 64 .
5. NIH News in Health (Mar 2016). *“Understanding Anxiety Disorders – When Panic, Fear, and Worries Overwhelm.”* – Provides an overview of anxiety disorders, prevalence (~1 in 5 adults affected each year), and treatments. Highlights that most anxiety disorders improve with therapy and/or medications, and that a combination approach is often effective 1 . Emphasizes that anxiety is treatable and that not everyone gets needed treatment. Good background on the legitimacy of seeking treatment.
6. Bernadette Anderson, MD, MPH (2024). *“The Healing Power of Prayer: Does It Work?”* GoodRx Health. – A physician-reviewed article summarizing research on prayer’s health benefits. Key points: *“Prayer reduces feelings of anxiety and depression, leading to improved mental health outcomes.”* Cites studies that prayer can lower stress, decrease cortisol, and boost positive emotions like gratitude 65 66 . Also notes prayer’s association with lower blood pressure and better coping. Supports the integration of prayer in anxiety management by showing physiological impacts.
7. X. Nader Sahyouni (May 2023). *“Anxiety and Prayer: What Works, What Doesn’t, and Why?”* InterVarsity.org Blog. – Written by a neuroscience-informed individual, this blog explores how certain ways of praying can either exacerbate or alleviate anxiety. Warns that repeatedly praying for reassurance without acceptance can *“feed the anxiety”*, whereas the biblical model (Jesus in Gethsemane, Paul’s thorn) leads from request to acceptance to hope 35 37 . Explains that acceptance (as in Acceptance & Commitment Therapy) reduces anxiety and that gratitude in prayer activates brain areas (anterior cingulate) that calm the amygdala 38 27 . A unique integration of neuroscience and biblical examples of handling distress.

The information presented is for educational and inspirational purposes only, it is not intended as medical advice.



8. Tim Allchin, D.Min. (2019). *"Should Christians Use Anti-Anxiety Medication?"* BiblicalCounselingCenter.org. – A Christian counselor addresses common questions about anxiety meds. Affirms: *"No, taking anti-anxiety medicines is not wrong because you are doing it to find relief and the ability to function at an improved level. This is a worthwhile goal and morally acceptable."* ⁵³ . Explains that meds can help short-term, though not usually a standalone long-term solution, and that underlying issues should be addressed in counseling and spiritual growth ⁵⁵ ⁵⁶ . Provides a balanced view that medication is a gift to be used wisely (with doctor's supervision) and not to be shunned out of stigma. Also notes ~8% of the U.S. population takes some form of anti-anxiety medication ⁴⁷ .

9. Michael R. Emlet, M.Div., M.D. (2019). *"Prozac and the Promises of God: The Christian Use of Psychoactive Medication."* Desiring God. – A theological and practical perspective from a former physician turned counselor. Emlet argues for a *"body-and-soul"* approach, recognizing that medications can be a **gift from God** for relieving suffering as part of a holistic plan ⁴⁵ ⁴⁶ . Addresses that Christians are divided, but suggests asking what is wisest for a person's situation. Encourages being well-informed medically and having a biblical philosophy that neither idolizes nor dismisses medication. Useful for reinforcing that using medication under proper guidance can glorify God by alleviating debilitating symptoms, enabling individuals to pursue spiritual growth.

10. Tina Yeager (2023), *Crosswalk.com* – **(cited again for completeness)** Yeager's article also cited a scientific source: *Akimbekov & Razzaque (2021)* on laughter's effect: *"Laughter suppresses the hormones secreted by stress and anxiety while also enhancing the production of neurochemicals that improve our mood."* ⁴² ⁴³ This supports the point that humor and laughter are therapeutic for anxiety (as also seen in Proverbs 17:22). The inclusion of this research-backed tip in a Christian article shows the integration of secular findings with biblical wisdom about a cheerful heart being good medicine.

Each of these references contributed to the strategies and insights presented. By combining scriptural truths with research and real-life examples, we gain a well-rounded approach to overcoming anxiety. **If you are struggling, consider reading these sources in full for further encouragement and practical tips.** And always remember to consult with qualified professionals for personalized help. You are not alone, and help is available – both from God above and His provisions here below.

¹ Understanding Anxiety Disorders | NIH News in Health

<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2016/03/understanding-anxiety-disorders>

² ⁴ ¹⁰ ¹³ ¹⁴ ¹⁸ ¹⁹ ²⁰ ²¹ ³⁰ ³¹ ³⁹ ⁴⁰ ⁴² ⁴³ ⁴⁴ 10 Grounding Tips to Relieve Anxiety |

Crosswalk.com

<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/grounding-tips-to-relieve-anxiety.html>

³ ⁵ ¹² ¹⁵ ²² ²³ ²⁴ ²⁵ ²⁶ ⁶⁴ Grounding Techniques: Exercises for Anxiety, PTSD, and More

<https://www.healthline.com/health/grounding-techniques>

⁶ ⁷ ⁶⁵ ⁶⁶ Does Prayer Have the Power to Heal? Here's What Science Says - GoodRx

[https://www.goodrx.com/well-being/alternative-treatments/healing-power-of-prayer?](https://www.goodrx.com/well-being/alternative-treatments/healing-power-of-prayer?srsltid=AfmBOopAMtz6C7MIJXmUjwbTmHvpjIToIAvHOC38Uncs-KK2u_kYDvIL)

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⁸ ⁹ ⁴¹ ⁶² ⁶³ Tips for Christians Overwhelmed by Anxiety — Wonder Christian Counseling

<https://www.wonderchristiancounseling.com/blog/4125-how-to-stay-grounded-in-christ-when-worry-overwhelms-you>

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<https://www.glennamarshall.com/2017/11/14/5-tools-christian-anxiety/>

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<https://biblicalcounselingcenter.org/anxiety-medication/>

49 Anxiety Disorders — Frequently Asked Questions

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/get-help/anxiety-disorders-ai-frequently-asked-questions/>

50 Frequently Asked Questions about Anxiety

<https://bbrfoundation.org/faq/frequently-asked-questions-about-anxiety>