

## Information for patients and families *Neurology Supportive and Palliative Care Clinic*

### **For physical anxiety:**

- Meditation, slow calming breathing.
- Progressive muscle relaxation (tightening muscle groups, then losing them).
- Naming sensory experiences

-You will begin with your sense of sight. Take note of five things that you can see around you. Spend a moment really noticing each of the five things that you see. What color is each object? What texture does it have? How is the light hitting it? Is it moving or stationary? Acknowledge each sensation with passive acceptance.

-Next, take note of four things that you can hear around you. Feel free to close your eyes if this will help you be more present with each sound. Notice what you notice about each sound. Is the sound loud? Is it pleasant or unpleasant? What quality does the sound have? Sit with each sensation for a moment, just noticing them.

-Now take note of three things that you can feel, just where you are. Perhaps you can feel your body resting on a chair or pillow? Is there a breeze where you are? What is the temperature like? Are there any internal sensations, from inside of your body that you can notice? Just be aware of these sensations, as you sit with each sensation in turn.

-Notice two things that you can smell and/or taste. Is this sensation strong or subtle? Pleasant or unpleasant. Finally, name one thing that you are grateful for in the present moment.

### **For anxious feelings or thoughts:**

- Attempt to name the anxious/negative thought
- Then identify the thought distortion associated with the anxious thought, see list below:

Catastrophizing	<i>focusing on the worst possible outcome</i>
Overestimating probability	<i>of bad things happening</i>
Perfectionism	<i>pressuring the self to be perfect: "I should..."</i>
Focusing on only the negatives	<i>ignoring positives</i>
Predicting the future	<i>how can you know what will happen?</i>
Generalizing	<i>ignoring differences in circumstances</i>
Underestimating your ability to cope	<i>if something bad does happen</i>
Mind reading	<i>imagining you know what another is thinking</i>
- Allow for realistic self-talk, reflect on one or more of the questions below:
  - Is the thought true? Is it always true? Is it partially true? Are there ways in which it is not true? Are there times when it is not true?
  - What is the evidence to support the thought? What is the evidence against it?
  - If you had to debate this thought or make a counterargument against it, what would you say?
  - Is there another way of looking at this?
  - What's the bigger picture?
  - If you are catastrophizing, what is the probability of this thought actually happening? If your feared outcome does happen, how terrible would it be? Could you handle it, figure out how to move on with your life? Who could you ask to help?
  - What would a good friend say to you about this?
  - Are there kinder, more respectful ways of thinking about yourself in your life that allow you to be a human being who makes mistakes, with strengths and limitations?