



MHFA England

5 top tips to support someone with anxiety in the workplace

We may all experience anxiety at some point in our lives. It is a perfectly natural response to a situation that may be dangerous or provide the motivation we need to solve problems.

Anxiety can be experienced as mild uneasiness, a panic attack, or a range of feelings in between. People who experience anxiety may exhibit both physical signs and psychological effects. For some anxiety may last a few moments, for others it could be a series of episodes over many years.

If anxiety is affecting someone's day-to-day work or life, there are things you can try that may help to support them.

Here are our top 5 tips:



1 Reach out to talk

Whether you are an MHFAider® within your workplace, a manager, or a colleague, reaching out can often help. Offering a non-judgemental listening ear can make them feel heard. Talk in a gentle, calm, and reassuring manner.

If you or someone you know needs support, you can contact the Samaritans, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on: **116 123** or email: **jo@samaritans.org**.

2 Encourage grounding techniques

If someone is very anxious or experiencing a panic attack, grounding techniques may be helpful. Encourage them to focus on things they can see, hear, smell, and touch and keep reassuring them.

3 Signpost to appropriate support

Depending on the severity of the situation you may need to seek medical support, especially if the person is experiencing a panic attack for the first time. Also consider what other support maybe available in your workplace, for example an Employee Assistance Programme or counselling services.

4 Look after yourself

Supporting someone with anxiety can impact your own mental health and wellbeing. Remember to focus on your self care, too. It will help protect your own mental health and enable you to support others.

5 Check in

If you have spoken to someone and supported them with feelings or symptoms of anxiety, remind yourself to check in with them. Ask them how they are feeling and, if you signposted to them to support, check whether they have contacted or used those resources. If you have access to the MHFAider Support App® you can take notes on your conversation and remind yourself.

