

# Stress & Anxiety

Understanding stress signals, coping choices, and when support can help.



Section goal: Identify what is within your influence and choose one safe next step.

Memory routine: Pause, Breathe, Sort, Support

*Use what helps, adapt what does not, and keep your work private when you choose.*

# Welcome from Jaden

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Hey, I'm Jaden Guerra. This module is a place to notice, practice, and reflect—not a test and not a diagnosis. You can move at your own pace and return to any page that helps you today.

**Keep your work private if you want. You may adapt an activity, use a fictional example, or skip anything that feels too personal. If difficult feelings persist, interfere with daily life, or affect safety, tell a trusted adult or qualified professional.**

# Course Overview

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- Describe stress & anxiety in your own words.
- Notice patterns and identify one flexible next step.
- Practice the Pause, Breathe, Sort, Support routine in a real or fictional situation.
- Apply the skill to school, family, friendships, activities, digital life, and future goals.
- Identify a support person or resource when help would be useful.

## Essential questions

What information does stress & anxiety give me? How can I practice this skill without expecting perfection? When is reaching out the smartest next step?

# Start Where You Are

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This is not a test. It is a snapshot of what feels available today. Circle, mark, or write only what fits.

- I can describe what I already know about this topic.
- I can notice one signal connected to this topic.
- I can name one strength or support I can use.
- I can choose one small next step.

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# Lesson Summary

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Stress & Anxiety is a practice of paying attention to what matters in a situation and choosing a response that supports safety, respect, goals, relationships, or well-being. It does not mean you must control every feeling or solve everything and it

## What this skill is not

It is not a promise that difficult moments will disappear. It is not a label, diagnosis, or replacement for qualified support. It is one way to gather information and practice a next step.

## In my own words:

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# Key Vocabulary

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stress & anxiety

signal — information that may help you notice what is happening

pattern — something that tends to repeat

support — a person, place, or resource that can help

boundary — a clear limit that protects safety or respect

strategy — an option you can try and evaluate

**A word I want to practice using:**

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# Core Concept One

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One way to understand stress & anxiety is to treat it as information rather than a judgment. A thought, emotion, body signal, behavior, value, or need can tell you something about the moment. You still get to choose what to do next.

## Think about this

What signal do you tend to notice first? What signal do you sometimes overlook?

## Write one observation:

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## Core Concept Two

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Try separating the moment into four parts: what happened, what you noticed, what it might mean, and what you want to try next. Separating the pieces can create more than one possible response.

What happened?

What did I notice?

What might it mean?

What could I try next?

# Signals and Patterns

| Area     | What I notice                          | A helpful question                |
|----------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Thoughts | Words, images, predictions             | What facts do I have?             |
| Emotions | Worry, pride, sadness, anger, relief   | What feeling word fits?           |
| Body     | Tight jaw, low energy, quick breathing | What would help me settle?        |
| Actions  | Avoiding, rushing, arguing, pausing    | Is this moving me toward my goal? |
| Needs    | Rest, clarity, space, support, safety  | What is the next safe request?    |

**A signal I want to notice sooner:**

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# Real-Life Connections

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**School and learning**

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**Family and home**

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**Friendships and community**

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**Sports, arts, and activities**

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**Digital life and social media**

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**Future goals and daily routines**

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**The situation that feels most familiar to me:**

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# Practical Strategy: Pause, Breathe, Sort, Support

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- 1 Pause: create a little space before reacting.
- 2 Notice: gather information from your thoughts, emotions, body, actions, and needs.
- 3 Name: choose one or two precise words for what is happening.
- 4 Choose: try one small step that supports safety, respect, goals, or connection.

## My practice plan:

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# Quick Activity

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Choose one situation. Circle the loudest signal, then write one reason and one next step. There may be more than one reasonable answer.

1. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signal: \_\_\_\_\_ Because: \_\_\_\_\_ Next step: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signal: \_\_\_\_\_ Because: \_\_\_\_\_ Next step: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signal: \_\_\_\_\_ Because: \_\_\_\_\_ Next step: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signal: \_\_\_\_\_ Because: \_\_\_\_\_ Next step: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signal: \_\_\_\_\_ Because: \_\_\_\_\_ Next step: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Situation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signal: \_\_\_\_\_ Because: \_\_\_\_\_ Next step: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reflection Activity

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Use a real or fictional situation. Keep it private if you want. You never have to describe trauma, abuse, self-harm, suicidal thinking, or another experience that feels unsafe to write about.

## The moment: what happened?

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## The meaning: what did I notice or need?

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## The move: what small, safe next step could I try?

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Private reflection option: Write privately, adapt the details, use a fictional example, or skip any part that feels too personal. You never have to share your response.

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# Practice Scenario

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A student is dealing with a stress & anxiety moment at school, at home, or online. They notice a strong reaction and are unsure what to do next. They decide to pause, name one signal, and ask a trusted person for clarity or support.

**What might the student notice?**

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**What could be more than one possible explanation?**

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**What is one respectful and safe next step?**

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# Weekly Challenge

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Try one small practice for seven days. You may restart, adapt, or ask for support. Consistency does not have to be perfect.

☐ Day 1: I tried \_\_\_\_\_ I noticed \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Day 2: I tried \_\_\_\_\_ I noticed \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Day 3: I tried \_\_\_\_\_ I noticed \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Day 4: I tried \_\_\_\_\_ I noticed \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Day 5: I tried \_\_\_\_\_ I noticed \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Day 6: I tried \_\_\_\_\_ I noticed \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Day 7: I tried \_\_\_\_\_ I noticed \_\_\_\_\_

# Weekly Challenge Reflection

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**A pattern I noticed:**

**A strength I used:**

**An obstacle or support:**

**One adjustment I want to make:**

**A habit I want to continue:**

# Personal Action Plan

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**One lesson I want to remember:**

**One habit I want to build:**

**One action I will take this week:**

**One support person or resource:**

**One backup plan if the first step is difficult:**

## Additional Support

If a concern feels too heavy, lasts, interferes with daily life, or affects safety, tell a trusted adult and ask for qualified support. In the United States, call or text 988 for immediate mental-health crisis support. If someone is in immediate danger, call 911. Elsewhere, contact local emergency or crisis services.

### My support map

Trusted adult: \_\_\_\_\_ School/community support: \_\_\_\_\_ Professional resource: \_\_\_\_\_

# Knowledge Check

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## 1. Which statement best describes stress & anxiety?

A. It requires perfection B. It is information and practice C. It replaces support D. It guarantees an outcome

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## 2. What is one flexible next step when a moment feels difficult?

A. It requires perfection B. It is information and practice C. It replaces support D. It guarantees an outcome

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## 3. When should someone involve a trusted adult or qualified professional?

A. It requires perfection B. It is information and practice C. It replaces support D. It guarantees an outcome

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## Answer and Explanation

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1. B — the skill is information and practice, not a diagnosis or guarantee.

2. B — choose a small, safe step such as pausing, asking a question, writing, or reaching out.

3. B — involve support when concerns persist, interfere with life, feel overwhelming, or affect safety.

# Key Takeaways and Inspiration

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- Stress & Anxiety is a practice, not a fixed label.
- Difficult emotions are valid information, not proof of failure.
- You can adapt activities, keep writing private, and ask for support.
- Small actions, flexible plans, and connection can help you keep moving.

**EMPOWERING YOUNG MINDS / INSPIRING BRIGHT FUTURES**

# Completion, Sources, and Support

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This guide provides general educational information. It does not diagnose conditions, provide treatment, or replace individualized support from a parent, caregiver, school professional, pediatrician, counselor, or other qualified professional.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Homepage and additional resources:

1. American Psychological Association — Stress  
<https://www.apa.org/topics/stress>
2. American Psychological Association — Resilience  
<https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>
3. American Academy of Pediatrics — Helping Adolescents Feel in Control  
<https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/mental-health-minute/helping-adolescents-feel-in-control-during-stressful-times/>
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — Managing Stress  
<https://www.cdc.gov/mental-health/living-with/index.html>
5. National Institute of Mental Health — Child and Adolescent Mental Health  
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/child-and-adolescent-mental-health>



<https://theguerrayouthfoundation.org/>