Pause and Ground

When Anxiety Hits, Your Body is Trying to Protect You.

These two steps slow the alarm and bring you back to the room you are in.

01 Pause

Stop. You are safe in this room right now.
This is a wave of anxiety. It has come before.
It will pass. Plant both feet on the floor.
Place one hand on your stomach, one on your chest.
Notice them rising and falling.
You do not have to do anything else yet



Why This Works?

Pausing tells your nervous system (the network of nerves connecting your brain to your body) that the threat is being assessed, not acted on. The body downshifts from full alarm.

02 Ground (5-4-3-2-1)

Notice and name, out loud or quietly to yourself:



Things you can see



Things you can feel



Things you can hear



Things you can smell



Thing you can taste

Why This Works?

Grounding redirects the prefrontal cortex (the thinking part of your brain) onto sensory input.
The amygdala (the part of your brain that scans for danger) reads sensory presence as safety information.

If The Wave Is Still High After These Two Steps

Use Breathe and Name (Anxiety First Aid Card 2) as it covers two more steps that shift the dial in the body and the thinking mind.

Crisis

If you cannot make it through the next ten minutes — thoughts about harming yourself,or about not wanting to be here — call your local crisis line or go to your nearest emergency department.

In Saudi Arabia, call 911 in an emergency (ambulance 997). For psychological advice.
The Ministry of Health line is 920033360 (daily 8am–8pm; Saturday 1pm–8pm).
Other GCC countries: monita.org/in-crisis.