

CALM DOWN! Activities for Your Emotional Well-Being

Jayne Gundrum, LMHP
Nebraska Cancer Specialists

Focus for Today

Relaxation/Mindfulness

Mind/body Practices

Creative/Sensory Activities

Fun Stress-Relieving Activities

Connection/Environment

Flow Theory

Worry

+
○

Relaxation and Mindfulness

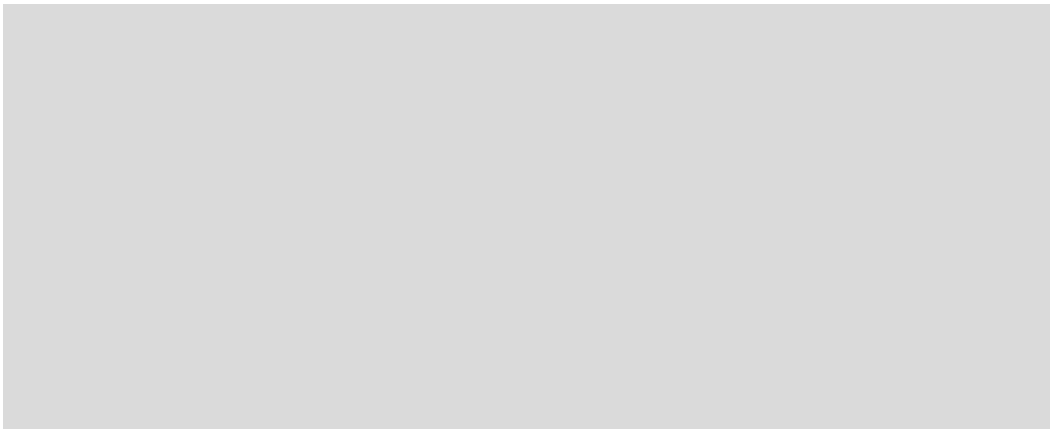
+
○



Breathing Techniques

Feeling Stressed?
Try this Box Breathing Technique...





Mindfulness and meditation can help redirect your focus away from anxious thoughts.



A lush, green forest scene featuring a stream with a small waterfall. The water flows over moss-covered rocks, surrounded by dense foliage and ferns. The background shows tall trees and a wooden railing on the right side.


Leaves on a Stream: A Mindfulness Meditation

Grounding



Stop – Ground-
Breathe





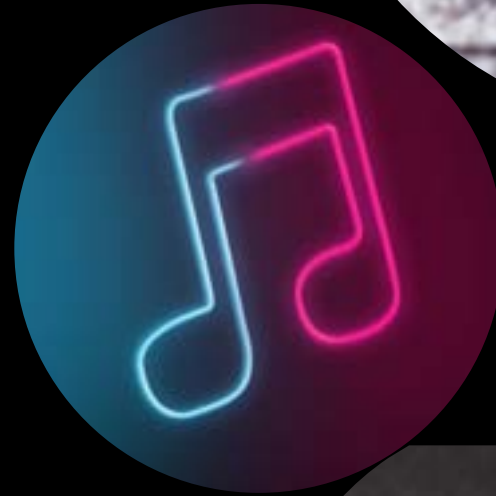
Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Mindfulness Meditation

Mind-Body Practices



Creative and Sensory Activities



Try your hand at art

Engaging in activities like painting or drawing or coloring can help calm us and reduce anxiety





Try a new recipe

Cooking or baking helps us focus on the process of creating something delicious



Listen to Music





Use aromatherapy

Inhale the scents of essential oils or light candles





Take a warm bath

Soothing activities like taking a bath can also provide a calming effect.

Fun, Stress-Relieving Activities to Try...

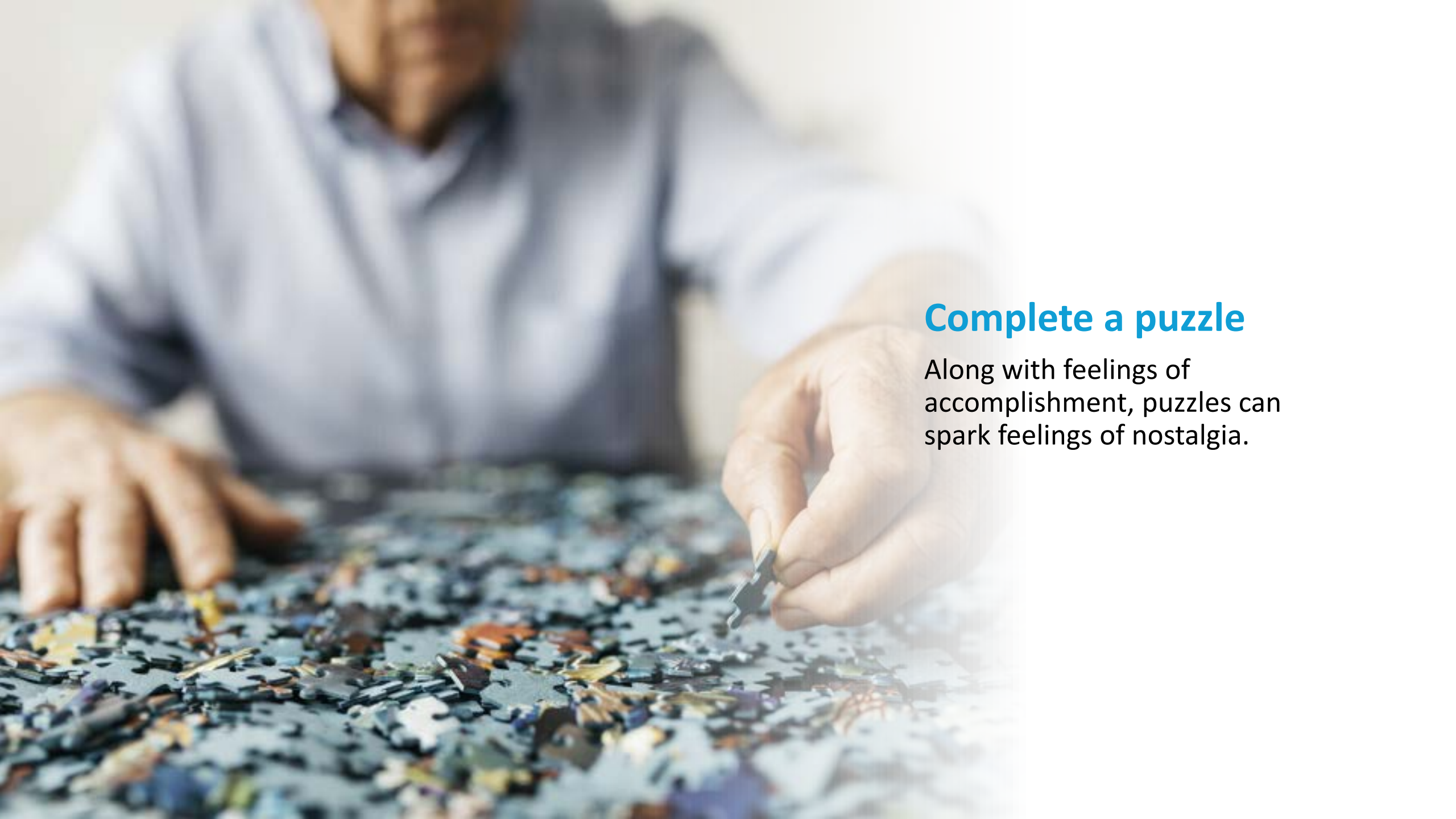


Play games!

If you are with a group, family or friends, play games.

Sequence, Pictionary, Codenames, Monopoly, Catch Phrase, Card games

--any group game will likely promote laughter and togetherness.



Complete a puzzle

Along with feelings of accomplishment, puzzles can spark feelings of nostalgia.

Read a Book





Garden

Spending time in the fresh air helps your body make melatonin, promoting a good night's sleep. (And [restful sleep](#) is key for lowering stress.)

[Planting flowers, herbs or plants](#) and watching them grow is also satisfying as you get to see your hard work flourish and enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Spend Time in Nature



Social Connection

Talking with trusted friends, family, or even your pet can provide support and perspective.

Interacting with animals can help reduce anxiety.





Other helpful practices

Journaling: Write down your thoughts and feelings to process them.

Take a nap: Short naps can help regulate emotions and reduce stress.





Flow Theory

“Your hobbies and interests are very important to your mental health.”



Schedule Worry Time

- Set a specific time each day to write down your worries and think about potential solutions.
- When a worry pops up outside this time, tell yourself you will deal with it during your scheduled worry time and then refocus on the present.
- When your worry time is over, stop and move to a different activity.



Address Solvable Worries

Make a plan: For those worries you can control, write down a plan of action.

Take action: Do one small thing to move forward on the problem.

Focus on what you can control: And again, acknowledge the worries you cannot control and accept them to help you move on.

Resources:

- <https://www.henryford.com/blog/2020/06/fun-calming-activities-relieve-stress>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK513238/>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/relaxation-technique/art-20045368>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/what-can-i-do-to-help-myself-cope/relaxing-and-calming-exercises/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/FWYkom7Enf8>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CzEf0RB9DI>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5q3K-6HvQIk>

Questions?

