

Reduce stress before you testify in court

Does your mind sometimes go blank when you think of things that frighten you or make you nervous? Or maybe your heart starts to beat really fast, your legs feel weak and your palms begin to sweat when you are nervous?

Below are tips to relieve these symptoms when you are getting ready to testify in court.



RELAX YOUR MIND

Close your eyes and listen to your breath as you breathe in and out. Keep focusing on your breath and picture in your mind a peaceful scenery, like a beautiful beach, a flowing river, or mountains. Keep your attention on your breathing and this picture for few minutes.



BREATHE DEEPLY

Breathe in deeply, feeling your stomach expand. Hold your breath for a few seconds, and then slowly breathe out.



STRETCH YOUR BODY

Stand or sit up straight on the chair and stretch each leg slightly apart.



POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Repeatedly say, 'I know I can do this' or 'I can cope' or 'I believe in myself'.



RELAX YOUR BODY

Slowly lower your upper body and place your head between your legs. Sit like that for a few seconds, and then slowly roll up again, starting at the base of your spine, until your back is straight. Repeat this exercise until your body feels relaxed.



RELAX YOUR MUSCLES

Sit or lie in a relaxed position. Now tense the muscles of your feet as hard as you can, and then relax them. Do you notice a difference in the feeling? Repeat this same exercise moving up your body, from your legs to your arms, stomach, back, neck and head. When you are finished, sit quietly for a few minutes.

IF YOU STILL FEEL STRESSED AND ANXIOUS, PLEASE NOTIFY THE COURT PREPARATION OFFICER, THE INTERMEDIARY OR THE PROSECUTOR BEFORE YOU TESTIFY. YOU MAY ALSO CALL FOR HELP:

National Counselling Line:

0861-322-322

Stop Gender Violence Helpline:

0800-150-150

Gender-based Violence Command Centre:

0800 428 428

Childline South Africa Helpline:

0800-055-555

Disclaimer: The information is shared on condition that readers will make their own determination, including seeking advice from their medical practitioner or healthcare professional.

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