



What to Do When You're Dreading a Social Event

A step-by-step guide to help you feel calmer, more prepared, and less alone — before you walk out the door (or log on).

✨ Made for:

- Social anxiety and overthinking
- Fear of judgment or awkward silences
- Introverts, HSPs, and anyone who gets pre-event nerves



Why This Feels So Big

Your brain is trying to protect you — it just doesn't realize you're safe. That surge of dread, overthinking, or physical tension? It's your nervous system on high alert.

But you can gently shift it. This toolkit shows you how.

📱 Want extra support? Open <https://navigateanxiety.org> and say: 💬 "Help me calm down before a social event."



Step 1: Ground Your Body

Before the event

Give your nervous system a reset.

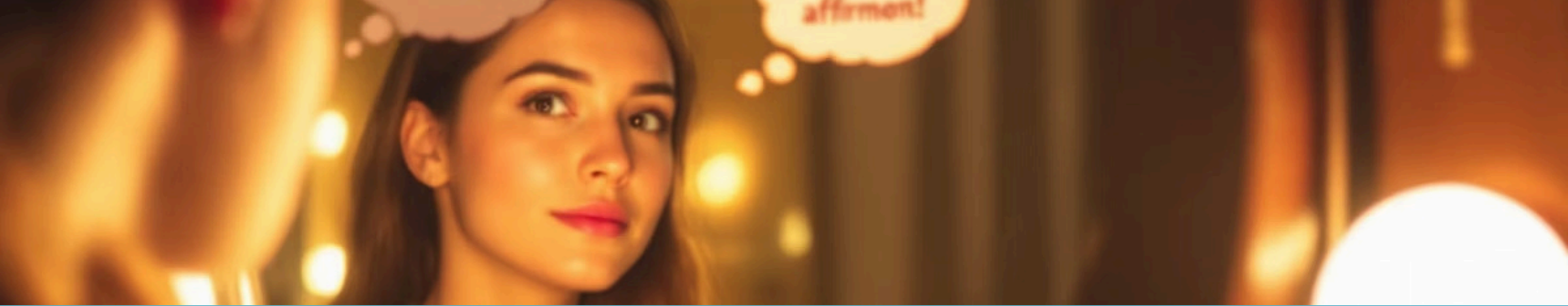
2-Minute Grounding Exercise

- Feel your feet on the floor.
- Wiggle your fingers and toes.
- Take 3 slow, deep breaths.
- Notice 1 thing you can see, hear, and feel.

Bonus

 Ask Navigate Anxiety: "Walk me through a calming body scan."








Step 2: Reframe Your Thoughts



Anxiety says: *"Everyone will judge me."*

Let's flip that.

Helpful Reframes

-  "I don't need to be perfect — just present."
-  "Some people might like me. Some won't. That's okay."
-  "Awkwardness is human, not dangerous."

In the app

➡  Try:  "Give me a social anxiety reframe."

Step 3: Pick a Go-To Line



You don't need a script for the whole event — just one opener.

Try:



"Hi, I don't think we've met yet — I'm [your name]."



"This is kind of out of my comfort zone, but I wanted to come."



"How do you know the host?"



Practice it out loud once. That's enough.

Step 4: Set a Gentle Boundary Plan



You don't have to stay forever. You just have to start.



✓ "I'll go for 30 minutes and reassess."



✓ "I can take a bathroom break if I need a reset."



✓ "If it's too much, I can leave. That's not failure — that's self-care."



Planning for an exit often makes it easier to stay.



Step 5: Choose Your Anchor Item



Cozy scarf or hoodie

Bring something that feels comforting to wear



Fidget ring

Something to keep your hands busy



Calming playlist

For the commute to the event

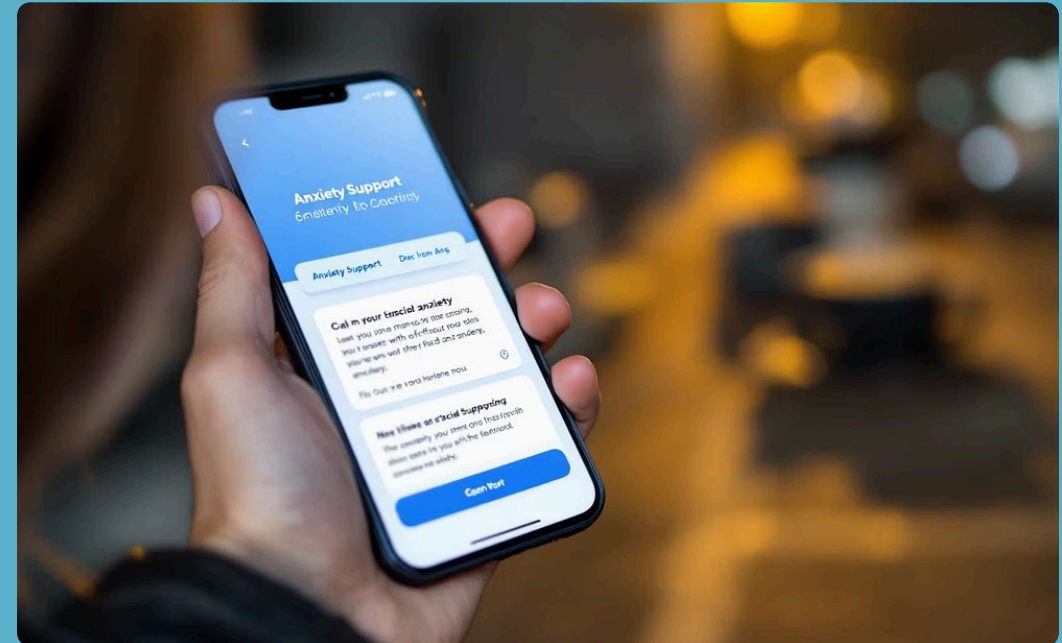
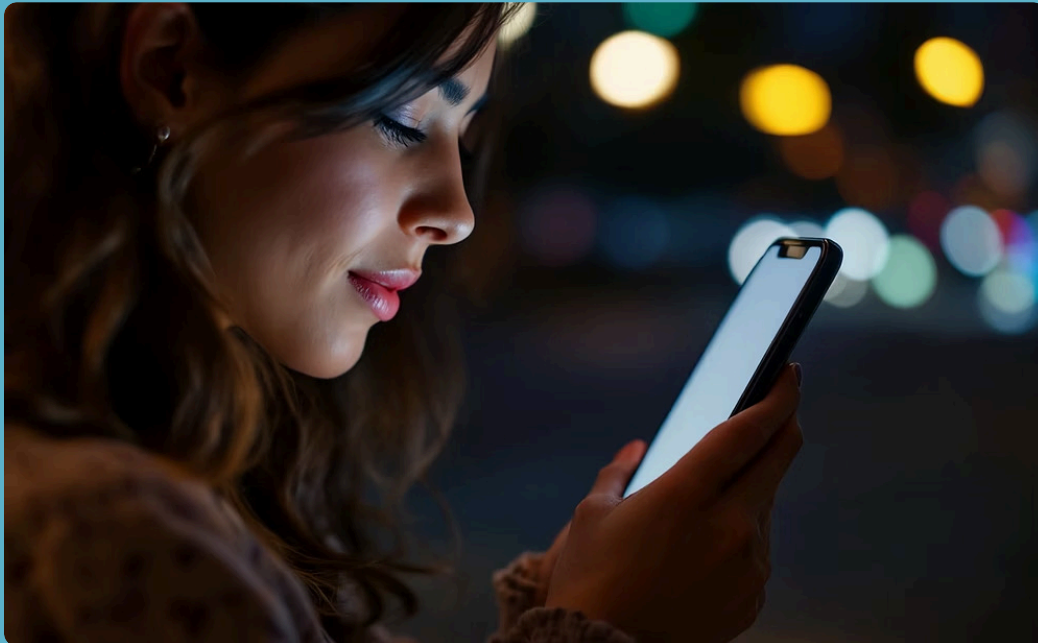


A saved Navigate prompt

"Remind me I've got this"

 This helps you feel safe — not silly.

Ask Navigate Anxiety Before You Go



Feeling panicky right before you walk in?

Let the app talk you down in real time.

Try these prompts:

- "I'm outside the event and freaking out — help."
- "Give me a confidence boost before I go in."
- "I need a pep talk."

🌐 Instant, non-judgmental support: <https://navigateanxiety.org>

Final Reminder: Bravery Isn't Loud



✨ You don't have to impress anyone. You just have to honor your effort.

👉 Share this guide with someone else who gets social anxiety. You never know who needs it.