



# How to Help Someone With Social Anxiety (Without Making It Worse)

You want to be there for them — but you're not sure what to say. These "do's and don'ts" offer simple ways to support someone navigating social anxiety.

✨ Perfect for:

- Friends, family, partners, teachers
- Anyone supporting someone with social anxiety
- Teens + young adults figuring out how to show up



# Why Support Looks Different with Social Anxiety

## Reach out

People with social anxiety often find it difficult to initiate contact, even when they need support.

## Ask for reassurance

Seeking validation can feel overwhelming when anxiety is already making them feel vulnerable.

## Say what they need

Expressing needs directly can be challenging when fear of judgment is present.

## Feel like a "burden"

Social anxiety often comes with concerns about imposing on others or being too much.

That doesn't mean they don't want connection — it means they need it in a low-pressure way.





# What *Helps* (Say This Instead)

Try offering support that's clear, kind, and doesn't ask too much.



**"No pressure — just letting you know I'm here."**

Creates space without expectations



**"If you want me to come with you or be your exit plan, I'm in."**

Offers practical support without judgment



**"We don't have to talk. I can just hang out with you for a bit."**

Removes pressure to socialize



**"You don't have to explain. I get it."**

Shows understanding without requiring justification

✨ These phrases reduce fear of judgment or rejection.



# What *Doesn't* Help (Even If It's Well-Meaning)



**"Just be confident!"**

Oversimplifies a complex condition



**"It's not a big deal, why are you freaking out?"**

Dismisses their genuine feelings



**"You always cancel — it's frustrating."**

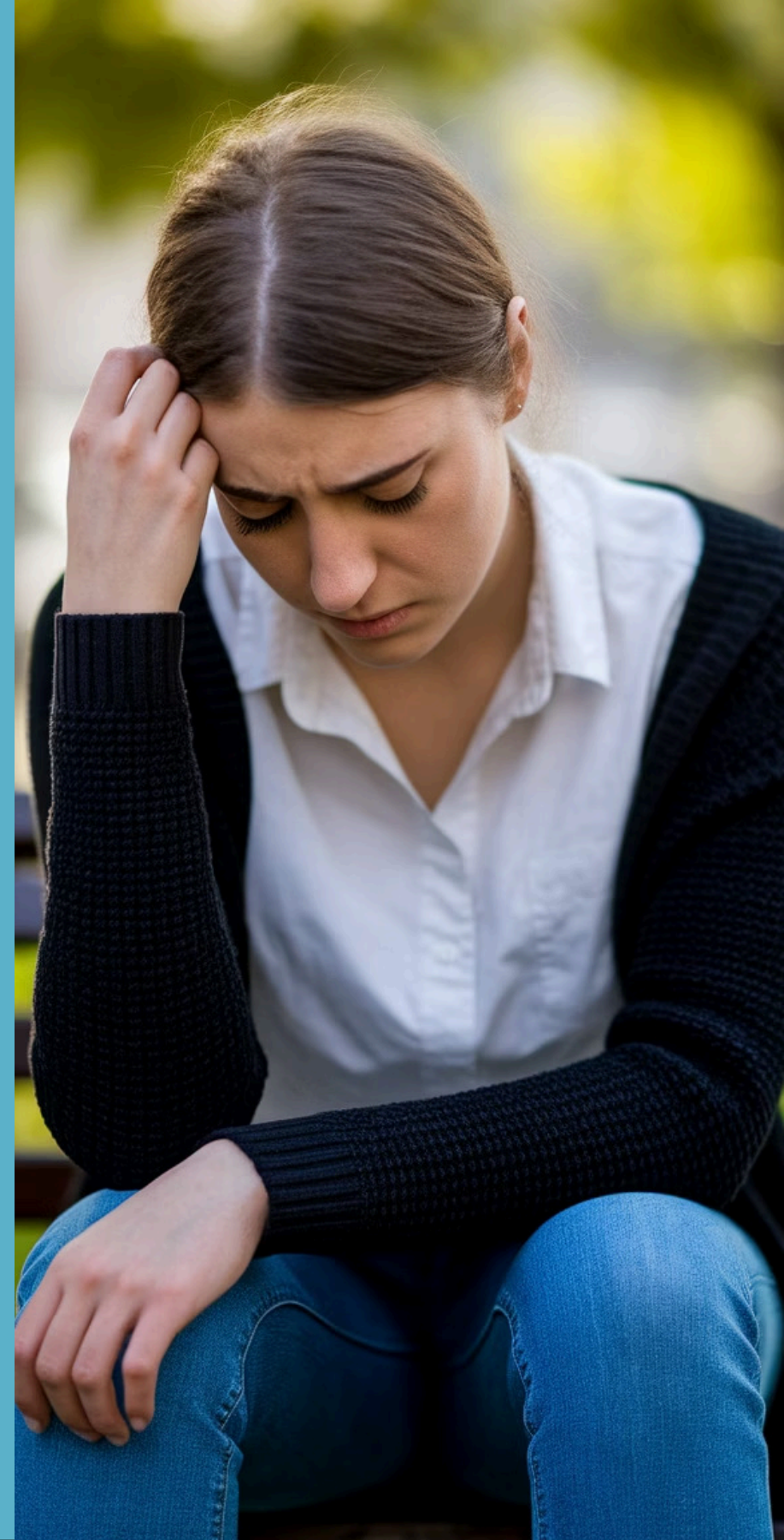
Creates guilt and shame



**"You need to push through this."**

Adds pressure rather than support

💡 Why it doesn't help: These can feel dismissive or create more shame.







# Texts That Say "I'm With You"

Sometimes they can't talk — but a gentle message still matters.



**"No pressure to reply, just wanted to say I'm thinking of you."**



**"Want me to check in later, or would quiet time be better today?"**



**"Want to send memes back and forth without talking?"**



**"Need a buddy at [event]? Happy to be your social shield."**



They may not respond — but they'll remember you cared.

# When You Want to Invite Them (Without Pressure)



## Avoid

"You *have* to come!"



## Try Instead

Low-pressure invitations



## Result

Being invited *without obligation* is powerful

Try these phrases:

- ☐ "We're doing something chill — come if it sounds good."
- ☐ "No stress if not, but I'd love to see you."
- ☐ "Totally okay if today's not the day."

✨ Being invited *without obligation* is powerful.

# Support = Repeating Yourself Kindly

If they need the same reassurance again, it doesn't mean they're ignoring you — it means anxiety's being loud again.

## **"You're not too much."**

Counters feelings of being a burden

## **"You didn't mess anything up."**

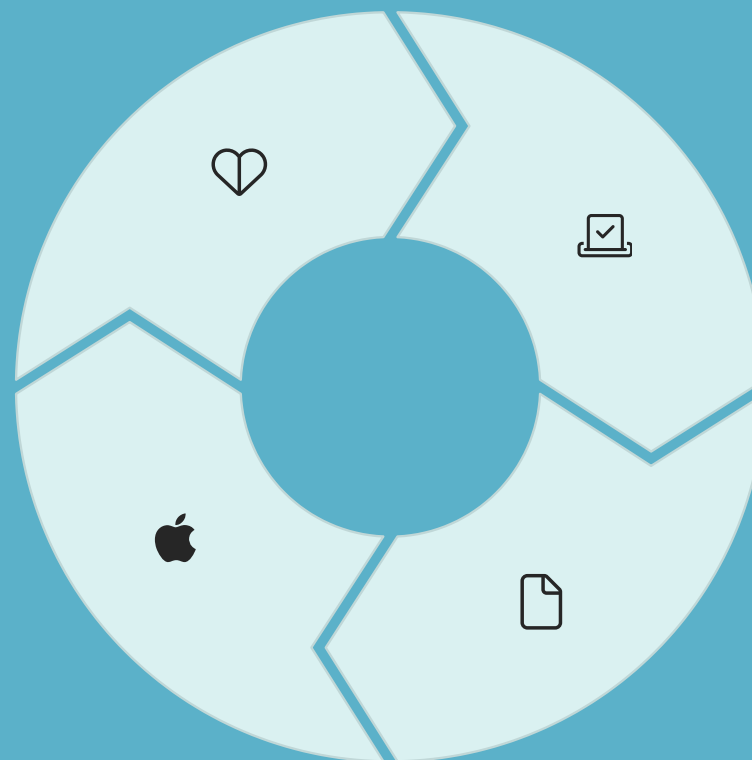
Addresses fear of social mistakes

## **"You're allowed to be quiet."**

Removes pressure to perform socially

## **"Hey, want to ask Navigate for a pep talk?"**

Offers additional support resource



💛 Keep saying these reassurances whenever they're needed.

# Use Navigate Anxiety to Support Them Too

If they freeze up, the app can say what they can't.

You can even send them these prompts:

- 🗨️ "Tell me something kind."
- 🗨️ "I'm panicking before a social event — talk me through it."
- 🗨️ "Help me feel less awkward."

🌐 <https://navigateanxiety.org>

✨ No pressure. Just presence.





# Share This With Allies Who Care

This guide is for siblings. For best friends. For partners. For anyone who wants to say: *"I see you — and I want to do it better."*

## 1

### Share

Send it to someone who loves someone with social anxiety

## 2

### Support

They don't need to fix anything

## 3

### Show Up

They just need to be present

💬 Send it to someone who loves someone with social anxiety. They don't need to fix anything. They just need to show up.