

FEAR & ANXIETY

A Workbook

For Understanding and Dealing with Fear and Anxiety

Oh fear
 leave this place
 come not again to scare
 leave me in peace
 let me rest

The child trembles
 The heart races
 The fear of a small child captures the giant man
 withering the sturdiest of souls

Fly from me fear
 I cannot bear thy face
 leave me to die
 or let me be
 I cannot bear the rest

Go away demons
 let me rest
 my muscles cannot withstand your brutal test

It grips my throat
 I cannot scream loud enough
 no one would understand
 my whole being melts in a puddle of panic

I stand frozen in time
 unable to move
 unable to breathe
 the dragon of fear
 has raised its ugly head

FEAR

c. Situations that frequently make me fearful and anxious:

b. Current method of dealing with fear and anxiety:

a. How I get fearful and anxious:

List the following:

WORKBOOK

- observe how you get fearful and anxious - work on noticing your fear reactions as if from a detached observer's point of view.
- begin to monitor your fear and anxiety reactions - notice how you currently deal with fear and anxiety and the effect it has on you.
- keep a fear and anxiety journal in which you write down different situations that frequently make you fearful and anxious

I. MONITOR YOUR FEAR & ANXIETY

Since anxiety disorders are caused by many different contributing factors it makes sense to develop a treatment approach that addresses the full range of factors. This next section will focus on how to overcome anxiety disorders with a varied attack which deals with all the potential underlying causes. It's important to become aware of how you deal with (or fail to deal with) your fear and anxiety. Each individual needs to develop his or her own strategy for working with fear and anxiety. It is important to give yourself time to develop methods that work for you by practicing and being patient with the process. Below are many different techniques and tools that have worked well with countless people. See which might work for you and put them to the test.

PART TWO: HOW TO DEAL WITH FEAR AND ANXIETY

A key ingredient for any treatment regimen to reduce anxiety is relaxation. Anxiety and relaxation cannot exist at the same time. When we are anxious we cannot be relaxed and visa versa. It therefore makes a great deal of sense to spend time developing the ability to relax. Relaxation is a skill that needs to be learned and practiced over and over again. Relaxation is more than just unwinding by the pool reading a book after a hard day at work. The type of relaxation that makes a difference for those suffering with anxiety is the regular, daily practice of some form of deep relaxation. Deep relaxation is a physiological state that is the exact opposite of the

3. RELAXATION

c. Circumstances that seem to make my fear and anxiety harder to handle, i.e., when tired or sick:

b. Types of people (or specific people) that trigger my fear and anxiety are:

a. Some of my fear and anxiety triggers are:

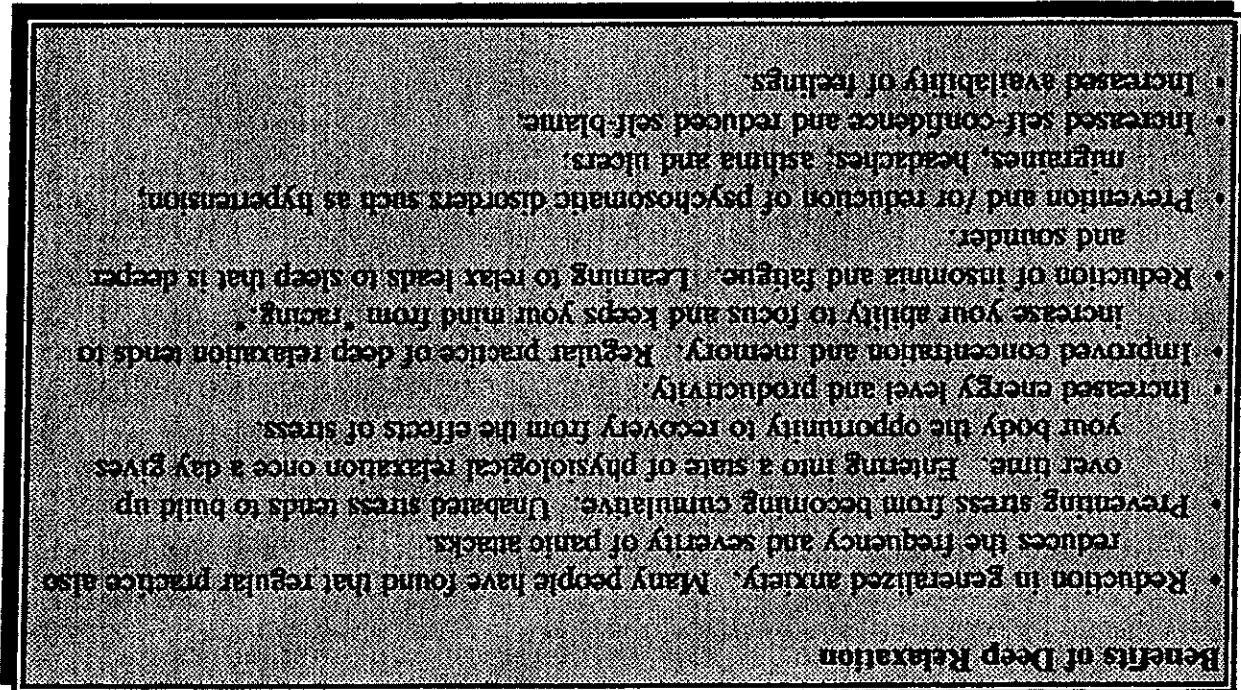
List the following:

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- begin to notice your fear and anxiety triggers - those things that happen routinely to trigger your fear and anxiety
- notice if certain types of people trigger your fear and anxiety
- notice if you get fearful or anxious more when you are tired, overworked, stressed or sick
- ask yourself, "what about this particular situation triggers fear within me?"

2. NOTICE YOUR FEAR & ANXIETY TRIGGERS

There are a number of people who experience significant anxiety when they try to relax which can even trigger a panic attack. The process of letting go and calming the mind can induce anxiety and fear, particularly child-within fear. Letting go of the defenses and the armor is difficult at best and overwhelming for some. If you experience anxiety when relaxing don't give up on the process. Try the many different techniques and find the one or two that work for you without triggering anxiety.



He found that regular practice of deep relaxation for 20-30 minutes a day produced a generalized feeling of relaxation that permeated all aspects of life. Edmund Bourne documented many of the benefits of deep relaxation listed below:

- decrease in heart rate
- decrease in respiration rate
- decrease in blood pressure
- decrease in muscle tension
- decrease in metabolic rate
- decrease in analytical thinking
- increase in skin resistance
- increase in alpha wave activity in the brain

The benefits of relaxation are numerous and have been well documented in Herbert Benson's book *The Relaxation Response*. He studied the effects of deep relaxation and found that when people got into a relaxed state the following things happened:

Types of relaxation:

A. Abdominal Breathing

One of the easiest and most powerful types of relaxation involves abdominal breathing. When we are experiencing stress or anxiety our breathing typically becomes shallow and rapid, our bodies get tense and we breathe high in our chest. This blocks our capacity to breathe deeply and reduces the oxygenation of our blood. It takes a great deal of energy to breathe from the chest since with each breath we have to raise the rib cage in order to expand the lungs. Abdominal breathing allows us to breathe more fully, deeply and with less effort. This type of breathing involves moving the diaphragm (the muscle that separates the lung cavity from the abdominal cavity) down which serves to pull air into the lungs. Trained singers and musicians know that the only way to get a good deep breath is by using abdominal breathing. Abdominal breathing can be learned and with regular practice can expand your lung capacity and your ability to relax.

To practice this technique lie down on a bed or the floor and place a light book on your abdomen. Breathe deeply and slowly through your nose. Try not to use your chest to breathe and instead pull the diaphragm down. When breathing this way the muscles of the stomach expand outward so you should notice the book moving up and down with each breath. Once you have mastered abdominal breathing you can use it as a powerful relaxation tool. It is recommended that you inhale slowly through your nose, pause for a moment and then let the breath out slowly either through your nose or through pursed lips (like you are whistling). On each exhale release the tension from your body and imagine your muscles letting go. Five minutes of slow abdominal breathing can have a profound effect on lessening stress, anxiety and panic. Once you are able to use deep breathing to relax you can learn to take one deep breath and trigger the relaxation response no matter what situation you're in.

B. Progressive muscle relaxation

Another powerful form of relaxation involves training our muscles to relax. If we can decrease the muscular tension in our bodies we can become more and more relaxed overall. Edmund Jacobson developed the idea behind progressive muscle relaxation many years ago. He found that muscles could be relaxed by first tensing them and then releasing them. We are often not aware of the muscular tension that we carry in our bodies. This technique helps us to review each muscle group, tense the muscle then release it, which leads to deep states of relaxation. This type of relaxation is particularly helpful for those whose anxiety is strongly associated with muscle tension. Many symptoms respond to this type of relaxation including: high blood

pressure, tension headaches, muscles aches (back, neck and shoulders), tightness around the eyes, jaw and throat, and insomnia.

To practice progressive muscle relaxation find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed and lie down on a bed or the floor. Begin with the muscles in your feet by tensing them as much as possible for a few seconds and then releasing the muscle. When you release the muscle focus all your attention on letting go and relaxing that particular muscle. Repeat each muscle group twice and then move on until you have tensed and released all of your muscles. Areas that people often forget to work on include the buttocks, stomach muscles, neck muscles, forehead, jaw, tongue and eyes. Once the whole body has been relaxed in this manner profound relaxation can be achieved. Combining this with abdominal breathing is suggested.

C. Visualization

The mind is a powerful tool. We can use it to become more anxious and we can use it to relax. If I visualize having a panic attack, losing control and embarrassing myself in public, my anxiety will undoubtedly increase. If, on the other hand, I can visualize something relaxing I have a chance of triggering the relaxation response rather than anxiety. As an experiment, take a deep breath and remember a time when you felt totally relaxed and calm. Most people can get a brief glimpse or reminiscence of what that feeling was like. If we can harness the power of visualization and put it to good use we have a chance to overcome the anxiety. It's important for you to discover what scenes or images are relaxing for you. For some, laying on a quiet beach experiencing the sound of the waves and the smell of the ocean is relaxing. For others it might be sitting in a boat in the middle of a quiet lake fishing on a lazy summer day. Other calming scenes might be in the mountains, by a stream or sitting by a cozy fire with the snow falling outside. It's important to find what works for you. Obviously, if you have a phobia of swimming in the ocean, the beach scene might not be relaxing for you. Once you have decided on one or several scenes, begin to use these to trigger the relaxation response. To get started with the visualization do some abdominal breathing or progressive muscle relaxation and then fill your mind with the peaceful scene with as much detail as you can. Lose yourself in the visualization as much as you can and allow yourself to experience all your senses. If we do this long enough, just thinking about that peaceful scene can trigger the relaxation response.

Another type of meditation is called "mindfulness." This involves putting your whole focus into whatever it is you are doing. If you are washing dishes, dive completely into the experience of washing dishes (i.e., feel the heat of the water on your skin, the softness of the soap bubbles, the fragrance of the soap, the sound of the water, etc.). If competing thoughts about something that happened earlier in the day or plans for tomorrow intrude on your consciousness, bring yourself back to your experience of doing the dishes. The idea is that if you can totally experience whatever you are doing you can create deep relaxation and live more in the present moment. Mindfulness as a meditation is nice because it can be practiced at any time during the day and does not require a quiet place or substantial time commitment. Imagine if we could totally experience things without our mind chattering away about how we are doing, about how we did in the past, about what our future looks like. Imagine begin

To practice meditation, find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. Sitting in a chair or on the floor is often best at first to prevent you from falling asleep. With eyes closed, begin to take some deep cleansing abdominal breaths and focus on your breathing. If thoughts come into your awareness (and they will) simply notice the thoughts and go back to focusing on your breathing. Focus on what it is like to inhale and then to exhale. Many people who meditate have a word or phrase (mantra) that they focus on and repeat over and over. This mantra does not have to have any special significance. It can be a simple word like "one," or a phrase like "let go." Many people develop specific mantras that have special meaning for them (e.g., om-shanti, God be with me). What is important is to unforgetfully notice your thoughts, let go of them and bring your attention back to your breathing or to your mantra. The first few attempts at meditation can be very frustrating because often our thoughts are pulling us all over the place and it seems like we can stay with our focus only for a few seconds. This is quite common and should not be a source of worry. It takes a great deal of practice to quiet the mind (especially an anxious or obsessive mind).

Meditation is one of the most powerful forms of relaxation. Meditation has been found to greatly reduce chronic anxiety and panic. People often think of gurus chanting on a mountain top when they think of meditation. In reality, meditation is something everyone can learn and benefit from. Meditation doesn't have to have any religious or spiritual significance (although it does for many) and can simply be used as a tool to develop the ability to enter deep states of relaxation. Meditation in the classic sense involves creating a place where you can experience your present state of being with no distraction. The process allows you to let go of thoughts of the past, worries about the future and just "be." Meditation is something that must be practiced. It requires discipline and repetition in order to train the mind to let go of all the things in life that distract and get in the way of being in the here and now.

a) Types of vigorous exercise that you do (or would like to do) on a regular basis:

List the following:

WORKBOOK

One of the most powerful and most effective techniques for reducing anxiety and panic is regular, vigorous exercise. Exercise is a natural outlet for muscle tension and the physiological arousal triggered by the fight or flight response. Regular exercise helps to reduce muscle tension, emotional frustration and helps the body metabolize adrenaline more rapidly. All of these factors contribute to anxiety so their reduction tends to enhance our ability to deal with anxiety and panic.

4. PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Modern equipment and computers make it relatively easy to monitor our physiological functioning. When learning to relax deeply, one's physiology is changing from an alert or agitated state to a calm, relaxed state. The idea behind biofeedback is to provide you with instant feedback on how you are doing as you practice learning how to relax. This instant feedback helps you to quickly find the techniques and images that work best for you, accelerating your ability to achieve deep relaxation. Biofeedback equipment can monitor skin temperature, pulse, muscular tension, brain waves and perspiration. All of these functions change when we relax so we can get instant feedback on our ability to lower our pulse, increase our skin temperature or lesson muscle tension. The feedback helps us isolate and fine tune particular techniques that work best in relieving tension, stress and anxiety.

E. Biofeedback

totally present for a conversation with a friend, a sexual encounter with a spouse, a game with your child, a relaxing bubble bath.

6. DESENSITIZATION

As discussed earlier, one cause of anxiety disorders involves conditioning. Desensitization is a powerful tool to help alter this prior conditioning and reverse the process of avoidance. Anxiety brought on by a phobia or a panic disorder can be reduced greatly by the process of systematic desensitization. This process involves developing a ranking of 10 (or more) situations or events that cause anxiety from minimal anxiety to full blown panic. Below is an example of such a ranking for a person with simple phobia of dogs from least threatening to most threatening.

1. Talking to a person about animals
2. Talking to a person about dogs
3. Seeing a photograph of a dog
4. Seeing a photograph of someone petting a dog
5. Seeing a commercial or movie of a dog
6. Seeing a dog in a cage
7. Seeing a dog at a distance of 50 feet
8. Seeing a dog close up
9. Seeing someone petting a dog close up
10. Petting a dog

When this ranking is complete, begin with # 1 and, after getting in a relaxed state, expose yourself to that event or circumstance (either in your imagination or in reality). If anxiety comes up, stop and relax again until calm. Do not begin # 2 until you have dealt with # 1 without experiencing anxiety. The coupling of the event with relaxation serves to recondition one to be less fearful of the phobic situation. This multiple and gradual exposure to the phobic situation serves to decrease the intensity of the anxiety and desensitize the situation.

Desensitization can be done completely through imagery or through real-life exposure. The use of imagery involves mentally confronting your fears and visualizing yourself in a relaxed state as you overcome them. Real-life desensitization is more powerful and difficult and usually requires a support person to help walk one through the various steps.

Before we can confront or challenge our automatic thoughts we have to become aware of them. By definition, most distorted, automatic thoughts are outside our conscious awareness. We don't sit there after making a mistake and say to ourselves "OK, now it's time to think that I am a worthless person without a future." We can become aware of our automatic, distorted thoughts by keeping a record of our day-to-day lives using the form below or one like it. Take some time (it doesn't have to take a lot of time) to write down a particular situation or event that happened that triggered your fear or anxiety and how you felt about it. The crucial next step is to ask yourself what was going through your mind during and after the event. If you can begin to

A. Confronting automatic thoughts:

As mentioned earlier, fear and anxiety can be triggered by distorted or irrational thinking and can lead to avoidance behavior that is not adaptive or helpful to us. We can talk ourselves into anxiety reactions by creating all sorts of negative images, thoughts or scenarios in our minds. The emotion that is triggered is real and powerful, yet it is often irrational, illogical, distorted and unnecessary. The triggers of this type of fear are often automatic thoughts (self talk) and underlying assumptions that we are typically not aware of nor have conscious control over.

7. CHANGING YOUR SELF TALK

b) Begin to practice gradual exposure to # 1, combined with relaxation. Slowly move to # 2 and so on, as far as you can go (you may need the help of a friend or therapist).

- 1. _____ (least threatening)
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____ (most threatening)

a) Develop a ranking for your anxiety provoking situation or object:

List the following:

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a) Distorted thoughts I have on a regular basis in which I do not examine the evidence:

List the following:

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Automatic distorted thoughts do not reflect the actual evidence out there in the world. One way to help challenge our thoughts is to examine the available evidence to see if it supports or challenges our thoughts, or if other beliefs would better support the evidence. Once you are aware of a thought that may be distorted ask yourself, "what's the evidence that verifies this thought or belief?" Challenge the belief and ask for proof before you accept it as being truth.

B. Examining the evidence

Date _____ Situation _____ Emotion(s) _____ Automatic thoughts _____

Distorted Thought Journal

Keep a distorted thought journal for a one week period.

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track this you will gain an understanding of the constant chatter or self-talk going on in your head. It's necessary sometimes to backtrack time and events. Thus, notice times during the day when you are feeling fearful or anxious and then ask yourself, "what was going through my mind before I had the feeling?" The more you do this the better you will become at catching your self-talk and your distorted thinking.

As we become aware of our underlying distorted assumptions it is important to develop alternative assumptions that can replace the negative irrational ones. It helps to have a few statements that you can tell yourself that will counter those negative thoughts. Writing them down and keeping them available is helpful so that you don't have to go through the process of thinking up rational ones, you can simply look at the counters you have already written down and begin to go over those in your head.

D. Writing alternative assumptions

a) Realistically consider the odds of your irrational thinking actually happening:

List the following:

WORKBOOK

Example: You are about to give a speech and you are getting yourself upright by thinking, "I'm going to make a fool of myself and probably faint in front of 200 people." It would be important to assess the odds of that actually happening by looking at past performances when you have given a speech and not fainted or made a fool of yourself. Once you can see that the odds of that actually happening are minimal you can begin to feel better about your upcoming speech.

Our distorted thoughts often focus on the possible outcome of an event without ever considering the odds of that possible outcome actually happening. If we don't consider the odds we often believe things that in reality have very little chance of ever happening. People with anxiety problems often overestimate the odds of something bad or embarrassing happening.

C. Considering the odds

b) Write down a challenge to those thoughts which takes into account all the available evidence:

Sometimes our automatic thoughts are pictures or images rather than verbal messages. These dysfunctional images can have a similar effect on us and need to be changed or replaced with more adaptive images. Replacement imagery involves replacing a negative image in your mind with a more adaptive helpful image. For example, you have an image in your mind that when you walk into a grocery store you

E. Replacement imagery

b) Write down thoughts you can say to yourself to counteract the distorted thoughts (make sure they are rational and realistic thoughts):

a) Distorted thoughts I have on a regular basis that trigger my fear and anxiety:

List the following:

WORKBOOK

Once we've identified a particular negative thought we can tell ourselves the counter thoughts even before the negative one comes into our mind. This is preventative medicine and it works. These new, more rational thoughts can become our new self talk and can keep the negative irrational thoughts at bay before they're triggered.

While panic attacks are uncomfortable they are not the end of the world and I cannot die from one
If I have a panic attack I can use deep breathing to help me get through it
If I have a panic attack I know that it will not last very long

Possible counter thoughts:

If I have a panic attack that will be terrible, I will lose control and probably die

Distorted thought:

Example:

Distorted, automatic thoughts often occur quickly and often one right after another, triggering a barrage of thoughts that make it difficult to break in and respond with a rational thought. Thought stopping involves interrupting the flow of thoughts with an abrupt stimulus then quickly focusing on other thoughts before the distorted thoughts resume. The abrupt stimulus, can be anything but what has proven to work

Thought stopping

Sometimes we have recurring automatic thoughts that are very difficult to stop or counteract. These thoughts can take on an obsessive quality and seem to have a life of their own. The following techniques can be helpful in alleviating these recurrent, automatic thoughts.

G. Techniques for controlling recurrent thoughts

This technique involves first imagining a situation with which you have a problem; then imagine the problem happening with all the associated fear or conflict; then imagine tolerating the anxiety and coping effectively with the situation. This imagery helps us to take some of the sting out of our emotional responses while at the same time developing more adaptive coping strategies to deal with the problem.

F. Coping imagery

- a) Write down scenes or images that you routinely have that trigger anxiety:

- b) Write down a new positive or at least neutral scene to replace the above scene:

- c) Practice imagining the new replacement imagery many times throughout the day.

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List the following:

will have a panic attack and have to run from the store shaking. It would be helpful to replace that image with one of you calmly walking through the store in a deep state of relaxation and calm. You can also imagine yourself dealing with whatever anxiety that comes up with deep breathing or other coping strategies.

well is simply telling yourself in your mind as loudly and forcefully as you can to "STOP." It's like you are yelling at the top of your lungs but just in your head so your neighbor can't hear you. This serves to derail the thoughts and for a few seconds there is nothing going on in your head. At this point switching to another pre-planned thought pattern is helpful so you don't go right back to the negative pattern again. The thought you switch to need not have anything to do with the previous thoughts. In fact, it's most distracting if you can make the replacement thought something totally different i.e., imagining yourself on a beach in Tahiti with the waves splashing against your feet.

Refocusing

There is a limit to the number of things that can be going on in the mind at once. If we can occupy the mind with pleasant or neutral thoughts and images we can keep the distorted thoughts out for a while. Any concentrated cognitive activity will have the effect of temporarily taking the focus away from our negative thoughts. This may include counting, focusing on pleasant images or concentrating on an object or event. Sometimes simply focusing intensely on an outside object and looking at it with as much detail as possible i.e., concentrating on how it looks, noticing the different colors and textures, and wondering about its meaning, etc., can distract us enough so that we are able to disrupt the stream of negative, distorted thoughts.

8. DEALING WITH PANIC ATTACKS

Panic attacks are the most debilitating type of anxiety and deserve special attention in order to cope with them. Anyone who has experienced a full blown panic attack knows how incredibly terrifying they can be. The physiological reactions of panic occur to a lesser degree when we are excited or stressed. The problem with panic attacks is that the intensity of the symptoms is dramatically increased and these reactions occur in the presence of little apparent danger. When such a dramatic event happens, there's a natural tendency to try to understand these terrible symptoms. If we look to the immediate environment and see no apparent danger our focus moves inward and we begin to think of possible reasons for the panic. Thoughts like the following serve to intensify the fear and create more panic, starting a cycle of fear and avoidance.

"If I feel such terror, I must be in real danger."
"I'm going to have a heart attack."
"I'm going to die, go crazy, faint, lose control."
"I'm going to suffocate and stop breathing."

The encouraging aspect of treating panic is that you can learn to cope with panic attacks to the point where the panic will not overpower or control you. If you can ride out the symptoms of a panic attack without fighting them or starting to catastrophize about how terrible they are, the panic will subside in a short period of time. The main game plan for fighting panic involves six steps.

How to cope with panic:

- a panic attack cannot cause heart failure or cardiac arrest
- a panic attack will not cause you to stop breathing or suffocate
- a panic attack cannot cause you to faint
- a panic attack cannot cause you to lose your balance
- you cannot "go crazy" during a panic attack

The first and most important thing to understand about panic is that it is not dangerous. As Edmund Bourne claims:

Panic is not dangerous:

Six keys in dealing with panic:

1. Accept the panic - panic only intensifies when we fight it, try to stop it or control it. Resisting the early symptoms of panic only makes them worse. Accept the fact that you are having a panic attack.
2. Face the feelings - face the feelings head on no matter how scary. The feelings and symptoms don't go away when we run from them.
3. Go with the flow - the best way to deal with the many symptoms and feelings associated with a panic attack is to float with them. Ride out the tide rather than try to swim against the current.
4. Relax - deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, meditation, and visualization can all be helpful in lessening the intensity of the panic.
5. Think helpful thoughts - counter any negative or irrational self talk with more positive coping statements.
6. Let time pass - panic will always subside with time. If we can tell ourselves this and allow for time to go by we will feel relief more quickly.

It is crucially important to develop a number of coping statements that you can keep handy at all times to counter the negative self talk. These positive and affirming messages serve to counteract the negative self talk and can help keep the panic at a minimum. Below are some coping statements to have ready. Write some for yourself that you can believe and use when panic hits (write them down on a 3 x 5 card so you

- "What if I panic?"
- "What if I faint?"
- "What if I have a heart attack?"
- "What if I fail the test?"
- "What if I can't handle this?"
- "What if someone laughs at me?"
- "What if I lose control?"
- "What if I get embarrassed?"

People who suffer with panic often engage in destructive self talk that serves to make the panic worse and escalate the symptoms. Such self talk for panic sufferers seems to be "what if...." - and they can develop all sorts of scenarios with these two innocent words in front of them. For example:

Coping statements:

b) Write down three things you can do to diffuse the panic before it builds:

a) What are your early warning signs of an upcoming panic attack?

List the following:

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An important aspect of dealing with panic is to notice early warning signs so that you can learn to interrupt it before it becomes full blown. Early symptoms will be different for different people and might include: tightness in the chest, shallow breathing, a skip of a heart beat or dizziness.

Early warning signs:

Most people have some repressed fear and anxiety from their childhood. If you were abused either emotionally, physically or sexually you most likely have a great deal of child-within fear and anxiety. If you grew up in a dysfunctional family in which you did not get your needs met or were abandoned (physically or emotionally) you may have child-within fear. If you witnessed violence or abuse toward others you

A. Acknowledge your repressed fear and anxiety

Dealing with past, repressed fear and anxiety is one of the most difficult aspects of healing. The fear we hold inside from the past can be strong and quite intense. Below are some helpful ideas in dealing with child-within fear and anxiety.

9. CHILD-WITHIN FEAR AND ANXIETY STRATEGIES:

b) Develop coping messages to counter each of your "What if...." statements:

a) What are some of your "What if..." statements that create anxiety?

List the following:

WORKBOOK

- "The panic is uncomfortable but it's not terrible nor the end of the world."
- "I can ride this out and survive the panic."
- "I've made it through this in the past, I can make it this time."
- "I can be nervous and still deal with the situation."
- "I can take a few deep breaths and the panic will soon pass."
- "This isn't dangerous or life threatening."
- "So what...."
- "Don't fight it, just let it pass."
- "I can slow down and take things one step at a time."
- "It's OK to feel these feelings."

will have them ready).

3) **reparenting** - this involves developing a nurturing relationship with your child-within and parenting him or her. When a child is fearful or anxious it is very important for an adult to talk to them and comfort them to help allay their fears. When we are experiencing some old fear from the past we need to acknowledge the fear as coming from the child. Once we can do that, we can step back and the adult self can be the nurturing parent and say the things the child needs to hear.

2) **sharing with others** - a helpful method of fear and anxiety reduction for child-within anxiety is to share those things you are afraid of with a support group, close friend or therapist and get validation for your feelings. Talking about or debriefing a traumatic or frightening event from the past can serve to reduce the emotional intensity of the feeling and help repair the wound. It's crucially important to share these things with someone who will not shame or blame you.

1) **journaling** - one of the best ways to get feelings out of your body is to put them on paper by writing in a journal. This can help you organize your thoughts and clarify your feelings. This often helps people to connect the various contributing factors of anxiety so that the complete picture can be seen. Journaling can involve writing letters to parents, siblings, perpetrators, God, etc. or you can just write whatever comes to mind.

B. Child-within work

b) Write a statement acknowledging your right to feel fear about those things in your life:

a) Briefly review your life and list all the things (big and small) that you might have been fearful or anxious about as a child (use extra paper if necessary):

List the following:

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probably have this kind of fear.

Anxiety is a very complicated emotion and can become quite debilitating. Anxiety disorders have many causes and cannot typically be pinpointed to one event or situation that causes or maintains the problem. The best treatment for an anxiety disorder is a comprehensive plan that includes a variety of approaches. With all of these available treatments no one should have to suffer from the debilitating effects of anxiety.

SUMMARY

Medications can be very helpful in treating anxiety disorders yet their use should always be combined with the various treatment strategies outlined above. Not all people who suffer with anxiety disorders will require medication and many people can get dramatic relief from their symptoms without relying on medication. Use of medication is probably indicated if other treatments have failed or if the intensity of the panic, obsessions or phobias is severe enough to prevent or restrict you from performing most of your day to day activities. When anxiety is so intense that just getting through the day is a major struggle, then medication is warranted. When anxiety is this intense it is difficult if not impossible to learn and practice relaxation or meditation. The judicious use of medication for anxiety can facilitate inner control and stability to the point of being able to then work with these other anxiety reducing techniques. Use of medication, changes in medication, dosage of medication and discontinuing medication should all be carefully supervised by a physician who has specialized knowledge about anti-anxiety medications.

10. MEDICATION

4) therapy - therapy is often required to help people get at some of the underlying childhood issues that contribute to child-within anxiety. The traumatic events that contribute to anxiety disorders are often not issues that we can deal with on our own. The child-within fear is often too intense to approach on your own. This is where therapy with a qualified therapist can help uncover traumatic memories and begin to heal some of the childhood fear and anxiety.

