

# PANIC & ANXIETY

## SESSION 6 COURSE WORKBOOK





## PANIC AND ANXIETY COURSE

### PANIC TOOL KIT AND COURSE SUMMARY

Panic Tool Kit : 6 rules of panic...

If you feel the panic coming on, stand your ground. Don't let the panic make you run away!

- ✓ Slow down your breathing. Try to use your belly to breathe rather than your chest. Breathe in through your nose and breathe out through your nose if possible.
- ✓ **HYPERVENTILATION**  
Importantly, in panic you are breathing too quickly for your body's needs. When you over breathe the balance between oxygen and carbon dioxide in your system gets disturbed. As a result, less blood reaches your brain which causes many of the symptoms of panic such as wheezing, tinnitus, sweating, light-headedness and feeling of weakness. Rapid breathing or hyperventilation is very common in panic and it keeps it going!
- ✓ Relax. Drop your shoulders. Tense each muscle you can locate in your body for 5 seconds and then release.
- ✓ Be realistic. Say to yourself "I'm having a panic attack. It makes me feel anxious but it can't hurt me. Panic attacks are not dangerous. I can manage this".
- ✓ Challenge your negative thoughts. What's the evidence for and against your negative thought? Try to formulate a more balanced thought.
- ✓ Distract yourself. Try to notice what is going around you? What can you see, smell, and hear?



## Exercise

What thoughts and beliefs do you have when you are experiencing a panic attack?

Write them down and challenge them on paper

UNHELPFUL THOUGHT	EVIDENCE FOR	EVIDENCE AGAINST	MORE BALANCED THOUGHT

## WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT PANIC ATTACKS?

If you have been sitting down for a while - get out of the chair slowly. If you have been lying in bed - don't jump out. A feeling of dizziness after rapid movement can cause anxiety and lead to panic.

Don't do too many things at one time. Find some time for hobby and relaxation. Panic is more likely to happen when you are tired.

Make time for your friends and family. Talking to someone can be very helpful.

Introduce some changes into your lifestyle. Watch what you drink, cut down on smoking and caffeine, find time for regular exercise.

Eat healthily. Don't skip meals- if you don't eat, you sugar levels drop which makes you more prone to panic



Face your fears if you want to feel in control. Leave diazepam at home, stop avoiding places that make you anxious. Use the step-by-step approach to do this. Use controlled breathing and muscular relaxation to manage your anxiety when you face your fears.

Can you think about any changes you could introduce to your lifestyle and daily routine?

List them below....



## OVERVIEW OF THE SESSIONS

Panic and anxiety affects the way we think and the way we behave. When we feel panicked we tend to think in a catastrophic way which makes our anxiety worse. Our behaviour changes and we stop doing things we used to enjoy doing or we start avoiding certain situations. Panic & anxiety is also associated with a range of uncomfortable physical symptoms brought on by the 'fight or flight' response.

In order to manage your panic & anxiety you need to practise using some of the techniques we discussed in the sessions. Try to practise daily the following skills:

- 1) Controlled breathing
- 2) Progressive muscle relaxation
- 3) Thought challenging
- 4) Mindfulness
- 5) Facing your fears using step-by-step approach

If you need to refresh your knowledge on any of the above techniques look at the workbooks from the previous sessions. You can always have another go at the exercises/homework. Keep practising and don't be discouraged by the lack of progress. Change takes time and practice. You have made the first step already by coming to the group, now plan your next move. Plan how and when will you use the techniques. Reflect on your progress, think about any obstacles you might encounter and how can you overcome them?

## EXERCISE

Which of the techniques you've learned during this course will you use to manage your panic and anxiety?