

106M. Breaking the panic cycle.

Panic & anxiety disorder & anticipatory panic, can be increased due to misinterpretations of physiological (bodily) sensations, e.g. sweating, shaking, chest pains, fear, hyperventilating, as well as thoughts of being trapped, or dying, or losing one's mind, which can lead to Agoraphobia, where one cannot leave their home, or safe spot, without dreadful horrifying panic.

One can identify the panic cycle by determining one's dysfunctional beliefs, triggers, appraisals, & misinterpretations, that drive these panic cycles.

Focusing on one thought at a time, one can use questioning, to examine the evidence for a belief, while considering alternate explanations & identifying unfounded assumptions, which can help to view thoughts more objectively, to see that though unpleasant, the symptoms are not medically dangerous.

Allow the feared physiological/ bodily feelings, so the mind can realize, how common & normal these sensations really are & that feeling uncomfortable is not the end of the world, nor start of an attack, but the start of positive brain gain & learning.

Basically, you mimic the symptoms of a panic attack, to show yourself that these feelings cannot hurt you & in actuality are just uncomfortable feelings, not a precursor to doom.

Review anxiety symptoms experienced, during a self induced attack & identify the specific fear, which allows you to prove to your brain, the lack of danger, from body feelings. Need to stay experiencing symptoms beyond your comfort zone, so that your mind sees that avoiding, or quitting the feared stimuli, didnt stop the fear of danger, but that riding it out did.

These exposures should be done daily, to reinforce the truths that sensations do not lead to panic attacks & may include exercises that cause, sweating, hyperventilation, dizziness, racing heart,

nausea, lightheadedness etc. exercises may include shallow fast breathing for 1 minute. Over dress, or turn up heat, to induce sweating, while exercising couple minutes; run in place a couple minutes to induce a racing heart; for an unreal feeling- stare at self in a mirror a few minutes. During exposures think about what physical symptoms you're feeling, how anxious your feeling, what thoughts are racing through your head & what is your worst fear? After exposure, if anxiety is high, try some slow deep breathing for couple minutes.

In cognitive restructuring we talk back to panic symptoms & maintain feared bodily sensations, seeing that distractions can help with symptoms, which proves the attacks are not dangerous. We will learn to reduce coping strategies, as we want to face the symptoms through brain retraining & coping cards where helpful.

After learning that irrational fear cannot cause bodily harm, via exposure, then we will work on the avoidance issues. It is important to know that it is irrelevant, what caused the feelings & sensations (other than medical reasons) as it's the beliefs & doubt labels that need addressed. You can also come to understand & change childhood doubt labels, to help overcome anxiety & panic.

So write, carry & read your coping cards to teach your brain that though unpleasant, anxiety feelings & symptoms are not dangerous.

Practice exposures in feared situations, to see that thoughts do not cause bad things, just bad feelings, which cannot hurt you, but can help us to focus on & record personal strengths, against bad thoughts, for self confidence building. Continue with new coping cards to show growth in what used to believe & what you have learned about yourself & anxiety/ panic & what you now realize that you are capable of, even through uncomfortable feelings.