

Disappear Fear: *Effective Strategies to Combat Anxiety*

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Anxiety disorders, as a group, are the most common mental health disorders in America.



About 40 million American adults are affected by these debilitating illnesses each year. That's 18.1% of the population.

Anxiety Disorders-

- *Panic Disorder
- *Specific Phobia
- *Social Phobia
- *Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- *Separation Anxiety Disorder
- *Selective Mutism



Anxiety Statistics

*Anxiety disorders are highly treatable, yet only 36.9% of those affected receive treatment.

*People with an anxiety disorder are 3 to 5 times more likely to go to the doctor and 6 times more likely to be hospitalized for psychiatric disorders than those who do not have anxiety disorders.

*Social Anxiety Disorder affects 15 million adults, or 6.8% of the U.S. population.

SAD is equally common among men and women and typically begins around age 13. According to a 2007 ADAA survey, 36% of people with social anxiety disorder report experiencing symptoms for 10 or more years before seeking help.

Statistics cont.

*About 40% of Americans experience a panic attack at some point in their life, but only about 4% develop Panic Disorder.

*About half of those diagnosed with an anxiety disorder are also depressed.

*Anxiety disorders affect 25.1% of children between 13 and 18 years old. Research shows that untreated children with anxiety disorders are at higher risk to perform poorly in school, miss out on important social experiences, and engage in substance abuse.

*Anxiety-based school refusal affects 2-5 % of school-age children. It commonly takes place between the ages of 5 and 6 and between 10 and 11, and at times of transition, such as entering middle and high school.

*Anxiety is the top presenting concern among college students (41.6 %), followed by depression (36.4 %) and relationship problems (35.8 %).



Anxiety Statistics

- According to NIMH, less than 43% of those with anxiety seek treatment, and only 33.8% of those people seek treatment considered "minimally adequate." That means that of all the people living with anxiety, only 14.3% are currently engaged in an effective treatment - and that number excludes those with daily manageable anxiety.

Clinical Example #1

10-year-old Corey stepped off of the bus and felt his heart race, stomach become nauseous, and began having difficulty breathing. He became dizzy and his chest hurt, so he called his friend to get the principal. By the time the principal came Corey was sitting on a chair and his face was very red. He was breathing very fast. He said everything was spinning. He told the principal he thought he was dying, and to call an ambulance. By the time the Corey arrived at the hospital he was scared, but all of the other symptoms were gone. Routine medical tests showed nothing.

Clinical Example #2

14-year-old Alexis has missed 8 days of school the past month. The reason is that every day she is ready to get going she feels very nauseated starts to gag. Her stomach becomes very upset, she gets a headache and acid reflux, her heart races and she starts shaking. She has had this “condition” since getting over the flu a little over a month ago. Alexis used to enjoy school and was very active in sports. She has become increasingly irritable and withdrawn.

Clinical Example #3

Rumeal, age 16, was in his math class. All of a sudden he felt like he had to get out or he was going to go nuts or lose control. Rumeal felt his body explode with terrifying sensations. He started breathing hard, felt his heart race, became hot and sweaty, and was trembling. He raised his hand to tell his teacher that he had to leave. When his teacher said no, Rumeal started screaming that he was going anyway and knocked over his desk and then slammed the door so hard they could hear it upstairs. By the time he ended up in the vice-principal's office, it was over and he was sorry, but he ended up with detention.

Clinical Example #4


9-year-old Jessica has been to the family doctor six times in the last two weeks. She has insisted that her mother take her ever since she had a dizzy spell, felt like her stomach was turning inside out, and couldn't breathe. She thought she was going to die. The family doctor couldn't find anything, but she believes that the doctor missed something. Jessica becomes unable to focus on her schoolwork because she is worried about her body sensations and fearful that she will have an attack. She begins to miss more and more school with assorted physical complaints and becomes increasingly oppositional.

Clinical Example #5

17-year-old John used to be a social and confident young man. He had a number of friends and did well in school. Over the past couple of years he has become increasingly worried about what other kids think of him and he has stopped doing things that may call attention to himself, such as raising his hand in class, for fear that he might embarrass himself. He is dreading an upcoming project that requires a presentation in front of his class and spends all his time thinking of ways to avoid the ordeal. He is willing to fail the project, rather than endure the discomfort of speaking in front of the class.



***The Scream*, 1893 – Edvard Munch**



It is common for an anxiety disorder to accompany depression, eating disorders, substance abuse, or another anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders can also co-exist with illnesses such as cancer or heart disease.

Treatment for anxiety

- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
- Behavioral Therapy
- Relaxation Therapy
- Medication (SSRIs – Prozac, Paxil, Celexa, Zoloft, Luvox; Tricyclics – Desipramine, Imipramine; Benzodiazapines – Xanax, Ativan, Valium)

Panic Inoculation Treatment

- 5 components
 1. Psychoeducation
 2. Breathing retraining
 3. Cognitive Restructuring
 4. Behavioral Experiments/Exposure
 5. Relapse Prevention
- 80% show “dramatic improvement in frequency of panic attacks, agoraphobic avoidance, and anxiety symptomatology” (Telch, Lucas, Schmidt, Hanna, Jaimez, & Lucas, 1993)

Initial Session

- Traditional intake – background information, MMSE, etc.
- Offer Miracle Question
- Begin psychoeducation
 - Dragon metaphor
 - handout on anxiety/panic



Imagine that a MIRACLE happens while you are sleeping tonight and all you are coming here for is miraculously all better...how would you know? What would it look like?

Education

HOMEWORK:

- Handout prior to or after first session
 - Define panic & anxiety terms
 - Function of anxiety & panic
 - Alarm system
 - Physiology of anxiety
 - Theoretical model of Panic
 - Myths and Misinterpretations
- <http://www.algy.com/anxiety/files/barlow.html>

Phase 1 - Education

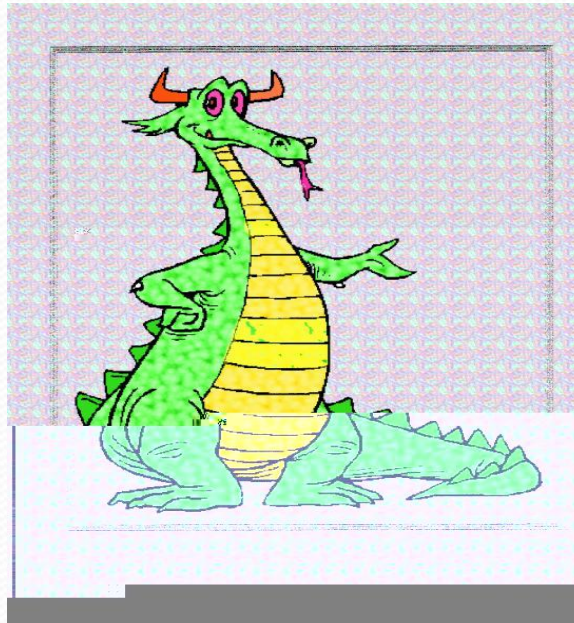
Dragon metaphor - Alarm system



Tactics For Easing Anxiety

Dragon Metaphor

(The Anxiety Cure for Kids; DuPont Spencer, DuPont, and Dupont)

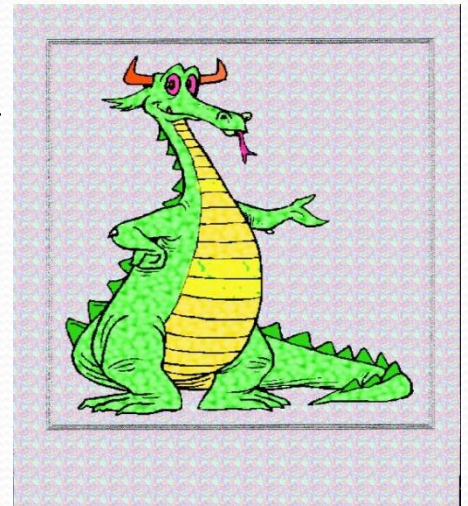


Dragon Metaphor

- We all have a dragon in the back of our mind.
- They can hurt us because they are in our mind.
- All they can eat? Fear and worries.
- They want us worried all the time – Old Country Buffet
- All they can do is trick us, so they are watching and waiting and learning the things that make us afraid.
- Then, they mess with us...whispering and then shouting to us the things that make us afraid.
- Make clients “dragon masters” – differentiate between true threats and dragon tricks.

Dragon Metaphor

- Inform about the dragon
- Learn about the dragon
 - Make your own
 - Know it's tricks
- Make child the Dragon Master



Tactics For Easing Anxiety

Therapeutic Story (Little Bird Who Was Afraid of Dragons)

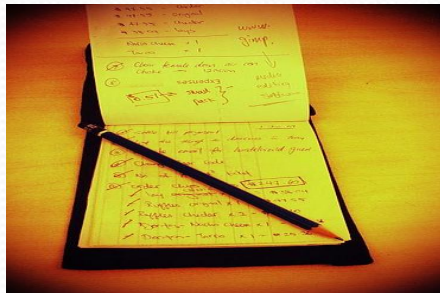


Conquering the Dragon

HOMework:

Logging Fears/Dragon Tricks

- Log dragons
- Identify specific fears
 - Small, Medium, Large Stickers



Education - Alarm Metaphor

- Anxiety
Definitions
- 3 systems of
anxiety
- Theoretical Model
of Panic
- Panic myths

Definitions



Stress – The general response to *perceived* pressures and demands.

*Potluck/picnic metaphor

Anxiety – A natural, normal, and built-in alarm system for dealing with *perceived* future threat or danger.

*Examples

Panic – An alarm response to react to *perceived* immediate threat or danger.

*Examples

Panic Disorder– A learned pattern of false alarms.

*True Threat vs. False Alarm

Agoraphobia – A method for coping with false alarms by avoiding situations.

3 Systems of Anxiety

● Physical

Physical Sensations

● Mental

Internal change in focus -
Hypervigilance

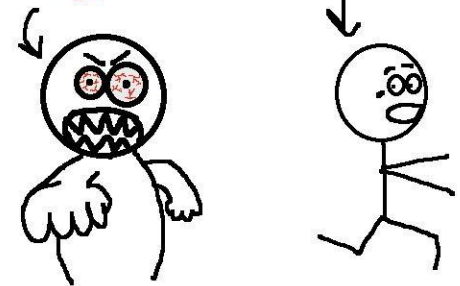
- Worry/Mental Rehearsal

● Behavioral

- Avoidance

- Escape Tendency

Sympathetic =
Fight or Flight!



What is the **fight or flight** response?

- The **fight or flight** response is a **reflex** response which is designed to **help** an individual manage **physically** when under **threat**.
- It is also **activated** in times of **stress** as the body **perceives** stress as a threat.
- There are a series of steps on how this works:

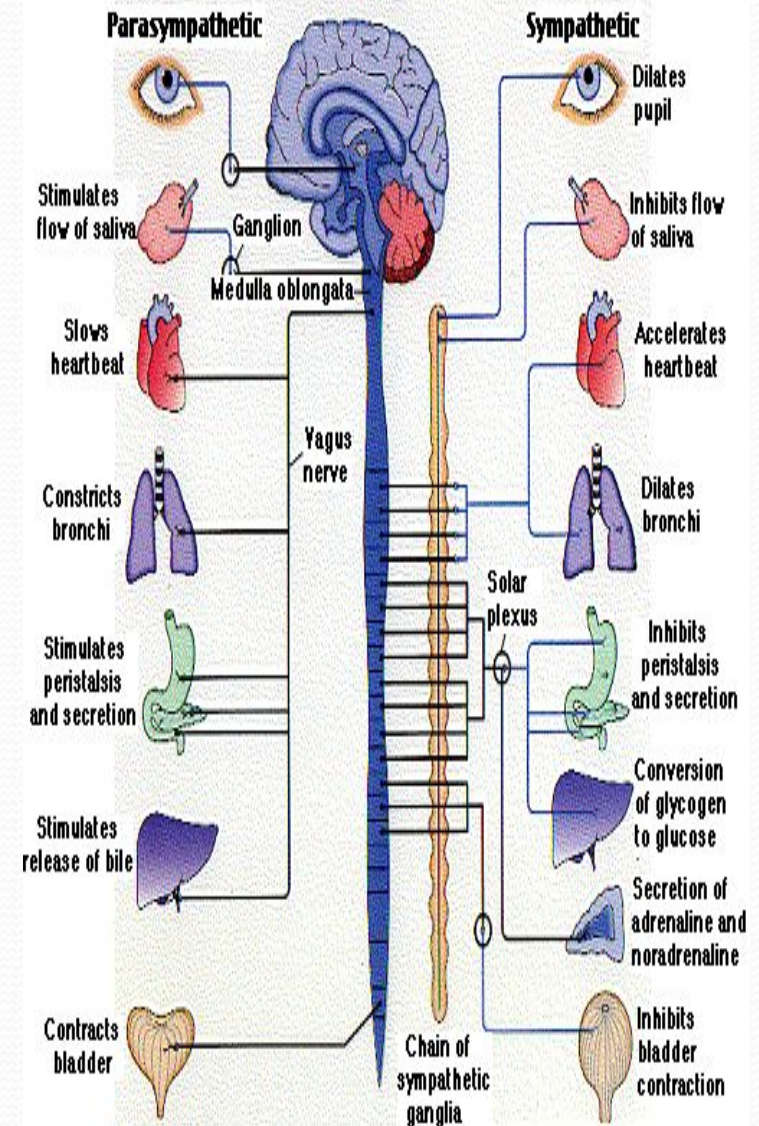
The hypothalamus recognises a threat so it sends a message to

The adrenal gland (adrenal medulla)

This triggers the release of

Adrenaline to the endocrine system and noradrenaline in the brain

This prompts a fight or flight response

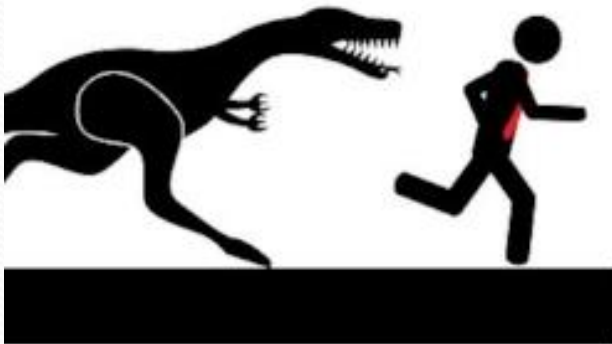


Sympathetic vs. Parasympathetic Nervous System

Autonomic Nervous System

Flight, Fight or Freeze

Sympathetic Nervous System



- Your heart rate increases
- Your pupils dilate
- Your muscles contract
- Your stomach stops many of the functions of digestion

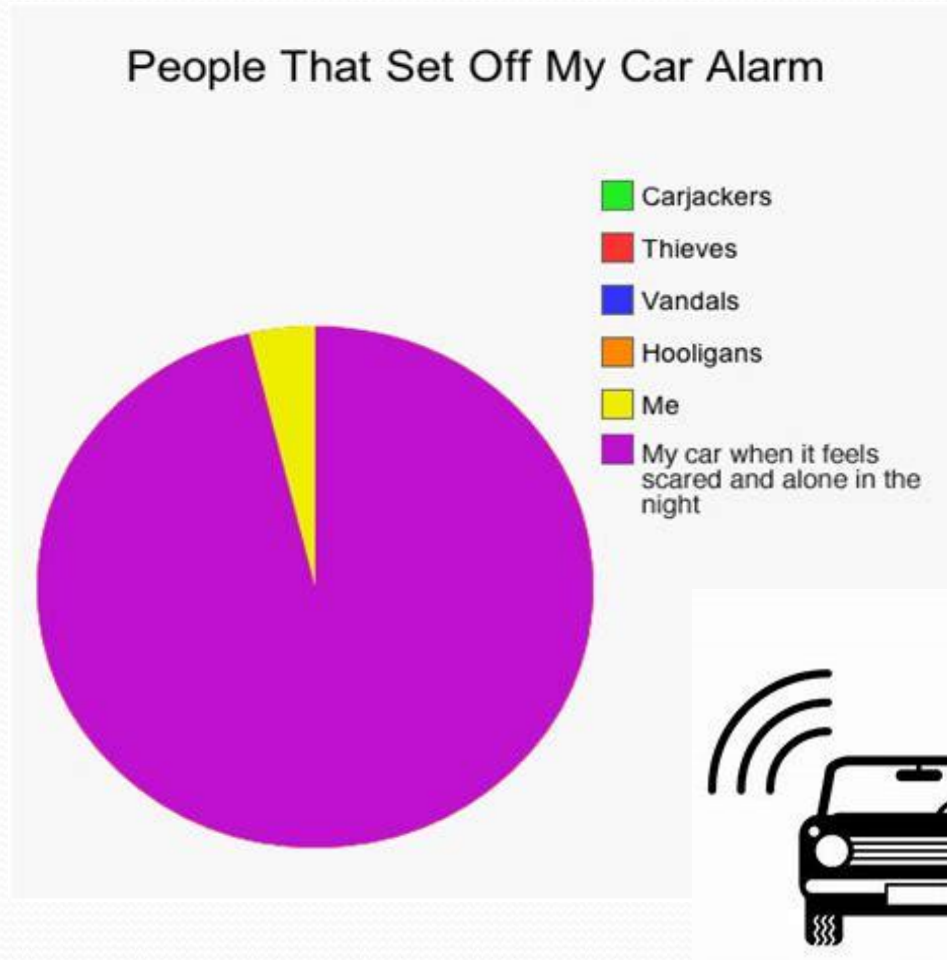
Rest and Digest

Parasympathetic Nervous System



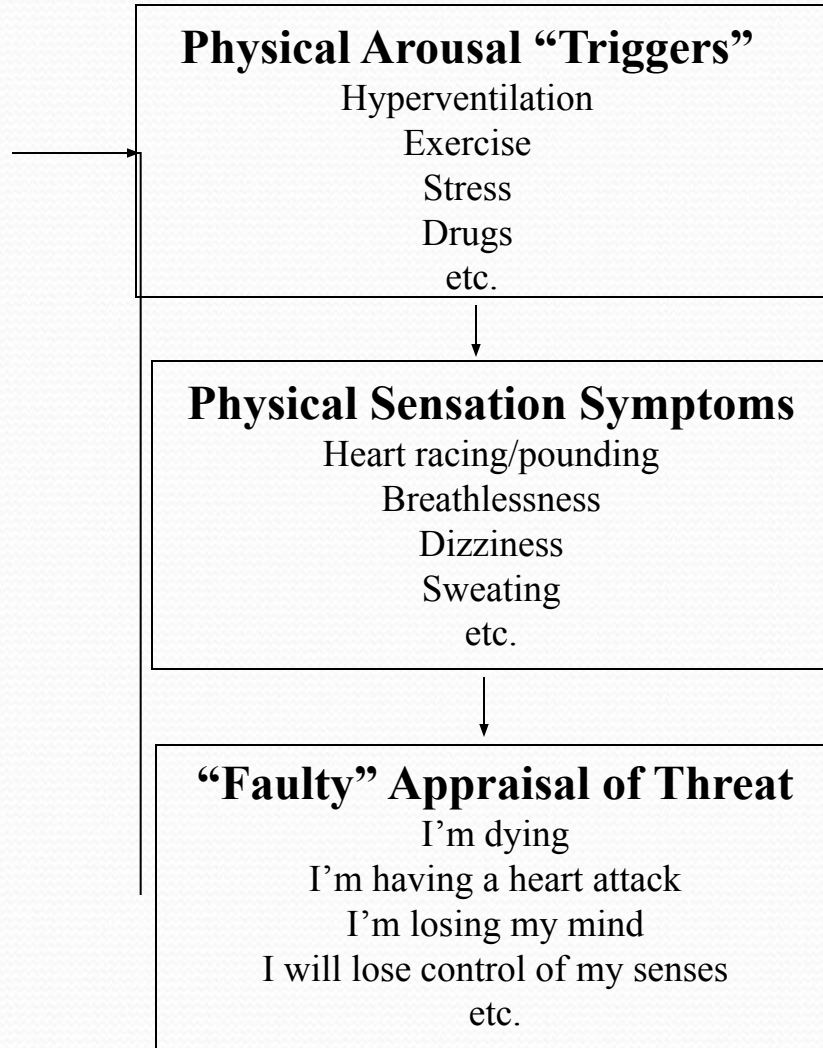
- Your saliva is increased
- Your heart rate drops
- Your muscles relax
- The pupils in your eyes constrict

Do car alarms go off only when people are breaking in???

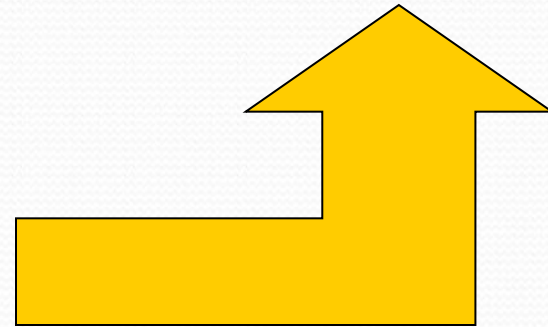


NO....We need to recalibrate your alarm system!!!

Theoretical Model of Panic



PANIC



Panic Myths and Misinterpretations

- Heart attack....heart racing
- Fainting....lightheadedness, dizziness
- Suffocation....breathlessness
- Seizure....lightheadedness
- Lose control....hyperventilation, body changes
- Vomit....stomach distress
- Go crazy....de-realization
- Make a fool of myself....high arousal=behavior changes



What's Cooking?

Recipe	
Dish: <u>PANIC ATTACK</u>	Serves: <u>40% of population</u>
Ingredients:	
1. Uncomfortable physical sensations	
2. The belief that something bad will happen	
Directions:	
Mix well, and panic!	

*While ANXIETY and PANIC, by nature, are unpleasant, they are NOT
harmful or dangerous.
They are necessary for survival and protection.*



Avoidance

- Avoidance is a form of self-medication
- May develop certain rules
 - I will only go if with special person.
 - I don't go to birthday parties.
 - I don't go to the mall.
 - I am driven to school.
 - I don't wait in lines.
 - I don't ride the bus.
- Significantly effects functioning or relationships





Fight, Flight, or Freeze

- An anxiety response is no more than:
 - Sympathetic Arousal
 - Cognitive Attribution
 - Emotional Labeling

Tactics For Easing Anxiety

Separating our “FEELINGS”



PHYSICAL SENSATIONS:

I **feel** my heart beating faster, my stomach **feels** sick, my palms **feel** sweaty.



EMOTIONS:

I **feel** worried, fearful, anxious, scared, embarrassed, hurt, overwhelmed, angry, annoyed, insecure, helpless, etc.



THOUGHTS/BELIEFS:

I **feel** like everyone will laugh at me, I **feel** the world is a dangerous place, I **feel** that I cannot do anything right, I **feel** as if I am all alone.

Phase 2 - Breathing Retraining



No control over sympathetic!!

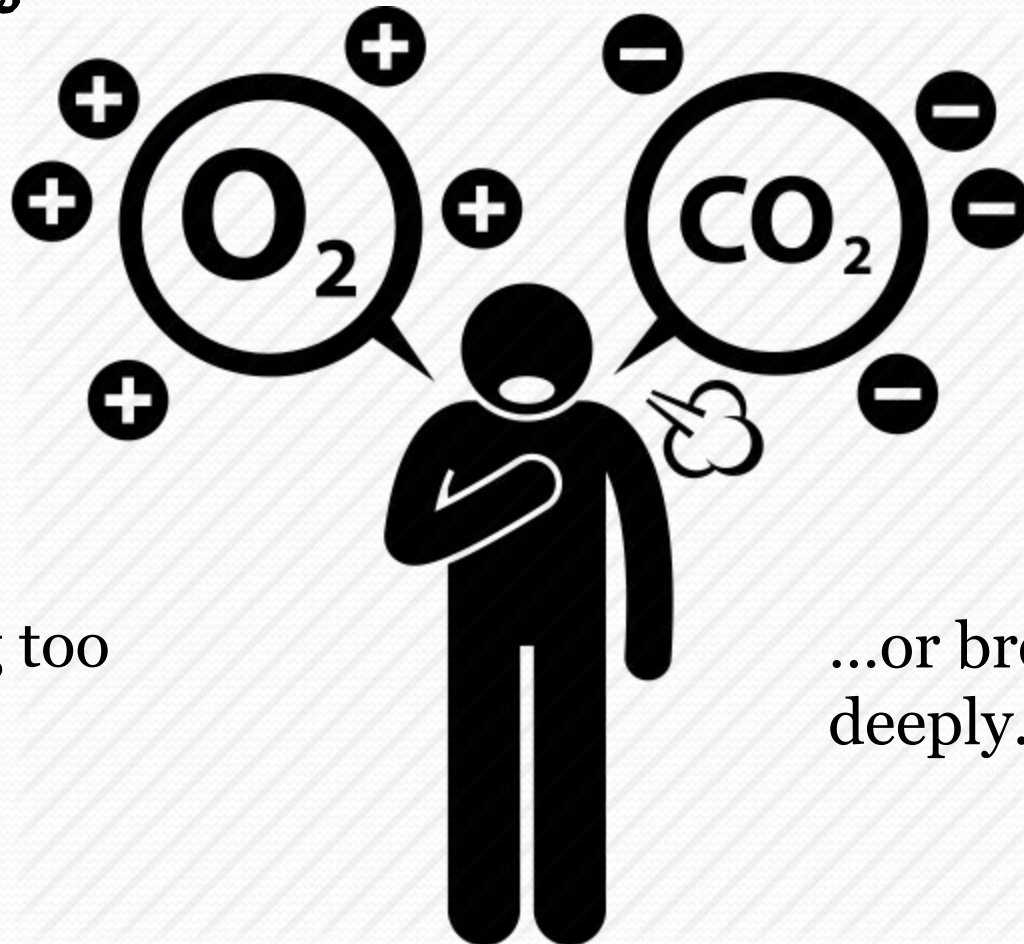
What do we have control over?



*Our PARASYMPATHETIC Nervous System
(Relaxation Response)*

Hyperventilation:

A physical state where you take in more oxygen than your body needs.



Breathing too
fast...

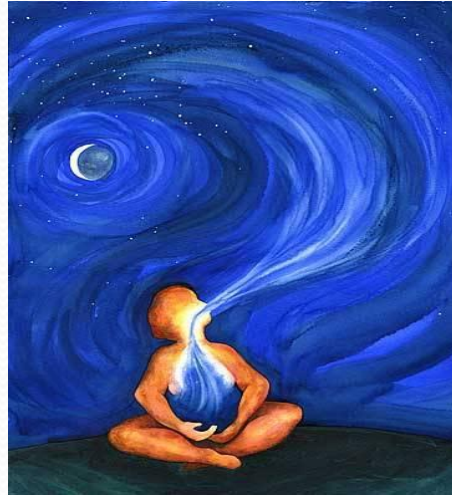
...or breathing too
deeply.

Breathing Assessment



Diaphragmatic Breathing





Inner balance/EmWave (Heartmath.com)

<https://www.thinkpacific.com/app#/app/home>

<http://www.doasone.com/BreathingRooms.aspx?RoomID=10>

Phase 3 - Cognitive Restructuring



STORMY



Negative
Thinking

SUNNY



Clear
Thinking/Reality

RAINBOW



Positive
Thinking-Not
necessarily “happiness”

Brain Channels

The Handbook for Helping Kids with Anxiety and Stress;
(Frank & Frank)

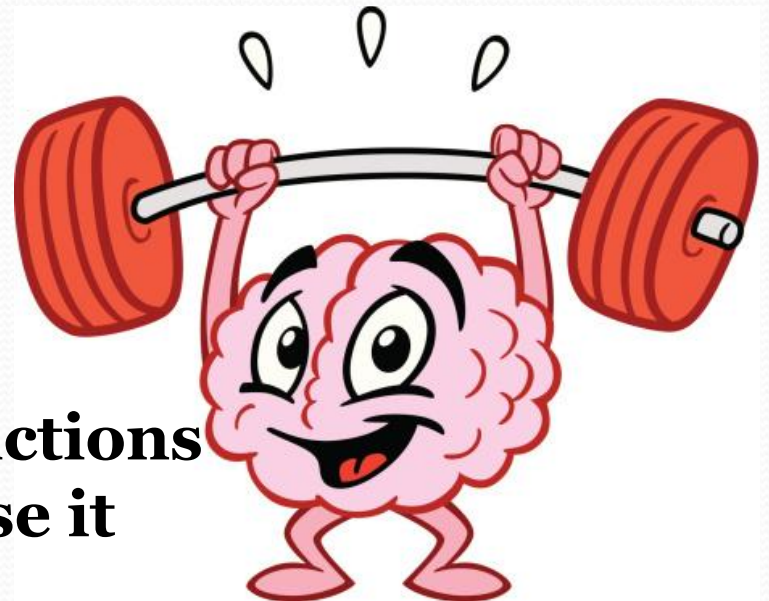
Brain Channels

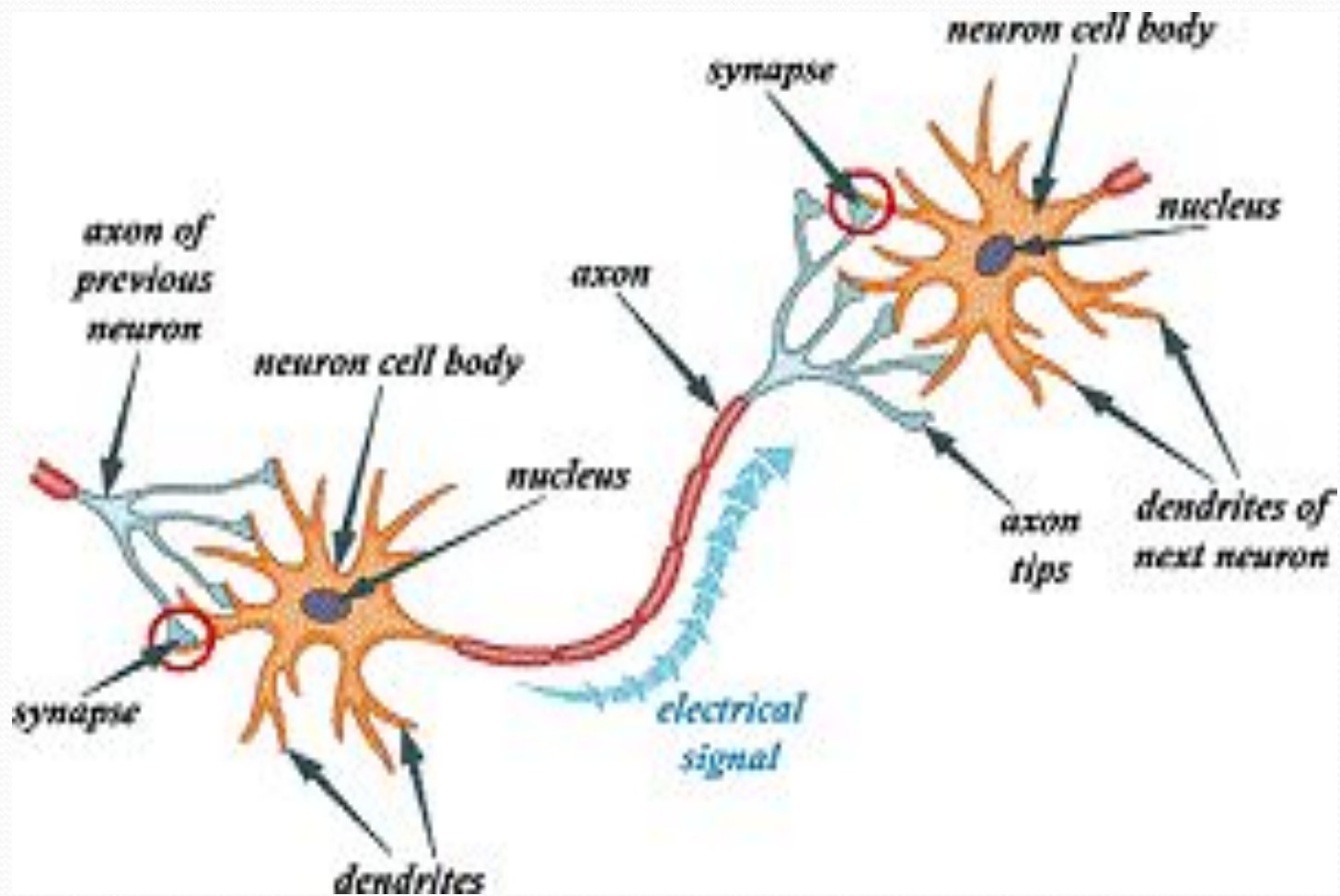
- Thoughts are very powerful, not that they can make things happen, but they can powerfully affect our emotions.
- Stormy channel = negative thinking. Examples? What emotions do those thoughts lead to? Do you do the greatest job of problem solving in stormy channel? NO
- Sunny channel = seeing things clearly/reality. “It is what it is channel.” Lots of it is what it is in life....practice/death/taxes...Not that things are great, but not stormy channel.
- Rainbow channel = positive thinking. Not happiness...easy to think positively when everything is great. Harder when bad things happen or adversity. How do people even think positively when bad things happen or challenges? 1) what we have to be thankful for, 2) hopefulness, 3) growth mindset. + thinking helps us better problem solve...this is what builds confidence because we know we can handle things.

Neuroplasticity

The brain's ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections throughout life. Neuroplasticity allows the neurons (nerve cells) in the brain to compensate for injury and disease and to adjust their activities in response to new situations or to changes in their environment.

Our brain is an organ, but functions like a muscle: the more you use it the stronger it gets.







Old theory =

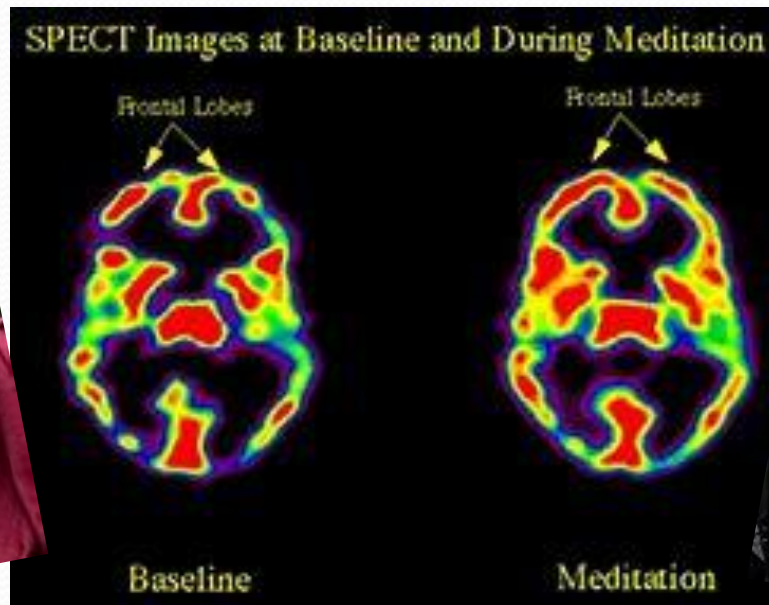
The adult brain is a static organ or hard-wired after critical developmental periods in childhood.

New theory =

Neuroplasticity. Brain is changing/adapting. We can re-wire our brain.

Examples of Neuroplasticity

- Neural networks....Patch over eye
- Davidson's work – New technology - Tibetan monks
- Stroke – brain remaps
- Dumbbell metaphor





a.k.a. “POSITIVE THINKING”

Rainbow Thinking Cards



Cognitive Restructuring

- Thinking Errors
 - Overestimation – believing something bad is way more likely to happen than it really is.
 - Catastrophizing – believing something would be way worse than it actually is
- Dragon Busting Worksheet

Dragon Busting Worksheet

When was your dragon messing with you? _____

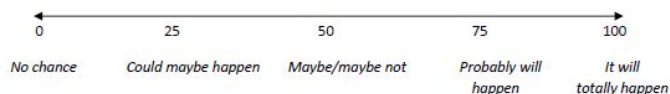
What were you doing? _____

How scared/anxious/worried did it make you? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

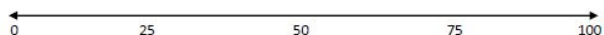
A little Medium A lot

How was your dragon messing with you? What did it make you believe? (Be specific as possible):

How much did the dragon make you believe it would happen? (Mark it on the line)



How bad did the dragon make you believe it would be, if it happened? (Mark it on the line)



Dragon Busting Worksheet

No biggie

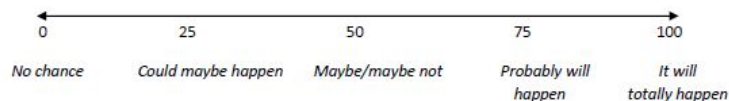
Kind of bad

Pretty bad

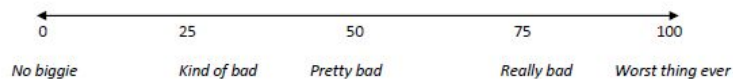
Really bad

Worst thing ever

What does your scientist brain tell you about the chances of it happening? (Mark it on the line)



What does your scientist brain tell you about how bad it would be? (Mark it on the line)



Is there a big difference between the two ? _____ What do you think this means? _____



Is there a big difference between the two ? _____ What do you think this means? _____



After going through this sheet can you switch your brain channel and come up with a better thought?

What would it be? _____

DRA GON BUST ING

Dragon Busting Worksheet

Yesterday

When was your dragon messing with you? _____

Woke up and getting dressed and stomach hurt

What were you doing? _____

How scared/anxious/worried did it make you? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A little

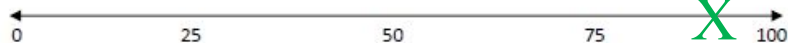
Medium

A lot

How was your dragon messing with you? What did it make you believe? (Be specific as possible):

The dragon was telling me that I was going to get sick and throw up
on the bus or at school.

How much did the dragon make you believe it would happen? (Mark it on the line).



No chance

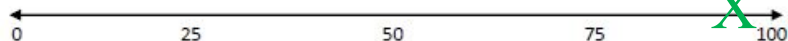
Could maybe happen

Maybe/maybe not

Probably will
happen

It will
totally happen

How bad did the dragon make you believe it would be, if it happened? (Mark it on the line)



No biggie

Kind of bad

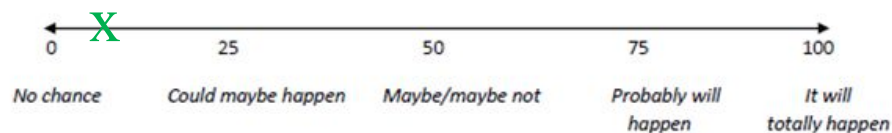
Pretty bad

Really bad

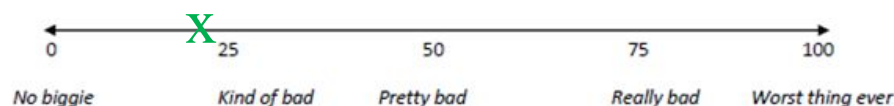
Worst thing ever



What does your scientist brain tell you about the chances of it happening? (Mark it on the line)



What does your scientist brain tell you about how bad it would be? (Mark it on the line)



YES

Is there a big difference between the two

?

What do you think this means?

The dragon made

me believe it would happen when it most likely won't.



YES

Is there a big difference between the two

?

What do you think this means?

The dragon made

me believe it would be worse than it would be.

After going through this sheet can you switch your brain channel and come up with a better thought?

What would it be?

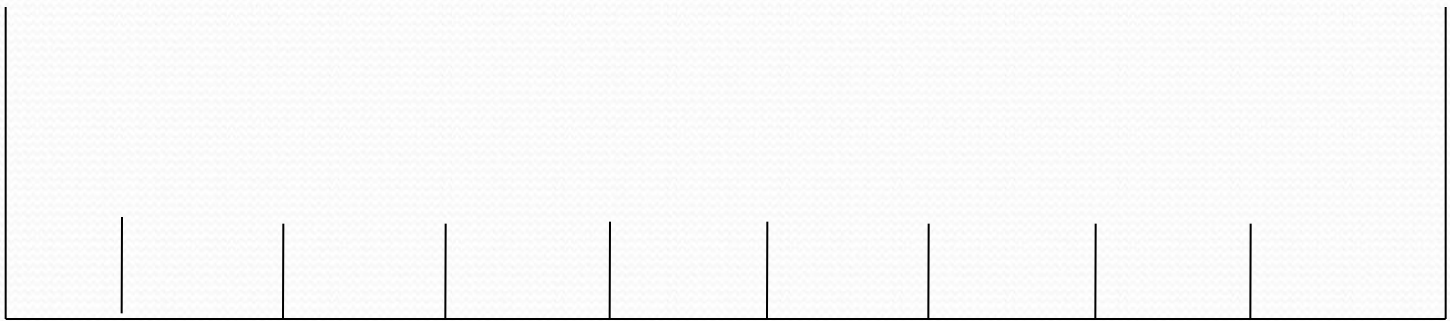
When I get worried my stomach aches, but I've never thrown up
and it always feels better when I relax and don't think about it.
Even if I did get sick at school everyone would feel bad for me
I'll be fine! I'm smarter than the dragon!

Dragon Busting Worksheet

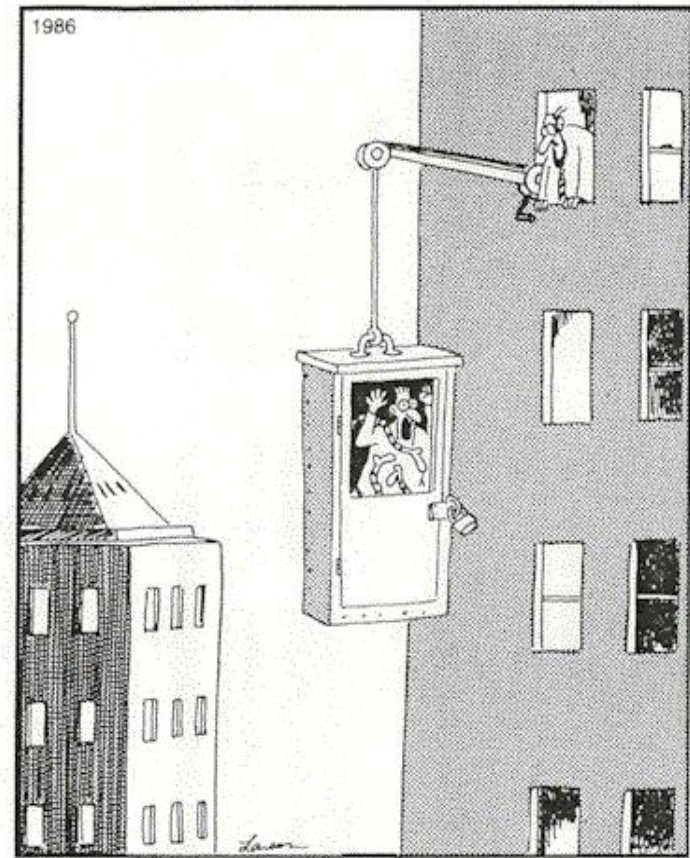
How Bad Would It Really Be?

0

100



Phase 4 - Behavioral Exposure/Experiments



Professor Gallagher and his controversial technique of simultaneously confronting the fear of heights, snakes, and the dark.

Exposure

- Behavioral Experiments
 - Play a key role in eliminating false alarms
- Interoceptive Exposure
 - Familiarize and habituate body sensations
- “Panic Pill”
 - Caffeine induction

Experiment Cards

- The Key to getting over phobias
- Write task on front – complete task
– write outcome on back
- Encourage with + reinforcement
- Gradual steps
- Keep going





The Girl and the Rope



Visualization Skill

- 👁 Mental Rehearsal
- 👁 Visualize getting through feared situation
- 👁 Incorporate breathing
- 👁 Break conditioned response

Examples of Visualization

- You Tube: The Best Way to Visualize-Performance Psychology-Visualization/Imagery
- You Tube: Mental Monday Athlete Spotlight Lindsey Vonn



Let's Practice (Refer to Handout)

Additional Tactics For Easing Anxiety

Super Powers



- HeroMachine 2.5
- Helpful with intrusive thoughts
- Fun way to help with thought stopping

Additional Tactics For Easing Anxiety

Use true Helpers

- Like experiments
- Way to help stop compulsive behavior
- Parents, siblings, therapist

Additional Tactics For Easing Anxiety

Worry Box



- ❑ Initial logging promotes teamwork/ID worries
- ❑ Later takes focus off fears
- ❑ Encourages use of coping skills

MINDFULNESS

*Mindfulness is simply... **noticing what is happening right now.***

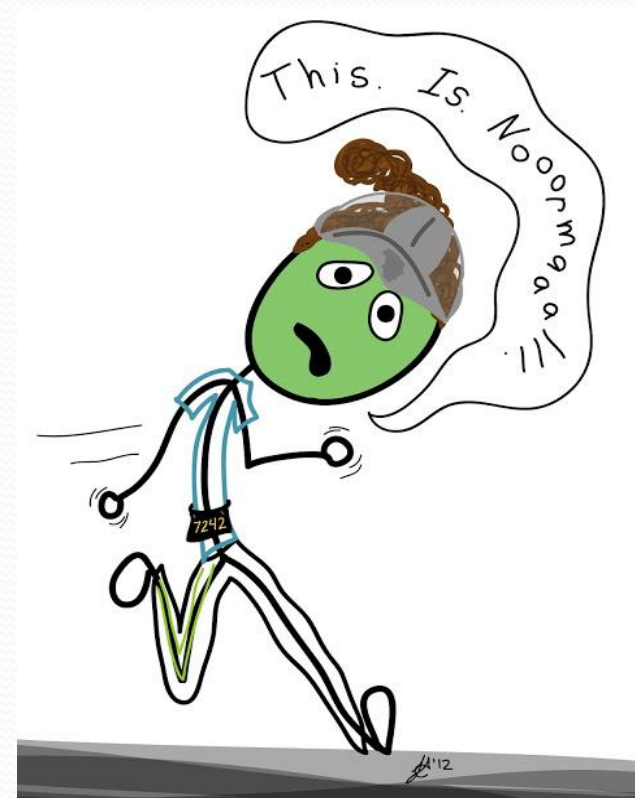
*Mindfulness is about paying attention in a particular way
—
on purpose, in the present moment and without judgment.*



*Mindfulness is an awareness of your thoughts,
emotions,
how your body feels, and what you see, smell ,taste,
touch and hear.*

Interoceptive Assessment:

Carrying out exercises that bring about the physical sensations of a panic attack, such as hyperventilation and muscle tension, in an attempt to remove our conditioned response that the physical sensations will cause a panic attack to happen.



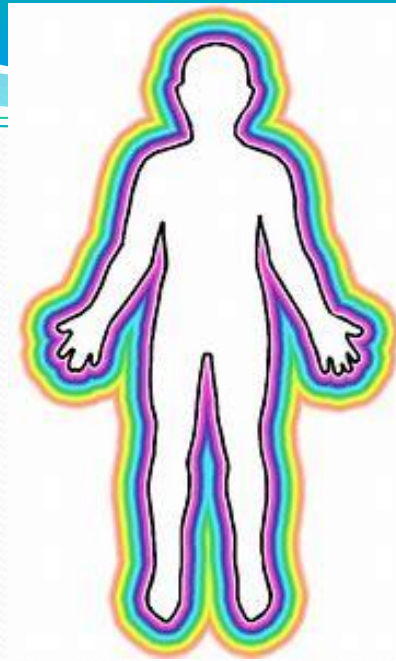
Automatic Conditioning

Classical Conditioning – Pavlov's Dog

Paired Learning



BODY PHOBIAS



Hypervigilance



Hypersensitivity to
physical sensations



Trigger

Anxiety and Panic

Interoceptive Assessment

Exercise	Sensations	Intensity of Sensation (0-10)	Intensity of Fear (0-10)	Similarity to Natural Panic (0-10)
Shake head from side to side (60 seconds)				
Place head between legs (30 seconds)				
Run in place (60 seconds)				
Hold breath (60 seconds)				
Gag response (1 trial)				
Spin (60 seconds)				
Push Up (60 seconds)				
Breathe through straw (60 seconds)				
Hyperventilate (60 seconds)				



If we could give you a pill to **PANIC**,
would you take it??

What would be the **worst** thing about taking a
panic pill?

Could you handle that? How?

CAFFEINE

E



Caffeine - Trigger for unpleasant bodily sensations

INDUCTION

Why is caffeine better than other exercises for eliminating fears of bodily sensations???

ON

Sensations produced by caffeine cannot be stopped once started unlike other exercises.

This is a behavioral experiment designed to show you that the physical sensations produced by caffeine are not dangerous.





Resistance to caffeine induction is common.



The dosage levels you are being asked to try is nowhere near a toxic level for caffeine:

Non caffeine drinkers-2 strong cups of coffee

Caffeine drinkers-4-6 cups of coffee

****If you prefer, you may consume other caffeinated beverages instead of coffee (Mt Dew, Energy Drinks, etc.)**



Cool coffee and drink rather quickly, It will take 10-15 minutes for the caffeine to get into your system.



Use your skills to help with anxiety if it starts to get high.

Caffeine Monitoring Form

Date/Time: _____

Amount consumed: _____

Level of sensations/anxiety every 10 minutes
after drinking

(0-10, 0 being none and 10 being the most
intense):

10 minutes: _____

20 minutes: _____

30 minutes: _____

40 minutes: _____

50 minutes: _____

60 minutes: _____

70 minutes: _____

80 minutes: _____

90 minutes: _____



Phase 5 - Relapse Prevention

- Address safety maneuvers/safety nets
 - Companions
 - Alcohol
 - Medication
 - Avoidance
 - Safety rituals
- Define success
- Review Miracle


Safety Maneuvers

Actions designed to :

A. Prevent a threatening event from occurring

B. Allow one to cope with a threat





Until recently treatment may have taken the “If it helps, do it” approach. However, now research very clearly tells us that this approach is **NOT** beneficial.

If we continue with the safety maneuvers, we continue to reinforce the idea that there is actually something wrong that we need safety from.

*The safety maneuvers reinforce the **FALSE ALARM** of danger.*

Identification of Safety Maneuvers

1. Use of a companion to perform certain activities	<u>Example:</u> I will only go grocery shopping if my mom is along due to my anxiety when standing in line.		
2. Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Medication	<u>Example:</u> Smoking weed before the football game because I'm uncomfortable in crowds.		
3. Avoidance	<u>Example:</u> Not getting my driver's license due to fears that I will pass out when driving.		
4. Safe Rituals	<u>Example:</u> Needing to ensure my cell phone is 100% charged before leaving home just in case.		

Why get rid of Safety Maneuvers?

- They help maintain **false alarms**
- They contribute to chronic anxiety
- Interfere with your life
- Failing to do so slows down your recovery



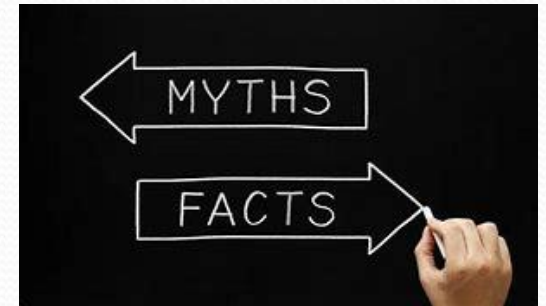
Defining RECOVERY from Anxiety and Panic

1. Panic attacks stop.
2. Worry about panic stops and chronic anxiety is eliminated.
3. Safety maneuvers are completely faded.
4. Hypervigilance to bodily sensations is eliminated.

To gauge your recovery , use your actions, rather than your feelings as a measure of how well you are doing.

Recovery MYTHS

1. I should never have another panic attack.
2. I should never have anxiety.
3. I should never feel stressed.
4. I should never have any emotional difficulties.
5. My life should be completely happy.






Setbacks

vs.

Relapse



Temporary step
backwards
(false alarms)



Going back to where
you were prior to
treatment

*What are some things that
may contribute to a
false alarm or relapse for you?*



*What can you do to cope in the event of a false alarm or
relapse?*

Reflecting back.....



Imagine that a MIRACLE happens while you are sleeping tonight and all you are coming here for is miraculously all better...how would you know? What would it look like?



*“Nothing diminishes anxiety faster
than action.”*

-Walter Anderson



Thank You!!

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