

Talk Yourself Out of a Panic Attack

Keep this piece of paper available to grab whenever a panic attack starts.

Read these statements to yourself slowly, as you begin to control your breathing.

1. This is only a panic attack. That's all it is.
2. I am not having a heart attack. The tightness in my chest, my shortness of breath, and my racing heart are symptoms of adrenaline overload.
3. I am not going crazy. The symptoms will pass.
4. I have endured these symptoms before. I can endure them now.
5. These feelings are uncomfortable, but they won't last forever.
6. Nothing worse will happen.
7. I can find a comfortable place to sit and control my breathing to ease the symptoms:
 1. Breathe in for 7 counts
 2. Hold it for 4 counts and think to yourself, "this will pass"
 3. Exhale for 8 counts

REPEAT until the symptoms remit (and they WILL remit)

After a panic attack you may want to try one of the following:

1. Go to a calming, quiet, comfortable place and do more deep breathing (7-4-8).
2. Do some stretching (or yoga) to ease the tension in your muscles.
3. Close your eyes and imagine yourself in your peaceful place...recall all the details of that place...the sights, the sounds, the smells, and all sensations.
4. Lie down in a comfortable place and begin to do progressive relaxation of your muscles (purposely tensing/tightening each muscle group and then relaxing it, to heighten the difference between the states of tension and relaxation).
5. Self-soothe (through vision, hearing, taste, smell, or touch)