

EMERGENCY ACTION FOR PANIC & ANXIETY ATTACKS

Relaxation

If you feel an attack coming on, simple breathing and relaxation techniques can help you feel more in control. But don't wait until you're having a panic attack to perfect the techniques. Practicing them twice a day for just 10 minutes at a time may make your panic attacks less frequent and easier to conquer.

Grounding

Using the 5 senses, immediately look around you and find:

- 5 things you can **See** (name them to yourself)
- 4 things you can **Touch** (physically touch them and notice how they feel, cold, wet, hard etc)
- 3 things you can **Hear**,
- 1 thing you can **Smell** or **Taste**,
- Tell yourself where you are and that **You Are Safe**.

If it was an anxiety attack:

- (i) Ask yourself what emotion you are feeling (Name it without analysing it).
- (ii) Ask yourself if that emotion is relevant right now in this very moment.

Breathing and Muscles

Notice your breathing. Put one hand on your upper-chest, and the other over your diaphragm (where your rib cage meets your stomach).

Take in a slow, deep breath through your nose. The hand on the chest should stay still, while the one over your diaphragm should raise with your breath. This is how you know the breath is deep enough.

Let the breath out slowly (through your nose) at the same rate as you inhaled.

As Best You Can... try to slow your breathing.

Concentrating on your hands and counting will help focus you and calm you down. Continue these breaths until you feel relaxed.

Relax your muscles. Find a comfortable position to sit in (or lie down).

Close your eyes and begin to focus solely on your toes. Curl them under tightly for a count of five, squeezing the muscles together as hard as you can, then relax.

Next, concentrate on your feet. Hold all muscles tightly for a count of five, then relax.

Continue up your body, isolating each muscle group (calves, thighs, buttocks, stomach, chest, shoulders, neck, fingers, hands, and arms) all the way up to your face.

By the time you contract and relax your face muscles, you should feel much calmer. **It will pass, I promise you.**

Note: Immediately after a panic attack, you may feel very tired. If so, drink water and try to rest and not over stimulate yourself until you feel back to yourself.