

Panic

What is Panic?

- A rush of intense fear and anxiety when facing or simply thinking about a situation, environment, activity or physical sensation that you find threatening.
- The body's natural response to danger is to get ready to fight or run away by sending extra energy resources to our legs and arms and making sure we are prepared to fight off the threat.
- If you don't use up this extra energy then the muscle tension, heat and extra oxygen makes us feel uncomfortable. This feeling can seem scary if we cannot make sense of why this might be happening.
- The physical sensations of anxiety are very normal and are not dangerous but they can seem like symptoms of illness – you might notice your heart racing, sweating, shortness of breath, choking, nausea, dizziness. This is called a Panic Attack when some or all of these symptoms happen at the same time.

How does it change what I do?

- You start avoiding things that might make you feel panicky – you often stop doing things you used to enjoy.
- You start doing more of the things that make you feel safe.
- You stay in or only go to places that make you feel safe.
- You start monitoring how your body feels by checking symptoms repeatedly.

What can I do to help me feel better?

- Relaxation techniques including breathing exercises & muscle relaxation.
- Distract yourself from the feelings in your body through doing other activities.
- Do exercise to use up the extra energy and reduce the anxious feelings.
- Start doing things that make you feel a little uncomfortable – this will help you get used to the feeling and it will go away after a while. Start small and build up as the first task gets easier.

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