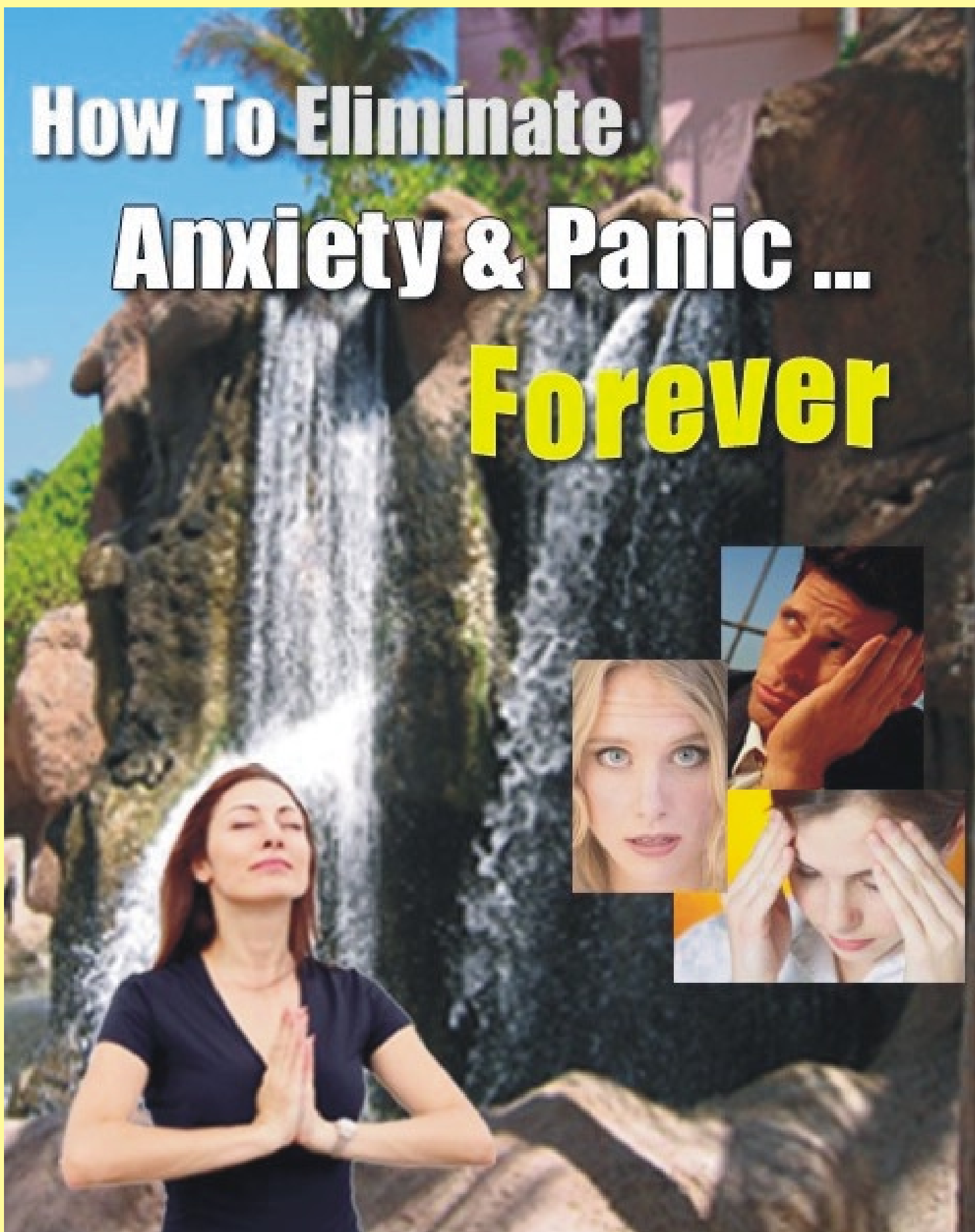


How To Eliminate Anxiety & Panic ... Forever



A Quality Zxmaxx Communications Publication

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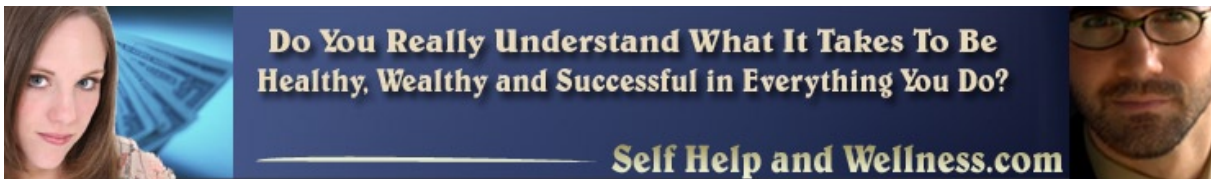
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— Theron Q. Dumont, *The Power of Concentration*

How to Eliminate Panic & Anxiety ... Forever!

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How To Eliminate Anxiety & Panic ... Forever

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Introduction

Panic attack is one of the most frequently experienced disorders in the world. It is estimated that 4 or 5 out of a hundred people are severely affected by it, one way or the other. Because of panic attacks, a casual mood can turn into an eye-popping, jittery, can't-sit-still-on-the-chair mood, like what a husband feels when he's eagerly waiting for his wife to give birth to their child.

A "little" anxiety is not a bad thing. It helps to protect you from harm or potential danger, real or imagined, like other emotions. Let me explain.

Human beings are the most fascinating and intriguing creatures on earth.

The most pronounced reason why we have dominance in the animal kingdom is the way the human brain works. One very distinct feature we have as humans is our ability to have feelings. Although we do not discount that animals have feelings too, as evidenced by the way we see them act or react to certain situations, human feelings have the depth and significance that goes far beyond what animals can attain.

For feelings that deliver us good, we expound ways to improve it even further. For feelings that deliver us harm, we also expound ways to minimize it to tolerable levels. Anxiety is no exemption. There is no need to totally eradicate harmful feelings because at least some of them are not 100% harmful. In small ways, they also do us good. The idea is to control and not be controlled. Let us take fear for example.

Fear, as you know, is one of the most infamous feelings we have as humans. It is one of the biggest (if not the biggest) deterrents to our success. Yet in spite of the negative perception we may have about fear, it also has its little good side. Fear prevents us from getting hurt, both physically and emotionally. The "little" fear inherent within us is actually good for us. We need that "little" fear. It prevents us from getting too aggressive.

The same is true with panic. A "little" panic can serve as a form of defense. But being engulfed with excessive panic may hinder you from performing your normal activities and may deter you to take action especially on not-so-common activities.



However, if you have only one option to face a panic attack, like it or not, you have to find the right approach to contain such an attack and suppress this discomforting feeling.

Panic attacks are actually products of the mind, an imagination of a perceived threat or danger that can be controlled. In reality, such danger does not exist. Even the worst scenario that you can perceive under these circumstances are not life threatening.

Life is too short to be preoccupied with anxieties that hinder growth. In this book, we shall explore in details the misconceptions about panic, so we can segregate what is myth and what is fact. We shall likewise discuss the causes that give rise to panic attacks. All will be presented in a reader-friendly format.

For this same reason, we shall find the corresponding cure or remedy to stop panic in its tracks. In the same context about fear, panic protects us from harm; but when excessive panic becomes harmful itself, we have to explore ways to contain it to the level we want or need it to be.

I encourage you to turn through the pages of this book to find the purpose of controlling panic to a level that will work in your favor. Keep it on a scale where the physical body and emotional state of mind are in comfortable, controllable, and conclusive levels. You should be the one controlling panic attacks, and not the other way around. This is possible and attainable as long as you discipline yourself. These disciplines are contained herein and it is best to know, adhere, and practice them. The succeeding chapters will serve as the path to curb panic attacks.

Chapter One

Getting to Know Anxiety and Panic

Ever experienced one or more of these feelings, some of which have become habits that are hard to beat?

1. A feeling that you might have forgotten to turn off an appliance before leaving the house.
2. A feeling that you might have left something behind on the last place you've been.
3. The bothersome thought that you might have annoyed someone whom is the least person you want to displease.

These feelings can bring about panic/anxiety in a person. All of us have, to some extent, experienced anxiety in one way or another, in more than one instance, and at different levels. These experiences make us all familiar with what anxiety is all about. Aside from what we know, there could be some other facts about anxiety we may not be familiar.

Simply put, anxiety is the feeling of uneasiness, discomfort, or fear of what may eventually happen resulting from perceived, real, or imagined threat or condition. Panic attacks, on the other hand, are actually heightened anxiety.

Two distinct symptoms become obvious during a panic or anxiety attack: physical and emotional.



Physical Symptoms include:

- Difficulty in breathing
- Loss of energy or fatigue
- Cold or sweaty hands
- Shaking or trembling body parts
- Rapid heartbeat
- Restlessness
- Body pains or aches
- Insomnia

Emotional Symptoms include:

- Irritability
- Excessive worrying or fear
- Inability to focus on the task at hand
- Frequent feelings of sadness
- Feeling edgy
- Disturbed composure

Given the choice, we would rather avoid facing an impending threat or undesirable situation we foresee. However, if we are left with no other option but to face the circumstances, we might as well be prepared for it and face it with confidence.

Not all anxiety feelings are caused by things we hate happening to us. One example is graduating top in class, and a valedictorian address needs to be delivered during the commencement exercise. Just the thought of speaking in front of an audience may bring about anxiety. The worst scenario that could happen is getting tongue-tied and this could bring about a panic attack. It's a mixed feeling of positive and slightly negative anxiety. Before the speech, nervousness engulfs the speaker. After the speech, the feeling of relief starts to turn to pride for having graduated no. 1 in class.

In spite of the negative impression we have for anxiety, it is by no means dangerous. Some of us may think that anxiety may result to life threatening health conditions. This is a myth and a false perception. Symptoms like butterflies in the stomach and clammy palms that occur when we get anxious are pretty normal.

However, panic attack is a more serious concern. It can sometimes result to blurred vision, dizziness, and a tight chest that leads to difficulty in breathing. One might misinterpret this as a stroke. The thought of having a stroke might make the anxiety-prone person think that he has a life threatening condition; thereby aggravating the situation.

To dispel this notion, it is best to consult a physician and have regular medical check-ups. This is the best way to segregate anxiety from a serious illness.

When we are confronted with a thought of an impending danger, real or imagined, we have one of two choices: either confront it or run away from it. This is better known as the fight/flight response. If we have to face it, we must be brave enough to do so.

The feeling of anxiety is actually a defensive inherent feeling that protects us from possible danger. It's not the "bad guy" that we usually think it is, but rather a protective shield or response that does not harm us physically.

What Transpires During a Panic Attack

What we usually perceive as a possible threat or danger brought about by a panic attack actually starts from the brain. From the brain, signals are sent to the nervous system of our body. It is the nervous system that is responsible in preparing our body to face or to escape the threat. It is also responsible in returning our body to its original state of equilibrium or tranquility once the threat has gone away or has subsided.

In layman terms, there is this independent region of the nervous system responsible for the rise and fall of our nervous feeling. This rise in feeling is responsible in preparing our body to face or to flee the danger. The fall in feeling or subsiding feeling works to restore balance and equilibrium, bringing our body back to its normal state.

Let us use our example earlier about graduating top in class. Before the valedictory speech, the rising feel goes to work. After the speech, the subsiding feel is responsible for the body's equilibrium. The rising feel is the controversial section of the nervous system which starts the anxiety (or possibly panic attack), while the subsiding feel is the one that brings our body to its original comfortable state.

You might ask: "Exactly what part of our body is activated during a panic attack?" In medical terms, just above the kidney are the adrenal glands that release adrenaline (a hormone) when we are in a state of anxiety. The adrenaline is responsible in keeping our anxiety going. Remember that anxiety within controllable levels is here to protect and not to harm, which is why a continued anxious feeling can be beneficial to the body. Once the excitement is finished, the subsiding feeling takes over to return our body to relaxation mode.

What can we do to control anxiety to a tolerable level? We can engage in some coping techniques or strategies to diffuse or control anxiety. Coping techniques are actually a means of activating the subsiding feel even before the perceived danger is over. Whether we will it or not, this feeling will be called into action at one point or another as the body cannot continue to stay in an ever increasing state of anxiety.

It would be interesting to note that our body is an ingenious work of art. We need not fear that anxiety will reach an uncontrollable level because our body cells are wise enough

to protect themselves from any potential harm. We may even think negatively and perceive the worst scenario; yet our body's ingenuity will still prevail and protect us. Even modern science is baffled with the way the human body works, which is why new discoveries develop as time passes by. Whatever situation we find ourselves into, we can be sure of our body's aim to keep us away from harm.

To sum up what we have discussed so far, anxiety or panic attacks are actually products of our mind; and to a certain extent, they are due to body chemistry.

Entertain yourself by visualizing a caricature of two persons — one representing your mind and the other one, your body. While the mind keeps on doing all sorts of stuff to bring the body to its worst condition (typifying anxiety), the body keeps its ground — confident and barely moving.

Other Distinct Reactions

A rising feel in the nervous system brings about other distinct reactions in the body.

The heartbeat goes up due to the amount of blood flowing through our body. This is to ensure enough oxygen supply so that bodily wastes are removed, thereby priming the body to be ready for action.

Unconsciously, our body works to distribute more blood to where it is needed, such as our extremities. The legs and thighs are primed up, ready for moving; so do the arms and biceps, adding strength to our upper extremities. This additional blood flow comes from the skin, fingers, and toes, which explains why our skin has a paler color under this condition. Our hands feel numb and there's a tingling sensation on the fingertips. We often mistake this manifestation as a prelude to a heart attack. As explained earlier, this is the reason why we need regular medical check-ups to dispel this wrong notion.

In a panic attack, there are other symptoms: difficulty in breathing to the point of suffocation, a tight chest, or a clogged throat. All of these are normal under this condition, as the tissues in the body need to get more oxygen to prepare for any emotional action. Breathlessness resulting to increased speed and depth of breathing, and even chest pains, are resultants of extreme anxiety.

A feeling of dizziness, a blurred (as in "seeing stars") vision, a difficulty to distinguish what is real and what is illusion, a hot flush feeling, a dry mouth, a nauseating feeling in the stomach, a feeling of being hyperactive - all these may also occur under an anxiety condition. The more extreme the anxiety is, the more pronounced the symptoms are.

The Causes of Panic Attacks

It is important that we identify the causes of panic attacks. For different people, the causes may come from various factors.

Oftentimes, we get anxiety feelings for reasons we do not know or cannot identify. We start to get agitated and our concentration gets derailed. We get disrupted in whatever we are doing.

It is extremely difficult to stay focused on what we are doing under an anxiety attack. It makes us commit mistakes that we hardly even notice, until someone else disrupts our attention.

If we are in the company of other people, say our family, friends, or business associates, and they notice that our actions are out-of-the-ordinary, they might begin to ask why. They might think we are hiding something when in fact we are not. That is the difficulty of having such a disorder. Those who are familiar with the situation can somehow help to pacify and calm down a panic victim.

It is important that we get to the root of anxiety. One denominator as reported by a lot of people reveals that prolonged or repetitive work pattern like those working with computers or in manufacturing lines can cause anxiety or panic attacks. This is the reason why regular breaks must be set up for those who work with computers.

Another possible cause of anxiety or panic attack is the fear that we might lose our body control. We are the ones who know our body the most, next to the doctor. What we eat, how we treat our physique, how we feel, and how we think, somehow reveal our health condition. In short, diet, stress, exercise, and our entire metabolism have something to do with the anxiety level within us.

We shall touch on these issues as we continue to know more about anxiety.

During a panic attack, two things usually come to mind: (1) the social embarrassment if such attack occurs when you are in the company of other people; and (2) the thought that runs through your mind of a probable serious illness or disease. The second one is more dangerous especially when the thought of an incurable illness is perceived by your mind, as this could intensify the attack even more. People often tend to think of the worst scenario, which again aggravates the feeling within them.

To allay this kind of fear, it is best to know the differences in symptoms associated with panic attacks compared to suspicions of possible illnesses.

Relation of Panic Attacks to Mental Health

Panic attack is sometimes mistaken to be a mental disorder characterized by disorganized thoughts, and an emotion coupled with bizarre behavior. Rest your mind to the fact that panic attacks do not lead to mental illnesses.

The most distinct difference between a panic attack and a mental illness is that the former is sudden, while the latter is gradual. Nobody has gotten mentally ill in a snap. With this in mind, doubts can be eliminated.

Relation of Panic Attacks to Heart Ailments

During a panic attack, the thought of a heart ailment is almost always certain to occur in one's mind. People have difficulty trying to distinguish between a panic attack and an ailing heart condition. Just the thought of falling into comatose leading to paralysis in the event of regaining consciousness can make one think very negatively. So it is important to know the difference between a panic attack and a heart ailment.

Chest pain and breathlessness are the major symptoms of an ailing heart condition. Occasionally, palpitation and fainting occurs. This is especially true under physical exertion or when a person is tensed. The more extreme it is, the more distinct it will be.

Panic attacks can cause breathlessness to a person even at rest, and may occur while under physical exertion like exercising. It might be difficult to tell then, if a panic attack or a heart ailment is the culprit. So to settle this matter once and for all, it is best to take an EKG test. It is better to have peace of mind than engaging in guesswork.

To have on-the-spot confirmation if a panic attack happens, compared to a heart condition, a home self-check blood pressure monitor (like one you can carry in a bag) can be useful and convenient. This is helpful for people who are under heart medication or in the "border line."

Relation of Panic Attacks to Other Body Symptoms

Panic attacks usually make a person's hands clammy with cold sweat. Some people may develop the feeling of having upset stomach. I remembered my niece once told me that the first time she drove her car alone (she was just learning to drive then), she had stomach ache upon reaching home from work. She felt so anxious or nervous being alone while driving that she hardly noticed any aches in her body. Many "what ifs" or negative thoughts crossed her mind. Fortunately, it was just only in her mind. It was only when she reached home that she noticed cold sweat on her forehead and hands, aside from her aching stomach. She felt so tired and fatigue but relieved after the drive.

As simple as it seems, even if there is currently no real danger, anxiety or panic attacks can interfere with one's daily life. This is why remedies are necessary to eliminate panic attacks; or at the least, bring panic attacks to manageable level.





Different People, Different Cures

Different people have different ways of approaching a problem. What may work for one may not be applicable to another. So other ways have to be explored or used. Being able to adopt more ways than one to solve panic attacks could be more beneficial to a person, should one solution be ineffective.

It's like a variety of products on a shelf in a supermarket. Let's use shampoo as an example. Some people may prefer ABC shampoo while others prefer XYZ shampoo. Of course, there are other brands as well. A person may even prefer two or more shampoos that can be used alternately depending on the mood, season, weather condition, and user's scalp condition, among others. Still others prefer to use conditioners after shampooing while some don't.

In a similar manner, the cures for anxiety are likewise varied to suit different people. It is important to note that there are anxieties brought about by uncontrollable events like natural disasters and loss of human lives; and there are those which are perceived or imagined (the ones that can be controlled or managed), like phobias. The wisdom is in learning to distinguish the difference between the two so as not to be discouraged with the outcome of the cure, not to mention time and effort that may be devoted for this purpose.

Equally important to note is the recognition and acceptance to oneself of specific anxieties. This way, one can say: "I am aware and I admit that I am suffering from anxieties. I will deal with them the best that I can". By stating this, one is psyched and committed in finding the right approach to cure the disorder.

In the next chapters, various ways to overcome panic attacks will be discussed. To those who have frequent brushes of anxiety, these techniques will be very useful and helpful. By learning all of them and by finding out which one best suits your needs, you'll soon be enjoying an anxiety-free life for good.

Chapter 2

Power Relaxation

Some people find relaxation and meditation skills beneficial in getting rid of anxiety and panic attacks. These skills are the opposite of the fight/flight response. You neither resign nor flee from anxiety, but you just let it glide through your mind and body. When learning and practicing these skills, it is important to free yourself from outside distractions.

Try any one or all of the techniques in this chapter until you find one suitable for you.

Roll Breathing

This type of exercise aims to develop the full capacity of your lungs and to harmonize yourself with your breathing pace. This is best done while lying on your back, with knees bent.

1. Place left hand on your stomach, and place the right hand on your chest. Breathe in through the nose to the lower lungs (notice left hand rises while right hand does not move) for around 10 times.
2. After you feel at ease after 10 times of filling and emptying your lower lungs, repeat the same step. But this time, continue inhaling to the upper chest (notice right hand rises as left hand falls a little).
3. Exhale gradually through the mouth with a slight whooshing sound letting left hand fall first, then the right hand. Feel your worries and anxieties leave the body. Do this for around 5 minutes. Notice that the stomach and chest resembles rolling waves, rising and falling in a rhythmic motion.

Do this daily for several weeks or until you feel comfortable with this technique, so that

it can be used whenever needed. If you get dizzy or light headed at first, you must breathe and move slowly, and then gradually increase the rate as you get more comfortable with the exercise.

Modified Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Deep muscle relaxation can diminish anxiety, stress, and tension. The objective of this method is to tense and relax every muscle part of your body. Let's begin.

Stretch out comfortably on the floor. Tense muscle groups for 5 to 10 seconds (strong but not to the point of discomfort), then let go and relax them for 10 to 15 seconds. At different points, check each muscle group and relax each one a bit more each time. Let's start from the bottom going up to the head.

1. Point your toes towards your face.
2. Point and curl toes downward.
3. Clench your thighs hard.
4. Press hips and buttocks together.
5. Suck abdomen into a firm knot.
6. Breathe in deep through nose, hold it in your chest, and exhale through mouth.
7. Arch the back upward and away from any support.
8. Shrug your shoulders.
9. Clench your arms into fists, bend arms at elbows, and flex biceps.
10. Stretch out wrists and forearms, and bend them backward to the wrist.
11. Extend your chin to the chest, then tilt head backward (for the neck).
12. Press your lips tightly.
13. Smile from ear to ear (for the cheeks and jaws).
14. Close your eyes tightly (remove contact lenses if any).
15. Wrinkle your forehead into a frown.
16. When you're done, count backwards from 10 to 1 for a more rejuvenating experience.

Relaxation Response

This technique slows heartbeat rate and breathing, lowers blood pressure, and relieves tensed muscles (as adopted from Herbert Benson, MD). While in a sitting position, with eyes closed, perform the modified progressive muscle relaxation technique. Thereafter, be aware of your breathing from the abdomen and not from the chest. Every time you exhale, say a desirable word, phrase, or mantra like “freedom,” “power,” “one,” or “amen.” Concentrate on any object in your mind as a stimulus and don’t be distracted by any other disturbing thoughts that enter your mind. Just let them drift away. Quietly relax for several minutes, then open your eyes. Notice any difference in breathing and pulse rate prior to the exercise. It may take more than one practice to attain deep relaxation. The purpose of this is to attain a passive mood, by letting distracting thoughts drift away like ocean waves. Practice this technique twice a day for 10 minutes (but not within two hours after a meal).

Imagery

Imagery is the capability of the mind to influence the body. It is the medium in which the mind processes your thoughts - be it positive or negative.

So when you think you’re sick, then your mind may influence your body to really get sick. When you imagine yourself getting healthier and stronger, then your body responds accordingly. That’s the power of the mind.

Imagery isn’t concentrated only on the visual aspect. It can become more powerful if you involve the sound, taste, smell, or touch of the thing you’re imagining. The more senses involved, the more defined the imagery is.

Imagery is an old traditional way of curing illnesses and is a healing tool in almost all of the world’s cultures. This natural healing process is backed-up by several studies and proofs of its effectiveness. Some cancer patients use imagery to remedy their illness by imagining strong white blood cells attacking weak cancer cells. Imagery has the capacity to boost the immune system of the body.

How you process an image that works best for you takes practice, just like playing a musical instrument or trying to excel in a particular sport. In practicing imagery, it is best done while the mind is in a relaxed mood, and while the physical body is in a comfortable state.

The following images are suggestions to relieve anxiety attacks. You can come up with your own image or images that befit your particular mood and that you are most comfortable with.

1. Picture yourself on top of a high mountain. Imagine air circling around your feet, going up to your knees, to your thighs, to your tummy, to your chest, to your neck, and finally to your head. Each time the whirling wind comes up, visualize all your anxieties and worries being swept away. Feel the calming effect as the



anxieties within you are now “gone with the wind.”

2. Picture yourself on the beach. As the waves splash your body, imagine all the anxieties being “cleansed and removed” out of your system.
3. Imagine a gigantic magnet absorbing all your anxieties. After pulling out all negativity out of your system, the magnet bursts like a bubble and all your fears, worries, and anxieties are vanished to oblivion.
4. Visualize yourself in a very relaxing setting. It may be a landscape where you can see the trees, smell the flowers, hear the gentle flow of water from the brook, and feel the refreshing breeze of fresh air. Now every time you feel anxious or tensed, go to this invigorating place in your mind and spend some time relaxing.

Eye Relaxation

“The eyes are the windows to your soul,” as they say. Your eyes are two of the most overworked parts of your body, so it is important to relax them regularly in order to relieve tension. Here’s how.

Close your eyes and place your palms directly over them. Shield out all light without putting pressure on your eyes. Envision and concentrate on the color black. To make your vision stronger, you may visualize a black object, such as a black curtain). Remain in this position for around three minutes while visualizing on the color black. Gradually open your eyes, slowly getting used to the light. Feel your eye muscles totally relaxed and refreshed.

Yoga

In essence, yoga is bringing body and mind in touch with each other. Yoga sessions would include taking deep breaths, inhaling and exhaling through the nose at around 3 seconds interval, and stretching gently from head to toe. Performing yoga regularly can release inner anxieties and tensions lodged deep within your muscles.

The earliest evidence of yoga’s existence dates back nearly 5000 years ago in India. Since then, yoga has been practiced as a natural remedy for various ailments, mostly related to stress and tension.

Daily yoga routine consists of four parts: breathing, relaxation, meditation, and poses. Breathing exercise and meditation can help dissipate anxiety and panic attacks. In deep breathing, positive energy is attracted and sufficient oxygen is collected to relieve your body from tension and stress.

One effective yoga method is the belly breath technique. To do it, you must sit on a firm cushion on the floor so that hips tilt slightly forward to avoid lower back strain. Place either hand on the stomach. Breathe out slowly through the nose, contracting the stomach and slightly pushing the stomach in. Breathe in with relaxed stomach muscles, arch back slightly, and let fresh air come in through the nose. The hand on the stomach will be pushed out as



the belly expands. Once you've familiarized yourself with this procedure, you won't need to put your hand on your belly. Breathing from the chest is stress breathing, while breathing from the belly is the natural and relaxed way of doing it. This will spread more oxygen to the entire body.

For meditation, place a mat or blanket on the floor and lie on it face up. Relax arms on the sides with palms facing the ceiling. Relax legs by straightening them. Unwind your mind by focusing on the different body parts and feel them releasing the tension within. Start with the face, down to the shoulders, arms, hands, and chest focusing on heart and lungs. As you focus on each body part, your breathing becomes deeper and slower. From the chest area, work down to the hips, legs, and feet. Then go back to make sure that the face is still composed and at ease.

After going through this scanning procedure, you can try silently chanting the word "om." Do this for about a minute to channel concentration from your body to your mind. Stop the chant and lie quietly. As images or thoughts enter your mind, don't linger on them but just let them flow. The idea is to think about nothing, only emptiness. Try to slowly transmit your thoughts to your mind's boundary without any pressure. Just let them drift away. What you're doing here is finding tranquility. This may take a little practice but once you're accustomed to it, it will come naturally. Do this for about 10 minutes. Then bring yourself back by repeating the same mantra for about a minute. By doing this procedure, you're letting your body heal itself.

Chapter 3

Proper Diet

Physical condition and mental attitude are directly linked to the way a person thinks, feels, and acts. Both are equally important. The physical side is influenced by the mental side and vice versa. When one of the two is weak, difficulties ensue. This is the reason why one's physique must be healthy with a positive mental disposition. This condition is called for not only to cure anxiety, but also in almost all other situations in life to handle whatever is thrown along the way.

This chapter shall touch on physical wellness related to diet. Before anything else, here's a friendly reminder: "Take things in moderation. Even good things when taken in excessive amounts can be bad." Words to these effects have been part of my attitude in life. I find it applicable in almost every activity I engage in.

Working just enough hours a day is a healthy attitude. Additional work may still be reasonably good like doing overtime work for a few hours and some days of the week. But excessive overtime work like working the whole night over just to finish a job can be very disturbing to one's health. It may be healthy for the pocket, but not for the body.

Engaging in activities to the extreme may occasionally be tolerable; but to increase its frequency can be disadvantageous.

Taking vitamin supplements is a good thing, but not in excessive quantities. Vitamin A, for example, is good for our body in a lot of ways; but too much of it can be toxic.

There is almost always a range of tolerable limits for a lot of things, whether good or bad. Just do not stretch them over the limits, especially with increased frequency.

What is being pointed here is not a picture of the bad side of good things, but rather the bad habits some people do to good things. What is good will remain good as long as it is not abused.

Some people on a diet regimen tend to bribe the good stuffs to extreme levels. Again, a good thing will always be good. It's the way the thing is treated that makes it turn otherwise.

The Importance of Water

Aside from the air we breathe, water is one of the primary sources of life. Water is accessible, abundant, and inexpensive, making it very versatile. It is one substance where the beauty of nature is in harmony with all living creatures.

Without doubt, water is the one of the main ingredients in relieving stress and anxiety. Even the human body is made vastly of water. Water transports and distributes nutrients, hormones, and various chemicals present in the human body to its various vital organs. It is like a delivery truck that drops off the essential substances where they should be or where the body needs them to be.

Dehydration, which is the lack of water in the body, disturbs the delivery system resulting to pile-ups and shortages. We can interpret this unbalanced flow as something similar to anxiety.

While it can be interpreted that drinking other fluids is a replacement for water, water remains to be the best choice. If a person is not accustomed to regular water intakes and prefers something else due to its taste, he can slowly and gradually increase substituting these fluids with plain water. In time, the person will choose water over any other fluids.

The flushing effect of water cleanses the body of toxins, so it is vitally important to drink at least 8 glasses of water a day. The more you perspire, the more water you should drink.

If one has to discover life on another planet or any unknown body in the universe, one of the most important signs being looked for is water. The other one is most likely to be the presence of oxygen in its atmosphere, which is why water is indispensable.

The Importance of Healthy Food

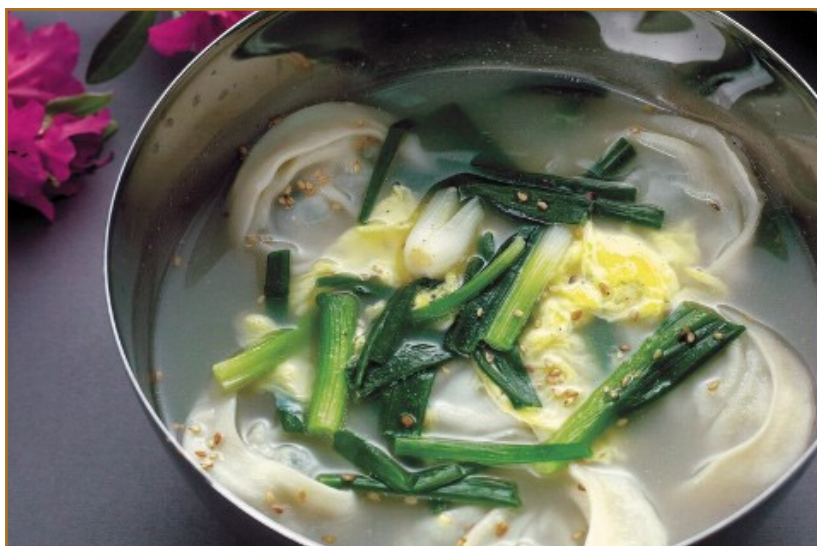
Aside from water or fluids that a person needs for his physical health, solid food or food in general is the other part of one's diet that needs looking into. Again, this is where moderation plays a major role in keeping one's body fit and healthy.

Practice good eating habits. By following the Food Guide Pyramid, you can get all the vitamins, minerals, and most nutrients needed by your body.

Trying to keep track of our eating habits can be difficult for some of us due to the fast-paced stressful life that we lead. We can't find the time to monitor what we eat. Unconsciously, we tend to consume food that is available in the fastest manner. Many of the foods in this group (the fast foods) have high fat content. An unbalanced diet can lead to acidity. This tends to raise the stress level, making many people more susceptible to anxiety and panic attacks. To counteract this activity, alkaline-based foods must be taken to balance the pH level in the body.

How would you know if your body's pH level is balanced?

I believe most of us know about the 80-20 rule. Based on this concept, it is stated that if a fairly fit person makes healthy eating choices 80% of the time (consuming higher calorie foods), the other 20% of the time usually won't be a problem. Translating this to



the amount of food taken each meal using the 80-20 principle, 80% amount of food in the grain, vegetables, and fruits groups, and 20% in the other food groups like meat, poultry, fish, eggs, milk, cheese, and sparingly on fats and sweets, is quite ideal.

Another way to determine an internally balanced pH is by feel. Each time a meal is taken, depending on your metabolism (which has something to do with age and activity), you can more or less determine the comfortable level of stuffy feel in the stomach. A person may be full after a meal but still feels light, due to alkaline-based foods. A person may feel full or heavy despite eating moderate amounts because of acidic foods. Though it is possible that other factors may determine how a person perceives feelings in the stomach, this is a fairly accurate gauge of measuring the pH balance.

Vitamins, Minerals, and Other Nutrients

A balanced diet like those in the Food Guide Pyramid provides enough vitamins, minerals, and most nutrients needed by the human body. However, supplements may be used if you think the foods you are eating fall short of the nutrients needed by the body.

Nutrients in the body play an important role to ward off anxiety in one's daily activities. These include B-complex (Vitamins B5, B6, B12), Omega 3,6, and 9, and colloidal minerals.

The B-complex normalizes the pituitary and adrenal gland hormone levels.

Vitamin B5 also helps relieve stress and tension, aside from anxiety. Suggested daily intake is 500 mg. Foods containing Vitamin B5 include tuna, wheat germ, banana, whole wheat bread, and peanut.

Vitamin B6 is also known as Pyridoxine. Suggested daily intake is 50 to 100 mg. Foods containing Vitamin B6 include peanut, olive, whole grain cereals, soybeans, corn, wheat germ, and nutritional yeast mixed into juice drinks.

Vitamin B12 is also known as Cobalamine. Suggested daily intake is 25 mg. Foods containing Vitamin B12 include whole grain bread, eggs, peanut, milk, cheese, meat, fish, banana, and wheat germ.

Omega 3,6, and 9 regulate the heart and circulatory system. Foods rich in these nutrients include flax seeds oil and fish liver oil such as Squalene.

Although supplements help keep the body healthy in many ways, nutrients derived from natural foods are still the best. Thinking that supplements are readily accessible while neglecting good eating habits is not an ideal habit. Try to go as natural as possible.

Minerals play a vital role in regulating the water content, hormones, and enzymes in the body. It is essential to keep the minerals in a state of balance so as to keep the different systems in the body functioning properly. There are at least 60 different minerals found in the human body, and around 1/3 of these are essential to good health.

Foods to Avoid

Consumables that can trigger anxiety attacks include:

- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Nicotine
- Sugar

Make a conscious effort to avoid them if you are experiencing frequent bouts of anxiety attack. If you can't avoid consuming them, then at least reduce your intake.



Chapter 4

Regular Exercise

One of the ways the mind gains more knowledge and information is through reading. In the same manner, the physical body gains more benefits through exercises.

Exercise is indispensable. A body that is exercised often can be likened to a well-oiled machine or engine. Exercise stretches the body's physical limitations to newer and broader boundaries. Exercises can improve ranges or limitations of movements in the body. Gradual increase in physical exertion brings a person to greater heights of good health; and this will result to less anxiety attacks.

The external results of exercise are obvious. Figuratively, it makes the body look fit while toning the muscles and body mass. Subconsciously under this condition, you become more confident with yourself.

Internally, the vital organs become more vigorous, thereby increasing the metabolic rate. In a possible way, due to this increased vigor, you can feel a more efficient delivery of nutrients to different parts of the body. It also contributes to the beneficial excretion of wastes, residues, and toxins from the body.

During and after an exercise, you can observe the similarities that an exercise delivers compared to an anxiety feeling. Increased bodily sensations and signs like sweating, rapid breathing, and heightened heartbeat rate are common for both. With this in mind, you can deduce your ability to be able to handle anxieties in the same way physical exercise is handled. Whenever you have a panic attack, just remember how you are feeling and adapting when you're exercising. You can then take that emotion and apply it to overcome your anxiety.

To those with a history of respiratory or heart ailments, a go-signal from the doctor is a necessary requisite.

It isn't difficult to start a regimen of exercise. Walking (casual or brisk), jogging, or running, which ever the person prefers, are some of the choices. Slightly sophisticated exercises with simple machines like biking, roller skating, and skate boarding can bring some fun alongside the benefits. For those who prefer to stay indoors, owning machines that simulate walking, jogging, or running is ideal. You may prefer going to the gym for a workout, and to the beach or swimming pool for a swim. If you are to choose between a beach (even for just a walk) and a pool, take the beach. A lot of people with respiratory ailments attest that aside from the exercises obtained by swimming or walking along the beach, the benefit of sea breeze to the respiratory system especially in the early morning, is astounding. This is probably the reason why, aside from swimming, houses along beach lines or seashores are the favorite vacation sites of many people.

Participating in sport activities as a group is not only beneficial to the physique but also in socializing with others.

All these can aid to relieve life's stresses, improve health condition, and cultivate a positive attitude.

How to Exercise

Before exercising, warm up and start slow before accelerating to your up and desired pace. Duration of exercise is based on your own capacity or doctor's recommendation. Keep going for as long as you are comfortably able. Rest a while when needed, then go on again. This way, you can experience and determine gradual successions of physical exertion. Increase the resistance on the next exercise session if possible. Remember to drink water or fluids prior to, in between (if possible), and after each exercise.

Exercise is definitely and undoubtedly one of the best ways to lessen or prevent anxiety. Exercise will remain as an indispensable tool not only in overcoming anxiety, but also in the over all context of maintaining a healthy body.

There is no better description about exercise than this quote by Dr. Robert Butler who states: "If exercise could be packed into a pill, it would be the single most widely prescribed and beneficial medicine in the nation."



Chapter 5

Natural and Alternative Means

Natural home remedies are practical ways to keep anxieties under control. In this chapter, you shall discover new ways to attain wellness - ways that are as close to nature as possible.

A lot of people combine conventional means with alternative measures in finding cures to anxieties. This is a good idea. This combination is better known as complementary therapies. A lot of practitioners agree to the benefits that can be derived from this fusion.

Here are the alternative techniques designed specifically to cure anxiety and panic attacks.

Acupressure

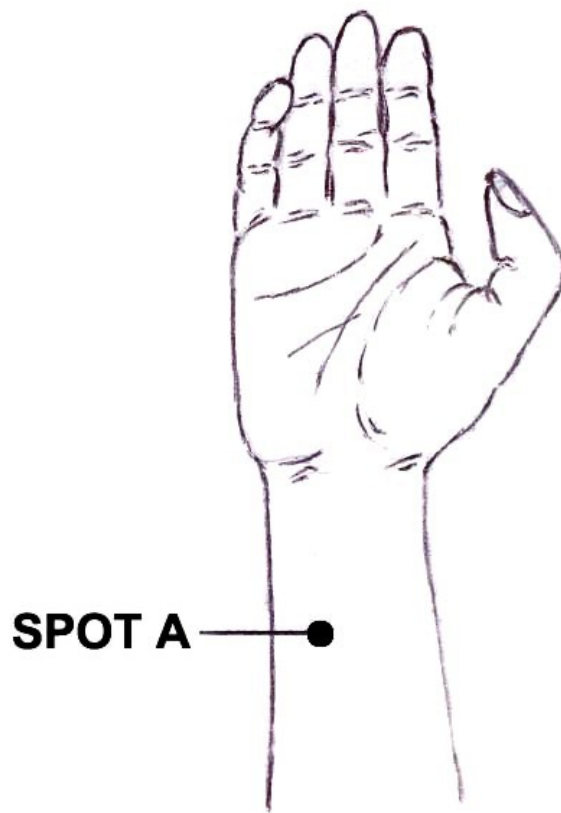
As the word suggests, acupressure is an ancient Chinese art of healing similar in many ways to acupuncture. It uses hands (at times other parts of the body like feet and elbow) in applying pressure to specific points of the human body depending on your illness or concern. This healing technique is completely safe, without side effects, and 100% natural. No medication is required. The results are effective and instantaneous. And the best part is that it is inexpensive (even free if you know the fundamentals of acupressure). By mere hand pressure, its purpose is to restore or accentuate the flow of energy in the body to activate its own healing process. This energy which is better known as Qi (pronounced “chi”) or Qi Kong is used in turning stagnant energy into free flowing energy in the body. It makes the blood flow smoothly, thereby giving relief to stress, anxiety, and other bodily ailments.

The acupressure techniques discussed in this book shall concentrate mainly on controlling stress or anxiety. Alongside, acupressure will likewise provide other benefits to the overall health condition of the body and mind.

Initially practice these procedures (even without feeling anxious) to familiarize yourself, although it would be better to do them when you're under an anxiety attack to determine their efficacy. Trying to bring yourself to a state of anxiety intentionally might be difficult just to determine improvement levels once these techniques are utilized. Nevertheless, practice them even under normal condition. General rule: Press firmly but not to the point of experiencing pain or discomfort.

1. Grasp your thumb (either one holding the other) in a firm, earnest, and gentle manner. Continue holding your thumb until your anxieties fade away.
2. Tightly press the spot that is approximately 4 to 4.5 cm from the bottom of your palm, while taking several deep breaths. **See SPOT A in the *Acupressure Illustration* below.**
3. Intently press the spot where the "third eye" is perceived to be (at the center of your forehead, in the middle of your eyebrows). Then grasp the middle toe. A pressure from top to bottom accelerates the flow of energy down the body, thereby releasing anxiety.

Acupressure Illustration



A lot of people affirm the effectiveness of acupressure methods. To some, these techniques may be new and they may feel apprehensive to try them. But the important thing here is that acupressure procedures are natural and externally applied. With no medication to be taken internally, it can be concluded that acupressure methods are completely safe.

Thought Field Therapy

“Thought Field Therapy is the study of the structure of thought fields and the body’s energy system as they pertain to the diagnosis and treatment of psychological problems,” explains Roger J. Callahan, founder and developer of TFT. This involves tapping different spots of the body to get rid of emotional or mental distress. The tapping transpires at the border points of various energy meridians and supplies the extra energy required to promote the beneficial flow of electromagnetic energy throughout the body. Here are the procedures.

Procedure 1: Contemplate on what causes your anxiety or panic attacks. Purposely feel the misery or agony of experiencing the situation.

Procedure 2: When your anxiety is at its highest point, assign a number between 1 and 10 that best depicts the level of your distress. A rating of 10 represents the maximum level of discomfort while a rating of 1 represents no discomfort at all.

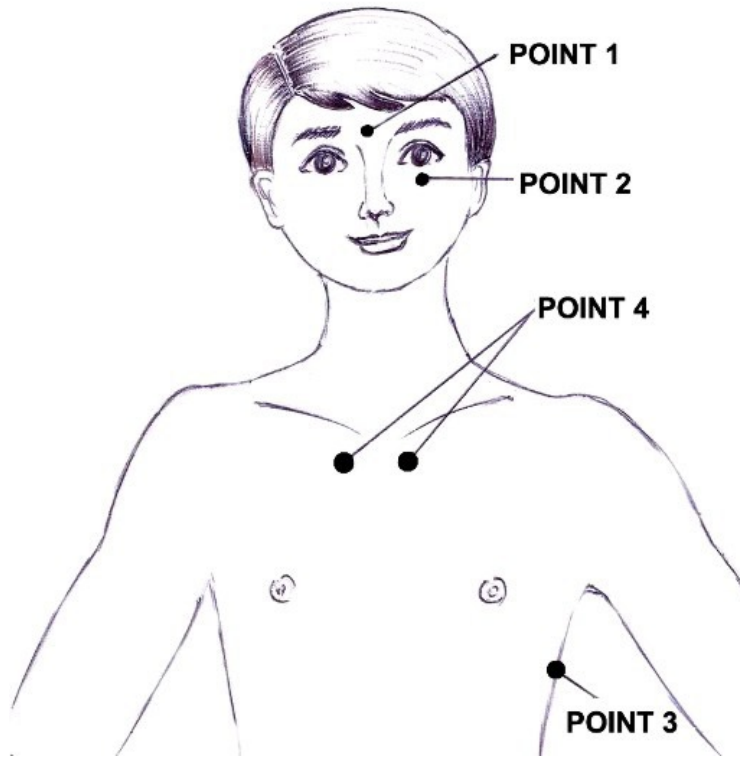
Procedure 3: While thinking about the distress, tap solidly five times (using your two fingertips) the spot above the bridge of your nose, roughly where either eyebrow meets. See **POINT 1** in the 1st *TFT Illustration*. Tap firmly but not to the point of experiencing pain or discomfort.

Procedure 4: Tap solidly (using your two fingertips) the spot under the eye around 5 times. See **POINT 2** in the 1st *TFT Illustration*. It doesn’t matter which side you tap. You can even tap both sides at the same time. Again, tap intently but not to the point of pain.

Procedure 5: Tap five times the spot about 4 inches below either armpit at the side of the body. This is a little below the level of the nipple. See **POINT 3** in the 1st *TFT Illustration*.

Procedure 6: Tap 5 times the spot under the collar bone, around 1 inch to the left or to the right from the center of the chest, before the first rib. See **POINT 4** in the 1st *TFT Illustration*.

1st TFT Illustration



Procedure 7: At this point, rate your anxiety level again from 1 to 10 (with 10 experiencing the most discomfort).

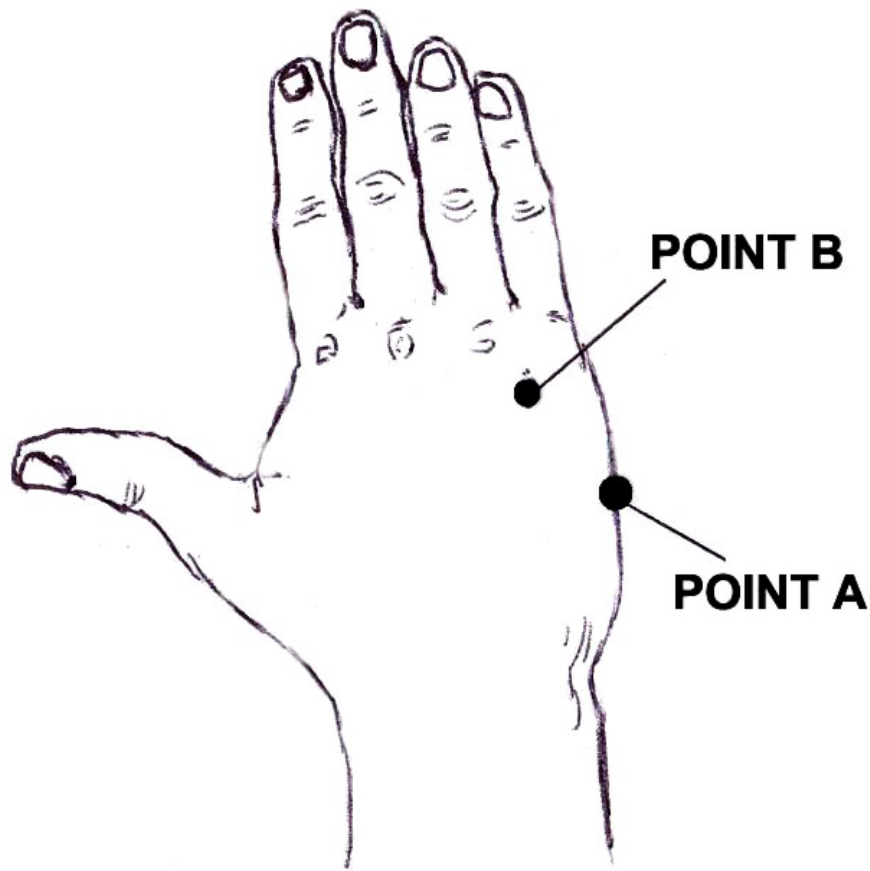
Procedure 8: If the reduction of the anxiety level is at least 2, go directly to Procedure 9. If not, join your fingers together and proceed to find the spot between the base of the little finger and the wrist, on the outmost edge. See **POINT A** in the *2ND TFT Illustration*. Tap this spot 5 times using the other hand while saying, “I wholeheartedly accept myself even though I am still experiencing this anxiety.” Then repeat the first 7 procedures.

Procedure 9: When a substantial level of anxiety is released, the next process is to locate (at the back of the hand) the spot between the knuckles of the ring finger and little finger. See **POINT B** in the *2ND TFT Illustration* below. Tap using 2 fingers of the other hand while simultaneously engaging in the following movements (around 4 to 5 taps per movement):

1. Close your eyes.
2. Open your eyes.
3. With head not moving, turn your eyes to the left side

4. With head not moving, turn your eyes to the right side.
5. Spin your eyes in one direction.
6. Spin your eyes in the opposite direction.
7. Hum around 2 to 4 notes of a tune.
8. Count from 1 to 5.
9. Hum around 2 to 4 notes of a tune.
10. Count from 1 to 5.

2nd TFT Illustration



Procedure 10: At this point, evaluate the anxiety level if there is a notable improvement. A minor decrease in anxiety will require a repeat of this whole procedure from the top. This time, the taps will be thrice as many.

When you have finally achieved a 3 to 1 rating, you may wrap it up with Procedure 9. This time, the tapping of the hand is done with the eyes circling downwards (at head level), then circling up taking about 6 to 10 seconds.

A word of advice: Do this privately or in the company of people who are aware of this activity to avoid being misinterpreted. Can you imagine what other people may think when they see a person rolling his eyes in all directions? :)

Aromatherapy

This alternative field of medicine dates back to ancient Egypt where it is used for maintaining health and a whole lot of other purposes. It focuses on healing through our sense of smell. This wonder cure deals with essential oils derived from botanical plants. These essential oils can be added to a bath or massaged to the skin, spread out into a room by evaporation, or can be inhaled directly. You can fuse together two or more oils to produce your own personalized scent. The possibilities are endless.

Essential oils have powerful effects that stimulate our smell instinct. It relieves tension and fatigue, and gives us an invigorating feeling. Our sense of smell is directly connected to the brain. A life deprived of invigorating scent can lead to a dull one; and in turn, can lead to an anxious and depressive mood. Aromatherapy is one effective solution to counter these emotional imbalances.

Essential oils come in a variety of scents. The most effective ones are peppermint, lavender, floral, tea tree, citrus, and rosemary. Revolving around any of these six scents can help induce relaxation by relieving tension and stress.

When it comes to relieving anxiety and panic attacks, the most recommended essential oil would be lavender. Store lavender in a bottle and keep it handy for instant relief against anxiety and panic attacks. Storage should be in a cool, dark place. You may do either any of the following:

1. Inhale straight from the bottle.
2. Put 3 to 5 drops in a hankie or towel before smelling it.
3. Mix about 40 drops of essential oil to an aroma lamp (if you prefer to fill the air in the room with an aromatic scent). You can adjust the dosage depending on how mild you want the scent to be.
4. Mix about 5 to 6 drops in a tub for a soothing bath.

At any rate, the inhalation process should be gradual and deep. Essential oils can be bought at health food stores or through mail order.

Herbal Therapy

There are some people who find conventional medication disturbing due to dependency. Somehow, they feel as if they are chained to the medication, triggering a secondary anxiety. Compared to prescription drugs (some of which have side effects), herbal medicines are safer and milder preferences. They are also natural and non-habit forming.

Herbal Therapy is the field of medicine that deals with plant derivatives to cure illnesses, especially herbs. Herbal medicine from health food stores are usually sold in a variety of forms such as tablets or capsules, extracts and tinctures, ointments and creams, and fresh or dried herbs to make a tea using leaves and flowers of plants.

Most herbal medicines are safe because they are natural. There are some which are not completely safe when they are used in conjunction with prescription or over the counter medicines, particularly when used by individuals with pre-existing health conditions. Examples include foxglove, rue, licorice, coltsfoot, and pokeweed. It is best to consult a physician who is also versed in the field of herbal medicine if you are unsure of any herb.

Those with chronic health problems usually take months or even years of taking herbal medicine before they will notice significant improvements in their conditions. However, herbal medicines coupled with nutritious diet and exercise can be the answer to an illness-free and healthy lifestyle.

To treat anxiety, make a soothing tea drink out of any of the following herbs in cut form. These herbs are tested to be safe.

1. chamomile
2. oats
3. lavender
4. lemon balm
5. passion flower
6. kava kava
7. linden flower
8. valerian root

Pour a cup of boiling water to around a tablespoon of the herb, steep for about 10 to 15 minutes, then strain and drink the tea while warm. Sweeten with honey if preferred.

You may also combine the herbs to make a more potent tea drink for beating anxiety. For example, you may blend chamomile, lavender, and hops. You may also combine lavender, linden flower, oats, and lemon balm.

Flower Remedy/Essence Therapy

Flower Remedy/ Essence Therapy is the branch of alternative medicine that uses treatment derived from distilled blooming flowers and plants. This type of therapy is specifically advantageous in curing and preventing disorders related to the emotion.

Modern tradition of healing with flowers and plants can be attributed to Dr. Edward Bach, an English physician who in the early part of the 1930s tried to find cures for anxiety and emotional disorders, without the side effects of drugs. Dr. Bach noticed that the physical health of an individual gets impaired as a result of psychological imbalances. His search was concentrated in nature. In the process, he discovered 38 flowering plants and trees that lessen and soothe emotional disturbances. These 38 essences form the basis of today's flower remedy therapy.

In essence, this branch of alternative medicine is responsible in linking the mind and body, like for instance psychological stress and heart ailment. The idea here is that "in order to cure a physical ailment, find the cause." It is sort of a psychological preventive approach to resolve a physical disorder. In this case, the flowers are used to enhance your emotional and psychological state in order to overcome panic and anxiety.

It is essential to know the underlying cause of anxiety that is bothering an individual. Different causes of anxiety call for different essences to various individuals. The results are not instantaneous and it may take weeks, unlike conventional medication. The advantage of this therapy is its long-term approach to solving anxiety, unlike the conventional means wherein the cure is only for a particular moment.

For people who frequently experience panic attacks, the essence marketed under such brand names as Rescue Remedy, Five-Flower Formula, or Calming Essence, is recommended. Originally known as the emergency stress relief formula, this remedy consists of Cherry Plum, Clematis, Impatiens, Star-of-Bethlehem, and Rockrose. To use it, just place 3 to 4 drops under the tongue. This formula may be taken up as often as needed.

For those who worry excessively, Aspen and Red Chestnut are advisable treatments. A quarter full of water in a glass mixed with a few drops of these concentrates is preferably taken in the morning upon waking up, before meals, and before bedtime.

Flower remedies/essences are sold in concentrated form at health food stores. You may also purchase them directly from manufacturers.

Sound Therapy

At one time or another in your life, you may have tuned in to music to change your angry, anxious mood to a relaxing one. If you're caught in heavy traffic, listening to music can be a soothing option. It is a natural outlet to relieve tension.

The principle lies in our body's main sound receptor, which is the ear. The nerves in the ears, as well as the skin and bones that form them, accumulate sound waves and transmit these waves in the form of impulses to the brain. After this process, the brain sends out signals to the other body parts affecting muscle tension, blood pressure, and heart rate. Listening to relaxing music can calm the nerves by releasing the "happy" chemicals known as endorphins. These chemicals are known to reduce pain and can even change your mood from gloomy - to lively and cheerful.

An important point to remember here is that the sound or music we hear must be one that we like. What is soothing for an individual might not be as effective for another person. It is a matter of individual taste for a particular type of music or sound. In most cases, soft music tends to soothe nerves while rock music raises almost everything in the body, including pulse and heart rate.

Also, you must be able to distinguish what is music to your ears and what is noise. The two have opposite effects. Music can heal while noise is hazardous. Even if noise does not affect your ears so much, it might already be damaging other parts of your body.

The best soothing sounds are nature-based. Sounds like ocean waves, leaves rustling in the wind, streaming water, and gentle rain are just some of the sounds that can enhance the relaxation experience.

Background music can help ease anxiety feelings in manufacturing lines that are not dominated by noisy machines. For noisy manufacturing lines, individual pocket radios with one earplug is recommendable, while leaving the other ear open to make the person aware of his surroundings. Please note though that this is just a recommendation as most companies have their own regulations.

For best results to slow down your heart rate and reduce anxiety, sit calmly in a comfortable chair while listening to slow, relaxing music or sound. Do this for around half an hour or until the anxious feeling goes away.

Homeopathy

Homeopathy is a form of medicine that deals with tiny quantities of herbs, minerals, and other substances. Through this healing method, ailments are treated by activating the body's natural defenses, quite often with just one dose. The wonderful thing is that it is reported to have zero side effects. According to the National Center for Homeopathy, around 40% of the populace in France and 30% of the people in England use homeopathy as a means of curing their illnesses. Moreover, the cost of homeopathy remedies is much smaller compared to conventional medicines.

Homeopathy involves restoring balance to the body's immune system or natural defenses. In principle, this branch of alternative medicine is based on the belief of eighteenth century German physician and founder of homeopathy, Samuel Hahnemann. He formulated the principle known as the "Law of Similars," where he concluded that effective medicine must generate symptoms in healthy individuals that are identical to the diseases that will be cured. This means that when a person develops an illness out of a certain substance, it will take a similar substance taken in diminutive proportion to treat the sickness.

In the field of homeopathy, it is likely that two persons with different ailments may be given the same remedy. Conversely, two persons with the same ailment may be given different remedies. This can be likened to two cars of the same model. One owner may say the car is good because it's durable, while another may say it isn't because it frequently breaks down. The problem may lie in the way the cars have been assembled or the way the two cars are used in different manners. A homeopath heals a person based on both emotional and physical symptoms. That is why two persons with the same illness but different symptoms are sometimes given different remedies. A homeopath heals the person as a whole, not just the ailment. This is why it takes a longer time for a homeopath to see each patient again.



Here are some do's and don'ts to remember that are required to maintain and enhance the efficacy of the remedy.

1. As with most medicines, keep homeopathic medicine in a cool dark place.
2. Don't expose the remedy to strong scents or odors because its efficacy might diminish.
3. Avoid using facial cosmetics, lip balms, mint-flavored toothpaste and mouthwashes, and products with camphor.
4. Avoid drinking coffee because its essential oils might decrease the effectiveness of the remedy.

To treat anxiety, a dose of Gelsemium 6X every 15 to 20 minutes may help, but only up to a maximum of 4 doses. (Homeopathic cures classified as X have been diluted 1 to 10.) For worse cases of panic attacks, try a dose of 30C Aconite. (Homeopathic cures classified as C have been diluted 1 to 100.) Stop dosage when you begin to feel calmer. Consult with a homeopath if you have any uncertainties.

Hydrotherapy

Once again, water has proven itself to be indispensable in the form of hydrotherapy treatments. This kind of remedy which dates as far back as 4th century B.C. has been part of the healing process of nearly every civilization. Modern hydrotherapy was made possible in the 19th century by an Austrian named Vincent Priessnitz. He is considered as the father of hydrotherapy movement. Most hydrotherapy treatments deal with bathing and compresses that stimulate blood circulation, which in turn deliver the nutrients to other parts of the body.

To relieve anxiety, fill bathtub with water that is a little cooler than body temperature, about 35 to 36 degree Celsius. Stay in the tub with your body immersed up to the neck for about 25-30 minutes. Observe the temperature using a regular thermometer, and add water if necessary to retain the appropriate temperature of the bath.

Diversion

An anxiety-busting measure that a lot of people find effective and enjoyable is by way of diversion. Choose a method that can give you the ability to regain resiliency and vitality, leaving very little or no room for anxiety. It can be a mentally stimulating activity or one that demands physical exertion. If both mental and physical exertions are present in the activity, the more chances it will distract recurrences of anxiety. Just make sure that chosen activity does not create a new and different round of anxiety. If it does, look for other types of diversion. Here are some ways to get you going:

1. Find a hobby (like gardening) or do something that you enjoy/love to do. It can relieve you of restlessness and stagnation. Sports activities like joining a chess club stimulates the mood. A round of bowling or billiard can keep both the mind and body busy.

2. Laugh hard. A good laugh is both exhilarating and invigorating. Take time to watch funny comedy shows. Place pictures that remind you of funny scenes. Laughter releases endorphins from our body that boost our immune system, thereby getting rid of anxiety.
3. Volunteer for a just cause (environmental concern, medical/dental clinic/community service). It is the best way to distract anxiety. Volunteering one's service results to a feeling of contentment in oneself. It makes one feel needed even in small ways.
4. Take a vacation. Travel to places you have never been before. Explore different sights to stimulate your senses. You must unwind once in a while in order to recharge your mind and body, thereby giving anxiety minimum chance to stage an attack on you.

There are many other activities that you can engage in to fend your mind off anxiety. Just ask yourself, "What makes me happy and satisfied with my life?" The answer to that question is an effective solution to your anxiety and panic problems.



Chapter 6

When All Else Fails

In the previous chapters, you've been taught many ways to counter panic and anxiety. Different people react to different cures. So if one technique does not suit you, or you do not find it effective, go on with the next one until you find one that works best for you.

But what if the panic and anxiety monsters don't give up amidst the numerous tactics you have used against them? Such situation is rare; but just in case, there is a last resort.

This next technique is putting panic on reverse gear.

Let us assume panic or anxiety as an individual who keeps annoying other people. Almost every time an important event is coming up, anxiety is the bad guy who gets into the picture. The more you fight or resist anxiety, the more it persists on wrecking and spreading havoc. Anxiety is almost always there with intention to win over the person. When it does, it sports a wide, silly grin. It's as if anxiety is telling you, "So now you know who is boss around here."

But the way to stop anxiety from pushing you around or from controlling you is to move in unison with it. You have to harmonize with it, and not resist it. In this case, apply the principle "If you can't beat them, join them." The more you resist anxiety, the more it sports that silly grin on its face. To put it simply, you have to befriend anxiety.

"But wait, isn't this tantamount to submission to anxiety's whims? It's like waving the flag of surrender." It may seem like a submission but it's actually not. It's actually more of "going with the flow."

With the right mental attitude, you can kick anxiety or panic out of your life by keeping in mind that it has no capacity to harm you mentally and physically, because it is just an illusion. It is not life threatening.

Let's pick a scenario. Suppose you're getting married in a few months. Lots of things are on your mind and this could lead to extreme anxiety. Of course, you make the usual

preparations that involve weddings. Most likely, you acquire the services of a wedding coordinator or planner to make the necessary preparations. You may have some special things on your mind that you want on your wedding, so you coordinate them with the wedding planner. This is actually time management. You visualize, simulate, and anticipate possibilities. Think in advance of the worst scenario that can spoil your wedding and prepare an action plan for it (just in case), and see if you can survive it (which I am sure you will). This will lessen your apprehension. This is advanced thinking.

To further ease the feeling of anxiety, consider this thought. At the instant anxiety is building up or at its peak, simultaneously savor in thought the comfortable feeling you will experience once anxiety subsides. The assurance and comfortable feeling of an after-anxiety attack will drive you to have a positive attitude. You may even say to yourself, “Let’s get this over with; the sooner, the better.”

Keep things coming one at a time. Do not be overwhelmed. Do not be uptight. Loosen those nerves. Be less concerned with the time but do not totally ignore it. Take things in stride, in a light manner, even if it seems not. Be less serious emotionally. Should you fumble, don’t lose your cool. If possible, see the funny side of every situation.

Ralph Waldo Emerson’s famous quote goes: “Do the thing you are afraid to do and the death of fear is certain.” This is really true. If you allow fear to stop you from living a normal life, it will always persist on your mind. This is much like a movie. If you don’t watch the movie, you won’t know how its story will end. And this thought will keep on lingering. By watching the movie, your curiosity will be satisfied. The same thing is true with fear. By engaging in an activity you fear, you will experience and feel the outcome of doing what you fear. Next time, you’ll be able to conquer that fear because you have already “passed that stage.”

In the event of a panic attack, always remember that: “What you may perceive as danger or threat is not real.” The panic attack is a result of the emotions within yourself and how you interpret it. Keep in mind that this can be controlled.

Conclusion

There is no denying that with the hectic and fast-paced lifestyle we lead, anxiety or panic attacks have become more and more prevalent. What we need to do is to place ourselves in a situation where we can overwhelm anxiety, and not the other way around. By acquiring the right knowledge and applying the proper techniques, there's no reason for anxiety or panic to stay longer than it should. Aside from being effective, all of the remedies stated here are natural, non-addictive, and non-evasive, virtually rendering very little or no side effects.

You have learned many of the best ways to overcome panic/anxiety in this book. New approaches may be discovered in the days ahead and we all look forward to this development.

