

## Anxiety busting

Anxiety can be crippling, but I have shared these techniques with many clients and they work. Like everything else, you have to do them regularly, not only so that you get used to them, but also so that you train your mind to **succeed.**

### **Prevention:**

- Simple meditation every day. This one is pretty much compulsory, it WILL make such a difference. For now, all you have to do is count in your head when you breathe in and out and try to breathe out for one more count than when you breathe in. Do this for 10 minutes.
- Positive meditation: Once you are used to the meditation process, when you close your eyes think about good things, good memories, people you love, and the positive things you can do today. 10 minutes will do.
- Push your comfort zone. If all you do is **just 1%** more every day, in a year you will be 365% better than you are now. That's an amazing thought. If you can do more than 1% then by all means do it. So for example, if you struggle to leave the house, walk to the end of your path and back. Tomorrow, maybe you can make it out of the gate to the next house and back. Every step forward is a victory.
- Yoga (or similar exercise). Yoga is more than just exercise, it will help you breathe, it will help you ground yourself and it will both relax and energise you. Any other good exercise that you can safely manage is great.
- Positive diary- start writing down your small successes every day, because I guarantee you are more successful than you believe. Every success no matter how small **is a victory.**
- Give your anxiety a name so you start a dialogue with it. It must be a silly name!
- Imagine that your anxiety is outside of you and talk to it as if it is another person, this will start to remove it from inside you. This can work wonders, because you can start to visualise it being left behind when you are going to do something that may make you anxious. For example, I visualise my anxiety as a human-shaped mass of squiggles, I call him Mr Squiggle. If I need to, I can leave him at home when I go out. When I am in a deep meditation, Mr Squiggle isn't allowed in.

### First signs of anxiety:

- Talk about yourself in the third person (as above). So for example, instead of saying to yourself 'Why am I anxious?', you say 'Why is Phil anxious today?'
- When you talk to yourself, you can even say 'I know you are thinking of making me anxious, and thank you, because I know you think you are doing the right thing. But actually I am safe and all is well.'
- Use the simple counting breath meditation above.
- Have a look around you and ask yourself is there is any cause. Don't forget that anxiety is a natural response in situations where we may be unsure of ourselves, and that is perfectly normal.
- You are human, and humans aren't perfect. Be kind to yourself, if you get anxious it won't kill you, so let it come if you can't stop it.
- If a good distraction technique works, then use it if you can, such as computer games. Bear in mind that staying on a game all day is time you could spend more productively, so maintain a healthy balance if you can.

### Panic attack:

- Use a re-breathing technique, only for 15 to 30 seconds at a time. This involves cupping your hands over your nose and mouth as you breathe. It slightly reduces the oxygen coming in, which then slows your heart rate.
- Turn and face it. Observe your feeling, notice how the anxiety comes and goes in waves. **Let it come**. An average panic attack only lasts 9 minutes if you surrender yourself to it. If you fight it, it tends to intensify and last longer.
- Let it come. Do not repress your emotions, let them out. Even if you have to run off to the loo, or sit in your car, let them out.
- Remember, panic attacks do not kill you. You can carry on working even in the middle of one. I know, because I've done it! And when you do, THAT is a huge victory.

Disclaimer: There has to be one, so here it is: I am not a GP, so if you need medical attention then please get it. Anxiety is not the same as depression, so if you feel that you are depressed, talk to your GP. If you have any medical conditions and/or you are taking medication, you may wish to consult your GP as to whether they may be influencing your anxiety.

If you have any doubts, please feel free to show this document to your GP.