

ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of **Rolling Workshops**

Introduction

Anxiety is the feeling of apprehension and fear, that leaves you constantly 'on edge' and unable to control your thoughts.

Everyone feels anxious at one point in their lives whether it is because of an exam, meeting new people or an interview. However high levels of anxiety can lead to Panic attacks which are more intense and distressing.

Panic attacks are more common than people think and they are usually misinterpreted which keeps the sufferer experiencing them.

Today's session will discuss: Anxiety, what it is and its role in the fight/flight response. What panic is, the panic cycle and how you overcome it

Sneak Peek

What is anxiety?

The flight or flight response

Understanding what panic is and what causes it

The symptoms of panic

Tips on how to manage symptoms of panic

Putting it into action

ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops



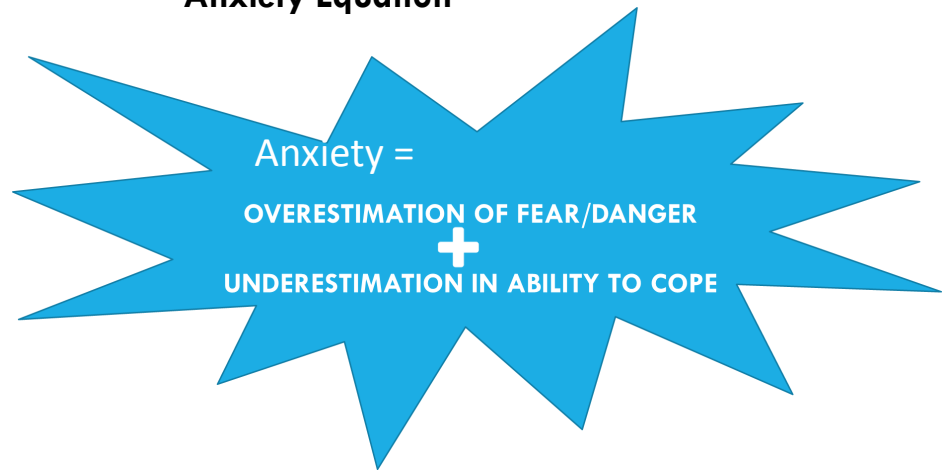
Anxiety is the most common Mental health disorder.	In the most recent Psychiatric Morbidity Survey indicates that there are some 8 million people in the UK with an anxiety disorder.
Women are twice as likely to suffer from an anxiety disorder than men.	Most types of anxiety disorders are more prevalent among women than men, except for OCD and social anxiety disorder, which affect both sexes equally.
Anxiety tends to be more prevalent in developed countries.	The U.S. is considered one of the most anxious nations on earth.
There are 6 type of anxiety disorders.	Anxiety breaks down into six categories: Generalized anxiety disorder, Panic disorder, Obsessive-compulsive disorder, Social anxiety disorder, Specific phobias, and Post-traumatic stress disorder. Symptoms vary according to the specific type of anxiety, but in most cases, people who suffer from them often feel “on edge” or nervous, experience insomnia, and a shortness of breath.
Anxiety disorders are often accompanied by other disorders	Mixed anxiety & depression is the most common mental disorder in Britain, with 7.8% of people meeting criteria for diagnosis. This can make these symptoms worse and recovery more difficult.
Anxious people are more sensitive to changes in facial expressions	People with anxiety perceive changes in faces quicker than those without anxiety — however, they are less accurate when perceiving their meanings.
Genetics play a role in anxiety	If one or both of your parents suffer from anxiety, there’s a higher chance that you’ll experience it as well. Most likely, both genetics and environment play a part.

ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops
Anxiety Equation

Symptoms of panic attacks

- q1) Heart palpitations
- q2) Sweating
- q3) Trembling or shaking
- q4) Shortness of breath
- q5) Choking /dry throat
- q6) Chest pain or discomfort
- q7) Nausea or abdominal distress
- q8) Feeling dizzy, lightheaded, or faint
- q9) Chills or heat sensations
- q10) Numbness or tingling sensations, usually in hands and feet
- q11) Feeling detached from self/reality
- q12) Fear of losing control or going crazy
- q13) Fear of dying



Causes of Panic

Worries about health

- Usually triggered when someone close to us has died or has a serious illness
- Worrying doctors have missed symptoms during check ups
- Worrying about physical symptoms or marks on body

Severe stress

- The death of a loved one
- Divorce
- Job loss
- Moving house
- Difficulties at work
- Having a baby

Other triggers

- Confined spaces
- Doing public speeches
- Being on public transport
- Rush hour
- Anticipating a difficult conversation
- Emotions*
- Out of the blue*

ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops

Janes panic story (VIDEO)

Watch the video clip on Janes panic story and answer the questions below:

What set off Jane's Panic attack? (*Trigger*)

What did Jane think was happening to her? (*Thoughts*)

What bodily sensations was Jane experiencing? (*Physical*)

How did this make Jane feel? (*Emotions*)

How did this make Jane act? What did Jane do? (*Behaviour*)

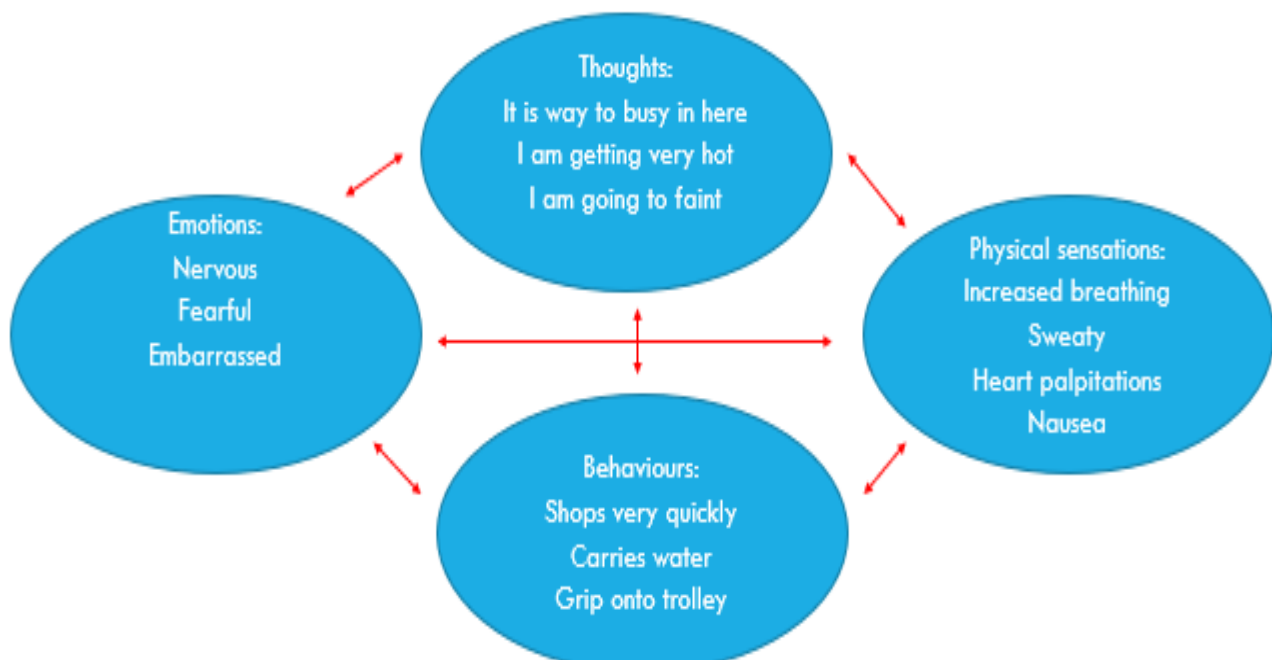
What was the lasting impact on Jane's life from her panic attack?

ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops

Jane's cycle of panic

Trigger: *In the supermarket*



ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops

Fight Or Flight Response

When faced with a life-threatening danger it often makes sense to run away or, if that is not possible, to fight. The *fight or flight response* is an *automatic* survival mechanism which prepares the body to take these actions. All of the body sensations produced are happening for good reasons – to prepare your body to run away or fight – but may be experienced as uncomfortable when you do not know why they are happening.

Thoughts racing

Quicker thinking helps us to evaluate danger and make rapid decisions. It can be very difficult to concentrate on anything apart from the danger (or escape routes) when the fight or flight response is active

Changes to vision

Vision can become acute so that more attention can be paid to danger. You might notice 'tunnel vision', or vision becoming 'sharper'

Dry mouth

The mouth is part of the digestive system. Digestion shuts down during dangerous situations as energy is diverted towards the muscles

Heart beats faster

A faster heart beat feeds more blood to the muscles and enhances your ability to run away or fight

Nausea and 'butterflies' in the stomach

Blood is diverted away from the digestive system which can lead to feelings of nausea or 'butterflies'

Hands get cold

Blood vessels in the skin contract to force blood towards major muscle groups

Muscles tense

Muscles all over the body tense in order to get you ready to run away or fight. Muscles may also shake or tremble, particularly if you stay still, as a way of staying 'ready for action'

If we don't exercise (e.g. run away or fight) to use up the extra oxygen then we can quickly start to feel dizzy or lightheaded

Breathing becomes quicker and shallower

Quicker breathing takes in more oxygen to power the muscles. This makes the body more able to fight or run away

Adrenal glands release adrenaline

The adrenaline quickly signals other parts of the body to get ready to respond to danger

Bladder urgency

Muscles in the bladder sometimes relax in response to extreme stress

Palms become sweaty

When in danger the body sweats to keep cool. A cool machine is an efficient machine, so sweating makes the body more likely to survive a dangerous event

ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops

Safety behaviours

These are behaviours or activities which we carry out to minimise or prevent something bad from happening. People experiencing panic and anxiety will often change their behaviour to feel safer and try to reduce or prevent future anxiety. Examples include:

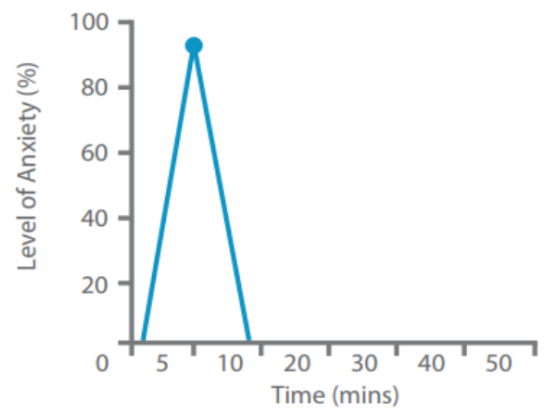
- X Carrying items such as medication, water or a cell phone that the individual believes will ensure their safety
- X Having a companion (e.g. a family member or friend) accompany them places
- X Avoiding physical activities (e.g. exercising, sex) that might trigger panic-like feelings and bring on a panic attack
- X Avoiding certain foods
- X Seeking reassurance from others that they are “okay or normal,” “healthy,” or, “safe.”
- X Sitting near exits or bathrooms
- X Using distraction to avoid feeling anxious or thinking about anxiety
- X Engaging in excessive research prior to taking a trip, starting a new job, buying something, all to ensure nothing will go wrong

ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops

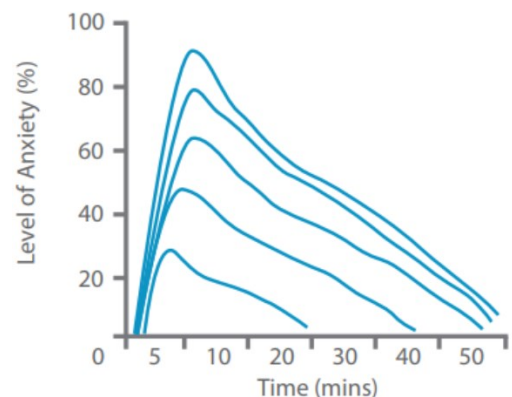
Graded exposure

- ⇒ When we feel anxious we avoid things, places and symptoms that make us feel that way -> in the short term you experience relief.
- ⇒ In the long term however you feel just as anxious as you did the first time.
- ⇒ To break the cycle you want to expose yourself in a graded way to what you are avoiding to prove to yourself that there is nothing to fear.



Habituation

- ⇒ Gradually exposing yourself to the fearful event without avoiding or escaping from it.
- ⇒ Each time you do your exposure treatment you remain with the anxiety feelings long enough for them to come down naturally without avoiding or escaping from them.



Conditions of Graded exposure

Condition 1: Graded

List things in your exposure hierarchy that give you least (50%) and most (90%) anxiety.

Condition 2: Prolonged

Do not use distractions and stay in the situation until your anxiety reduces by 50%

Condition 3: Repeated

To truly expose yourself you need to be doing things at least 4-5 times a week.

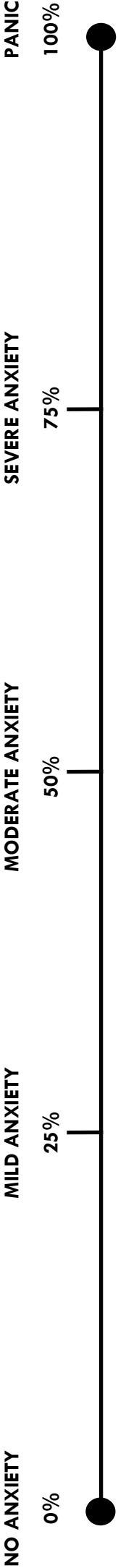
Condition 4: Without distractions

Try to remove distractions (Safety behaviours) that will reduce your anxiety artificially.

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops

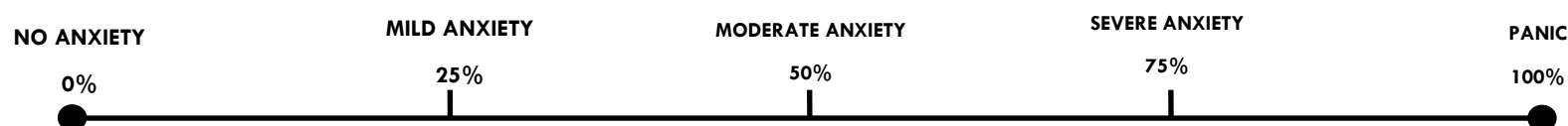
Below Write Each Step in Your Hierarchy	Anxiety Rating (0-100%)
Most difficult...	
Medium difficulty...	
Easiest...	

DATE AND TIME	DURATION	EXERCISE	RATING OF ANXIETY			COMMENTS
			BEFORE EXERCISE	START OF EXERCISE	END OF EXERCISE	



BELOW WRITE EACH STEP IN YOUR HIERARCHY		ANXIETY RATING (0-100%)
Most difficult....		
To travel on the bus to a job interview in town when busy		100%
To travel on the bus at a quiet time alone		65%
Medium difficulty...		
To travel on the bus at a quiet time with Bill		60%
To walk to the park alone when quiet		60%
Easiest...		
To walk to the next street alone at a quiet time of the day		55%
		40%
To walk to the end of the street with Bill		

DATE AND TIME	DURATION	EXERCISE	RATING OF ANXIETY			COMMENTS
			BEFORE EXERCISE	START OF EXERCISE	END OF EXERCISE	
SUN 9.30 AM	25 MINS	To walk to the next street alone at a quiet time of the day.	55%	25%	40%	Terrifying but did it!
MON 6.30 AM	75 MINS	To walk to the next street alone at a quiet time of the day.	45%	20%	25%	Still horrible but I did it!
WED 6.00 AM	40 MINS	To walk to the next street alone at a quiet time of the day.	40%	40%	20%	Not as bad as last time. :)
SAT 2.45 PM	25 MINS	To walk to the next street alone at a quiet time of the day.	30%	30%	15%	Not as bad this time again, feel ready to try the next exercise! eek
SUN 9.30 AM	70 MINS	To walk to the local park when quiet	60%	70%	35%	Felt horrible again to begin with but I was expecting this and it got better



Grounding techniques

- **Observe:** Remind self that it is an episode of anxiety
- **Embrace:** Welcome the sensations and change attitude towards panic
- **Demanding more:** Letting the panic flow through which reduces the fear
- **Trust:** Trying to control the anxiety only feeds it more, trust that it will pass and if it should return, use this experience as evidence to reassure you.

How to Stop a Panic Attack: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0P8f4ExY3vs>

Present moment focus

- **Switching your attention to what is happening in your environment right now**
Switch your attention between the different sounds and sights. You can try this equally well indoors and outdoors
- Start by focusing on one of the sounds, noticing all that you can about it and letting it fill your awareness.
- If attention shifts, bring focus back to present.
- After following the first sound for a little while, shift your attention to another sound and become absorbed in following that.
- Do the same for a third sound—Move on to colours, objects, or textures ect

ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops

My notes:

ANXIETY AND PANIC

Part of our series of Rolling Workshops

Further reading & resources:

UNDERSTANDING PANIC– VIDEOS

www.youtube.com/watch?v=32K-rElbBgE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=DahDtNa80OE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OP8f4ExY3vs

SUGGESTED READING

- **Overcoming Panic** 2nd Ed (2017) - Derrick Silove, Vijaya Manicavasagar
- **Feel the Fear and Do it Anyway** (2007) – Susan Jeffers
- **The Worry Cure: Seven Steps to Stop Worry from Stopping You** (2005) - Robert Leahy