

Tips & Tools For Managing Panic Attacks

Panic attacks can be overwhelming and distressing experiences, but with the right strategies and support, it is possible to manage and reduce their frequency and intensity. At Evolve Mental Health, we understand the impact that panic attacks can have on your life, and we're here to provide you with practical tips and tools to cope effectively.

Understanding Panic Attacks:

1. **Recognizing Symptoms:** Educate yourself about the common symptoms of panic attacks, including rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, sweating, trembling, and feelings of impending doom. Awareness of these symptoms can help you identify when a panic attack is occurring.
2. **Understanding Triggers:** Identify potential triggers that may precipitate panic attacks, such as stressful situations, specific places or environments, intense emotions, or certain thoughts or memories. Understanding your triggers can help you anticipate and prepare for potential panic-inducing situations.

Tips for Managing Panic Attacks:

1. **Deep Breathing Techniques:** Practice deep breathing exercises to help calm your body and mind during a panic attack. Try diaphragmatic breathing, where you breathe in deeply through your nose, filling your belly with air, and exhale slowly through your mouth. Repeat this pattern several times until you feel more relaxed.
2. **Grounding Techniques:** Use grounding techniques to anchor yourself in the present moment and reduce feelings of disorientation or detachment during a panic attack. Focus on your immediate surroundings by noticing five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.

Cognitive Strategies:

1. **Challenge Catastrophic Thinking:** Challenge catastrophic thoughts and catastrophic interpretations that may fuel panic attacks. Remind yourself that panic attacks are not life-threatening and are temporary in nature. Practice reframing catastrophic thoughts with more realistic and balanced alternatives.
2. **Positive Self-Talk:** Use positive affirmations and self-talk to reassure yourself during a panic attack. Remind yourself that you have successfully coped with panic attacks in the past and that you have the resilience and strength to overcome them again. Repeat calming statements such as "I am safe," "This will pass," and "I can handle this."

Lifestyle Strategies:

1. **Regular Exercise:** Engage in regular physical activity to reduce overall stress and anxiety levels. Exercise can help release tension, improve mood, and promote

relaxation, making it an effective tool for managing panic attacks. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week.

2. **Stress Management Techniques:** Practice stress management techniques such as mindfulness meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, and guided imagery to promote relaxation and reduce anxiety. Experiment with different techniques to find what works best for you and incorporate them into your daily routine.

Seeking Professional Support: If you find that panic attacks are significantly impacting your daily functioning and quality of life, consider seeking professional support from a therapist or counsellor at Evolve Mental Health. Our team of trained professionals can provide personalized treatment and support to help you better manage panic attacks and regain a sense of control over your life.