

# PANIC DISORDER



**DR RAVINDRA AGRAWAL**



**RECOVERY. RESILIENCE. RESURGENCE.**

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# Panic



- What is panic?
- What happens in panic disorder?
- What happens as a result of panic disorder?



# Explanation of symptoms



- Fight & flight response
- Carbon di-oxide washout



# treatment



- Goals
- Controlling anxiety: JPMR and other isometric relaxation exercises
- Stopping avoidance and gradual exposure
- Cognitive restructuring



# Cognitive restructuring ...the thinking errors



- A- event, B- thoughts in response, C – emotions
- **Mislabeled or misinterpreting:** emotion is appropriate to the thought but the thoughts are inappropriate ( label is incorrect).
- **Misinterpreting physical sensations:** s/s of panic are signs of immediate medical illness

Individual with Panic Disorder	Individual without Panic Disorder
A: Crowded cinema	A: Crowded cinema
B: "What if I panic and can't get out?" "What if others can see I'm anxious?"	B: "There are a lot of people here" "I'm glad I got a good seat in the middle"
C: Anxious & Tense Sits on aisle, near exit	C: Relaxed Settles down to watch movie

Physical sensation	Common misinterpretation
Pounding heart	I'm having a heart attack I'm going to drop dead
Feeling short of breath	I'm going to stop breathing I'm choking
Feeling lightheaded	I'm going to pass out or collapse I'm having a stroke



## ... the thinking errors



- Generalisation
- All or none thinking
- Using absolutes
- Condemning oneself on the basis of a single event
- Concentrating on weaknesses and forgetting the strengths
- Overestimating the chances of disaster
- Exaggerating the importance of events
- Pessimism
- Predicting the future



# ...Changing/challenging unhelpful thoughts



**What is the evidence for what I fear?**

**How likely is what I fear to happen?**

**What is the worst possible thing that will realistically happen?**

**What alternatives are there?**

**How helpful is the way I'm thinking?**



# ..after cognitive restruct

E.g. 1



<b>Description of situation</b>	<b>Anxiety-provoking thoughts &amp; initial anxiety rating</b>	<b>Realistic thoughts &amp; subsequent anxiety rating</b>
<p>Catching an express train, where I couldn't get off if I wanted to.</p>	<p>I'll panic – being on a train makes be lose control and panic. I'll go crazy if I can't get out. What'll people think of me? If I can't get out I'll do something stupid or out of control. I won't cope. No-one else feels this way. I must be loopy to feel this way.</p>	<p>I probably won't lose control, I'll just feel anxious. Even if I do feel anxious and uncomfortable, that doesn't mean the situation is dangerous. I've never done something out of control on a train, and probably won't do something this time either. I can use my techniques to manage my anxiety People won't notice me, and even if they do, they'll just think I'm a little tense.</p>





..after cognitive restruct

E.g. 2



<b>Description of situation</b>	<b>Anxiety-provoking thoughts &amp; initial anxiety rating</b>	<b>Realistic thoughts &amp; subsequent anxiety rating</b>
<p>Walking into a train station, noticing a pounding heart, and getting suddenly anxious.</p>	<p>I'm going to have a heart attack and die. I'd better sit down before I collapse. There is something physically wrong with me.</p>	<p>I'm experiencing an anxiety reaction. I'm not having a heart attack. The unpleasant physical sensations are due to anxiety, which I have learned to control. Breathing too hard will make the symptoms worse, which proves it is not a heart attack. I've never had a heart attack, collapsed or died as a result of a panic attack. I don't need to sit down, I can do my breathing exercise.</p>