

Your Virtual Guide to improve your
Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Tips to deal with distress

This self-help guide was made to help
people with **mild to moderate symptoms**.

If you are not sure how you feel, ask for
a **Psychological Coaching** with our Clinical
Psychologists.



DISTRESS

Most people feel distress, anxiety or fear at times, but if that is affecting your life, there are things you can try to do that can help.

SYMPTOMS OF DISTRESS AND ANXIETY

Anxiety can cause many different symptoms, so it is not always easy to recognize when anxiety is the main reason you are feeling or acting differently.

Physical symptoms.

1. Faster, irregular or more noticeable heartbeat.
2. Feeling lightheaded and dizzy.
3. Headaches.
4. Chest pains.
5. Loss of appetite.

Physical symptoms:

1. Feeling nervous or tense.
2. Being unable to relax.
3. Worrying about the past or future.
4. Feeling like you want to cry.
5. Not being able to sleep.

Changes in behaviour:

1. Not being able to enjoy your free time.
2. Difficulty in taking care of yourself.
3. Problems concentrating at work.
4. Struggling to form or maintain relationships.
5. Worrying about trying new things.

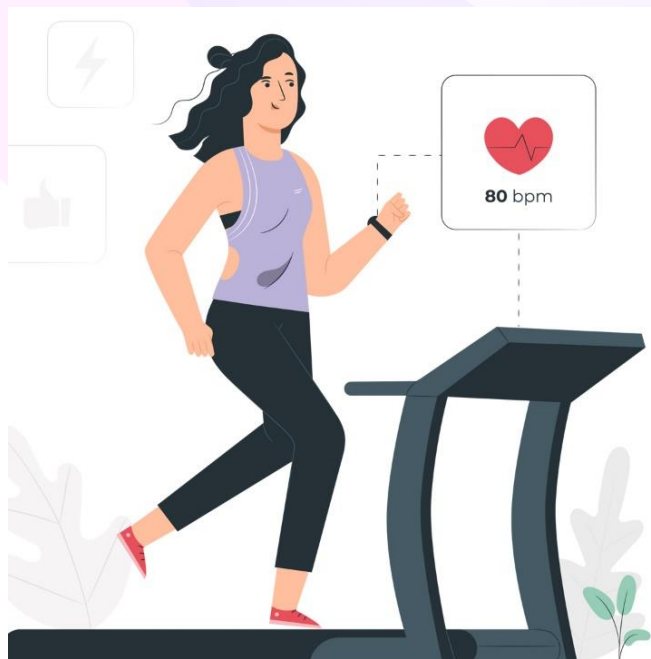
SYMPTOMS OF A PANIC ATTACK

If you experience sudden, intense anxiety and fear, these could be symptoms of a panic attack. Other symptoms may include:

1. Feeling like you are losing control.
2. Sweating or trembling.
3. Shortness of breath or very rapid breathing.
4. Feeling sick (nausea).

A panic attack usually lasts from 5 to 30 minutes. They can be very frightening, but they are not dangerous, and they shouldn't harm you.

If you have experienced panic attacks, please consult a doctor.



RECOMMENDATIONS TO MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER

- 1. Identifying the cause.** If you know what is causing your anxiety, fear or panic, it may be easier to find ways to control it. Some examples of possible causes include:
 - **Work:** feeling pressured at work, being unemployed or retired.
 - **Family:** having relationship difficulties, getting divorced or being a caregiver.
 - **Financial issues:** having unexpected bills or loans to pay.
 - **Health:** having an illness, an injury or going through the loss of someone (grief)
 - **Difficult past experiences:** harassment, abuse or neglect.
 - **Even important life events:** situations such as buying a house, having a baby, or planning a wedding, can provoke feelings of stress and anxiety. In general, those situations that generate uncertainty or those over which we have no control, can cause us distress or anxiety, because we are not sure what is going to happen.
- 2. Relaxation and breathing exercises.** Relaxation and breathing techniques can help us relax, and in this way decrease our anxiety, fear or panic. It takes only a few minutes, and it can be done anywhere. You can do it standing, sitting on a chair that supports your back or lying on a bed or yoga mat on the floor.

You will get a more beneficial effect if you do it regularly, as part of your daily routine.
- 3. Come up with a routine.** Just like when you make a weekly exercise plan, the more you get used to your routine, the easier everything will become. Create a daily routine that works for you and try to stick to it with responsibility, this will help make your day-to-day life more predictable which will help you manage your anxiety.

It doesn't matter if you are a morning person or a night person: make a task plan that you can stick to, that allows you to be more productive and that you can maintain throughout the week. It is proven that your body naturally responds to repetitive behavior.

4. **Physical activity.** Exercise won't make your anxiety go away, but it will reduce some of the emotional intensity you're feeling, clearing your thoughts, and allowing you to face your problems more calmly. Being active is not only great for your health and fitness. Evidence also shows that it can improve your mental well-being by: Boosting your self-esteem.
5. **Helping to set goals and challenges, and achieving them.** Causing chemical changes in your brain that can help to positively change your mood.
6. **Take care of your sleeping habits.** The average human needs about eight hours of sleep for his or her body and mind to function at its best. Researchers have also shown that after people sleep, they tend to retain information and perform better at memory tasks. Our bodies require long periods of sleep to restore and replenish, build muscles, repair tissues, and synthesize hormones.

Find out how to get to sleep if you have trouble sleeping [here](#).

7. **Keep in touch with other people.** A good support network from colleagues, friends and family can ease your work problems and help you see things in a different way. If you don't communicate with others, you won't have the support to turn to when you need help.

The activities we engage in with friends help us relax. We often laugh a lot with them, which is an excellent stress reliever, talking to a friend will also help you find solutions to your problems.

8. **Set aside time for yourself.** Unfortunately we spend many hours working, which means we usually don't spend enough time on the things we really enjoy. We all need to take time to socialize, relax or exercise.

It is recommended that you set aside a couple of nights a week to enjoy some quality "time to yourself" outside of work. By setting aside those 2 days, it means you won't be tempted to work overtime.

9. **Not doing everything at once.** Establish small goals that you can easily achieve, you can use to-do lists to better organize yourself. Find time management guides [here](#).
10. **Changing what is possible.** It is not always possible to change a difficult situation. Try to focus on the things you have control over. For example, if your company is firing people, there's nothing you can do about it. So, in a situation like that, you should focus on the things you can control, such as looking for a new job.
11. **Try to be positive.** Look for the positive aspects of life and the things you are grateful for. People don't always appreciate what they have, try to see the half-full glass instead of the half-empty glass. Try writing down 3 things that went well, or that you are grateful for, at the end of each day.