

Crisis Response Training

Providing Support for Health Care Staff In Crisis Situations

Topic: How to Ground Someone Having a Panic Attack

Presented by Louise Albert, MA

Assistant Director

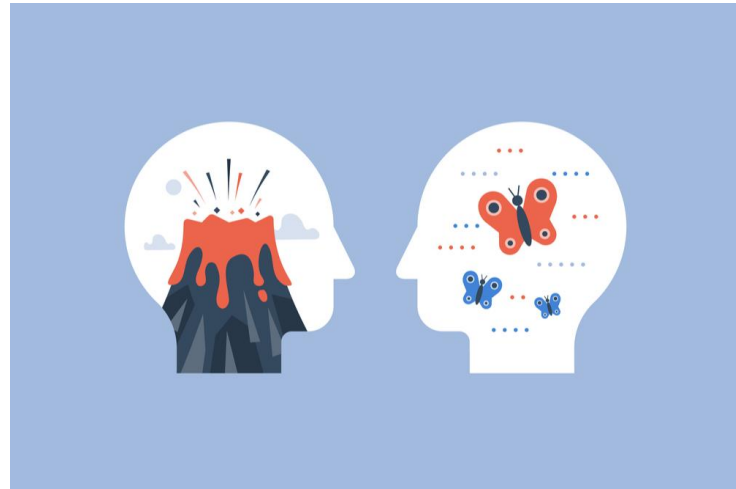
HR, Workforce Development

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Overview

- Introduction
- Symptoms of a Panic Attack
- How to Ground Someone Having a Panic Attack
- Resources



What Causes a Panic Attack?

Severe stress such as

- Death of a loved one
- Sickness
- Job loss
- Feeling endangered and unable to escape
- Crisis situation



What Causes a Panic Attack?



- Panic attack doesn't come in reaction to a stressor. It's unprovoked and unpredictable. And during a panic attack the individual is seized with terror, fear, or apprehension. They may feel that they're going to die



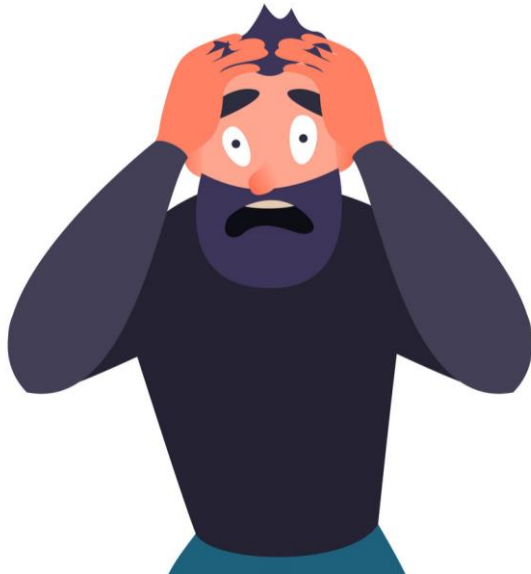
What Causes a Panic Attack?

- Also, they start avoiding places where they have a panic attack. So if they had one in a grocery store for example, they may stop going to the store. The good news is even though this is a common disorder, it is treatable



Can a Panic Attacks Kill You?

- A panic attack won't kill you
- **It can** be terrifying, but it won't **kill you**

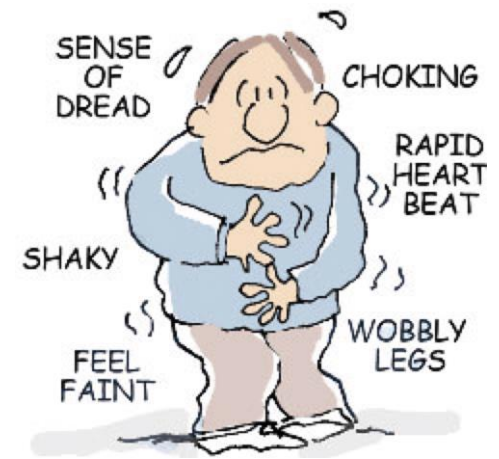


Can Anyone Have a Panic Attack?

- Yes. Anyone can have a panic attack



Symptoms of a Panic Attack



- Palpitations, pounding heart, or rapid heart rate
- Sweating
- Trembling and shaking
- Shortness of breath, sensations of choking or smothering
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Abdominal distress or nausea
- Dizziness, light-headedness, feeling faint, unsteady
- Feelings of being detached from oneself (unreality)
- Fear of losing control or “going crazy”
- Fear of dying
- Numbness or tingling
- Chills or hot flashes

Symptoms of a Panic Attack

- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Do these symptoms look familiar? They're also signs of cardiac distress. It's difficult to know if a person is experiencing a panic attack or a heart attack



How to Help:

If **you don't know** it is a panic attack:

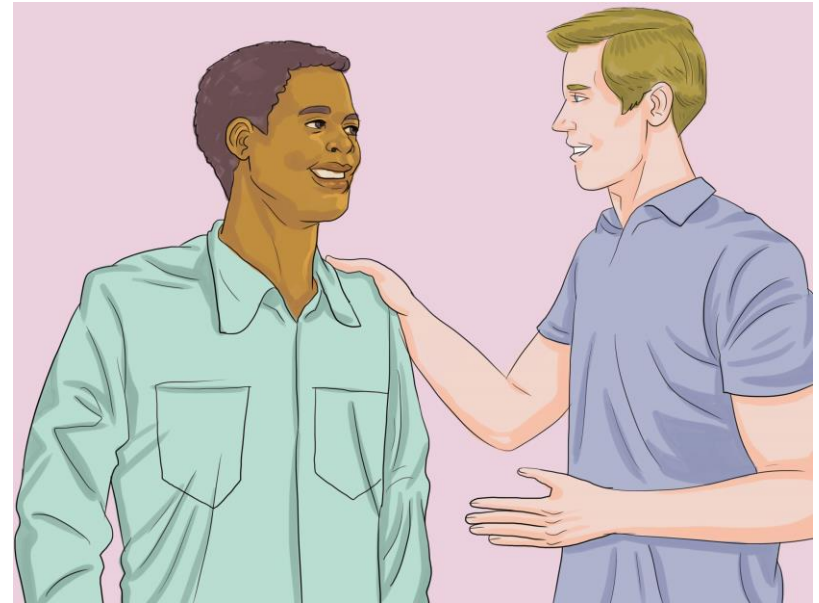
- Check for a medical alert bracelet and follow the instructions
- Seek immediate medical assistance
- Ask

If **the person believes** it is a panic attack:

- Reassure the person that it is a panic attack
- Ask the person if you can help
- Remind the person that while a panic attack is frightening, it is not life threatening



How to Help:



- Remain calm
- Speak in a reassuring but firm manner
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Use short sentences when speaking
- Be patient with the person



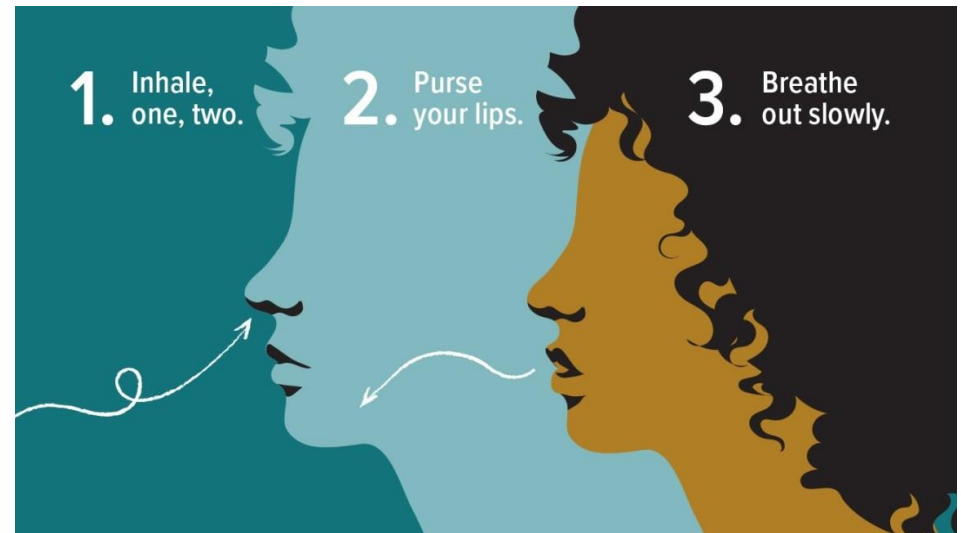
How to Help:

- Move the person to a quiet, private location
- Have them sit down
- Encourage them to breathe



Breathing Exercise:

- Inhale through your nose
- Hold for 2 counts
- Purse your lips
- Exhale through your mouth



How to Help:

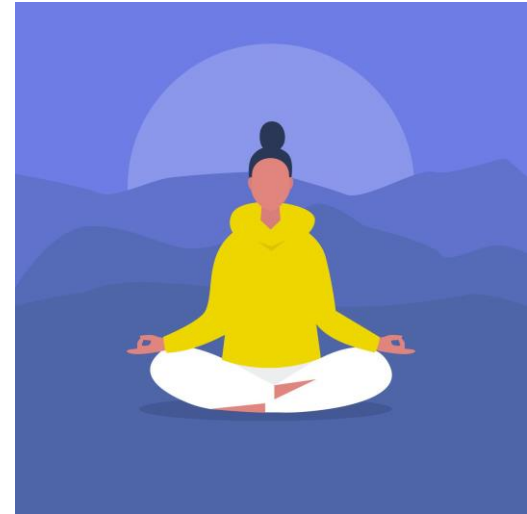


- Acknowledge that the terror feels real
- Reassure the person that he or she is safe and that the symptoms will pass
- Avoid expressing your own negative reactions



Encourage the Person to

- Take care of themselves
- Identify sources of support
- Use coping strategies that have helped before
- Spend time in a safe and comfortable place
- Discourage the person from using negative coping strategies
- Seek professional help if needed



When Communication is Difficult

- Respond to disorganized speech by talking in an uncomplicated manner
- Speak slowly and use short sentences
- Repeat things if needed
- Be patient and allow plenty of time for responses
- Be aware that just because the person may be showing a limited range of emotions, it does not mean that he or she is not feeling anything
- Do not assume the person cannot understand you, even if the response is limited



Conclusion

- The better you're able to recognize panic attack the easier it will be to guide the person you are helping through one
- Be mindful of the signs and symptoms
- Remain calm
- Apply the tools and techniques



RESOURCES

ANONYMOUS SUPPORT HOTLINES FOR ALL NYC H+H EMPLOYEES



COVID – 19 SYSTEMWIDE SUPPORT HOTLINE

646-815-4150 *Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 3:00pm*
**Hours may be extended upon demand*



NYS COVID-19 Hotline

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

For Mental Health Counseling

Available for All New Yorkers

1-844-863-9314

Hours: 8am-10pm, 7 days a week

**Hours may be extended upon demand*



<https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/>

An free anonymous service for NYC residents

Available 24/7/365

Call or Text anytime.

English: 1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355), Press 2

Call 711 (Relay Service for Deaf/Hard of Hearing)

Español: 1-888-692-9355, Press 3

Text WELL to 65173

Blog Post: Mental Health Support Tools and Tips

Anxiety: What to know and Look For

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/external/2018/05/17387/>

4 Self-Care Tips for How to Deal with Anxiety

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2018/07/how-to-deal-with-anxiety/>

What's the Difference Between an Anxiety Attack and Panic Attack?

<https://www.talkspace.com/blog/anxiety-attack-vs-panic-attack-one/>

How to Help Someone Who is Having a Panic Attack

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2018/12/how-to-help-someone-who-is-having-a-panic-attack/>

Resources for Overcoming Coronavirus Anxiety

<https://www.talkspace.com/blog/coronavirus-anxiety-outbreak-managing-stress-resources/>

5 Tips for Nonjudgmental Listening

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2019/08/five-tips-for-nonjudgmental-listening/>

6 Tips to Keep from Destroying Your Relationship During Quarantine

<https://www.talkspace.com/blog/coronavirus-relationship-quarantine-advice/>

Remaining Emotionally Connected While Practicing Social Distancing

<https://www.talkspace.com/blog/coronavirus-emotional-connection/>

7 Tips for Working From Home With Your Kids During the COVID-19 Outbreak

<https://www.talkspace.com/blog/coronavirus-working-from-home-tips-with-kids-children/>

Tips for Staying Mentally Healthy

<https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/coping-wellness-tips/tips-for-staying-mentally-healthy/>



RESOURCES

- For more information, please feel free to visit our COVID-19 Guidance and Resources Page by going to the following link <http://hhcinsider.nychhc.org/sites/COVID-19/Pages/Index.aspx>
- To request emotional or psychological support, go to the following link <http://hhcinsider.nychhc.org/sites/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-19.aspx>
- For more resources, please visit our Employee Resource Center by clicking the following link <http://hhcinsider.nychhc.org/corpooffices/erc/Pages/Index.aspx>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact, Louise Albert via email at Louise.Albert@nychhc.org or Jeremy Segall at Jeremy.Segall@nychhc.org



SOURCES

- Panic Disorder: When Fear Overwhelms – Includes how to manage a panic attack. (National Institute of Mental Health)
- Answers to Your Questions About Panic Disorder – Signs, symptoms, and effective treatments. (American Psychological Association)
- Panic Stations: Coping with Panic Attacks – Self-help series of workbooks. (Centre for Clinical Interventions)
- Panic attacks: what they are and what to do about them – Free course to help you manage panic. (Open University)
- (VIDEO) Panic Disorder – (Khan Academy)



Thank You

Coming Soon

Topic: *Talk It Out. Tools and tips to effectively communicate:
verbal, non-verbal, written and visual.
Week of April 13, 2020 - April 16, 2020*

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