



How to help someone who is having a panic attack

What are panic attacks?

Panic attack is a sudden onset of fear and anxiety that can overwhelm us, and usually is accompanied by physical symptoms such as shortness of breath, tachycardia and feeling dizzy.



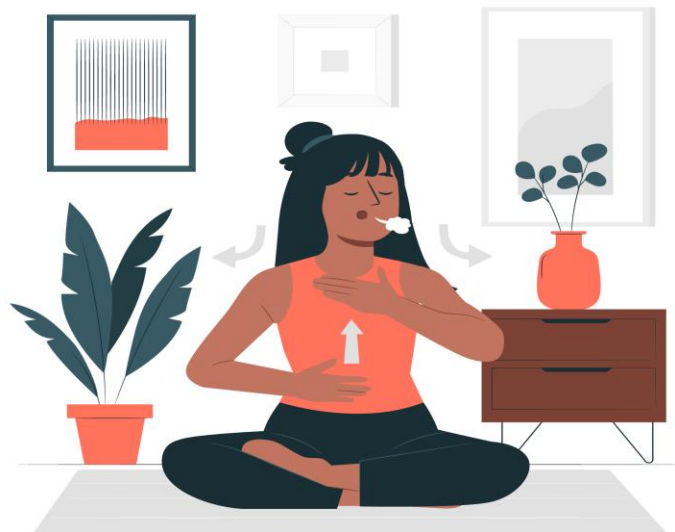
The person who is experiencing a panic attack:

- Is in distress
- Can be teary/sweaty/shaky
- Struggles to breathe and feels like choking with a tight sensation in the throat
- Complains of tightness in the chest and palpitations
- Has a fear of dying or losing control
- Feels lightheaded and dizzy associated with nausea
- Feels very hot or very cold



What to do...

- Keep calm
- Stay with the person and let them know that you are there for them
- If possible go to a quiet place
- Ask what the person needs
- Speak to the person in short sentences with a calm tone in your voice
- Help the person focus, ask them to look in your eyes
- Help slow the person's breathing



Breathing Exercise- Box Breathing

Step 1: Breathe in, counting to four slowly. Feel the air enter your lungs.

Step 2: Hold your breath for 4 seconds. Try to avoid inhaling or exhaling for 4 seconds.

Step 3: Slowly exhale through your mouth for 4 seconds.

Step 4: Repeat steps 1 to 3 until you feel re-centered.



What to say

You can get through this

Tell me what you need now

Concentrate on your breathing. Stay in the present.

I am proud of you. GOOD JOB

What you are feeling is scary, but is not dangerous

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- Sources:
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See more on our Website, Blackboard & Social Media
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