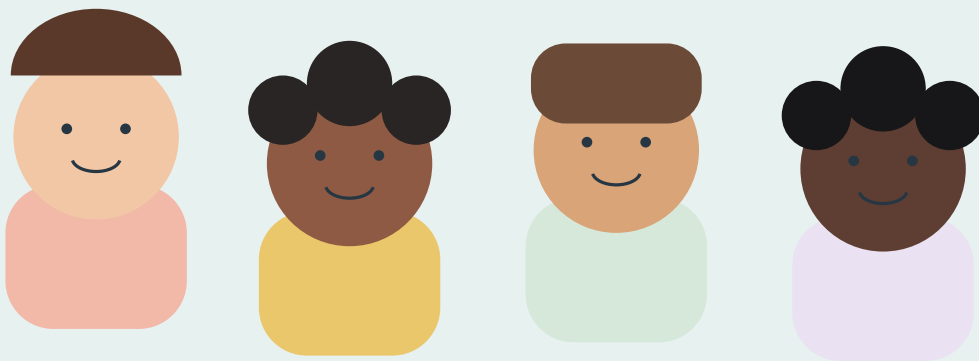


SPACE TO BREATHE

Panic Attack Recovery Workbook

Understand the alarm • Ride the wave • Recover with care



A gentle beginning

Panic intensity today: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What would help me feel supported while I use this workbook? _____

The sensations are real. The wave can pass.

Understanding a panic attack



What panic can feel like



A sudden surge of intense fear or discomfort may include a racing heart, chest tightness, breathlessness, shaking, sweating, dizziness, nausea, tingling, unreality, fear of losing control or fear of dying. Symptoms can feel frightening even when caused by the alarm response.

The panic wave



Panic often rises quickly, reaches a peak and gradually falls. Adrenaline changes heart rate, breathing, muscles and attention so the body can respond to danger. Fighting every sensation or urgently searching for certainty may accidentally tell the brain that the alarm is dangerous.

The fear-of-fear cycle



SENSATION → frightening interpretation ("Something is terribly wrong") → more fear → stronger body sensations → escape, checking or reassurance → short relief → greater fear of the next sensation.

Where do I recognise myself in this cycle? _____

Important medical note



New, severe, unusual or unexplained symptoms should be medically assessed. Do not assume chest pain, fainting, breathing difficulty or other concerning symptoms are panic. Seek urgent medical help when symptoms may indicate an emergency or when you are unsure.

What panic is not



Panic is not weakness, attention-seeking or a failure to cope. The experience is involuntary and physical. Recovery is not about forcing calm instantly; it is about reducing added fear, supporting the body and learning that sensations can change.

Map my panic pattern



Before the wave

Where was I and what was happening? _____
Sleep, food, caffeine, stress, pain, hormones, illness or sensory load: _____

Sensations I noticed

☐ racing heart ☐ tight chest
☐ breathless ☐ dizzy ☐ shaky
☐ hot/cold ☐ nausea ☐ tingling
☐ unreal/detached ☐ tense
Other: _____
First sensation: _____

What my mind predicted

☐ I will faint ☐ I will die
☐ I am losing control ☐ I cannot escape
☐ people will judge me
☐ something is medically wrong
Other: _____
Belief then: ____ / 10

What I did

☐ left ☐ sat down ☐ checked pulse
☐ searched symptoms ☐ called someone
☐ held breath ☐ paced ☐ froze
☐ used a coping tool
Other: _____

What happened next

How long until intensity changed? _____
What helped even slightly? _____
What made it harder? _____
What did I learn? _____
Intensity afterwards: ____ / 10

Ride the panic wave



Orient to the present

Name where you are, the date and what you are doing. Look for three steady objects. Feel the support beneath your feet or body. Say: "My alarm is active. I am here, and I can let the wave move through."

My best visual anchor: _____

Let breathing be gentle

Avoid huge forced breaths, which may increase light-headedness. Soften shoulders and jaw. Allow a comfortable inhale and an unforced, slightly longer exhale if that feels safe. If breath focus increases fear, use sound, touch, counting or movement instead.

Choose a body anchor

- ☐ feet press floor ☐ hold a cool object
- ☐ wall push ☐ slow walking
- ☐ name colours ☐ hum or speak
- ☐ sip water ☐ feel a texture
- ☐ loosen tight clothing

My choice: _____

Supportive words

"This is intense, not permanent."

"I do not have to make the sensation disappear."

"My body can use up adrenaline."

"I can seek medical help if symptoms are new or concerning."

My phrase: _____

My in-the-moment card

1. I will remind myself: _____
2. I will orient by: _____
3. I will anchor my body with: _____
4. I want another person to: _____
5. If symptoms are new, severe or concerning, I will: _____

Recover after panic



Immediate recovery

- ☐ quiet space ☐ water ☐ familiar food
- ☐ warmth/coolness ☐ gentle movement
- ☐ reduced demands ☐ supportive company
- ☐ privacy ☐ rest

What my body needs: _____

Speak without shame

Instead of "I failed", try: "My alarm became overwhelmed." Instead of demanding an explanation immediately, allow recovery first. Panic can leave fatigue, shakiness, headache, tears or emotional sensitivity.

Kind words to myself: _____

Fear of another attack

What am I avoiding or changing because I fear panic? _____

What safety behaviours do I rely on? _____

How do they help briefly, and what do they cost over time? _____

A gradual confidence step

A place/activity I want to reclaim: _____

Smallest manageable step: _____

Support I will take: _____

How long I will try: _____

Permission to pause: _____

Review the experiment

What did I predict? _____

What actually happened? _____

Did anxiety rise and fall? _____

What helped me remain? _____

Next repeat or smaller step: _____

My panic recovery plan



My early signals



Situations: _____
First sensation: _____
First thought: _____
Behaviour: _____
What increases vulnerability: _____

What helps me most



Grounding: _____
Body/sensory tool: _____
Words: _____
Person: _____
Recovery need: _____

My three-stage plan



BEFORE: food, rest, medication as prescribed, reduced stimulants, preparation: _____
DURING: orient, allow, anchor, supportive words: _____
AFTER: lower demands, replenish, reflect later: _____

People who can support me



Trusted person: _____
Health professional: _____
Emergency contact: _____
What I want others to say/do: _____

When to seek urgent help



Seek urgent medical help for new, severe, unusual or unexplained symptoms; possible heart or breathing emergencies; loss of consciousness; serious injury; or whenever you are unsure. If you are at immediate risk of harm or cannot stay safe, contact emergency services or urgent crisis support.

My next compassionate step



Within the next 24 hours I will: _____