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Relieve
Anxiety

with Medical Hypnosis

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Relieve Anxiety with Medical Hypnosis

Passport to Comfort, Peace, and Relaxation

Introduction

This companion guidebook is your passport to Comfort, Peace, and Relaxation in using medical hypnosis to relieve anxiety. The information and exercises here will set the stage for both your conscious and subconscious mind to use and respond to the hypnosis suggestions

on the audio CDs. Be openminded and clear about what you want to achieve: Comfort, Peace, and Relaxation. As you focus on what you want, your mind and body respond accordingly—just as a magnifying glass focuses and intensifies the power of sunlight. Remember, you cannot be anxious and relaxed at the same time. It is physically impossible, for they are distinctively different physiological states. Stay focused on what you do want: Comfort, Peace, Relaxation. Let any thoughts of what you do not want pass quickly. With consistent practice, your mind-body connection memorizes this experience of Comfort, Peace, and Relaxation rapidly, so the anxiety patterns are replaced (unlearned), and Comfort, Peace, and Relaxation are restored (relearned). If you were having a heart attack, you would want CPR, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation. If you are having an anxiety or panic attack, you need this CPR—Comfort, Peace, and Relaxation. You may think of your hypnosis as your CPR . . . to be used whenever your CPR is needed. Keep in mind that all hypnosis is really self-hypnosis.

About the Exercises

The activities in this guidebook compliment your hypnosis by stimulating a new way to approach and view your experience of anxiety. Do these exercises and you will discover that you can change or reframe both your perspective and experience of anxiety in order to replace it with Comfort, Peace, and Relaxation. Some of the activities may touch a nerve or resonate with you in ways that make this learning very rapid, permanent, and so automatic that it will feel easier than you thought it could be.

Exercise One: Anxiety Experience Inventory

This is an important exercise. Think about what you experience when you are anxious, or make notes when you are anxious so that you can take inventory of your anxiety experience. List them within these categories:

Physical (What your body is doing): e.g., My heart is racing. My hands and feet get cold. I shake or tremble.

Emotional (What you feel): e.g., I'm scared. I feel like others can tell that I am freaking out. I feel sad.

Cognitive (What thoughts you are thinking): e.g., Oh my, I'm losing control. I can't stop this. I can't control this. I am so nervous.

Exercise Two: Comfort/Peace/Relaxation Experience Inventory

Once again, take inventory, but this time list your Comfort/Peace/Relaxation experience within these categories:

Physical (What your body is doing): e.g., My shoulders are loose and droop. My hands are warm. Muscle tension is gone. My breathing is calm and regular.

Emotional (What you feel): e.g., I am at peace with the world. I feel safe. I feel warm and protected. I feel confident and at ease.

Cognitive (What thoughts you are thinking): e.g., I am safe. I am calm. I am relaxed. I feel good. Everything is fine. All is well now.

Exercise Three: The Emotional Expressway

This exercise helps release the emotional energy that may be fueling anxiety. Here are some ways to do it:

The tears way. Tears contain the electrolytes (salts) that carry electric energy through your nervous system. Select a time and place each day where you will exercise your ability to cry. Give yourself at least ten minutes to cry. Make or let the tears flow. The tears are washing out and re-balancing the chemicals of anxiety. Perhaps you may have noticed how much better you feel after a “good cry.” Make this a “good cry,” with the emphasis on using tears to release emotions and feel better.

Punch it out. Emotions may also be released by punching a pillow, or rolling up a towel and using it to pound a mattress. With each punch, express what you are angry, sad, or frightened about. Let the feelings rise up and let them go as you continue punching. The tears may also start flowing as well. The goal is to bring your feelings to the surface and let them out—to express them to release them.

Shine the light on them. As emotions and ideas related to anxiety arise, think of them as “shadows.” Imagine that you have a powerful flashlight. Notice what happens when you shine the bright light on each shadow. At some point you may even imagine a light switch that only you can turn on. Notice what is being released, and that you are in control of letting it go deliberately now.

Laugh it off and out. In 1995, Dr. Madan Kataria, the founder of “laughter yoga,” started the first Laughter Club in Mumbai, India. There are now over five thousand such clubs with over two hundred in the United States. Look up what may be in your city at

www.laughteryoga.org. Or nourish your humor by reading jokes, telling jokes to others, watching only funny videos and movies. Do whatever it takes to make yourself laugh every day. This is a “more is better” thing.

Exercise Four: Imagery of Anxiety— Draw It Out

Draw your anxiety. Put words to it. Picture it as elaborately or symbolically as possible. Get into drawing it; become a Picasso, a van Gogh, or a Rembrandt.

Now, “do something” with the images. Imagine how these images can be dissolved, disintegrated, evaporated, neutralized, dispelled, or converted in to a positive and productive energy. Convert the energy that had been anxiety back into a “pure” energy that is available for you to use to make you Comfortable, Peaceful, and Relaxed.

Exercise Five: Affirmations—The Power of Your Thoughts and Words

Write out five sentences that express the comfort you want to feel—not what you do not want—but what you *do* want.

Refine and rewrite the first sentence over and over until you have the distilled essence of the message that you want your subconscious mind to hear. I have written as many as fifteen pages of sentence after sentence for a single affirmation until I have the most precise and positive message that conveys to my subconscious the message I want it to have.

Remember, “never the nots.” Use only positive words that express what you do want.

No “trying” or “try” allowed. Use only the positive essence of what you do want as clearly stated as possible.

Now, do the same for the remaining four sentences.

Pick the top three sentences that really say what you want—and memorize these three. *Examples:* Everything I need to feel safe is already within me. Each breath is now a relaxation breath. I am calm.

For the first month, stand in front of a mirror and read or say these affirmations aloud to yourself. Say it with conviction. Pretend you are a voice actor being paid to say these affirmations convincingly. You want to make these positive affirmations as real as possible to your subconscious mind.

When doing your hypnosis (with or without the CDs), review the affirmations in your mind and create the image or visualize having already achieved the goals in your affirmations, as if they have already happened for you.

Exercise Six: Hypnotic Rehearsal— Preparing Your Mind for What You Want to Experience

Select a situation or circumstance that you respond to with anxiety or that you find anxiety provoking. In your mind, imagine the way you want it to be—images and words—so you can visualize and play it in your mind as you would like it to be.

Over time, as you mentally rehearse, you continue to refine and embellish what you want to experience in much greater detail.

You will use this script, or any others you design, with your hypnotic trancework sessions for hypnotic rehearsal. You are literally reprogramming your subconscious (mind-body) with this hypnotic rehearsal.

Exercise Seven: Create a Vibrational Signature

Physicists tell us that everything is composed of energy. Even though we may perceive and recognize objects as “things” (such as a table, a rock, the color green), it is all basically energy that is vibrating with a unique frequency for those forms we perceive. Thus, we might say that “green” is the vibrational signature for the energy we perceive and call “green.” In similar fashion, “rock” is the vibrational signature we perceive as a rock.

This exercise is about creating your very own vibrational signature. Just as you have learned to perceive vibrations to recognize objects (such as “green,” “apple,” or “car”), you can create a vibrational signature for your state of comfort and confidence.

A tuning fork will vibrate to a specific pitch, and if soundwaves of that pitch are present, the tuning fork will vibrate to it because the vibrational frequency or vibrational signature is the same. This

is an exercise “to tune” your sensitivity to vibrate in tune to positive feelings, and to neutralize past patterns that were learned as anxiety vibrations.

For many of you, we are stretching your imagination with the idea of a vibrational signature. We can simplify it by merely asking you to do the following steps. When you are in a very relaxed state, associate some color, sound, smell, feeling or taste (or all senses) to this relaxed state and give it a name—such as the word “cloud,” “hammock,” or “blue.” The name you give it is now the name for the vibrational signature of your Comfort and Relaxation. Think of this as your mantra. And whenever you need to, tune into that vibration and remember the feelings. By remembering the name and the associated memory of Comfort, Peace, and Relaxation in mind, your body and nervous system begin to vibrate in tune to what you are remembering in mind.

Descriptions of Anxiety Disorders Excerpted from the National Institute of Mental Health's "Facts About Anxiety Disorders"

The descriptions and classifications of anxiety disorders listed here show you the basic criteria that are used to diagnose clinical conditions of anxiety by the National Institute of Mental Health, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Psychological Association. Perhaps you will see yourself in some of these descriptions. And if you feel that you fit the description too well and the symptoms are excessive . . . you might consider seeking professional advice on how to reduce the symptoms.

- **Panic Disorder:** Repeated episodes of intense fear that strike often and without warning. Physical symptoms include chest pain, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness,

abdominal distress, feelings of unreality, and fear of dying. Panic disorder affects about six million American adults and is twice as common in women as men. Panic attacks often begin in late adolescence or early adulthood, but not everyone who experiences panic attacks will develop panic disorder. Many people have just one attack and never have another.

- **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder:** Repeated, unwanted thoughts or compulsive behaviors that seem impossible to stop or control. OCD affects about 2.2 million American adults, and the problem can be accompanied by eating disorders, other anxiety disorders, or depression. It strikes men and women in roughly equal numbers and usually appears in childhood, adolescence, or early adulthood. One third of adults with OCD develop symptoms as children, and research indicates that OCD might run in families.

- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder:** Persistent symptoms that occur after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event such as rape (or any kind of criminal assault), war, child abuse, natural or human-caused disasters, or crashes. Nightmares; flashbacks; numbing of emotions; depression; feeling angry, irritable or distracted; and being easily startled are common. PTSD affects about 7.7 million American adults, but it can occur at any age, including childhood. Women are more likely to develop PTSD than men, and there is some evidence that susceptibility to the disorder may run in families. PTSD is often accompanied by depression, substance abuse, or one or more of the other anxiety disorders.
- **Phobias:** Two major types of phobias are social phobia and specific phobia. People with *social phobia* have an overwhelming and disabling fear of scrutiny, embarrassment, or humiliation in social situations, which leads to avoidance

of many potentially pleasurable and meaningful activities. Social phobia affects about fifteen million American adults. Women and men are equally likely to develop the disorder, which usually begins in childhood or early adolescence. People with *specific phobia* experience extreme, disabling, and irrational fear of something that poses little or no actual danger; the fear leads to avoidance of objects or situations and can cause people to limit their lives unnecessarily. Specific phobias affect around 19.2 million American adults and are twice as common in women as men.

- **General Anxiety Disorder:** Constant, exaggerated, and worrisome thoughts and tension about everyday routine life events and activities, lasting at least six months. Almost always anticipating the worst even though there is little reason to expect it—accompanied by physical symptoms such as fatigue, trembling, muscle tension, headaches, or nausea. GAD affects

about 6.8 million American adults, including twice as many women as men. The disorder develops gradually and can begin at any point in the life cycle, although the years of highest risk are between childhood and middle age.

Resources

Bibliotherapy (Books)

10 Steps to Take Charge of Your Emotional Life by Eve A. Wood, M.D., 2006 Hay House, Inc.

Dare to Be Yourself by Alan Cohen, 1991 Ballantine Books

Hope and Help for Your Nerves by Claire Weekes, M.D., 1990 Signet

I Had It All the Time: When Self-Improvement Gives Way to Ecstasy by Alan Cohen, 1994 Alan Cohen Publications

Instant Emotional Healing by Peter Lambrou, Ph.D., and George Pratt, Ph.D., 2006 Broadway Books

Love Is Letting Go of Fear by Gerald Jampolsky, M.D., 2004 Ten Speed Press

The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook by Edmund J. Bourne, Ph.D., 2005 New Harbinger Publications, Inc.

The Dragon Doesn't Live Here Anymore by Alan Cohen, 1993 Balantine Books

The Tapping Cure by Roberta Temes, Ph.D., 2006 Marlowe & Company

What to Say When You Talk to Yourself by Shad Helmstetter, 1997 MJF Books

The Worry Control Workbook by Mary Ellen Copeland, MS, MA, 1998 New Harbinger Publications, Inc.

Internet Websites (Anxiety Support, Laughter, and Humor Sites, etc.)

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/anxiety.html

www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/anxiety.cfm

mentalhelp.net/poc/center_index.php?id=1

www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/anxietymenu.cfm

www.adaa.org

www.amtaa.org

www.peacewithmyself.com

www.algy.com/anxiety

www.drweil.com

www.healingwithhypnosis.com

gnhealth.com

laughteryoga.org

Sounds True Products

Anxiety Relief by Martin Rossman, M.D.

Breathing: The Master Key to Self Healing by Andrew Weil, M.D.

Entering the Now by Eckhart Tolle

Fly Without Fear by Gay Hendricks, Ph.D.

Heal Yourself with Medical Hypnosis by Steven Gurgevich, Ph.D.,
and Andrew Weil, M.D.

Relaxmate II by Norman Shealy, M.D.

Self-Hypnosis Home Study Course by Steven Gurgevich, Ph.D.

When Things Fall Apart by Pema Chödrön

For Dr. Steven Gurgevich's latest releases and for more information on the mind-body connection, sign up for the newsletter: www.healingwithhypnosis.com.



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