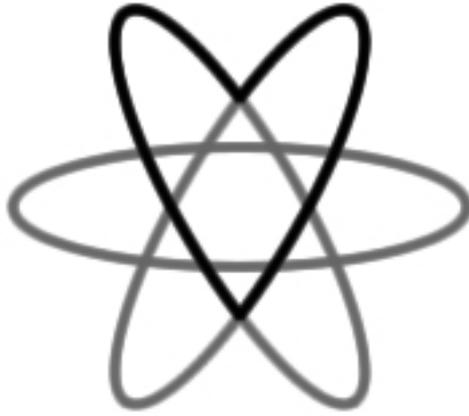


Self Therapy for Anxiety

Transcript



- ✓ Panic Attacks
- ✓ Social Anxiety
- ✓ Agoraphobia
- ✓ Public Speaking Fear
- ✓ Hypochondria
- ✓ Generalized Anxiety
- ✓ Derealization
- ✓ Mild Depression
- ✓ Negative Thoughts
- ✓ Much More!

"The Stuff Really Works!"

Self Therapy for Anxiety

Copyright © 2004-13 by Reid Reichardt

HOWEVER, you may distribute the PDF version of this book via email to friends who you believe will benefit (no spam). The latest PDF version may be obtained from www.MC2Method.org

DISCLAIMER

This text describes a very general self development technique. The approach will not be appropriate for everyone, and it is not intended as a means of diagnosis or replacement for professional advice. Use only at your own discretion, liability, and risk. Any testimonials appearing on book cover or website are NOT typical results.

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Disclaimer](#)

[What is anxiety?](#)

[Anxiety Attacks](#)

[Depersonalization](#)

[Agoraphobia](#)

[Social Anxiety](#)

[Depression](#)

[Self Therapy for Anxiety](#)

[Practice Session 1](#)

[Practice Session 2](#)

[Real-Time Self Therapy](#)

[Anxiety Reversal](#)

[Anxiety and Health](#)

[Conclusion](#)

Welcome

Before we begin, I would like to first thank you for the opportunity to be part of your personal development process. By taking the initiative to read a book like this one, you have already demonstrated your belief that there must be something better than your current emotional state — and there is! The technique that I'm going to share with you has not only been an incredible tool for overcoming my own anxiety, but also my greatest asset for moving onto a more fulfilling life in almost every aspect. It's my sincere belief that it can be the same for you.

I created this course based on my own experience with anxiety, and I

understand how serious the condition can feel. When most people encounter anxiety, they're not aware of what it is, or that it is such a common affliction. Moreover, they have no idea what to do about it. This is part of what makes the experience so traumatic — that feeling of being trapped in a situation that is out of your control.

If you're thinking that you might be a weak person because you're having problems that other people don't seem to have, be assured that after you learn and start using the tools that we'll discuss, you'll probably feel an inner strength that you've never known before.

Whether you have simple stress and malaise, or if you're housebound with fear, the concepts we'll cover may define a whole new way of living for you. The

only reason you have anxiety and others don't is probably because they're using some of the same concepts that we'll discuss without even knowing it.

For brevity's sake, I'll be referring to the Self Therapy for Anxiety techniques simply as "Self Therapy". There's no intention in the name to imply that this approach should replace traditional counseling, or that it is the best way to treat all forms of anxiety. It is simply a method that has worked amazingly well for me and many, many other people. However, this brings us to an important issue to be aware of:

Disclaimer

I am not a doctor. I am simply someone who has suffered from severe anxiety, discovered a powerful solution that completely reversed the condition in my life, and am sharing that knowledge with the hope that it will help some other anxiety sufferers. However, because I am not a licensed medical professional, this information should be considered only as a general approach to self-development, and *not as medical advice or a means of diagnosis*. If you're not finding the information helpful, or if you feel too overwhelmed to try it, please consult with a mental health expert to explore other options.

What is Anxiety?

In the most basic sense, anxiety usually occurs as a result of ongoing stress, worry, or just general negative expectations. All of these are kind of the same thing — fear of some real or imagined negative possibility, or possibilities. The fears could be of almost anything: embarrassment, illness, judgment, driving, flying, failure, poor performance, and so many others. Since negative outcomes are possible for just about any situation in life, it's likely that you can identify a variety of things that cause you to worry.

Anxious people, most of whom have a tendency to dwell on and imagine the "bad" things that could happen, create a

general environment of fear in their minds. Eventually the subconscious mind begins interpreting these mental images as real danger. You're imagining all these uncomfortable or even catastrophic scenarios, and sooner or later your mind reacts to them, as if they're reality, and says "Hey, whatever it is that you're doing, or going to do, it's not a good idea". The way it tells you this is by giving you a sensation of fear, releasing hormones like adrenaline into your body to put you into "self preservation" mode with classic fight-or-flight sensations.

Now you may not realize this relationship at the time, because you don't have the usual visual signs of danger associated with adrenaline. But if you compare the sensation of fear and

adrenaline to that of anxiety, you'll recognize the similarity. The big difference is that because the sense of danger is not being created by temporary physical threat, but rather by your mind's ongoing negative thoughts, this fear response can endure for long periods.

Symptoms of anxiety may start with elevated heart rate and a general sense of uneasiness or nervousness, but over time can branch out into a wide variety of seemingly unrelated issues: headaches, racing heart, insomnia, sweaty palms, muscle fatigue, indigestion, diarrhea, dizziness, lightheadedness, chest pain, and many others.

Since anxiety sufferers have a tendency to often imagine the worst case scenario,

and can become hypochondriacal with just about any unusual body sensations, they are also quite likely to worry about these anxiety symptoms themselves. It's easy to start believing that such symptoms may be indicators of serious medical conditions. The rapid heartbeat may be interpreted as an indicator of heart attack, lightheadedness as a sign of stroke or brain tumor, and so on. You should definitely see a doctor to rule out physical causes, but know that all of these symptoms are also very commonly the result of ongoing anxiety.

There are some other eventual manifestations of anxiety that I'd like to mention because of the severe impact they can have on the person experiencing them. These are anxiety

attacks, unreality, agoraphobia, depression, and social anxiety.

Anxiety Attacks & Panic Attacks

Anxiety attacks are often experienced as a feeling of dread, an intense fear that something terrible is about to happen, like you might die or lose your sanity. These experiences can be extremely frightening, especially since they can occur at anytime and anywhere. They might arise while driving in your car, standing in a line at the store, lying in bed, or even while just watching television.

What happens during a panic episode is that worries and fears lingering in your mind are interpreted as real danger by

the subconscious, which in return releases adrenaline into your body to help you deal with the threat. But since anxiety can cause adrenaline to come to the surface at anytime, and without any visual danger present, these feelings may not make any logical sense to you. And not seeing actual danger with your own eyes, you don't recognize the adrenaline burst for what it is. This phenomenon can make the adrenaline sensation itself a seemingly unusual and frightening experience. As a result, you then become worried about, and fearful of, that "out of place" adrenaline feeling. That additional fear causes the adrenaline to increase further, which in turn just escalates your fear more. As these two feed each other, a full panic attack occurs.

During a panic attack, you may feel as if you're losing your mind, or like your heart is about to explode. An anxiety attack is not going to hurt you or cause you to go crazy, but it can feel like dying a thousand deaths when you're having these episodes regularly.

And once you've experienced the terror of a first panic attack, it's quite likely that you'll have more as you become more sensitive to the symptoms that precede them. A slight malaise or stress may get you fearful that another attack coming on. And ironically, it's that very fear that gets the adrenaline flowing and starts the cycle over again.

As with other anxiety symptoms, an excellent first step to recovery from

panic is to know that what you're experiencing is a normal reaction to persistent worry and fear. Think of a time when you were really frightened, maybe while you were watching a scary movie, or after nearly getting in an accident. Now try to remember what types of sensations you had at that time. Maybe a rapid heartbeat and adrenaline? Did you get fearful of those feelings? No, because you knew they were normal at that time. In fact, if you're having trouble remembering what you felt, it's probably because you didn't even think about it then, since the sensations were nothing out of the ordinary for the situation.

Unreality & Depersonalization

Another common, but often quite disturbing, result of anxiety is the sensation of unreality, also known as depersonalization or derealization. If you sometimes feel a little bit spacey, disconnected, or as if your body and your environment are somehow unreal, know that this is an extremely normal sensation resulting from the introversion that anxiety cultivates. Anxious people tend to become so preoccupied with worrisome thoughts, body sensations, and adverse emotions, that a good portion of their awareness becomes perpetually directed inward. You simply become so focused on your inner world that the outer begins to take on an air of unrealness. Once again, the typical anxious response to this sensation is

often to become fearful that you're going crazy, losing your mind, or losing control of yourself.

If this sounds familiar to you, just know for now that there is a vast difference between the simple sensation of unreality caused by anxiety, and true insanity.

Agoraphobia

With time, many anxious people create for themselves a condition known as agoraphobia. Often defined as "fear of open spaces", agoraphobia, in a more practical sense, is really a fear of your anxiety symptoms themselves — or a kind of "fear of fear". This results in the avoidance of doing many activities

because of the uncomfortable feelings you associate with them. Do you avoid interacting with people or attending events because of your nervousness? Do you dread work or school because of the symptoms you experience there? These are, in a broad sense, types of agoraphobia.

Now you don't have to label yourself an agoraphobic. This is the most common type of phobia there is, and anyone who tries to avoid emotional discomfort, which is just about everyone, could be said to have a touch of agoraphobia. But if you've sought out a book like this one, you've probably reached a point where your body sensations are so uncomfortable or frightening that your whole day is filled with activities that you either avoid, or would like to avoid

and feel awkward performing. Since there are so many tasks and interactions that cause discomfort, anxious people have a tendency to eventually start avoiding more and more of those everyday activities, and some may have a hard time even leaving their homes. Their true underlying fear is not of the outside world, but of the feelings and body sensations that they may experience while away from their safety zone.

Social Anxiety

There are many reasons people become socially uneasy. However, nearly all those reasons are reflections of the desire to avoid some sort of emotional energy that arises in social situations —

perhaps nervousness, awkwardness, insecurity, fear of rejection, or some other uncomfortable feeling. Whatever those feelings are for you, ask yourself this question: Would you have a social anxiety problem if you did not have those feelings? Do you think a shy person would remain shy for long in the absence of negative sensations when approaching and interacting with other people? If you apply the concepts you'll learn in this book to the inner energies that you're now avoiding, your shyness will soon disappear.

Depression as an Anxiety Symptom

The blanket of fear that anxiety creates can prevent enjoyment of the present moment, create a cycle of worry and

inaction, and eventually may lead to a mild depression. This type of depression can certainly make life seem empty and undesirable. I remember many times when I imagined the possibility of suicide as a way out of my unhappiness. But there is a usually big difference between the mild depression caused by simple anxiety, and the major depression that can lead to suicide. An anxious person might imagine suicide, but will probably be just as afraid of dying as they are of their emotional state, and not have the intention of really carrying it out.

However, if you are not feeling afraid of suicide, if you're experiencing real hopelessness, if you're considering methods of suicide, or if you're feeling comforted by the thought, then you

should seek help from a mental health professional. Speak to your doctor, check your phone book for suicide hotlines, or call 911 for a referral.

For the majority, you know that you don't like living with anxiety and depression. But if you've started working through a program like this, you most likely feel that there is some hope for your condition. Anxiety can be a strong motivating force to start taking action to find an alternative, and sometimes things can get pretty dark before we break out. But know that you are not alone in the experience. When you begin to make progress in overcoming your anxiety, the mild depression you're having should disappear as well.

(Some) Anxiety is Your Friend

That's right, some anxiety and stress in life is good. To be a little worried about a test will motivate you to study. A little nervous energy during a presentation can be transformed into a more engaging enthusiasm. Even a fearful state of mind is useful in truly dangerous situations, where we need to take steps to protect ourselves. But in day to day situations, excessive anxiety is counterproductive; the slight but persistent feeling of paranoia can make you feel constantly nervous and awkward, and prevent you from doing things you need to do.

Excess stress, aside from leading to debilitating conditions like anxiety, can also be outright dangerous as it

suppresses the immune system, increases blood pressure, and is associated with a wide variety of diseases. Of course, it doesn't make sense to start becoming hypochondriacal about that, but your physical health is just one more reason to start now with taking measures to reduce your stress and anxiety.

Before we move on, remember that all of the symptoms that we've talked about so far can be fully attributed to anxiety. However, don't use that information as a method of diagnosis. Get a physical examination from a medical doctor to confirm that your symptoms are not indicative of a more serious condition. Knowing that what you're feeling is a completely normal result of anxiety can

be a great relief, and a good first step to calming yourself.

It's for this precise reason that many anxiety books and programs spend an enormous amount of time talking about symptoms. A lot of comfort can be gained by knowing that what you're experiencing is not unusual. So if you think that you'd benefit from additional confirmation about your particular symptoms, you might want to do additional research or consult with your doctor about them. You may have some of the symptoms we discussed, all of them, or perhaps others that weren't mentioned. There are many, many more, and I've just tried to cover some of the more common ones here.

We could literally devote an entire book (much longer than this one) to discussing all the ways in which anxiety displays itself in various sensations and behaviors. But I know from personal experience that it's usually not really necessary to figure out all the mind-body connections before working on anxiety. And often those connections become easier to see once you begin to move beyond anxiety and can look back at the experience more objectively.

So even if you do take additional steps now to satisfy your concerns, also start moving forward with the techniques that we'll discuss. The stress that you may be adding to the situation you're worrying about is probably not doing anything to help resolve it. And you may find that as you start learning how to reverse

anxiety, the symptom that's bothering you might just disappear before you know it.

The truth is that while it's helpful to confirm that your symptoms are being caused by anxiety, without managing the anxiety itself you'll eventually probably just find other sensations to become concerned about. Along the same lines, if we attempt to avoid or eliminate all the situations that inspire anxiety in us, sooner or later more will come along to take their place, and we'll eventually find our lives confined to a very limited number of safe places and safe people.

The Self Therapy Solution

Understanding that anxiety is primarily a fear-based emotion, the first aim of Self Therapy is to boost your tolerance levels for the feelings you're now avoiding, including anxiety. The reason for this is that anxiety grows from the desire to avoid the feelings associated with certain activities. From this perspective, anxiety is really *fear* of particular "unwanted" feelings, including anxiety sensations themselves. Therefore, when you learn to boost your tolerance level for experiencing the feelings and sensations that you're avoiding, those very feelings (anxiety) actually dissolve. In other words, a major key to conquering anxiety is to embrace it.

The benefits of our Self Therapy process will go well beyond just anxiety reduction. A rich and full life is achieved by living on the full spectrum of human emotion, and in learning Self Therapy you'll greatly expand your ability to do that. To feel the desirable emotions, like joy, we must be able to feel and go through the lower ones. An unfortunate quality of many anxiety and depression treating drugs is that while they may numb emotional lows, they often dull the highs as well. Achieving inner harmony involves increasing tolerance for all emotions to a point where none can stop you from moving forward. This is the ultimate objective of our Self Therapy.

What is Self Therapy?

Self Therapy is an amazingly simple approach to overcoming anxiety.

However, some of the concepts may seem a little foreign at first because they're new. In a nutshell, what you'll be learning is a new method of communicating with yourself that reverses anxiety tendencies. But the method of "communicating" in Self Therapy, and what you think of as your "self", are probably going to be much different than what you might expect. What you're about to learn will expand your tolerance level for negative emotions, increase your ability to experience higher ones, and can virtually eliminate emotional dependence on, and susceptibility to, external events.

As with interpersonal communication, Self Therapy can be thought of as involving both speaking and "listening", and this program is loosely divided into two sections based on those components. We'll start by learning the listening aspect, which will enable you to quickly take control of your emotions and prevent anxiety from overwhelming you. For most readers, this section of Self Therapy will provide the key to freedom from anxiety. You will also find it to be an excellent tool for simply gaining a greater sense of connection with, and understanding of, yourself.

In the second section, "speaking", you'll learn a powerful method of re-programming your mind, and then work on reversing some common thought patterns and behaviors that lead to

anxiety. Since you used your mind to create the condition of anxiety, it only makes sense that you'll use your mind to reverse it as well.

So, in short, we start by managing current anxiety levels, and then learn how to prevent anxiety from taking root in the first place.

As we get started, know that we are not out to suppress anxiety, or any other "negative" emotion for that matter. As previously mentioned, in order to experience the higher emotions in life, like joy, we must be able to experience the lower ones. I call this psychological phenomenon the "emotional energy pendulum". To swing high, you must be able to swing low. How good can you

ever feel if your positive emotions are accompanied by a constant fear of losing that comfort? Everybody experiences loss, disappointment, failure, rejection and other adverse situations. If you view such circumstances with emotional avoidance, or constantly fear their possibility, anxiety will grow.

But you can choose instead to experience such feelings with acceptance, even with an appreciation for the humanness they grant you, and to see them as stepping stones back to the other end of the emotional spectrum. The goal of Self Therapy is to learn how to feel all body sensations with complete tolerance for their presence. Without fear of such "negative" emotions, whether internal or external in origin, there will be no anxiety.

Self Therapy Background

To gain a little better understanding of Self Therapy, let's take a quick look at how it was developed.

As a young man, I suffered almost constantly from anxiety, and a myriad of symptoms stemming from that anxiety. My path to inner freedom actually began in traditional counseling, with a psychologist. Soon I began to notice various factors that the productive counseling sessions had in common. In particular, sessions that resulted in feelings of increased inner strength almost always involved a period during which the counselor guided me into an observation of my own emotional energies. The observation of emotional

energy was more accurately a period during which I stopped trying to avoid inner sensations, and merely experienced them.

Simultaneously with counseling I was also exploring several spiritual pursuits, most notably through meditation. Oddly, I noticed that the goal of almost every form of meditation was an emptying of the mind, a "releasing" of emotional energies from the body, and a mental concentration on the remaining "void". It was almost as if the goal of meditation was a separation of oneself from one's feelings — the exact the opposite of what I benefited from during counseling. This approach may indeed be a spiritual or relaxing experience for some people. But when you're dealing with anxiety, it's really just a form of suppression,

with very short lived benefit in the real world. However, I did find tremendous value in the inner awareness that meditation taught.

What eventually resulted in Self Therapy was a fusion of these two practices, a form of meditation in which I was able to communicate with myself in the same manner that the psychologist communicated with me during those energy shifting sessions. I could now combine the benefit of inner emotional awareness with the focused concentration of meditation. The result was a piercing ability to directly experience body sensations and emotional energies in a controlled manner that defeated the subconscious tendency of emotional avoidance, which was leading to anxiety.

The benefits of this technique in my life have been truly astounding, and I believe they will be for you as well.

Flip the Switch on Anxiety

Often when a person starts to feel an uncomfortable feeling like fear or anxiety, the initial reaction is to avoid it; either its internal sensation or external cause. The person may not even realize that they are avoiding something, or know why they are avoiding it, since many such reactions are triggered by subconscious associations. When acting in this manner, it's obvious that fear is in control.

And when dealing with anxiety, avoidance is just what you don't want to

do. If you try to suppress anxiety, ignore it, run from it, or distract yourself with other activities, you're only giving anxiety power. Remember, fear of anxiety creates more anxiety. The key is to instead confront it, feel it, and accept it. Now that you know panic attacks are just a normal adrenaline response, there's no reason to fear the sensations anyway. And also don't try to ignore the symptoms — even if your heart feels like its pounding out of your chest, just *feel* it. No matter how bad it is, the key is to face it. The more energy you put into embracing the sensation of this episode, the less strength it will have to affect you the next time.

This may all sound "easier said than done", but in a few moments we'll perform an exercise that will present a

more comprehensive approach to embracing anxiety. For now, just know conceptually that awareness and acceptance of inner sensations is the essence of Self Therapy listening. Once you've gained confidence in your ability to handle any feeling, you will have eliminated the fear of feelings that causes agoraphobia and panic disorder. Knowing this, you can quickly prevent anxiety from escalating into panic.

Emotions like anxiety exist essentially as energies within our bodies. Most likely you've never given much thought to what feelings really are. We use language to place labels on emotions like "happy", "sad", "angry", "nervous", "anxious", jealous, and "fearful", but these are just labels or symbols of the actual energies. For the duration of this

reading, I'd like to think of emotions as the energy, sensation, or essence underlying your feelings. Using labels or words to symbolize emotional energy is useful for communicating with other people. But you connect with yourself by listening directly to the pure label-less energies within.

Your relationship with yourself is a unique one, in that you are the only person whose inner world you can ever really know. Learning to observe and listen to your energies is the key to your relationship with yourself. And the identification of pure energies within you is a major component of Self Therapy, because learning how to concentrate awareness on your energies has tremendous ability to expand your emotional tolerance for them. This is the

listening aspect of the process. When you increase your emotional tolerance, adverse energies lose their power over you, and you regain control over your inner world – of which your outer world is just a reflection.

You'll find that by identifying the energies underlying anxiety in your body, and observing them as entities, you'll be able to overcome the majority of anxiety's debilitating effects. Once you can observe anxiety objectively as an "entity" (a thing) and accept it, you move from being consumed and controlled by it, to simply feeling it. With practice, you eventually reach a level where such feelings no longer dominate your thoughts to the point of influencing decisions. You experience energies like anxiety with comfort, and

can continue acting in a confident and constructive manner despite their presence.

Don't worry if some of this explanation seems confusing at this point. Self Therapy is a really simple tool, and you don't need to completely understand the underlying theory in order to make use of it. Just like you don't need to know how an engine works in order to drive a car, you also don't need to have a perfect grasp on these principles to reap the benefits of Self Therapy. Review these concepts later if you wish, but for now let's move on to some practical instruction.

Self Therapy Practice Session

The best way to learn the Self Therapy listening technique is by experiencing it. So I would now like to guide you through an exercise that demonstrates the process. For this exercise, you should be in a comfortable seated position, in an area free from distractions. You should not be driving or operating machinery of any kind.

Read through the description of each step fully before trying it yourself. In most cases you can assume at least a few seconds pause after each sentence.

NOTE: For your convenience, I have also included a guided audio recording on the next page that you can listen to

(instead of reading). If you are new to Self Therapy, I would suggest listening to the online audio at least once in order to get familiar with the appropriate speed and pauses.

Step I

OPTIONAL: Listen to the guided audio at MC2Method.org (track 6 of anxiety version), then [skip the next six steps](#).

Close your eyes now and relax. Direct your awareness toward the inside of your body. I would like you to put your mental awareness first on the inside of your head. Just mentally observe that space with your mind's eye for 30 seconds or so.

Then move your awareness to your neck and observe that space for about the same amount of time. Then down into your chest and abdomen area. Then move your awareness to your left arm. Then your right arm. Now down to your left leg. Then the right leg. Finally, expand your awareness so that it encompasses your entire body. Relax in this state for a minute with inward awareness throughout your body.

Step II

Now that you have centered concentration within your body, I would like you to notice the sensations in that space. You can start in your head, or in any area of your body where a physical sensation is present. Each person's

internal sensations will vary, but some examples are:

- Pressure in the head
- Tightness in the neck
- Aching in an arm
- Any other sensations

Sensations can range from physical ones like aching within muscles, to emotional ones like the butterfly feeling in a nervous stomach, or the heaviness of depression. If the sensation you find is of an emotional nature, like nervousness, just observe it as the energy.

Try to avoid placing verbal labels like "nervousness" or "anger" on energies — this type of identification requires an intellectual evaluation that interferes with your complete attentive listening to the pure energy. The key right now is to find and concentrate awareness on the energies. You can describe energies with words like "tingling vibration", "smooth", "dense", throbbing, etc.

If you don't feel anything, you're probably trying too hard. Just observe what's there. We all have sensation in our bodies. You don't need to force anything to be created.

If you've been experiencing anxiety recently, then you can probably find *that* sensation as an energy in your body, or

maybe throughout your body. Any emotion that you experience has an energy, a physical sensation inside your body, that goes along with it. It's that physical sensation that we're interested in right now.

If you find yourself becoming frustrated or rushed, then *that* energy (the one underlying the feeling of frustration or rush) is a good one to observe.

Step III

Once you've found a sensation, greet it, almost as if it's an "entity" within you, by saying something like "hello energy". Please choose an energy to concentrate on, and try this greeting now.

In the past, you've probably been in the habit of either ignoring or avoiding the "unpleasant" emotional and physical sensations within you. Use this time now to instead consciously be with those energies in an accepting manner. Focus your concentration on the energy you're spending time with as if you are listening to it, as if it is speaking to you with the sensations that it radiates.

Overcome all avoidance, feel genuine interest in wanting to listen to it. Listen without analysis, without evaluation, and without judgment of the energy. If it helps, think of listening to energies simply as concentrating on and observing them with pure, thought-free, avoidance-free awareness. Try this now for a couple minutes.

Just as a good listener would put all their mental attention on the person they're listening to, you should "listen" to the emotional or physical energy with all your accepting awareness — meaning free of analytical or judgmental thought. Continue doing this for a few more minutes.

The ability to stay focused and listening is like a muscle; the more often you practice, the stronger your ability will become. If you start to lose focus, say something to the energy like "I am with you energy". If you become distracted with other thoughts, don't try to forcefully push them out, as doing so only gives them the additional power of your attention. Instead, let them be there and just let them float away. They'll lose strength as you continue concentrating

on the energy you're with. Just turn your awareness back to the energy and say something like, Feeling, I am with you now. There is nothing more important to me right now than being with you. I want to know you.

With this in mind, continue listening to your energy for a few more minutes.

Step IV

For the energy you are currently listening to, try now to describe the physical characteristics of that energy. Reflect your observations *to* the energy, as if you are speaking to it. You can do this either out loud or in your mind.

Some examples might be:

- Energy, you are smooth and thick.
- Sensation, you are a tingling vibration in my stomach.
- Energy, you are aching and solid.
- Feeling, you extend from my stomach into my chest.
- Energy, you are dense and throbbing, and shaped like a rod.
- Energy, you are like a heavy sheet in front of my face.

- Energy, you are pressure in front of and through my chest.
- Energy, you are like a thick gray cloud in my body.
- Energy, you are aching from the top of my head to behind my eyes.
- Energy, you are a floating sensation.

These are just examples. You will obviously have your own unique energies, and therefore unique descriptions. Try to come up with as many descriptive words as possible, including shape, density, size, feel, and so on. Take a couple minutes to try this now. Tell the energy your observation of

its physical characteristics. Your description does not have to be exact, as there's no need for perfection here. Just reflect the first observations that come to mind. Please try this now for a couple minutes.

You may find it easier in the beginning to use a feeling word for very obvious emotional energies. For example, if intuition tells you that what you're feeling is anxiety or nervousness, you can identify it that way, maybe by saying hello nervousness. However, remember to listen only to the pure energy, and to then describe its physical traits. *Do not* get caught up in trying to interpret your energies, translate them into emotions, or associate them with external events. This energy describing process that we're performing is actually

a form of active listening. You are reflecting back to your inner energies your understanding of them. This process of reflecting helps maintain mental focus and requires clear observation. By focusing only on the physical characteristics, you limit the need for intellectual activity that interpreting energies into feeling words requires. This is also the best way to stay focused on and listening to the pure energies.

This describing and reflecting step is the most important component of the Self Therapy process, and the majority of your session should be devoted to this activity. So if you would like to spend some more time listening to the energy that you are currently with, please feel free to do so before continuing.

Step V

Remember that the goal of Self Therapy is to increase tolerance for all emotions, not to rid yourself of the unwanted ones. There is some irony in this, because as you spend time listening to your energies and becoming comfortable with their presence, they often transform into feelings that are no longer overwhelming. Usually this happens within a few hours after a Self Therapy session. You will notice that the energy that had perhaps been quite uncomfortable before your session becomes something that is easily tolerable within a short period afterwards.

Sometimes energy shifts can even occur during the session itself. Energies may change shape or density, expand or contract, or move slightly. Sometimes an energy you're spending time with may even disappear altogether. Just go with these transformations, and continue being present with the new forms that emerge.

It will often be a nice side effect, but an elimination of unpleasant feelings should *not* be the objective of your interaction with body energy. To have a mental goal of dissolving your feelings will defeat much of Self Therapy's effectiveness. You are learning to be with your energies, and in doing so eliminating the magnification of uncomfortable ones that is caused by avoidance. So do not try to empty

yourself of unpleasant emotions. Doing so will only have the reverse effect.

Please close your eyes again, and turn your attention back once again to the energy you were spending time with. Affirm your acceptance of the energy's presence by repeating the following phrases to it:

- Energy, you're okay to be where you are.
- Energy, I can handle you.
- I'm okay with your presence in my body.
- Energy, I do not seek to suppress you.

- I seek only to be comfortable with you.
- Sensation, I am okay with you.
- Energy, I let you be as you are.

Do your best to express these statements with sincerity. This becomes easier with practice.

Step VI

You might have noticed that the manner in which we're communicating with body energies is similar to an interaction with a person. That's an excellent way to view this process. For our purposes, you can treat the energies as separate

entities, or friends, within you. In a way, they are indeed friends, as most energies arise because they are trying to provide you with something that your subconscious mind thinks is useful information (as illogical as its interpretation might be).

More importantly, emotional energies are what make us human. Feelings, and our ability to experience all of them, make life rich and full – and we don't want to eliminate this special dimension of our lives. Instead, our number one goal here is to learn to listen to energies objectively. With continued practice of the Self Therapy listening technique, your tolerance level will increase and you will be able to move through self-limiting emotions like fear and anxiety because they will no longer overpower

you. You'll find that the benefits of this process build upon themselves day after day, as you continue practicing.

Please turn your awareness back once more to the energy you were spending time with. With a feeling of genuine appreciation, regardless of the nature of the energy, repeat the following phrases to it:

- Energy, thank you for the message you are trying to give me.
- Energy, I appreciate and accept your presence within me.
- Energy, thank you for contributing to my humanness.

These statements or something similar can conclude your Self Therapy session.

Practice Session Notes

This first exercise has demonstrated the principles of Self Therapy "listening". However, for the demonstration we have only spent limited time with one energy. During a self paced session, you can spend as much time with an energy as you wish, move between all of the energies within your body, or repeat the same process for each energy that you detect.

If you're still new to Self Therapy and prefer the guidance of this reading, simply repeat this segment anytime. Once you're familiar with the technique,

you can work independently at your own pace and even create your own variations of the technique. For example, you may choose to move from one area of your body to another, or to work first with the most uncomfortable energies. In my own sessions, I tend to work with the dominant energies first, and will jump back and forth between the listening and speaking steps (which we'll cover later). This technique does not have rigid rules, and you will undoubtedly find an approach that works best for you.

Be aware that you will often encounter energies that you are not at all comfortable placing your awareness on, especially given that you're probably reading this book due to feelings of anxiety and fear that you've spent years trying to *avoid*. However, *those energies*

in particular are the most rewarding ones to spend time with. Directly observing underlying energies takes self discipline, and may initially be very uncomfortable. But your ability to improve your emotional state will be in direct proportion to your ability to extend your experience into the realm of discomfort. In fact, the best time to engage in Self Therapy listening is in the period just before, during, or just after a situation that has caused adverse energies to arise.

This is especially true if you're experiencing panic or anxiety attacks. If you're feeling panicky or anxious and can safely do so, immediately engage in the self-listening exercise. Face that anxiety head on by feeling it completely, and release all efforts to prevent it from

coming to you. Greet the sensations, accept them, observe them, be with them, and experience them. You'll quickly prevent general anxiety from escalating into a panic attack. Once you've been practicing the listening method for awhile, you might even try going to a place that reminds you of an anxious episode and implement your listening skills with the feelings that arise from memory.

Each time you extend yourself in directly observing the previously avoided sensations, the benefits of your efforts will increase, and your anxiety will dwindle. You'll be amazed at the self empowerment you create by expanding your tolerance further and further each day. It's similar to exercising; running fifty yards might

wipe you out when embarking on a fitness program. But as you push your limits little by little on a daily basis, you soon find yourself running further and further with less effort.

Practice, Practice, Practice!

Before we move on, I'd like to stress once again the importance of this "listening" phase of Self Therapy. Don't make the mistake of just reading through this material and judging its value without trying it. If you only read about it, then you're wasting your time here. Listen to the recording at mc2method.org to see if the guided audio works better for you. Also, if you're thinking that this process is similar to simply feeling an emotion like

you normally do, please know that there is a *huge* difference between simply walking around with a feeling and actually taking the time to fully listen to the energy directly.

If you're suffering from anxiety, the manner in which you've been experiencing adverse feelings is most certainly one of avoidance. This means that when there is a stimulus or thought prompting fear or anxiety within you, you probably try to avoid the situation, and/or suppress the emotional reaction. But it is by consciously taking time to completely feel the uncomfortable energy that you will boost your tolerance and comfort levels for both that feeling, and the situations that cause it to arise.

Self Therapy Practice Session #2

OPTIONAL: Listen to the guided audio at MC2Method.org (track 8 of anxiety version), then [skip this session](#).

If there are certain types of situations that provoke especially high levels of anxiety for you, or if there are past events in your life that plague you with guilt, anger, or other inner turmoil, I'd like to show you a useful variation of the listening technique that helps reduce the emotional impact of such events.

One of the most powerful therapeutic tools of a mental health professional is the skill of active listening. An effective psychologist will employ active listening to guide a patient into emotional self-

awareness. By prompting the person to describe a memory, and how they feel during that recollection (e.g. by asking for clarifications), the patient is led into a state of re-experiencing uncomfortable emotional energies. This emotional re-immersion in a safe environment can drastically decrease the intensity of uncomfortable emotions.

While such hand-holding may be beneficial, especially for deeply traumatic or repressed memories, the counselor is still relying almost completely on the patient's ability to heal their own emotional state. The healing is induced by the direct immersion into emotional energies that the doctor's active listening necessitates.

Self Therapy empowers you with that same powerful tool, without making you dependent on any other person for your inner harmony. There may be certain issues that you find too difficult to reflect on alone, for which professional help may be sought. However, for many emotional events, especially those revolving around anxiety, you can also be a good listener to yourself — and provide to *yourself* the same supportive and accepting environment that promotes inner healing.

I would now like to lead you through an exercise that demonstrates exactly how to do this. Before getting started, please think of a moderately uncomfortable experience that you've had recently, or perhaps just a general situation that

causes you to feel anxious. We'll use that experience for a practice demonstration.

For this exercise, you should be in a comfortable seated position, in an area free of distractions. You should not be driving or operating machinery of any kind. As before, you should either read through the steps before trying them, or use the guided audio link above.

Step I

When you're ready, close your eyes and relax. Direct your awareness inwardly, and just feel the sensations of your body. Take a few moments to relax into the feelings of your being, and let any thoughts that come to you just float away.

Imagine yourself now, in your mind's eye, in the situation that makes you anxious, fearful, or otherwise uncomfortable. Whether this is a past event that causes lingering discomfort, or an upcoming one that you're nervous about, visualize yourself in the situation — as if it is currently happening right now, all around you.

Do a halfway decent job of mentally projecting yourself into the situation (as if you're in it right now), and you will quickly notice an emotional reaction arise somewhere in your body (e.g. nervousness, stress, uneasiness). Immediately transfer your awareness to that energy. Just *let it* come. Let it be there without trying to stop it. Do not react to the energy, do not try to evaluate or analyze it, and above all *do not* try to

suppress it. Just be with the energy with all your observing awareness.

We'll now perform the steps of Self Therapy listening just as we did in the first session, instead applying them to this internally generated feeling.

Step II

First, greet the energy by saying something like, "Hello energy". Then, just keep your accepting awareness on the energy. Listen to it without analysis, without evaluation, and without avoidance. Do this for a couple minutes now.

If you start to lose focus, say something to the energy like "I am with you. I want to know you". If you lose track of the energy, simply re-visualize the situation and then transfer awareness back to the feeling. Continue listening in this manner for a couple more minutes.

Step III

Now, start describing the energy's physical characteristics. Keep your inward awareness on the sensation and reflect your observations to it, either out loud or in your mind.

- Energy, you are...
- Sensation, you are...

- Feeling, you are...

When distracting thoughts arise, just let them go and re-greet the energy. Tell the energy there is nothing more important to you right now than getting to know and be comfortable with it. Continue listening and reflecting for as long as you'd like. As with the standard form of Self Therapy (first practice session), most of your time should be spent on this step.

Step IV

Now, let the energy know that you accept and appreciate its presence by repeating the following phrases to it. As you do so, know that as you continue

increasing your ability to tolerate feelings like this one, you will also be able to handle the situations where these energies arise. So once again, direct your awareness to the energy, and repeat some phrases like these:

- Energy, you are okay to be where you are.
- Feeling, I accept your presence in me.
- Emotion, I do not seek to suppress you.
- Energy, thank you for your message.
- Energy, I can handle you.
- Energy, I can be with or without you.

You're free to change the wording in any manner that feels right for you – as long as it facilitates the goal of "accepting observation". And as mentioned before, you can move between all these steps as you see fit. Stay with the energy until you feel that you are able to tolerate and even be comfortable with its presence. Not only does this have the therapeutic effect of reducing anxiety, but such emotional tolerance also makes you less likely to avoid situations that you've come to associate with adverse feelings. Once again, the most important component of achieving this objective is the practice of non-evaluational listening and focused observation of your energy.

If you lose track of the feeling you started with, you may want to repeat the entire process. Start over by visualizing

the situation so that the energy is refocused within you, and then proceed through the steps again. You will probably notice that each time you repeat the process, the original energy's tendency to emotionally overwhelm you will become weaker and weaker.

Eventually, when practicing this method regularly, you may have a hard time even finding the adverse energies that once affected you. Ultimately, you will feel in control of yourself even when the energies do resurface, because you have consciously affirmed your ability to handle their presence.

Many other anti-anxiety exercises involve relaxation, perhaps using muscle contraction or peaceful visualizations. However, relaxation is *not* the goal of this exercise that we're doing here. To

the contrary, we're actually visualizing a feared or "undesirable" situation for the specific purpose of re-creating and fully experiencing the discomfort without emotional avoidance. Ironically, profound and lasting relaxation is more often the eventual result.

Real-time Self Therapy

If your experience of anxiety is anything like mine was, your daily life is probably riddled with situations that you loathe because of the unpleasant feelings they cause. You will find Self Therapy to be an immensely valuable tool for keeping your emotional balance as you face such events.

For example, there was a time when I was quite literally petrified of speaking in front of groups. I say "petrified" because when I would talk in front of people, the anxiety would be so extreme that a lump in my throat would virtually prevent me from speaking. I would blush like a tomato and mentally freeze so that I couldn't even think of what I had to say. This reaction alone made the whole experience many times worse.

After learning the Self Therapy listening technique, I started to apply it to my fear of public speaking. If I knew in advance that I would be giving a presentation, I would start by performing the variation of Self Therapy that we just discussed, applying it to the upcoming event. I'd visualize myself in the future speaking situation (or actually practice the speech

while imagining myself "on stage"), and just be with the energies that arose.

More importantly, as the time to speak approached, even minutes before, I would continue actively listening to my energies as I got ready. And finally, even while speaking, I would keep some mental awareness on the anxiety energies welling up inside of me.

Whereas previously I would have tried to suppress those energies while speaking (which always resulted in disaster), I could now just let all those reactions flow into and through me.

Even if I thought my heart was going to explode, I could just feel it, and continue acting calm on the outside. What would have previously become bottled up energy overload was now a completely manageable reaction.

As I became more confident in my ability to handle these sensations, the fear that was causing the reaction in the first place eventually dissolved, along with my fear of speaking.

It may initially be somewhat of a challenge to concentrate awareness inwardly like this while involved in an activity like speaking or interacting, but it's really much less of a distraction than suppressed anxiety would be. You will find that, with practice, maintaining an inner awareness while outwardly interacting is possible, and very beneficial. Obviously you won't be able to have the full-fledged inner dialog with your feelings, but an accepting awareness is the key component in managing such situations.

I've used public speaking anxiety as an example here, but the same concept can be applied to any situation-specific anxiety. And while this example did allow for some mental preparation, you can also apply Self Therapy to unanticipated situations as they occur. Just keep a portion of your mental awareness on your inner sensations, observe them, and accept their presence. You might even try intentionally placing yourself into some situations that cause anxiety, just to practice listening to the sensations that arise.

Life is full of events that make us feel one way or another. Increasing your ability to tolerate such situations, and your inner reactions, is an amazing step forward to becoming the person of your full potential. If you can handle anything

in your inner world, you can handle anything in your outer world.

This brings me to one more topic I'd like to cover before leaving this section.

We've primarily discussed Self Therapy listening as applied to anxiety. However, learning to experience other emotions without avoidance is also important. For example, think of how common it is for people to avoid trusting or loving someone fully because they're afraid of re-experiencing sensations of loss, betrayal, rejection, or other feelings that they've encountered in the past. It's not fear of loss; it's fear of the *feeling* of loss.

Embarrassment, anger, sadness, loneliness, and so many other emotions;

no one usually wants to experience these things, but they are sensations that make us human. The degree to which we've insulated ourselves from feelings that we've grown to fear, grasping for emotional comfort and security, is also a measure of how much we're limiting ourselves and our lives. So regardless of what sensations come along, take the opportunity to grow from them. Be with those feelings, and work on observing their energy with acceptance rather than avoidance.

Happiness, sadness, peace, suffering, love, loneliness. These things will come and go. Real joy, and real inner strength, can be found in being able to feel each moment and being *okay* with yourself in it.

Self Therapy "Listening" Review

The Self Therapy listening skills that you've just learned will be powerful tools for managing your anxiety.

Listening to and gaining mastery over inner energies has profound benefits for anxiety reduction. Simply knowing that you can tolerate and no longer need to fear negative feelings, or the situations that inspire them, will make a tremendous difference in your anxiety levels. Your fears will no longer get nearly the amount of emotional fuel that you previously gave them once you trust in your capacity to handle even the worst case emotional scenarios. Don't give anxiety the additional power that fearing its presence creates. Make the practice of Self Therapy listening part of your daily life, and you will see its

benefits constantly unfolding before you in more profound ways.

I would recommend continuing with the listening exercises regularly, at least one or more sessions per day if possible, especially if your anxiety levels are still high. It's probably a good idea to use the guided audio recordings a couple times in the beginning to be sure that you're applying the concepts correctly (go to MC2Method.org). You'll eventually come up with your own variations, but initially it's important to be working with a proper foundation. Learn to look forward to spending that time with yourself, and know that your accumulated efforts will lead to inner freedom.

The upcoming material is best utilized once you've managed your current anxiety to a degree that it is not overwhelming you. For most people, the "listening" exercises will be the most important component of the Self Therapy process and overcoming anxiety. In fact, it used to be the entire program!

Reversing the Anxiety Trend

To stop stress and anxiety from arising in the first place, we must look at where those feelings are originating from. And in almost every case, the cause is our thoughts and beliefs. You've probably heard the term "seeing the world through rose colored glasses". Well, with anxiety you're looking at the world through lenses of fear. The origin of this behavior may be self-preservation instinct, but an excess of it becomes purely self-defeating.

Reflect for a moment on the fact that it's not situations themselves that cause stress; it's your perception of how they may affect you. Thinking of and imagining feared outcomes excessively

eventually causes the body to react to the images as if they are reality, resulting in feelings of anxiety and stress. Thoughts, being the filters of perception, are also the manufacturer of feelings. And the emotional quality of everything you do during your day is going to reflect those feelings that you have created with your thoughts.

Sometimes the reverse can occur, where a feeling influences thinking. A good example is a panic attack or anytime we're afraid of an emotion. Fear of the feeling itself causes us to imagine something bad. And it's for that reason that this program began with developing your ability to handle all feelings so that you don't have to fear them. But in most cases, the downward thought-feeling

cycle usually begins with thoughts and perceptions.

Do you wonder why you feel better when you are with certain people, or when you are in certain situations? It's because you think differently in those situations. If you're with good friends that accept and appreciate you and make you think well of yourself, you're probably going to feel fine (or even great). On the other hand, if you're in a "stressful situation" that poses a lot of "negative possibilities", you're probably going to do a lot more "what if" or "catastrophe" thinking. But the fact is that you could instead be exerting a sense of control by imagining and implementing positive solutions.

Why do you feel better when you're reading an inspirational book? Because it's giving you inspirational thoughts. But you can start producing your own inspirational thoughts all the time. Why do you reach out for or even cling to certain people when you're feeling fearful or uneasy? Because their presence or supportive attitude enables the type of thinking within your mind that makes you feel safe and secure. But you can do the same thing for yourself!

Whether in words, images or both, we're involved almost constantly in an inner dialog with ourselves. And to overcome anxiety we need to control the direction of this communication. Rather than continuing to blindly follow the programming that we've passively absorbed from unenlightened people and

"negative" experiences, we can choose to start taking conscious control of deciding the type of thoughts that we'll produce and "speak" to ourselves.

NOTE: Please don't dismiss the remainder of this book by thinking it might be a course in "positive thinking". Although somewhat along those lines, I feel confident in guessing that every approach to positive thought that you've ever been exposed to before was probably flawed in some way, otherwise you wouldn't be here. So please read on!

Improving the quality of your thoughts is a critical step toward defeating anxiety. It is the mental preoccupation with images of things you fear that causes your body to get nervous, release

adrenaline and create other anxiety sensations. The fact is, if your mind didn't have a tendency to dwell on negative thoughts and possibilities, the fear reaction of anxiety would have no basis on which to grow, and the avoidance behaviors leading to anxiety and stress would be much less likely to occur. Stress and anxiety simply cannot exist without the thoughts that create them. So what's the conclusion? Reverse your thinking and you will reverse your anxiety.

Those who stagnate in life, those who resist change, and of course those who tend toward anxiety, are the ones who dwell on negative possibilities. If you expect bad things or nothing to come of your efforts, you're probably not going to do much to better yourself — people

act in accordance with their beliefs. But emotionally empowered people have their minds focused on the positive possibilities and act toward manifesting those possibilities.

Don't cheat yourself out of all that your life could be. Know that if you continue thinking and acting in your current manner, this is what your life will continue to reflect. But it can be so much more. Know that you are the creator of your life, and start to choose more constructive thoughts and beliefs for yourself as much as possible.

The "speaking" aspect of Self Therapy involves taking back conscious control of your thought patterns, which is essentially your communication *to*

yourself. You stop passively sustaining old self-limiting messages, and decide what thoughts and beliefs you need to internalize in order to reach your objectives, even if your only objective is simple inner harmony. To reverse the cycle of negativity that breeds anxiety, keep aware of the walls that improper thinking builds between you and your true goals, and begin to re-arrange your thoughts and beliefs in a more constructive manner.

Sure, bad things will sometimes happen. But your mental energy would be much better spent on manifesting positive possibilities and solving problems that really do arise, rather than imagining the myriad situations that could, but probably won't, arise.

Thought Adjustment

To begin reprogramming your mind, it's helpful to first determine what thoughts and beliefs you personally hold that are responsible for your anxiety. Some of these might be obvious to you already, and in the next sections we will cover a few of the most common thought patterns that lead to anxiety. However, you may also have some unique personal beliefs that need adjustment.

Reflect on things in your life that cause anxiety for you, consider the faulty thoughts behind the reactions, and decide what replacement thoughts you must assume in order to achieve the emotional result you desire. You might consider an emotionally secure or

confident person that you know, and figure out what they must feel and believe about themselves in order to be that way. Everybody will have some personal thoughts and beliefs to change, and their own variations for new and empowering ones. Initially, your replacement thoughts don't have to be the complete opposite of your current ones. For example, just acknowledging a positive possibility is a significant improvement, and an excellent starting point.

Before moving on, let me remind you to not forget about your "listening" skills. Using the upcoming "thought adjustment" as a method of repressing existing emotions that you'd like to avoid is counterproductive. If there's fear or avoidance underlying your new

thoughts, it will likely undermine your efforts. Therefore, be sure to keep practicing what you learned in Self Therapy "listening" as you move into this next section.

When first getting started, it's a good idea to perform a listening session just before working on thought adjustment. This way you first overcome any tendency toward avoidance of your energies, affirm your ability to handle their presence, and don't make the mistake of using the thought adjustment exercises as a means of emotional suppression. Once you've managed anxiety and other feelings, you are then in the best position to reprogram your mind with new and empowering beliefs.

So with that in mind, let's get started. In order to demonstrate the process of thought adjustment, we're now going to work on reversing some common thought patterns and behaviors that lead to increases in anxiety. The purpose of these sessions is to instill some general thought patterns and beliefs as a foundation on which to start building your anxiety resistance.

Of course, the intention is not to brainwash you into accepting beliefs that you don't agree with. If you should encounter any concept or thought that you're not comfortable with, simply ignore it and move on to the next. And you'll most likely find some statements that don't apply to your particular situation. They're all presented only as examples of general healthy attitudes to

hold, and assume that you're using good judgment in their application at all times.

For the upcoming exercises, please find a private and comfortable environment, where you can work without distraction.

Though Adjustment Session #1

RECOMMENDED: Listen to the following sessions at MC2Method.org (tracks 13-19 of anxiety audio), then [skip ahead](#).

For demonstration, please start by simply repeating the following phrases out loud to get familiar with them:

- With my new skills, I no longer need to avoid, suppress or run from anxiety.
- When I feel anxiety arising, I can now just listen to it and be with it.
- I now know that I can handle any feeling that arises in my body

Now, do the same thing again — repeat the phrases out loud. *However*, this time say them with the complete feeling that they are really true for you. Place your emphasis on the *feeling* that matches the words, rather than just the words:

- With my new skills, I no longer need to avoid, suppress or run from anxiety.
- When I feel anxiety arising, I can now just listen to it and be with it.

Remember, it is very important that you try to create the inner feeling that the statements are in fact true for you now — perhaps a happiness or joy that you're overcoming anxiety. Without generating the feelings, the words do not carry any energy. Repeat the last phrase with this in mind:

- I now know that I can handle any feeling that arises in my body

Okay, that's a good start. Now, here are some additional steps to really get the energy of your body (belief) into alignment with the words that you're speaking. Turn your awareness toward the inside of your body, and do the following:

- Remind yourself that what you've learned so far has enabled you to stop fearing anxiety — that it will set you free.
- Feel and listen to any positive emotional energy that arises from that thought.
- Let yourself feel those positive emotions, and try to expand them without thinking about them.
- Realize that your internal feeling is now that of a person who has overcome anxiety.
- Inwardly congratulate yourself for having found a way beyond anxiety.

- Continue listening to and expanding the feeling in your body. If necessary, remind yourself that anxiety relief is real for you now, and then continue expanding the energy. Don't think about it — just feel it, and mentally will the energy to expand.

So what we're doing here is trying to get your body energies to correspond with those of a person who knows that they are anxiety free. Speaking words out loud (the limit of most positive thinking and affirmation programs) is only a start. Speaking with intense feeling is an improvement. However, the most important component of the process is to do whatever it takes in your mind to get your body energies into alignment with

the thoughts — even if just for a moment.

Sometimes simply thinking about a positive possibility can get some of the target energy flowing. At other times, visualizing yourself acting in a certain manner can help, or perhaps just speaking the words will bring up a bit of the energy. But the most important and powerful step comes when you drop the thought, feel the energy, and expand it through your mental will. Keep thought out of the process at that point; just feel the energy, and expand it in your body as much as possible. Know that it is real for you in that moment.

This whole process becomes easier with practice, and with time you'll find the

results to be truly profound. As we move forward, keep in mind that even though I may be introducing new thoughts and perspectives with words, our objective is to generate the body energy of belief that corresponds to those words.

Don't Worry, Be Real(istic)

Worry can be a beneficial survival mechanism, as it is worry that often motivates us to choose safer alternatives. However, the excess worry that causes anxiety usually provides little benefit, and can severely limit your ability to engage in normal activities. For example, some anxious people fear flying in airplanes. While flying does involve an element of physical danger, the amount of mental energy channeled

into negative expectations usually far outweighs the amount of actual risk. Ask yourself, what is the realistic probability that your feared event will actually happen? Is it worth filling your head and coloring your experience with visions of catastrophe?

Ironically, the imagined catastrophe for even more anxious people is a physically harmless event that could occur. This might revolve around fear of rejection, failure, embarrassment, loss, loneliness — the list goes on. Anxiety about such irrational fears, if not confronted, can be truly devastating if it prevents us from taking action to achieve the type of life we desire. What we need in order to start moving beyond these self-limiting tendencies are replacement beliefs that

give us a sense of control in all situations.

There is one belief in particular, one realization, that when fully internalized, will free you to live without excess anxiety, and to fully enjoy the life that you have available to you now. What is it? It is the realization that *YOU CAN HANDLE IT*. Whatever it is that you fear happening, realize now that *you would be able to handle it* if it did happen. No matter how bad it is, you have a strong mind and you will be able to cope. You won't lose your sanity. You will survive.

In Self Therapy "listening", you already began working on your ability to be present with the feelings in your body. This is where confidence in your

capacity to handle anything begins. Knowing that you can experience negative feelings like anxiety without avoidance is a powerful step toward overcoming their limiting effects. In order to reinforce the confidence you're gaining from the "listening" exercises, that's why we've also made this the subject of our first thought adjustment session.

To continue building on the initial 3 statements, please repeat the following phrases out loud with the strong and congruent feeling that they are already true for you now:

- I now accept all feelings that come to me. I let them come.

- Fearing emotions or body sensations only gives them power. I embrace feelings instead.
- I am willing to experience all human emotion.
- By being able to experience all emotions, I am now able to live more fully.
- When I feel fear, I just feel it. I am proud of my ability to tolerate and go through fear.
- I do not repress or run from anxiety. I fully feel my anxiety and know I can handle it.

- When I sense anxiety, I no longer run from it by seeking mental or social diversions.

Remember, for maximum impact speak each thought with the belief that it is true for you already. Once again, the words don't matter — it is the feeling that matters. This is what gives the thoughts real power. Try to ignore the intellect, which likes to argue with anything that does not conform to your belief system. You'll recognize the "intellect" — it's that voice in your head saying "no you're not" every time you think a new thought about yourself. By concentrating your full awareness on the replacement thoughts with full belief and congruent feeling behind them, you will not leave any room for the intellect to interfere. In this way, you are bypassing the

analytical intellect, and speaking directly to your subconscious mind.

So speak your new thoughts with complete belief and deep emotion. Feel the words being spoken out to the universe by every cell of your being. Project and sense the joy or whatever emotion you would expect to have if the target condition were already attained. Know that the change is true for you already.

As you take time everyday to instill your new thoughts and beliefs in this manner, the effects will accumulate, and generating the feelings will become more natural. The intellect will soon become more accepting, and eventually

the new thoughts and beliefs will replace the old ones.

After speaking these last statements out loud, you probably already generated some of the energy that is in alignment with the thoughts. If not, remind yourself simply of the possibility that what you've learned in this book will enable you to handle anything that arises in your body, including anxiety. Then:

- Feel and listen to any positive emotional energy that has arisen from these thoughts.
- While feeling and listening to those positive emotions, try to expand them without thinking about them.

- Realize that your internal feelings are now those of a person who can handle anything.
- Inwardly congratulate yourself for having found true confidence.
- Continue concentrating on and expanding the feeling in your body. Don't think about it — just feel it, expand it, radiate it.

Stress Reduction

I would now like you to reflect on this fact: If you can be okay with any sensation or emotion inside of you, then you will also be able to handle anything that happens outside of you. This is

because it is really the inner reaction that you fear.

We just talked about how worry and anxiety become self-defeating when they prevent us from taking action. But conveniently, if you've developed confidence in the fact that you would be able to handle any feared event, then you will have already eliminated the need for much of your worry. You see, worry is simply a preoccupation with negative possibilities. But if you know you could handle any of those possibilities if they did arise, then you will be much, much less likely to dwell on them. And without worry and fear, anxiety will no longer be able to take root.

Repeat the following affirmations out loud. As before, speak with a complete knowing that they are already true for you now. Speak the words as if with every cell of your being — as if every cell of your body absolutely knows their truth.

- I have the capacity to handle anything that happens.
- There is nothing I can't handle, only the mis-belief that I can't handle it.
- Instead of worrying, I know that I am able to cope with any situation that arises.

- I have the emotional strength to handle anything that comes my way.
- Since I can handle anything, I can now go through my fears.
- I will survive even if the worst case emotional scenario happens.
- When I feel fear, I continue taking action with confidence and go through it.
- I have the capacity to handle any situation, any outcome, any event.

One reason that people disregard the power of traditional "positive thinking" is because of the delay and disconnect

between the thought reversal and feeling reversal. That's why we are doing both simultaneously. Another pitfall is that even when speaking positive affirmations, it is very easy to actually be thinking the exact opposite. Again, it is for this reason that I place emphasis on generating the desired and congruent feelings, rather than just speaking positive thoughts. It is the *feeling and body energy that matters* above all else. That is where belief lies.

Learning to self-generate emotional energy does take some practice, so don't be too concerned if you cannot instantaneously create a strong feeling when you're first getting started here. Just keep doing the best you can, and emotional adjustment will come. Its strength will continue to increase as you

continue generating your new energies from day to day.

Emotional Self Reliance

Confidence can be increased by trusting in your ability to solve problems and complications that arise, *as they arise*. Always remember that you can handle anything that happens, because you have a strong mind. If you had the creativity to imagine the quantity of negative possibilities necessary to create anxiety, then your mind is also resourceful enough to find solutions to the problems that really do come along. Problem solving ability is like a muscle in your mind; exercise those muscles on a daily basis, when they're needed, and you will

become a more effective, and relaxed, person.

By trusting in your ability to cope with, fix, or improve any undesirable situation, you will maintain a sense of control over your life and daily events. That sense of control prevents situations from becoming sources of stress and trauma. Just remember that there is always something you can do. You are never given more than you can handle in this life. And it is by maintaining a sense of control over your circumstances that you gain real emotional strength within.

Repeat these thoughts out loud with the feeling throughout your body that they are true for you now:

- I have the ability to find solutions to the problems that arise in my life.
- I have a powerful mind and am a strong problem solver.
- I put mental energy into finding positive solutions.
- I can always find a way to improve an undesirable circumstance.
- Every time I solve a problem and improve my life, I become a stronger person.
- Because I can find a solution to any problem, I no longer need to worry about "bad" things happening.

The attitudes that we've covered so far can help greatly with reducing the anxiety and stress caused by "what if" thinking. When you know that you'd be able to handle whatever happens, you won't spend so much time worrying about all the myriad negative possibilities that could happen. Apply these attitudes to fears and worries that are causing you anxiety or limiting your personal growth.

You might also experiment with changing your perception of "negative" events. As a personal example, I once viewed my anxiety as something undesirable and "bad". But was it really "bad" if I got through it, became a stronger, more content person as a result, and can now help others? My friend was

devastated when her last relationship fell apart, and she couldn't see any other future. But was the experience "bad" if it helped her to grow emotionally, and if she is now much happier with her new partner? Perhaps the traffic on the way to work this morning got you stressed; would you feel stressed if you knew that the traffic had diverted you from a serious accident?

The "negativity" we perceive in daily life is only relative, pure reflection of the breadth of the observer's perception. If nothing else, I urge you to simply experiment with seeing your life from a larger, more enlightened, perspective. Trust that everything is just right for its time — that it's the universe steering you in the right direction, even if you cannot yet see the destination. Yes, you may

never know when a "problem" was a saving grace, when an "accident" was preparing you for better things, or when an "obstacle" taught you a crucial lesson. But just try assuming the best. See the procession of events in your life from this perspective, and all the little problems and setbacks won't seem quite so "bad".

Self Esteem

A healthy self-esteem, or regard for oneself, is another vital element of overcoming anxiety. Acceptance of yourself gives you the freedom to make mistakes; you don't need to try to appear perfect to others if you're already okay with yourself. Imagine what this can do for fear of failure, rejection and social

anxiety. For example, would you worry about saying something stupid or embarrassing yourself if it didn't matter so much to you what others thought? Would you fear rejection if you were already so supportive and loving of yourself that no one else's negative criticism could affect you?

Imagine that — if no one's judgment could emotionally touch you because your sense of self-worth was already so rock solid. You'd be able to relax around others and just be yourself. You'd be able to freely tell people what you feel, let them know who you are, and start making real connections. When you're okay with what's inside you, you don't try to hide it from others — if someone doesn't like you, that's their problem. In this mindset, it's easier to act yourself,

try new things, and feel authentic. It's for all these reasons that improving self-esteem is another major key to coping with anxiety.

So how can we cultivate that unsinkable self-esteem? The key once again is to improve your communication with yourself. Consider the manner in which you would hope that your best, most supportive, encouraging, and trustworthy friend would communicate with you — and then adopt this manner of communication for speaking to yourself. Instead of relying on others for your emotional support and seeking them out when things get bad, figure out what type of emotional energy and words you would wish to receive from them, turn your attention inward, and give it to the inner you.

If we depend on supportive messages from other people for our self-esteem, then the opposite (neglect, criticism, or negativity towards us) will logically eat away at self esteem. The solution is to free yourself from the daily barrage of uncontrollable external messages that can destroy self-image by building your foundation of self-esteem from the inside. Stop looking outside for approval, and communicate your thoughts of acceptance to your own inner self.

As an additional motivator, know that loving yourself is not only a key to real self-contentment, but also the foundation for successful relationships and friendships. You must have love for yourself in order to have extra love to give to others. Moreover, you're much

less likely to repel people with insecurity, and more likely to accept love from them without doubt, if you already love yourself. This is because when you love yourself, you more naturally believe yourself worthy of others love.

The following exercise should give you a good idea of the type of self dialoging you can engage in to take charge of your own self-esteem. This segment should not be performed while driving or operating machinery. You should be in a seated position, in an area free from distractions.

Repeat the following phrases 2 or 3 times, doing your best to go beyond the

words, into the body energy and feeling that corresponds to their meaning.

- I accept and love myself unconditionally, as I am.
- I love the person I am choosing to become.

Before moving onto the next statements, I'd like to introduce another useful technique of generating target energies; that is by speaking your thoughts inwardly to yourself in the 2nd person. For example, instead of saying "I am a confident person", you'd turn your mental focus toward your inner being and say, "<Insert your name here>, you are a confident person". You speak from the center of your consciousness into

your body and all the energies that make up your being. If done properly, with full feeling and thought-free mental focus, your subconscious mind will perceive these messages almost as if an objective third party is making the statements about you. Often an outside and objective statement is the one that we (our subconscious) find most believable, and speaking inwardly to yourself in this manner is an excellent way to simulate that effect.

This technique may seem a bit strange at first, but remember that it is a means to an end. Experiment a little and you'll discover that it really helps to create an energy of belief in your subconscious mind. After all, it was outside influences that inspired many of your perceptions in the first place. This method of

speaking to yourself is essentially replacing uncontrollable outside voices with your own, more enlightened one. Furthermore, the focus on your inner being leaves little room for intellectual distraction, and can make for a more direct impact on your subconscious mind.

Simply modify your thought phrases by replacing the words "I am" with the words "Self, you are" (where "self" is your name).

Let's give it a try. Close your eyes now and turn your awareness inward. Repeat the following phrases, speaking from the center of consciousness in your head down into your entire body and being. Replace the word "self" with your name.

- Self, I am okay with the person you are.
- Self, I enjoy spending time with you and getting to know you.
- Self, my relationship with you is important to me.
- Self, you are my best friend, and I am your best friend.
- Self, I like the person that you are, and I like the person that you are becoming.

Again, be sure to speak the phrases to yourself with a genuine and absolute sincerity. Simultaneously generate a

feeling that you really mean it; that it's 100% true now.

- Self, I support you and stand by you through everything and no matter what.

- Self, I will always be with you as you move through any fear.

- Self, you can now ignore outer criticism; that I love and accept you is all that matters.

- Self, I am committed to giving you supportive and encouraging thoughts at all times.

- Self, you are doing a great job. I am proud of you. I congratulate you for the progress you have made.
- Self, you are my comforter, I am your comforter.
- Self, you are the one I run to, and I am the one you run to.
- Self, there are so many good things about you. I like who you are.
- Self, I appreciate the humanness within you. I appreciate your imperfections.
- Self, it is okay when you make mistakes.

- Self, I look out for you. I stand up for you.
- Self, everything will be okay. Everything always will be okay.
- Self, I love you no matter what.

While your attention is still focused within, take a moment and just feel your inner energies. Now, instead of speaking, try to project the energy of love to yourself. Feel the energies of complete acceptance, appreciation, admiration and any other components of love, and mentally radiate those inwardly to yourself. Try this now. If it helps, you can silently speak the words, "Self, I love you and appreciate you" as you project the energy of love into your

body. Feel those energies flowing now for a few minutes.

Social Anxiety

Good friendships and loving relationships can be one of life's most rewarding experiences. However, the quality of such external relationships is in large part a reflection of the quality of your relationship with yourself. The last two sections provided an excellent foundation to start working on your internal communication.

Know that putting your relationship with yourself first does not mean being selfish. To the contrary, when you first resolve your own emotional issues and become less preoccupied by your inner

suffering, you'll be much more capable of giving yourself to others. Step #1 in improving your relationship with the outside world is improving your relationship with yourself. Like a drop of water on a still lake, the effects of your efforts to improve your inner relationship will ripple out to external ones. By making your inner needs a priority you will have the greatest positive impact on everyone around you. Likewise, once you've created a healthy relationship with your inner self, you are then in the best position to start connecting with others in a healthy, non-needy, non-clingy, unconditional manner.

The following affirmations will address some additional sources of social anxiety, shyness, and fear of rejection,

all of which are often nothing more than symptoms resulting from negative expectation about social interaction. Repeat these phrases with full emotion, knowing they are true for you now:

- I am okay with myself and this makes me a comfortable person to be around.
- Because I am secure with myself, my presence makes others feel secure.
- Having resolved my anxiety, I am now able to focus my attention on others rather than myself. This makes me a more likable person.
- I know that not everyone will like the person I am, and this is okay with me.

- If someone does not like me or is not comfortable with me, this is their problem.
- I can only be the person that I love, and let others love me if they choose.
- I do not try to appear perfect to others. My interactions with others do not need to be perfect.
- Mistakes and imperfections make me human. I appreciate my humanness. The people I care about like me because I am real and genuine.

- I love and appreciate my imperfect life, imperfect events, and imperfect interactions.
- Anyone who disapproves of or judges me is of no importance to me.
- I have no fear of judgment or rejection, because I am already fully okay with myself.
- I am willing to feel nervousness, rejection, and embarrassment. I embrace and go through such feelings.
- I take the risk of rejection that getting to know others requires.

- I take chances in order to find the relationships and friendships I desire.

This is a good place to introduce one more method of adjusting thought patterns and beliefs. I call this method "acting", and it involves behaving in a manner congruent with your targeted beliefs, even if such behaviors feel artificial or unnatural at first. This is especially useful in social situations. While the approach may at first appear to be more of a physical activity than a mental one, "acting" the role of the person you want to become creates an extremely powerful impression on your subconscious mind that can quickly become the foundation of your thoughts about yourself.

For practice, next time you're not feeling all that confident in a particular situation, try simply *acting* like you are confident. Stand tall, speak in a calm voice, make eye contact, be controlled in your movements, and so on. You will probably be amazed to find that by simply acting confident (even if you don't feel it initially) you will cultivate an energy of confidence within yourself that will change your image of yourself. Not feeling social? Try *acting* social. Not feeling energetic? Try *acting* energetic. Not feeling competent? Try *acting* competent. You will become it.

Some self development coaches refer to this method as "fake it until you make it". However, it's really not the same as being fake or phony. Phoniness involves insincerity. What I'm talking about here

is "acting" as though you are already the person that you want and are choosing to become, which is probably the best reflection of who you really are. Acting is an amazingly powerful method of redefining yourself, and it doesn't take long for new and improved behaviors to become second nature.

From Acting to Taking Action

Earlier we worked on building confidence in your capacity to handle any feelings or events that arise in daily life. But while knowing that you would be able to handle any undesirable negative possibility is very comforting, true empowerment will come when you start taking real action to confront the things that you fear. You are a person

that must continually grow in order to be happy. See your anxiety as a wake-up call that growth has slowed, and the time for profound action is now.

While the Self Therapy "listening" technique will help you to manage your emotions and get a good grip on your anxiety, don't make the mistake of trying to eliminate your fears completely before confronting them. The deep realization that you can truly handle anything, and real freedom from anxiety, comes by proving to yourself that you have the capacity to feel fear and go through it.

To get out of your rut of stagnation, practice doing what you fear even when you don't yet feel like it. Don't wait until

you feel confident on the inside to take action on the outside. To achieve the most profound levels of confidence, you must do the things that you don't yet have the confidence to do. Massive inner strength comes by taking action when you're emotionally down. So start looking for growth opportunities by seeing events and situations in your life as practice opportunities. And be sure to use the real-time Self Therapy method while taking them on.

To put this all another way, the best way to really defeat the discomfort of anxiety is to intentionally confront your underlying fears. For example, if you want to overcome social anxiety, learn to invite, listen to, and even love that feeling of nervousness and awkwardness that arises while you're interacting.

Whenever you notice yourself trying to avoid some person, interaction, or social situation due to anxiety, use that as an opportunity to practice being okay with your inner sensations.

NOTE: Of course, we're not talking about rational fears of realistically dangerous situations; always use good judgment and make exceptions where your physical safety is concerned.

See each challenge as one with yourself. For example, you are not just giving a speech; you are confronting your fear of speaking. Your focus isn't just on the speech; it is on being okay with the feelings during the speech. Regardless of how it goes, you are successful because you got up and felt those sensations.

Give positive feedback to your inner self while facing fears. You are doing something very important and very difficult. So compliment yourself frequently. And realize that even "failure" is success.

Repeat the following affirmations with the feeling and realization that they are already your own beliefs.

- I look forward to the good things that will come with going through my fears.
- The anxiety I'm feeling now is worse than the discomfort of change. I choose change.

- Successful people go through fear, failure, and rejection. As do I.
- I see anxiety provoking situations as practice and growth opportunities.
- Whenever I feel anxiety, I take the opportunity to feel it, accept it, and go through it.
- I now face situations with an attitude of emotional confrontation rather than avoidance.
- My fears have taught me how to have courage when I am afraid.

- I know that confidence is enhanced by confronting fear; I take action even when I feel unconfident.

- Even if the worst outcome happens, I will see it as a successful growth experience.

If there is one real gift that anxiety provides, it's dissatisfaction with dissatisfaction. If you're not making progress in your life and moving forward with your goals in some way, you're probably going to get uneasy. For example, if you're experiencing anxiety now, it's quite likely that you're not content with your present external circumstances. You might be holding back from doing some things in your life that you want to do, making changes you

need to make, standing up for yourself in some manner, or moving forward with your life in one way or another. The reason I say this is that anxiety often starts to dissolve once we begin to take action externally, and internally prove to ourselves that we are capable of achieving the circumstances we desire.

Earlier we discussed how developing confidence in your ability to handle any outcome will eliminate the need for worry from which anxiety grows. Take that principle one step further now, and realize that *if you become a person that can handle any failure, then your success (however you define it) is virtually guaranteed*. If you really want something bad enough, then no failure, no rejection, and no setback will stop

you from picking yourself up and trying again.

Fear of failure is itself responsible for much of the negative thinking that leads to inaction and anxiety. Free yourself from this trap by changing your perception of failure. Remind yourself often that every failure is a learning experience and stepping stone to success, that you have the ability to accomplish the objectives you've set your mind to, and that you are now able to move through the discouragement and disappointment of any setback. You might make some mistakes; you might fail many times. But you will be able to persevere in the face of adversity because you're pursuing a vision that you believe in.

Thought Adjustment Review

In this section of the book you've learned some immensely powerful tools of self transformation. With them, you can begin to reprogram your subconscious mind and redefine yourself by replacing self-defeating and anxiety-producing thought patterns with more constructive ones. While you shouldn't expect to immediately reverse years of mental inertia, know that the benefits of your efforts will build upon themselves as you continue practicing day after day.

By focusing as much mental energy on truly believing the new thoughts, and generating congruent emotional energies, you will drastically accelerate your results. Eventually you'll

internalize new beliefs completely and have a new basis from which you interact with people and your external world in general.

Whenever you feel frustrated, remember that negative thinking and expectation is a habitual behavior that you've been "practicing" for a long time. As with any habit, it may take some time to reverse, and you may occasionally fall into your old ways. That's okay — if this happens, just review what we've discussed and gently move yourself back to generating the new energies. Know that they will eventually become your dominant and natural emotional foundation.

And once again, don't forget the importance of continuing with your listening exercises!

Physical Health and Anxiety

Since anxiety is usually created in the mind, it seems logical that it should be resolved in the mind, and this book primarily focuses on that aspect.

However, emotional energies exist throughout the body, and you'd be wise to consider both components in your recovery. The truth is that physical health can directly impact emotional wellness, including anxiety levels.

Without taking proper care of both your mind *and* body, you will simply not be able to manage stress and anxiety as well as you would otherwise.

You've probably heard this a hundred times, but a few major components of a healthy lifestyle are proper diet and nutrition, good sleeping habits, and regular exercise. What you may not be aware of is that a deficiency in any one of these areas can actually contribute to stress, anxiety, and depression, and may be having more of a negative impact on your emotional life than you realize.

A complete course in health and nutrition is beyond the scope of this book, but there is plenty of material out there should you wish to increase your knowledge of the subject. For now, let's take a quick look at some of the most common weak links in efforts toward anxiety relief.

NOTE: It is advisable to consult with a doctor before making changes to your diet or fitness program.

Get an adequate amount of exercise

Over millions of years our bodies have evolved with regular physical activity present, which modern conveniences, transportation, and office jobs have nearly eliminated. Without replacement activities, it's easy to accumulate a lot of excess body energy. And in the right mental environment those energies easily transform into higher anxiety levels. This phenomenon makes exercise one of the best ways to initially manage anxiety issues.

Experiment with cardiovascular exercise, resistance training, and activities like jogging or bicycling to find which works best for you. The right activity can work wonders in enhancing your overall mental and emotional state by releasing accumulated body energy, reducing stress levels and irritability, and producing endorphins that relax both the body and mind. Think about how easily children fall asleep at night, and then note how much physical activity they are engaged in during the day. Exercise isn't the only factor when it comes to overcoming anxiety, but it can certainly play a major role.

Again, it is usually advisable to consult with a doctor before making changes to your personal fitness program.

Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and caffeine

If alcohol has helped reduce your anxiety in the past, it most likely just happened to create a somewhat carefree mindset at that particular time. You've probably found that such results cannot be relied on, as more often the effects of this drug actually lead to heightened anxiety levels. Fortunately, in this book you've learned how to cultivate an anxiety-free mentality with much greater reliability.

As for nicotine and caffeine, these are both well known nervous system stimulants which increase heart rate, produce stress hormones, and have the potential for shooting anxiety levels through the roof! Take a look at the

ingredients in foods you eat regularly to make sure caffeine is not present. This anxiety trigger shows up in many places, including chocolate desserts (theobromine), coffee, black and green tea, and especially cola. If you drink coffee, soda, or other caffeinated beverages regularly, you are going to be much more prone to stress, nervousness, and general anxiety. Yes, both nicotine and caffeine are legal drugs, but they do have a detrimental effect on health and anxiety levels.

I'm not out to change your lifestyle, but if you're serious about overcoming anxiety, you owe it to yourself to at least experiment with cutting alcohol, caffeine and nicotine out of your diet temporarily.

Conclusion

Several powerful ideas have been presented in this book, and you may want to review from time to time to make sure you're getting the most from your Self Therapy sessions. The techniques that you've learned can be truly life changing, especially in that they are extremely practical.

Don't be frightened if lingering anxiety appears from time to time, even after you've been using these methods for awhile. In most cases, you'll be able to identify an episode of negative expectation as the cause. At other times, certain sights or sounds might trigger emotional memories of anxiety. I once had an anxiety attack while a particular

song was playing on the radio, and for years (before developing Self Therapy) was uncomfortable listening to that song. The same thing can happen with sights, smells, sensations, or any other memory trigger.

If something similar happens to you, remember to not try to suppress, avoid, or run from your anxiety. Just engage your "self listening" skills and know that you can go through it by embracing it. With growing confidence in your ability to handle those episodes, along with your new anxiety resistant thoughts and behaviors, such occurrences will become less and less common.

You are learning *new* behaviors, changing longtime thought patterns, and

breaking strong habits; so don't be surprised if anxiety pops up from time to time as you occasionally fall back on your old ways. Welcome the opportunity to practice your skills and reinforce your knowledge that you can handle it.

Thomas Paine once wrote, "The mind once enlightened cannot again become dark." Now that you have the tools to cope with anxiety, you no longer need to fear it. And now that you understand the cause of anxiety, you can reverse the tendency to create it. The worst point you have been to is where you felt trapped in your anxious feelings without knowing how to escape them. You now have the key, and you know a way out.

One of the greatest gifts we have in being human is the ability to feel emotions. In my experience, true happiness comes when one is able to experience the entire range of emotions without avoidance behavior. When we can do that, even with anxiety, then anxiety itself will disappear. The "self listening" method that you've learned is a powerful tool for experiencing any emotion, and eliminating the ability of any emotion to overwhelm or stop you.

Your general emotional state, your relationships, your career, and all other areas of your life will go through cycles. As smooth as things seem now, there will be dips. If you are living an active and full life, then disappointment, failure, loss, and other such events will inevitably come. This is the nature of

our physical lives. Your ability to feel the emotions that come with such events is also the measure of your ability to live fully and eventually succeed, regardless of what your definition of success may be.

When you know that you can handle anything, you will be free of fear, free to live in and enjoy the present moment.

The depth to which you are able to experience the lows, and the height to which you can tolerate the highs, together will define your spectrum of experience, and richness of life.

Eventually you'll reach a point where you know that each failure is just a stepping stone to your next success, each rejection a stepping stone to your next connection, each low a stepping stone to your next high. And you will no longer

fear these setbacks. You will find yourself moving more and more rapidly from peak to higher peak in your life, while even appreciating the valleys in between.

Your assignment now, and hopefully for everyday of your life, is to continue building your emotional self-awareness to deeper levels, to consciously produce more positive and empowering energies, and to never stop taking action toward becoming the person you want to be. You can move beyond anxiety and fear, and become a person for which there truly are no limits.

Thank you very much for trying the Self Therapy for Anxiety technique. I really hope that what you've learned in this

book proves beneficial to your life. If you get a chance, I'd love to hear your feedback, personal story, or any suggestions. To contact me online, please visit MC2Method.org