Overthinking & How To Stop This

You are doing your daily routine work, nothing dreadful is about to happen, but your feelings are inappropriate. Increased heart rate, tense body, chaotic terrifying thoughts, that you cannot ignore. So how to get rid of them?

In order to defeat the enemy, you need to know his origin so let's first figure out where anxiety comes from. The brain consists of different parts that function in a specified manner. For example, the prefrontal cortex is responsible for rational thinking, and the limbic system and hypothalamus regulate emotions.

When unpleasant situation happens, these types of brain try to "shout over each other". If you have already dealt with similar problem, the prefrontal cortex has a plan of action so you do not worry and know what to do. However if there wasn't such experience in your life, your "emotional brain" wins. As a result, the anxiety arise.

Unless the level of concern is low, you can't think rationally. Therefore, **here are 3 ways to reduce anxiety.**

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

If the body is relaxed, the brain thinks that there is no danger. At first, you need to sit or lay down and be sure that nothing can distract you. After that, you need to focus on different parts of the body in turn, strain each of them as much as possible, and then relax completely. For example, first you strain and then relax the forehead, then the lips, neck, shoulders and so on, until completely relax your whole body.

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FOCUS ON CHANGING YOUR CONDITION

You need to realize, how the anxiety feels in your body on a purely physical level. Does it hurt or squeeze? Where is it? Maybe in the chest, throat, or somewhere else. Focus on how the sensations in the body change over time until they become weaker. You can also imagine how you will physically feel when the anxiety is over.
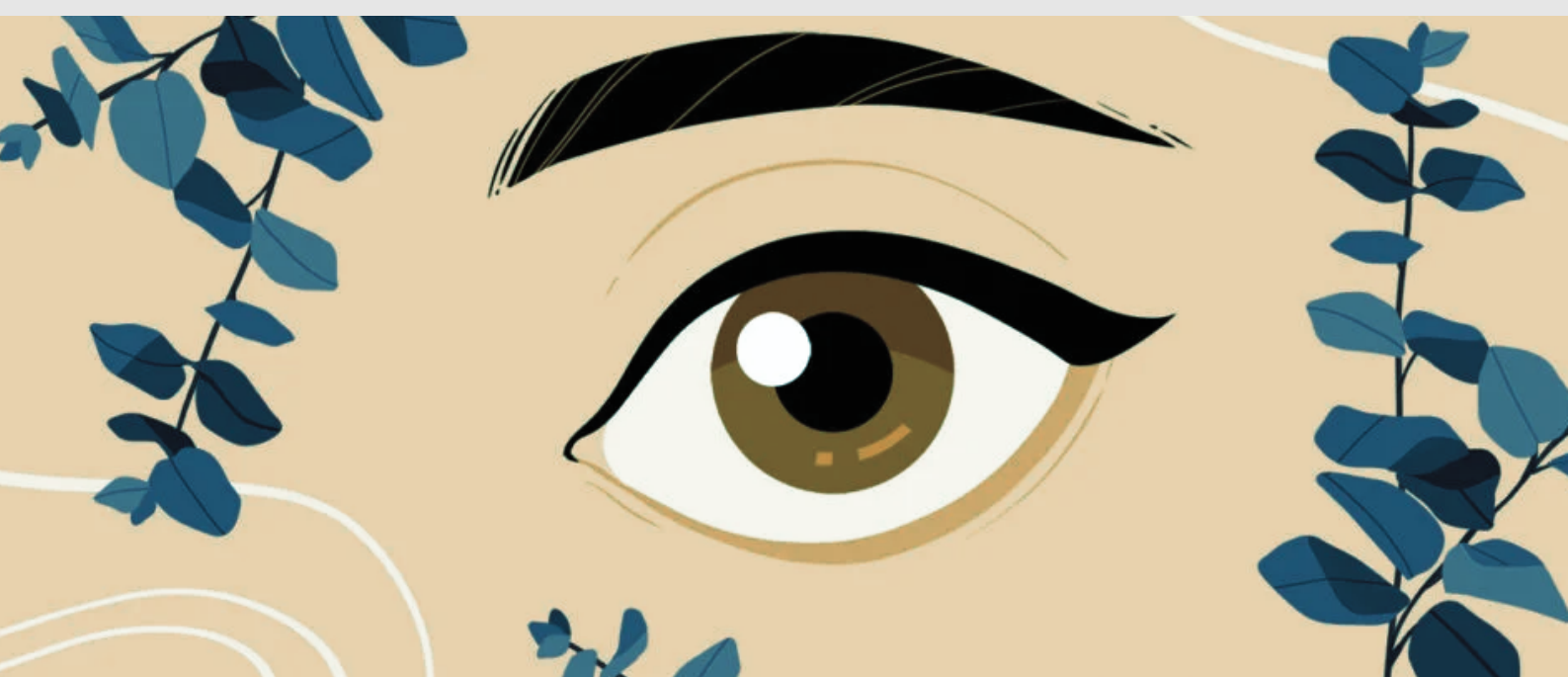
SQUARE BREATH

Imagine a square. Its sides are breath in, pause, breath out, pause. The task is to draw the sides of the square with your breath, so that each process takes the same amount of time (4-5 sec.)

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As soon as you are calm enough to think rationally, you can work with your feelings. Your anxiety should be at the level of background disquietude. Then your task is to take some paper and give detailed answers to the questions:

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1.What made you that nervous? Describe everything you are thinking about right now;

2.Name that ONE thought that causes you the most anxiety;

3.Does this this thought helps you to fix some problem? Is it useful at all?

4.What evidence can you provide to prove the truth of this belief?
What evidence do you have against this thought? (If you need, you can imagine that you are soothing a loved one)

5.Do you focus on just one negative, completely ignoring the positive facts about the situation?

6.Do you consider all the relevant evidence or only that which supports your belief?

7.Do you generalize a one-time situation for confirmation a disturbing thought?

8.Do you only consider the worst possible outcome?

9.Do you blame yourself for all the troubles and ignore external factors?

10. Do you confuse opinion and fact?

12. Everyone makes mistakes. Do you take this right away from yourself?

13. Is there any people in your environment who experienced something similar? Can you ask them for help?

14. How many times have you predicted this outcome and how many times has it actually happened?

15. Write down ALL possible options for the development of this situation. What would you do in each case?

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Than read your answer as a text. On the one hand, previous questions were supposed to make you doubt an anxious thought. On the other hand, you have a strategy for different occasions, so you do not have to worry if something goes wrong.

Remember it is okay to feel nervous sometimes. So do not forget to take care of yourself.