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# "The Anxiety Detox"

Hi, Alex here from [www.PreventYourPanic.com](http://www.PreventYourPanic.com), and welcome to this week's mini e-book, which I've called "The Anxiety Detox."

This is an idea I learned about a while back which I saw used for something other than anxiety, but I tested the idea on myself and on my own anxiety, and I realised how effective it can be in stopping some of our most common worries and fears.

And now that I have this regular time with you each week, I thought this "Anxiety Detox" would be a great place to start so that our minds are as clear and as anxiety-free as they can be before we move onto the new ideas starting next week.

You're probably familiar with Detox diets, which usually involve temporarily eliminating all foods and drinks other than fruits, vegetables, and water. This kind of diet, over a one or two day period, gives the body a chance to flush out toxins and other contaminants that build up over time.

It was a few months ago that I came across the idea of using this "Detox" approach for the mind instead of the body. When I first saw this idea it wasn't aimed at reducing or eliminating anxiety (it was aimed more at freeing the mind from stress and unclear thinking). But I could see that the idea would work with anxiety too, so I started looking for ways to alter the "Stress Detox" into an "Anxiety Detox," and what I came up with is what I'm about to talk about right now.

And what this will hopefully help you to do is flush out some the toxins and contaminants in your mind, because that's exactly how I see the fears and worries and anxieties we experience on a day to day basis. They're toxins and contaminants, just like those in our bodies. And like those in our bodies, we need to flush them out from time to time.

I've put together a short exercise that helps to identify the specific anxieties we're experiencing and then to get rid of them - or at least to lessen their impact on us, to make them less able to affect the quality of our lives.

Okay, so here's what we're gonna do. Take out a blank piece of paper and spend a few minutes writing down all the specific worries and fears you think about. Write down everything you can think of.

Even this first step of writing these worries and fears down can be therapeutic, so the Detox will already be beginning as you're making this list. The act of making yourself search your mind for these thoughts and then writing them down has a calming effect on the mind.

Many of these thoughts are locked away like dark secrets, and shining a light on them like this lets your mind breathe and this will probably be a pleasant experience for you.

Once you've finished making your list, you can move on to the next step. But what I actually suggest you do is wait a day or so before moving on. The reason for this is that you're probably going to think of more things to add to your list.

Now that your mind is focused on looking for these fears and worries going on inside you, you'll find that things will subconsciously pop into your mind from time to time over the next 24 hours. This is especially true of the time you spend lying in bed before you fall asleep. That tends to be a time when our worst fears come to the surface, and if this happens for you, take advantage of it and add anything new to your list.

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Okay, so you've either completed this step right away, or you waited 24 hours to give yourself the best chance of noting down as many of your fears and worries as possible.

And you have your list.

If your list looks anything like mine then you'll be amazed at how much is going on in your mind at any one time, and how many fears and worries you have racing around up there all the time.

So, onto step #2: What you're gonna do next is go through your list, one worry or fear at a time, and you're gonna put a star next to everything that's beyond your control, so anything that you have no power over, that you can't influence or change.

And you're gonna put a check mark next to everything that you can control. Things that you are able to effect, or have the power to change, even if they're just small things.

So now you'll have your list separated into two groups - things you can't control, marked with stars, and things you can control with check marks beside them. Now take all these worries and fears that you can control and put them on their own list, on a separate piece of paper.

This new list should be no longer than about 10 or 12 worries or fears, so if you have more than that just list the top 10 or so.

This will help to keep this manageable, and it will also let you concentrate on those fears that are causing you the most problems.

So the list you end up with here will be where your attention's going to be from now on. These are the fears you have the power to affect in some way, either through thinking or through taking action. And because you have the potential to affect these fears, this is where your energy is best spent.

Any energy you spend on those things you have no power to change is only wasted, and anxiety or fear about any of those things does you no good at all - all it will do is grow into more fear and anxiety. It's one of those horrible vicious circles that anyone with severe anxiety is very familiar with.

All those things on your original list that you put a star beside because you have no power over them? Consciously try to let those go.

In fact, as you go through your list, deciding which of your fears and anxieties you have control over, consciously try to let go of those ones you put a star next to. As you make that decision that the fear in question is something you have no control over and you place that star beside it, really ask yourself if this is something you can let go.

It might sound simple, but this process can stop many of these fears from haunting you. How often do we really go through our thoughts and fears this way? Probably never. We experience the fear and the worry and the panic and we let them affect us in many different ways. But we have the power to affect them too.

And in this exercise, we have the perfect opportunity to look at each of these fears in turn and ask, "Can I let this go? Can I really let this go?" There's a lot of power in

doing this - there's a lot of power in writing these fears down and then saying, even out loud, "I'm gonna let this go."

So, back to your list of your 10 or 12 biggest fears and worries - the ones you have the power to affect in some way.

In some of my upcoming videos and e-books, I'm gonna share some ideas with you that I've used to control and eliminate the fears I have on my own list, and I'll show you how to do the same with yours.

But in the meantime, let's start by changing the way you think about the things on this list you've made.

If you can make a few simple changes to how you think about the things on your list it will help you out right now, and it will also put you in the perfect position to move on to the future steps that I spoke about just now where you'll learn how to eliminate the fears on your list completely, and we'll get into that another time.

The first thing to do is not let yourself waste any time thinking or focusing on any of those things on your original list that you decided were beyond your control.

No amount of thinking will help you with those because you can't change them.

So whenever you catch yourself thinking anything about one of those fears, immediately switch your mind to one from your shortlist that you believe you do have the power to change.

This is actually pretty easy to do, because you've narrowed the list of fears you can change down to just 10 or so of the worst ones you experience, and because they're your worst fears, they tend to be very easy to switch to at any time - for some reason, the worse a fear is the more we seem to enjoy going over it in our minds.

This ability to switch your thinking to something of your choice, instead of something your mind just throws at you, is a pretty easy one to learn, and it won't be long before it's second nature.

There are lots of benefits to learning how to do this.

First of all, it trains you to control your thoughts, which makes it less likely that you'll suffer those unpleasant trains of thought about horrible things that sometimes go

on against your wishes. Learning to switch your thoughts like this will also mean that you're only ever experiencing a small chunk of the fears you used to.

If, for example, you had 20 fears on your original list that you decided were beyond your control, and you can train yourself to let those go in favour of those on your list of 10. Well, you've just completely stopped over 65% of the fearful thoughts you were having before you went through this video.

And not only are you saving all that suffering those fears were causing you, you're also saving the energy you were *wasting* on them - because, after all, they were things you couldn't control. Things that no amount of thinking would help.

All that energy can now go on the fears you've found that you do have the ability to change or control.

So you can probably begin to see how big a change this simple exercise can make. If you go through the steps I've laid out, the result will be that you can stop the majority of the fears you think about, save the mental energy you've been wasting on them, and switch all that energy onto the really important fears you have - the ones you can actually change.

And that brings me to the last step in this exercise.

Now that you've got yourself focused on the fears you can control, and now that you know to switch your focus and energy onto them whenever you experience those other fears you can never control, you might be wondering what you should be thinking about these controllable fears or anxieties.

Well, for now, I'm gonna keep it really simple. In the future I'll show you those slightly more complex ideas I mentioned before that will ultimately eliminate many of these fears. Right now, though, while this is new to you, let's keep this simple.

These 10 or 12 worst fears are fears that you've decided you have the power to affect or change in some way. And if you have the power to change them, that means there are solutions to them, or answers to them that will make them go away, or make them considerably less unpleasant to experience.

So for now, make all your thinking about them a hunt for solutions.

Look for positive answers.

Ask yourself new questions about them. Consider everything.

The important thing here is not actually what you're thinking. The important thing is that your thoughts on these subjects are positive, not negative. And any time your mind is looking for solutions to problems, you're in a positive state of mind.

And that's a healthy state to be in.

By putting yourself in this positive state of mind when you think about these fears or worries, you'll find that a lot of the fear will just fade away.

Thinking about these fears in a positive state of mind is the opposite of the state of mind you'd normally be in when you're thinking about them. That takes a lot of their power away.

And there's no need to feel disappointed if you don't actually find answers or solutions to these fears. If you do, great, but if you don't, the exercise is still helping you in the way it's supposed to.

It's still getting your mind in a far healthier place, it's still reducing a lot of your anxiety without you even being aware of it, and it's still preparing you for those ideas we'll go over together soon.

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