

THE ESSENTIAL ANXIETY CARD

(In memory of Howard "Dr. Fear" Liebgold)

We don't get rid of anxiety. We learn to manage it. Here are some key cognitive/behavioral skills.

1. **What is Anxiety?** _____
(Adrenaline!) That is correct. No adrenaline, no anxiety.
2. **All adrenaline comes from our own thoughts, especially from the BOO VOICE.**
3. **Possibility is NOT probability.** The BOO feeds us lots of plausible thoughts: 99.99% of them never take place. The BOO lies.
4. **Feelings are NOT facts.** But, they certainly feel like facts at times.
5. **If something makes you anxious (but is in fact not dangerous), DO IT.** Really.
6. **Face the fear _____ (Safely!) and it will disappear.** Afraid of spiders? Put a big fake one on your desk until you don't see it, much less react to it. It becomes boring!
7. **If you want to feel totally safe and secure, then don't be born.** Sorry, but true.
8. **Feelings follow behavior (Act, then you will feel better).** The correct order.
9. **You are not here (Alive) to be comfortable, but to live your life.** Clear?
10. **Adverbs don't count. Only VERBS do.** I did it "poorly." No. I DID it.
11. **For every "What if....." that occurs in your head, ALWAYS respond, "I will handle it!"** After a while you will believe it because we handle what actually happens.
12. **You can ask for anything. ANYTHING!!**

13. **For every “WPT” (What Will People Think!) that occurs in your head, ALWAYS respond, “They will have to handle it!).** Up to them, not you!
14. **Life is too complex to get it right.** So what is it with this trying to be perfect?
15. **The presumed thoughts or judgments of others have no power over me.** It's true.
16. **There are no mistakes or failure, only learning.** We avoid mistakes by good judgment and get judgment from mistakes.
17. **ALL anxiety and panic attacks pass.** Remember this. When the adrenaline goes away, so do panic and painful anxiety.
18. **Panic attacks are as dangerous for you as throwing marshmallows at your feet** (You might die from what you do, but not ever from your own body chemistry).
19. **We handle what actually happens.** Truth.
20. **Your BOO VOICE is a hacker.** It uses all your smarts and creativity to scare you.
21. **Our goal is to be COMFORTABLE with being uncomfortable.**
22. **To think less about something, you have to think more about it** (Until it becomes boring instead of terrifying).
23. **Life by the yard is hard, whereas life by the inch is a cinch** (Break it down into small and safe steps).

MASTERY IS YOUR GOAL, SO WEAR OUT THIS CARD. MEMORIZE IT.

PRACTICE. PRACTICE. PRACTICE. PRACTICE