

Coping Statements

Use any or all of the following positive statements to help you cultivate attitudes of accepting, “floating,” and allowing time to pass during a panic attack. You may find it helpful to repeat a single statement over and over the first minute or two when you feel panic symptoms coming on. You may also want to do deep abdominal breathing in conjunction with repeating a coping statement. If one statement gets tiresome or seems to stop working, try another.

- This feeling isn't comfortable or pleasant, but I can accept it.
- I can be anxious and still deal with this situation.
- I can handle these symptoms or sensations.
- This isn't an emergency. It's okay to think slowly about what I need to do.
- This isn't the worst thing that could happen.
- I'm going to go with this and wait for my anxiety to decrease.
- This is an opportunity for me to learn to cope with my fears.
- I'll just let my body do its thing. This will pass.
- I'll ride this through—I don't need to let this get to me.
- I deserve to feel okay right now.
- I can take all the time I need in order to let go and relax.
- There's no need to push myself. I can take as small a step forward as I choose.
- I've survived this before and I'll survive this time, too.
- I can do my coping strategies and allow this to pass.
- This anxiety won't hurt me—even if it doesn't feel good.
- This is just anxiety—I'm not going to let it get to me.
- Nothing serious is going to happen to me.
- Fighting and resisting this isn't going to help—so I'll just let it pass.
- These are just thoughts—not reality.
- I don't need these thoughts—I can choose to think differently.
- This isn't dangerous.
- So what.
- Don't worry—be happy. (Use this to inject an element of lightness or humor.)

If you have frequent panic attacks, I suggest writing your favorite coping statements on a three-by-five card and carrying it in your purse or wallet. Bring the card out and read it when you feel panic symptoms coming on.