

ways of dealing with

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# PANIC



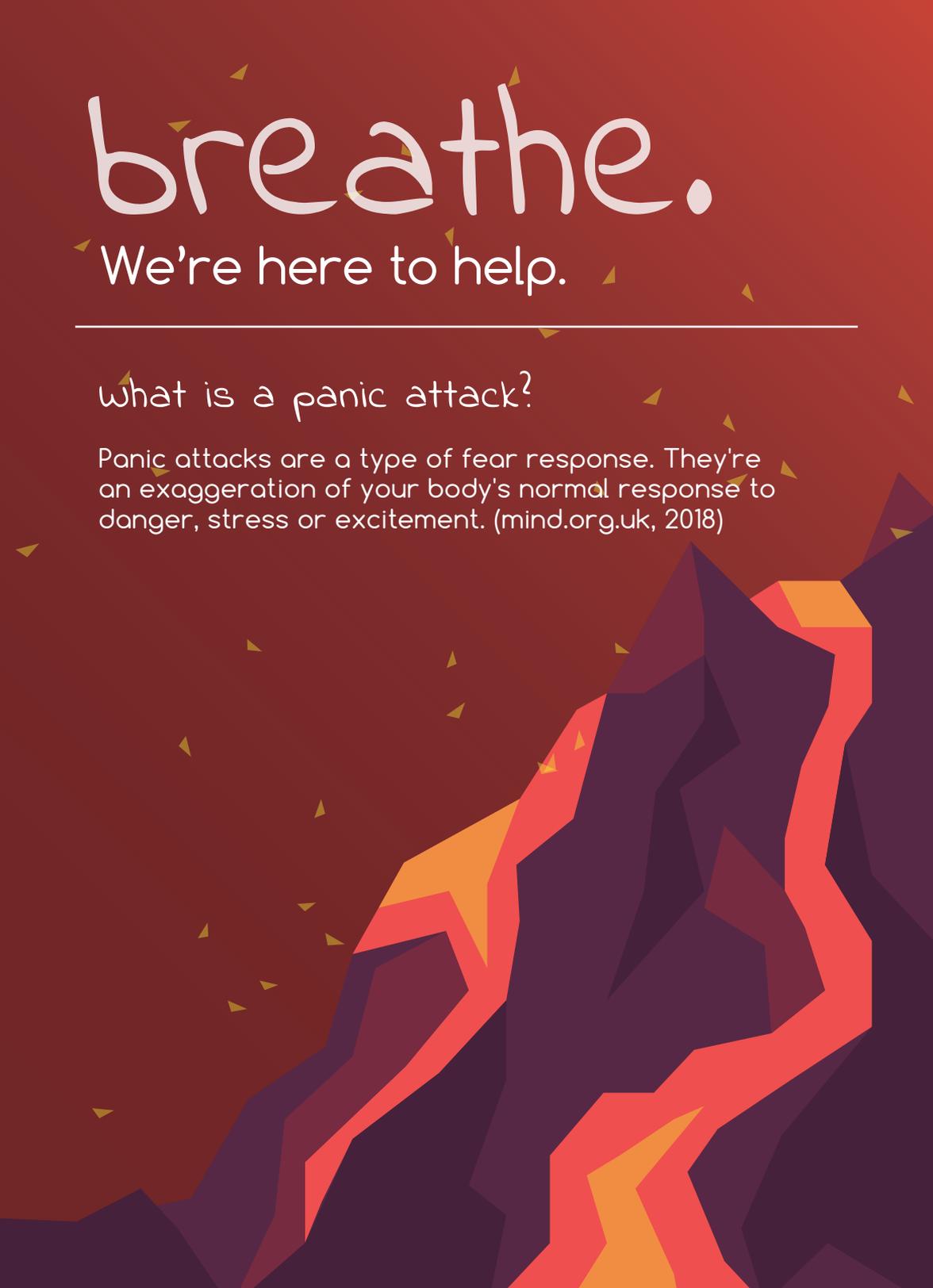
# breathe.

We're here to help.

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## What is a panic attack?

Panic attacks are a type of fear response. They're an exaggeration of your body's normal response to danger, stress or excitement. ([mind.org.uk](http://mind.org.uk), 2018)



# what are the symptoms of a panic attack?

Symptoms of a panic attack can come on & escalate very quickly. These can include:

pounding or racing heartbeat

feeling faint, dizzy or light-headed

struggling to breathe or feeling like you are choking

sweating, trembling or shaking

pain in your chest or abdomen

feeling disconnected from yourself or surroundings - depersonalisation

feeling like your legs are shaky or turning to jelly

nausea (feeling sick)

feeling very hot or very cold

you may have strong fears of

dying

losing control

having a heart attack

passing out

more about

# panic attacks

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Panic attacks can cause you to become extremely anxious about everyday situations that you would previously have managed. Being alone, going out to public places, driving for example. This can sometimes lead to a more extreme fear or phobia such as agoraphobia. Panic attacks can happen in a number of places, day or night. Sometimes, the place you first experienced a panic attack can become a trigger & you will avoid the place for fear of it happening again.



Generally last:  
**5-20 MINS**

Can come on  
very quickly &  
leave you  
frightened



can leave you  
ANXIOUS   
**SHAKEN**  
+ VERY TIRED 

YOU ARE  
**SAFE**

The important thing to remember is that you are  
NOT in any danger, you are safe & the sensations  
you are feeling WILL pass.

how to

# manage

panic attacks



## Focus on your breathing

try the 4,7,8 breathing exercise – breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of 4 (or whatever you can manage), hold for 7 (if you can), & breathe out slowly through your mouth for a count of 8. It may be that you are only able to do 3, 4 & 5 but it's a good starting point & it will take your focus from the feelings of panic.

## Use grounding techniques

such as naming 5 things you can see, hear, smell, touch & taste.



## Try acceptance techniques

Such as the DARE response – Diffuse, Accept, Run towards, Engage. These steps can help reduce the feelings of panic quickly by diffusing them at the first stage.





## Engage in an activity

It may be listening to music or a meditation, talking to someone or focusing on a task.



## Professional Help

Seek help from your GP if you feel it's necessary.

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/understanding-panic-attacks/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/understanding-panic-attacks/)

It's important to look after your physical health, so eating well, regular exercise & sleeping well are all huge factors in reducing feelings of panic & will boost general wellbeing.

Don't be  
afraid to ask  
for help

that's why  
we're here :)

feel free to get in touch, or go to our website to find out  
more information about the services we offer



[SAADVICE@ABERTAY.AC.UK](mailto:SAADVICE@ABERTAY.AC.UK)



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