

DEALING WITH FREE FLOATING ANXIETY

STEP ONE: NAME IT

Name one thing you are worried about.

Your anxiety may seem free floating and unidentifiable, but it's really not.

Try a stream of consciousness exercise and for two minutes write down everything that has ever frightened you or made you anxious.

Now pick one thing. Just one. Write it down. On paper. Own it.

When we can name our fears, we can overcome them.

STEP TWO: SIT THERE

Don't just do something, sit there.

Sit with your fear.

Don't berate yourself for not being brave enough or faithful enough or strong enough.

Just sit with your fear. It's okay to be afraid.

CRUSHING
YOUR
FEARS
REQUIRES
YOU TO SIT
WITH
UNCOMFORTABLE
FEELINGS.

STEP THREE (A): IF/THEN

Play the if/then game with your fear.

If your fear is realized, then what?

What is the worst thing that could happen?

If that happens, then what?

Keep playing the if/then game and see what that reveals about what you're really afraid of.

At each stage, question the authenticity of your "then" and see if you're being honest about it.

For instance, maybe you're worried about losing your job.

If I lose my job, I can't pay my mortgage.

If I can't pay my mortgage, I'll be homeless.

I'm afraid I'm going to be homeless.

SOURCE:

www.doubtingbeliever.com

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STEP THREE (B)

Fact check your "what if" statements:

Will you really become homeless if you lose your job?

- I have savings to pay mortgage for two more months.
- I can stop cable, subscriptions, eating out, etc,
- I am highly skilled and can find job in my field
- I am willing to do any kind of job if I need to.
- I have friends and family I can stay with.
- I can sell my house and move to an apartment.

So if/then becomes: if I lose my job, I'll need to cut expenses and look for a new position. Or: if I lose my job, I can make other living arrangements.

STEP FOUR

Stick with today's fear.

If our day is consumed with what might happen tomorrow, we lose focus on dealing with the problems of today and risk missing all the joys it has to offer.

If there's still some anxiety floating around in your head that you still can't identify, try this exercise tomorrow...or the next day.

*Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.
(Matthew 6:34).*

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