

Is This Fear, Anxiety or Panic That I'm Feeling?

- ✓ We feel scared when a threat is present.
- ✓ Anxiety is what we feel about things which we think could happen in the future.
- ✓ We feel fear against perceived threats of physical nature. (For example; snakes, sudden high pitch cry)
- ✓ We feel anxious against threats of uncertain, subjective and unspecific nature.
- ✓ Anxiety involves unrealistic and uncontrollable thoughts like something bad is going to happen in future.
- ✓ A certain amount of anxiety and fear is normal as it helps us come up with solutions when a threat is present.
- ✓ The coronavirus outbreak is causing us to feel scared and anxious, because, coronavirus poses a real threat to our physical health and it is making us feel anxious about the future as much remains unknown about the disease's potential impact on our lives.
- ✓ Severe panic can be defined as the highest level of anxiety.
- ✓ Anxiety and panic cause you have uncontrollable racing thoughts and disaster scenarios about perceived threats.
- ✓ Anxiety may cause other negative emotional responses such as anger, unhappiness, feelings of despair and helplessness.

Physical Symptoms of Fear, Anxiety and Panic

- ✓ Anxiety, fear or panic produce similar responses to immediate threats, for instance your lungs would move more oxygen through your body in case you need to escape (flight response) or stay to fight.
- ✓ These emotions cause changes in sympathetic nervous activity, converting stored energy to usable energy.
- ✓ The fight or flight response may lead to high blood pressure, abnormally increased heart rate, excessive sweating, stomach cramps, trembling of the hands or other parts of the body, muscle pain and tightness, shortness of breath, digestive problems, less saliva and feeling of a dry mouth.
- ✓ With sudden and intense feelings of terror and fear, one may experience one or more panic attacks.

How to cope with severe anxiety and panic?

- ✓ Firstly, you should try to know your feelings better. Notice your feelings you show or responses you give against certain situations.
- ✓ Ask yourself how realistic your thoughts are vis-à-vis a perceived threat.
- ✓ Stop your racing thoughts, unrealistic worries or catastrophic thinking. Instead, try to think more realistically.
- ✓ Diaphragmatic breathing increases the amount of oxygen-rich blood that flows to your brain and helps you cope better with stress and anxiety.
- ✓ Urge yourself to remember that difficult situations will pass whether or not you get all stressed out.
- ✓ If you are experiencing chronic symptoms of anxiety or recurrent panic attacks, you may wish to seek counselling.

- ✓ Please send an email by writing your name, surname and your department to psikolojikdestek@altinbas.edu.tr to schedule an online appointment.
- ✓ If you wish, you can follow us on Instagram **@altinbaspsikolojikdestek**.

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