

# PANIC AWARENESS DAY

*10 July 2019*



## Today is Panic Awareness Day

**10 July 2019**

There is such misunderstanding around Panic Attacks and Panic Disorder, especially the stigma and shame that is linked to it, that the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) has a dedicated day on the national health calendar committed to raising awareness and providing support for this treatable condition that affects so many South Africans.

Panic Disorder can be a terrifying illness that can cause great distress, isolation, and limits your life. Don't suffer in silence and alone. There is help. There is treatment. And there are people who understand. Contact SADAG. Remember that attacks always end. Always. Panic is not dangerous. Don't let panic win, "You can take control back of your life again," says Zane Wilson.

A panic attack is a sudden surge of overwhelming fear that comes without warning and without any obvious reason. It is far more intense than the feeling of being 'stressed out' that most people experience. Some of these attacks are on a frequent or regular basis that may stop you going to the shops, or to work, or to movies, or going out in public.

"During a panic attack, the individual usually thinks something like "I am having a heart attack" or "I am going insane", but may not be aware of how those thoughts affect, even exacerbate, the attack's symptoms", says Clinical Psychologist and CBT Expert, Dr Colinda Linde. "During Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), people learn to recognize their earliest thoughts and feeling and modify their response to them – instead of "I'm going to have a heart attack", rather think and say "It's only uneasiness - it will pass". It really does help to reduce the anxiety and ward off a panic attack." Says Dr Colinda Linde.

Panic Disorder is highly treatable, and learning about Anxiety Disorders and accepting that they can happen to anybody is a far better option to attempting to hide

or to ignore the problem and allow it to jeopardize your career, marriage and relationships with children, parents and friends.

Signs of a panic attack include:



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### Panic Disorder Toolkit



- [Learn more about Panic Attacks](#) in a short video by SADAG Founder, Zane Wilson, who herself experienced Panic.
- [What Is Panic Disorder and who suffers from Panic Disorder Handout](#)
- [Panic FAQs](#)
- [Learn more about Breathing Techniques to Cope through a Panic Attack](#) in an online video by Dr Colinda Linde.
- [Click here for simple controlled breathing techniques](#)
- [What to do if a family member has an Anxiety Disorder Handout.](#)
- [Click here](#) to read more about celebrities living with Anxiety.

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### How SADAG can help you

The SADAG call centre is open all day, 7 days a week offering free telephone counselling, info and referrals.



**Adcock Depression and Anxiety Helpline**

**0800 70 80 90**

**Dr Reddy's Mental Health Helpline**

**0800 21 22 23**

**Cipla 24 hour Mental Health Helpline**

**0800 456 789**

**Suicide Crisis Helpline**

**0800 567 567**

Recovery is possible with the proper professional care such as GPs, psychologists, and/or psychiatrists can diagnose and treat anxiety disorders. SADAG offer telephonic counselling, referrals, free resources and support groups nationwide. Visit SADAG's website – [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org) - to learn more about Panic and Anxiety Disorders.



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### Helpful Online Resources for Panic & Anxiety

- The Best 10+ Anxiety Apps of 2019, click [here](#) to read more.
- Everything you need to know about CBT. Click [here](#).
- Calm, named the 2017 iPhone app of the year by Apple itself, promises to help users sleep better, boost confidence and reduce stress and anxiety. Click [here](#) to download.
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America Provides some information & understanding of depression & anxiety. Click [here](#) for more.
- MoodGym have a Interactive self-help program that provides cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) training to help users prevent and cope with depression & anxiety. Click [here](#) for a paid subscription.
- Breathe – A Guided Meditation & Mindfulness. Learn to meditate, relax, relieve stress, anxiety and be calm. Click [here](#).

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### #SpeakYourMind

Sharing “Lived Experience” can really help others understand what it feels like to have anxiety or experience a panic attack, but it also helps to fight the stigma that anxiety is not just something you imagine or that you can fix with just “thinking positively”.



SADAG is encouraging people to share their real life stories of anxiety and panic, to share what their experience has been, how they have coped, and what they wish others knew about anxiety and panic to help break the stigma, educate others and empower those sharing their stories of hope.

Please share your “Lived Experience” in whichever way you feel comfortable – maybe through social media (Facebook or Twitter) and tag SADAG too (Facebook - [The South African Depression and Anxiety group](#) and Twitter - [@TheSADAG](#)). Or email your story to [media@anxiety.org.za](mailto:media@anxiety.org.za) and we can compile a series of “Lived Experience” stories to help others going through similar situations to feel less alone.

Please use the #SpeakYourMind so we can create an open discussion on panic and anxiety, and hopefully inspire others to reach out or seek help.



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#### Fast Facts about Panic

- The average length of a panic attack is 4 – 6 minutes
- 2-4% of the population will suffer from panic disorder at some point in their lives.
- Panic is twice as common in women as it is in men.
- Panic Disorder is frequently misdiagnosed as a thyroid problem, hypoglycemia or a heart valve problem.
- The good news: Panic disorder is a highly treatable condition. With the right combinations of therapy, support and sometimes medication if necessary 90% of people recover fully. The remaining 10% experience significant recovery and improvement.

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I had Panic for over 10 years before I got the right treatment and support, and was able to recover fully and take back control of my life. I started SADAG in 1994 to help others living with anxiety and panic.

I got the help I needed, and so can you.

**Regards,**

**Zane Wilson**  
**Founder and Director**  
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