

Contents

Acknowledgements

Series Foreword by Steven Jones

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Is this book for you? | 2 |
| What are fears and phobias? | |
| Experiences you may have had | |
| Who could benefit from this book? | |
| ‘Coping with anxiety’ versus ‘overcoming anxiety’ | |
| A note on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) | |
| <i>Self-check</i> | |
| 2. Who gets phobias and how do they learn to cope? | 9 |
| What does it mean to be diagnosed with an anxiety disorder? | |
| Fears and phobias associated with other mental health problems | |
| Recovery from phobias | |
| What does learning to cope involve? | |
| Seven helpful beliefs | |
| <i>Self-check</i> | |
| 3. Some key coping strategies to begin with | 21 |
| Slow, shallow breathing | |
| Stretching and relaxing muscles | |
| Brief mindfulness relaxation | |
| Taking a step back | |
| Helpful things to remember | |
| Drawing on strengths, qualities and resources | |
| Diet | |
| Self-soothing | |
| <i>Self-check</i> | |
| 4. Understanding fear | 33 |
| Fear can be helpful | |
| Three stages to fear | |
| What does this mean about feelings of fear? | |
| The close relationship of mind and body | |
| What kinds of things do people fear? | |
| How do fears begin? | |
| Memories and pictures in the mind | |
| When is avoiding danger a good way of coping? | |
| <i>Self-check</i> | |

5. Understanding vicious cycles and how to step outside them	49
Anxiety-provoking situations	
Physical Sensations and mental events	
Some people have more . . .	
‘Safety-seeking’ behaviour	
Completing the cycle: the Effects of Safety-seeking Behaviour	
Some examples of vicious cycles	
A ‘virtuous’ cycle?	
<i>Self-check</i>	
6. Preparing for change	66
Fear of change	
Each small step is progress	
<i>Summary/checklist</i>	
7. Developing your own programme for coping	72
The ten-step plan	
Returning to step 1	
Using the ten-step plan for other goals	
Ten-step plan record sheet	
Ten-step plan progress sheet	
<i>Self-check</i>	
8. Dealing with worry and self-blame	93
What is worry and self-blame?	
Are worry and blaming yourself useful?	
Is worrying, self-criticism and recrimination dangerous?	
Understanding worry, self-criticism and rumination	
<i>Self-check</i>	
9. Dealing with the consequences of the phobia	100
Knowledge is power	
Dealing with people who don’t understand	
Dealing with people who are overtly critical	
Dealing with people who are abusive	
Work colleagues and employers	
<i>Self-check</i>	
10. I am still not coping with my phobia. Why not?	108
Common ‘roadblocks’ to coping, and how to deal with them	
<i>Self-check</i>	

11. Living a valued life	117
Commitment and change	
Table of strengths, qualities and resources	
<i>Self-check</i>	
12. Treatments for phobias and anxiety disorders – Professional Help	125
Support groups	
National guidelines	
The medical profession	
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)	
Accessing CBT	
Other psychological treatments	
Choosing whether to start medication	
Coming off medication	
<i>Self-check</i>	
The Last Word	134
Appendices	136
1 A graded introduction to the symptoms of phobias	
2 The names of the main ‘anxiety disorders’ and their symptoms.	
3 What is Anxiety Like? Useful Analogies for Coping with Anxiety	
4 A Few Words...	
5 Further Reading	
6 Support Groups and Organisations	
Index	156