



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY 1 - MYTHS ABOUT ANXIETY

OBJECTIVES

Myth-bust anxiety, resolve doubts about the harmful consequences that people fear.

TIME REQUIRED

15-20 minutes.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE

Individual.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Analytical skills, discussion skills and teamwork.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. List:

- **Can I have a heart attack?**
- **Can I lose control?**
- **Can I faint?**
- **Can I drown?**
- **Will it never happen to me?**

1. Divide the participants into groups of 4-6 people.

2. Give them a list with statements about anxiety (see solver).

3. Instruct them to discuss among themselves whether the questions are correct or whether they are myths.

4. Share it and give feedback to the group.

SELF-EVALUATION AND REFLECTION GUIDE

List: When I have a lot of anxiety ...

- Can I have a heart attack?

Anxiety does not cause heart attacks. In some cases, frequent anxiety or stress may increase the likelihood of people with previous heart disease, but they are never the only factor. In healthy people, it does not pose a risk to the heart. Tachycardia, chest pain and other symptoms can be explained by the natural activation reaction to an anxious situation.

- Can I lose control?

When we experience an episode of severe anxiety, we may feel that we will have some unwanted impulse or that we will do some "madness." Sometimes this helps lead us to paralysis, the feeling of blockage. The reality is that these negative expectations are not met, the person continues to be in control of the situation. In the worst of cases, a person with a lot of anxiety can try to escape the situation to escape a danger. Anxiety prepares us to act quickly, without having to think much, to protect ourselves from danger. This may explain the feeling of loss of control, which is not real.

- Can I faint?

Fainting is extremely unlikely to occur. Although we may have feelings of dizziness or vertigo, this is because our body is sending more blood to the muscles (to be able to run or fight) and less to the head, but the circumstances are not due to fainting: we should feel a very large reduction in heart rate and a drop in blood pressure. The exact opposite happens during an anxiety attack.

- Can I drown?

No, it is impossible to drown by suffering from anxiety. The feeling of suffocation is due to hyperventilation which is not followed by a corresponding physical exertion. Sometimes when we feel the feeling of suffocation we try to breathe faster and faster to compensate for that feeling, but that increases it even more. What we should do to reduce activation is try to have slow, diaphragmatic, and regular breathing.

- Will it never happen to me?

Our body is built to withstand a state of high anxiety for a short time, then the anxiety begins to gradually decrease. Anxiety peaks usually last a few minutes at most. It is when we focus too much on our feelings that we can feed them, if we focus on our objectives (how to do the exhibition), the anxiety will gradually decrease.