

This document is provided by PanicAttackRecovery.com. Please sign up for our free newsletter by simply visiting www.PanicAttackRecovery.com and providing your email address in the sign-up box. Subscribers can opt out of our newsletter at any time.

Low Self-Esteem & Anxiety

Many festive times, for example the holiday season, can be a great time to get together with friends and family.

Sometimes, though, for the anxiety and panic sufferer, things may not be as joyous. This does not have to be the case though.

If we become aware of the natural tendency that many of us share at times like these, we can have a much more enjoyable time.

What am I talking about?

I'm talking about the tendency to compare ourselves to our friends and family. In other words, by listening to others talk about their lives we can sometimes set ourselves start comparing ourselves to others and sometimes feel down.

If you value your self-worth on the basis of your accomplishments then this tendency will become noticeable whenever you compare your career to others, if they appear to hold the upper hand in this regard. Once we start to feel this way our anxiety increases.

The most important thing to realize is that your self-worth is not something that is relative, in other words, relative to others. Rather, as humans, we all have equal self-worth and self-worth in reality is what you believe to be the case.

Again if you feel that external world dictates your worth then you will find yourself very competitive or feeling down when others appear to have accomplished more.

Of course this makes the assumption that the other person has had the same life experience that you had – if you believe you should compare your self-worth to that of others.

In reality you know that this is not realistic. We each have different life experiences. So when you think about it, comparing yourself to others in never a great scenario.

Page 1 of 3

The material and or suggestions in this publication are provided by www.PanicAttackRecovery.com for educational and informational purposes only, and are not intended to be a substitute for a health care provider's consultation. Please consult an appropriate health care provider about the applicability of any opinions or recommendations with respect to your own panic attacks, anxiety or agoraphobia, or any other symptom or condition. This material may not be reproduced for commercial purposes without written permission

Instead what you need to recognize is that you are an individual. We all have equal self-worth, but sometimes society can leave us with the perception that we need to compete in a rat race of competition.

Whether we compare our self-worth to others depends entirely on a choice. The choice is as simple as asking this question: Am I going to compare my self-worth to others or recognize that I'm equal to other people in this regard?

Instead if you can approach gatherings with relatives and friends by going in knowing we are all diverse, have diverse backgrounds and obviously some may have accomplished more than us in the material sense, you can prepare in advance and have a chance to orient your self-worth and remind yourself that self-worth is not relative to your career or accomplishments, we are all equal in that sense.

I have a simple suggestion you can try: That is to analyze your thoughts for cognitive distortions if you start feeling anxiety during social gatherings this season. If you scroll below you can access a list of cognitive distortions which you can use to analyze your thoughts and then substitute in their place more realistic and happier ones.

For more tips on recovery from panic attacks, agoraphobia, and anxiety, please sign up for our free newsletter by simply visiting www.PanicAttackRecovery.com and providing your email address in the sign-up box. Subscribers can opt out of our newsletter at any time.

This document is provided by PanicAttackRecovery.com. You may be share this document with anyone you feel may benefit from it. We only ask that you encourage him/her to visit our website and sign up for our free newsletter.

Cognitive Distortions

1. All-or-nothing thinking - Thinking of things in absolute terms, like "always", "every" or "never". Few aspects of human behavior are so absolute.
2. Overgeneralization - Taking isolated cases and using them to make wide generalizations.
3. Mental filter - Focusing exclusively on certain, usually negative or upsetting, aspects of something while ignoring the rest, like a tiny imperfection in a piece of clothing.
4. Disqualifying the positive - Continually "shooting down" positive experiences for arbitrary, ad hoc reasons.
5. Jumping to conclusions - Assuming something negative where there is no evidence to support it. Two specific subtypes are also identified:
Mind reading - Assuming the intentions of others.
Fortune telling - Predicting how things will turn before they happen.
6. Magnification and Minimization - Inappropriately understating or exaggerating the way people or situations truly are. Often the positive characteristics of other people are exaggerated and negative characteristics are understated. There is one subtype of magnification:
Catastrophizing - Focusing on the worst possible outcome, however unlikely, or thinking that a situation is unbearable or impossible when it is really just uncomfortable.
7. Emotional reasoning - Making decisions and arguments based on how you feel rather than objective reality.
8. Making should statements - Concentrating on what you think "should" or ought to be rather than the actual situation you are faced with, or having rigid rules which you think should always apply no matter what the circumstances are. Albert Ellis termed this "Musterbation."
9. Labeling - Explaining behaviors or events, merely by naming them; related to overgeneralization. Rather than describing the specific behavior, you assign a label to someone or yourself that puts them in absolute and unalterable terms.
10. Personalization (or attribution) - Assuming you or others directly caused things when that may not have been the case. When applied to others this is an example of blame.

Cognitive distortion. (2008, July 9). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 00:08, July 15, 2008, from http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cognitive_distortion&oldid=224669620