

Physical Symptoms

Social Anxiety West Topic Session

This topic discusses the physical symptoms you get when you feel anxious. This includes things such as a racing heartbeat, sweating or muscle tension, but excludes cognitive symptoms such as racing thoughts and difficulty concentrating. Some symptoms have elements of both such as tiredness. The questions are intended to prompt your thinking around the topic. You do not have to answer them, although it may be beneficial for you if you do.

Questions

- **There are quite a few physical symptoms caused by anxiety, although how pronounced each symptom is often varies from person to person. What are the physical symptoms you experience when you feel anxious?**
- **Why do we get physical anxiety symptoms? What purposes do they have?**
- **What symptom, or symptoms, bother you the most and why?**
- **How do you react to your anxious symptoms? i.e. ignore them, hide them, fight them etc.**
- **What do you think might be the most helpful response to your physical anxiety symptoms?**
- **Shaking, trembling, blushing and sweating are common physical anxiety symptoms that people with social anxiety often worry about. Why do you think they worry about these symptoms so much?**
- **If these symptoms are caused by anxiety, then what will focusing on your worries about them do?**
- **What message are you sending to yourself if you accept or even welcome your physical symptoms, and how might this help break the vicious cycle that keeps them going?**
- **Fighting back and trying to directly control physical symptoms is a natural response to something we feel threatened by, but how well does this approach seem to work for people (and you)?**