

OVERCOMING PARANOID AND SUSPICIOUS THOUGHTS

Exercise: How do you react to suspicious thoughts?

Ignoring suspicious thoughts

I ignored the thought.

I hardly noticed the thought.

I felt quite detached from the thought.

It didn't really seem to matter.

I felt a bit anxious when the thought occurred, but I just got on with what I was doing.

The problem-solving approach

I considered the thought and rejected it.

I didn't panic and instead I thought it all through carefully.

I thought of all the reasons why the thought couldn't be correct.

I wondered what advice my friends would give me.

I put the thought into context and instead concentrated on positive things.

I decided to see what someone else thought about my anxious feeling.

The emotional response

I felt miserable.

I felt overwhelmed.

I was annoyed at myself.

COMMON REACTIONS TO PARANOID & SUSPICIOUS THOUGHTS

- It felt like things were out of control.
- I felt vulnerable and helpless.
- I felt ashamed.

Avoiding suspicious thoughts

- I wanted to withdraw from everybody.
- I knew that I had to get away from the situation in order to stop the thoughts occurring.
- I didn't want anyone else to know I'd had the thought.
- I knew the only way I was going to feel better was by avoiding the thought.
- I thought that the only way to cope was to have a drink or a smoke.

Treating suspicious thoughts as if they might be correct

- I believed the thought was probably true and so I needed to get away from the situation.
- I tried to watch out for the danger.
- I tried to escape the danger.
- I was anxious and wanted to get somewhere safe.
- I wanted to blend in and not upset anyone.
- I got angry with the people involved.
- I worried about what was going to happen.
- I vowed to avoid these situations in future.

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Trying to understand suspicious thoughts

I knew I had to get more information before deciding what to do.



I thought it was better to be uncertain about what was going on than leap to conclusions.



I didn't know what to think but I knew I had to find out more.



I wanted to talk about it with other people to check whether I was being reasonable.

