

Overcoming anxiety to enjoy life

Joe: I had come to the conclusion that I got really nervous going to new places and places I hadn't been. I don't know why but, I had a friend that said "Hey, you want to drive down to Baltimore to go to dinner tonight?" I'd make up an excuse like, "Nah, I've got homework," but really I was like, "Oh, I'm afraid if I go I'm going to have an anxiety attack," and not that my friends wouldn't be supportive, but I just didn't want to put myself in that scenario, and I start feeling really nervous and then my head's racing and it's just, you can't control what's going on in your brain and it's just a vicious cycle, even if you start to think about it, it just gets worse and worse and then it's all mental for a while but then the physical symptoms start to kick in because it gets in your head, "Oh, I might have a panic attack," and then you convince yourself that you are, then your heart starts racing and then you start to get the physical symptoms.

So what I was doing is I'd try to, and I did eventually, force myself to go to new places with friends and stuff, and I would wait as long as I could to see if I could mentally calm myself down before having to take the Valium and that was kind of the practice I took for it. I was trying to calm myself down and then as a last resort, knowing that I had the medication to take was comforting, but started out biweekly meeting with the counselor. It almost felt like we just had a casual conversation, we'd talk about my thought process during when I start to feel anxious and some kind of exercises I can do to calm myself down. I felt really comfortable speaking to the Counselor that I was with and it really helped out a lot.



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