

# SUPPORT DURING A PANIC ATTACK

Shift your mindset

~~Panic Attack~~



Waiting Period



A panic attack is an intense, uncomfortable period of time. Think of a panic attack as a "Waiting Period". The Waiting Period may feel frightening, but will always come to an end. A Waiting Period may last 5-10 minutes. It is inconvenient, but not dangerous.

## EDUCATE

Learn about a Waiting Period and how it is a part of our fight/flight/freeze response. By learning more, the Waiting Period may feel less scary.

## SUPPORT AND STAY COOL

Support others experiencing a Waiting Period. Acknowledge that Waiting Periods can be scary. Speak with a calm, understanding, and confident tone.

## Reassure

We acknowledge that Waiting Periods feel scary. The fear of Waiting Periods creates a vicious cycle of panic, then increased panic due to fear of panic. Panic is inconvenient but it will pass. When someone around you is experiencing a Waiting Period, reassure them that they are safe, you will stay with them, and the experience will end momentarily.

## "You are safe"

To some people, a panic attack feels like you can't breathe, or like you are having a heart attack. People do not die from Waiting Periods/panic attacks. They feel scary but they are NOT harmful.

## Distract

We may choose to distract with a comforting song, verse, prayer, or video to decrease the intensity and duration of the Waiting Period.

However, **you don't need to try so hard to calm down**. If a distraction doesn't work, **you don't have to do it**. We can't just "force" our body to "calm down". Don't try so hard. **Your body will calm down on its own after a few moments**. You can wait it out/ride it out.

The Waiting Period will eventually subside on its own. It will be over in a few minutes.

## Wait it out



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