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Kim Basinger's Panic Attacks

I want to discuss someone famous who has suffered from anxiety, panic attacks and agoraphobia.

I'm talking about Kim Basinger. You know the Oscar winning actor. Yes indeed.

Some people say "who cares" but my reason for discussing this is that quite a while ago I saw a documentary on anxiety, panic attacks, and agoraphobia that followed Basinger around. She appeared to be quite open and honest about her struggles. It was really interesting. What was really interesting is the points that can be taken from this documentary.

The first point is that anyone can struggle with the issues of anxiety, panic attacks and agoraphobia, celebrities, wealthy and successful people, professionals from all sorts of backgrounds.

The second point is this: look at what Basinger has accomplished despite her struggles. Others have suggested that even Clay Aiken suffers from anxiety and panic attacks again much has been accomplished by him.

You see often people who struggle with anxiety think that life can only be so good. That they can only accomplish so much. This type of limited thinking of course makes them more anxious (you remember the vicious circle of anxiety?)

You probably recall the famous movie "As Good As It Gets" with Jack Nicholson and Helen Hunt. The character Jack Nicholson played did not suffer from panic attacks, in fact Nicholson portrayed someone who had obsessive compulsive disorder. But my point here is that you likely recall the scene in the movie where Nicholson comes out of his therapist's office and says out loud to the waiting room full of patients: "What if this is as good as it gets?"

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This statement certainly illustrates a form of limited thinking. Limited thinking can apply whether you're thinking about how you're likely to feel or whether you're talking about accomplishments.

I'm really saying that it is in fact the limited thinking that keeps us stuck.

Throughout this newsletter I have worked through various anxiety producing thoughts utilizing Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in order to locate the Cognitive Distortions and then substitute healthier more realistic thoughts in their place.

CBT is a great way, when done continuously, to break away from any limited type of thinking and the anxiety that such thinking creates in you.

One of the things that is most useful about restructuring your thinking with CBT is that it is a realistic way of feeling better – not simply a matter of tricking yourself into feeling better. It is structured, organized and logical. In many ways it seems we are unwinding all the circular thoughts that caused our anxiety and panic through CBT.

Another useful point I want to get across is that the key to really getting better is similar to what Kim Basinger does when she produces great work or gets in front of a large audience – or any actor when for example they get in front of a large crowd.

Kim and other actors fully immerse themselves into the present situation. This immersion prevents the actors from being distracted from their anxiety.

Now here is what I consider the biggest point to take away from all of this: This immersion at first does not feel natural. You will resist going out of your comfort zone.

But the ironic thing is that your perceived “comfort zone” is a form of limited thinking patterns that keep you stuck.

So here is what you do.

Although at first you will feel much resistance to reframing your thinking with CBT, this reframing, and immersion in a place outside of your comfort zone is the way out.

If you can take some time to really ponder the points of this website (and my free newsletter which you can join today) and write them down so that you can refer to them throughout the day while you're doing your CBT exercises (hopefully regularly by now) I think it will be helpful. I think it would be most helpful if you can put the main points in your own words when you write them down.

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