

Worksheet 10

Discovery experiment 1 – understanding the role of thoughts and images in panic attacks (pink rabbit experiment)

For the next couple of minutes DO NOT think about a pink rabbit with big floppy ears, a white fluffy tail, and a twitchy nose with extra-long whiskers.

Once you have done that, do whatever you can to get rid of the pink rabbit. While making sure you are not thinking about our oversized pink rabbit, say out loud whatever is going through your mind, it really doesn't matter what you say. If the rabbit does come to mind, try to push it away and pop a dot below every time it pops into mind.

Once the two minutes is up, answer the following questions:

1. How often did you think about the rabbit?
2. What can we make of this?
3. How does it relate to trying to push thoughts out of your mind during a panic attack?
4. Might it be that trying to push distressing thoughts out of your mind is having the opposite effect and if so, could you do something different next time?

What have you learned from this exercise?
Rate your level of belief in your catastrophic thought (from 0 = 'I don't believe it at all' to 100 = 'I believe it completely'): Before exercise: After exercise: