

Panic Attacks Hurt, But Can lead to Healing and Peace.

If you or someone you care about is struggling with the fear, anxiety and stress that triggers panic attacks, this book is a guide to help live a normal life. A life that is filled with inspiration and joy for the start of each new day. It's possible. I'm proof of it.

I've been there. Living joylessly to get through a day and make it to the next without experiencing too much anxiety and fear. I wasn't living my life, just barely surviving. Taking medication to avoid panic attacks and sleepless nights. No way to live; the meds helped in some ways and hurt in so many others. Sick of it and totally frustrated, I finally decided enough was enough. Time to do whatever it took to live a normal life not controlled by anxiety, stress and fear.

It was time to make changes. Big changes.

I did research, spoke with experts and implemented a number of changes that while difficult helped me reduce the stress *and* eliminate the panic and fear holding me back. Not a short journey, but it was a successful one, with challenges presenting choices, opportunities and hope. If you're seeking sanctuary from your personal storm this book will help if you'll do your part. Read my story, heed the advice and resolve to reclaim your life.

Find hope, courage and confidence to live an extraordinary life. Control your destiny and put an end to fear controlling it. Your best, most creative and productive life is but a few choices away. Read the story of how I changed my life and change yours.

Make Peace With Panic - *Naturally*

**How a Panic Attack Sufferer
Overcame the Stress, Anxiety & Fear**

by STEVE GUARINO

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Steve Guarino

Visit my website at www.steveguarino.com

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*The only person you are destined to become
is the person you decide to be.*

–Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.
Live the life you have imagined.*

–Henry David Thoreau

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MY STORY & HOW I CAN HELP YOU

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I – I took the
one less traveled by, And that has made all the
difference. – Robert Frost*

If you or someone you care about is suffering from stress, anxiety and even potentially the terror of panic attacks, know that I've been there. I personally suffered from an overload of stress and anxiety that led to countless panic attacks spanning a number of years. I know the pain, the fear and how they rob you of your life and leave you feeling, believing and fearing there is no hope. But there is hope.

My goal is to bring hope and healing into your life by sharing with you the tools it took me years to discover in this easy-to-read book. I will be providing you with the same tools and information which eventually allowed me to free myself from the pain and suffering I was experiencing that was caused by a stress overload. Implementing the recommendations in this book will likely allow you to reclaim your life and free yourself from the anxiety you are experiencing.

This book is also meant to be beneficial for those of you that want to help someone you care about work through a difficult period of stress and anxiety. It will allow you to better understand what they are going through, as well as provide proven and useful techniques that are the culmination of all that I've tried and experienced while doing all I could to lead what I had always wanted; a "normal" life.

Or at least a life without panic attacks.

I'm Steve Guarino and I can relate to the overwhelming physical sensations that take place when you've reached your capacity and, overloaded and overwhelmed, just can't take anymore, emotionally and also physically. I ran very hard; what people call a Type A personality. I have always been

driven to be the very best at the things I do and perform at the highest level of my ability.

Looking back, I now realize that my desire to excel at everything I did contributed to the panic attacks I struggled with. Without knowing it, I was putting a tremendous amount of pressure on myself and it was that pressure that accumulated along with other stresses that caused me a stress overload. If that describes you, and stress, anxiety and panic attacks are getting in the way of you living your life to your full potential, know there is real hope and a way to calm the storm in your life.

I've been there and I know. My cup was surely overflowing with panic and I was drowning in it. I felt out of control and at times thought life just wasn't worth it. But it is.

I am a big believer that everything happens in our lives for a reason. It may not feel comfortable at the time, and we may wonder why the things that are happening to us are indeed happening, but one day you will look back and see that the event that was so uncomfortable when you were going through it, brought with it an opportunity to learn and grow as a person.

When I was 6 months old, I suffered with terrible asthma attacks and my parents really had no idea what to do to help me. I was the only one in the family to have asthma so it was a new experience for all of us. About the age of 2, my mother was referred to an allergist by a friend a friend of hers. There weren't many at the time, but she found one and took me in for a number of tests and we found I was allergic to many things.

This began years of Saturday allergy shots and daily medication to control the symptoms of asthma I was having. I offer this for not only background but also because for me, those medications and the fear of not being able to breathe have also been part of what contributed to the panic attacks I struggled with later in my life. The medication did help me to breathe, however, the side effects of the medication included my heart racing as well as beating aggressively. Even though I was taking the medication, there were still occasional asthma attacks which left me feeling as though I couldn't breathe for

several days at a time. The fact that the medicine made my heart race and the asthma caused me to struggle breathing are two very common symptoms of a panic attack. These experiences were a perfect setup for the panic attacks I would experience later in my life.

My First Panic Attack

The first panic attack I remember took place one morning when I was sitting in a coffee shop with friends. I was 17 and had too little sleep the night before. Without warning, in the middle of the coffee shop, I began feeling disoriented; as though I wasn't really there. My body was there but my mind did not feel connected to it. People were talking to me but as hard as I tried, I couldn't process what they were saying. At the same time, I noticed that my heart was racing, my palms were sweating, I was having difficulty swallowing and couldn't catch my breath. I was terrified. God, please help me get through this is all I could think. I'd had periods of stress in my life before, but had never experienced all of these feelings at the same time, and with such intensity.

I've since come to think of that day as the unofficial-start of my journey. It was to be a long road I'd travel to get to a healthy body, mind and spirit with highs and lows along the way.

I remember taking what for most people would be a simple and uneventful trip to a store and while shopping I began to experience overwhelming anxiety causing me to become filled with the fear that I was going to pass out and fall to the floor right there in the middle of the store. The fear and anxiety brought about the feeling of being lightheaded progressing to the point that my legs became very weak, as though they were going to give out from under me. While all of this was happening, the thought that came to my mind was, how embarrassing would that be.

There were also a number of times I was in my car after a morning workout at the gym where I began feeling

like my heart was going to explode, wondering if death was imminent and as a result driving myself to the hospital. There I had blood workups, EKGs, Stress tests and Chest X-rays, only to be sent home with a prescription for a pill to treat my anxiety and stress.

A pill containing chemicals that, I held out hope would help eliminate my panic attacks or at least lessen their effect on me, but at the same time, there was a huge tradeoff as they made me numb to daily happenings in life. The medication never was a long term solution, because as soon as the prescription ran out and I had none left, it was back to the same stress and panic attacks.

For me, panic attacks were like a death sentence.

If you've had one, you know what I mean. If someone you care about is experiencing them, this book is meant to help you to understand what they are going through.

While having a panic attack you feel like you surely are going to die and at times that's a more attractive option than enduring yet another and then another. Living life without knowing when the next one was coming. I did for many years until I gave in and went on one of the well-known drugs popular at that time to reduce or eliminate panic attacks. What a mess...that's exactly what the medication turned me into...a mess. This was *not* the way I wanted to live, but I sure didn't want the panic attacks to return so I remained on the medications for a number of years.

Life on Medications for Panic. What a Mess...

The medication I was prescribed did, over time, eliminate the panic attacks, but it also took the life out of me and robbed me of my emotions. I was walking around in a fog trying to understand how I'd come to this point and desperately trying to figure out how to make a change and find my way out.

After living that way for too many years I was determined to avoid losing any more time. Believe me, I tried many times to get off the medication. Cutting down little by little until,

the medication level was reduced too far, at that point my old friend *panic* returned, and back to a higher dose I would need to go to eliminate the symptoms once again. Life was like a rollercoaster and so were my emotions. When I was cutting back, I would feel sadness, frustration, increased anxiety and more, but when I was taking the prescribed amount, I would feel emotionless, tired and wanted to sleep all of the time with little desire for anything.

With so many different choices for medications available, there was no way to know which was best – or the least harmful for me. The ads promised great results but they didn't talk much about the terrible side effects. And the medication needed to be taken every day.

I was not the type of person to submit to taking medication every day for the rest of my life. I did not want to be controlled by the medication. You shouldn't, either.

I knew I needed to get off the medication, but how?

I became angry at the panic for having control over my life and ironically it was that anger that I needed to experience so that I could rise up and make the changes necessary to regain control of my life and finally experience good health.

Panic attacks and illness literally stole years of my life from me. The cycle is ugly. Panic causes fear. Fear causes us to want to stay in our homes and not want to venture too far outside. Being held captive in this way costs us so much, and eliminates our opportunity to experience life as it should be.

There were so many times I wanted to go somewhere; a trip, concert, cafe, restaurant, a ballgame or just going to a store and I just didn't feel safe doing so. I was too filled with the fear that something bad was going to happen while I was there. As a result of the fear that we experience, we miss out on life. I was getting tired of missing out on my life and it eventually stopped being an option for me. It was the fear of a panic attack that caused me to miss out on so many of the things that I longed to do for many years. That needed to change and for it to change, I knew that I needed to change. I was determined to find my way.

Beginning to Make Changes

10 years prior to the writing of this book I went through a divorce and like many, suffered through the lengthy, painful process. Yet, things happen for a reason and this was a catalyst for me to make the changes in my life that needed to be made to live a healthier and happier life. With the help of a coach and other extraordinary mentors, I made major changes; exercising more often, accepting and forgiving myself as well as others for past hurts, eating healthier, developing my spirituality, changing and or eliminating unhealthy relationships in my life, living in truth and honesty, and a personal vow to change and become the example for my children that I wanted to be.

Today I live the life I'd always dreamt of, I want the same for you. I've been blessed with the opportunity to raise four children that I love very much. Now that I am panic free, we share many good times and create priceless memories together. One of my great joys is viewing each day as a precious gift and doing my best to live it and enjoy it to the fullest. Do your best to look at your panic episodes and see them as a gift, your catalyst to begin again. Panic attacks can certainly rob you of your life ... but they also can give you the opportunity to find a path to a more authentic and fulfilling life to live.

All you have to do is choose to take a new and healthier approach to your stress, anxiety and panic and when you do, you will find the rewards are real, long-lasting and very gratifying.

You'll Learn a Lot and See Big Rewards

My life has changed and yours can too. I no longer take medication of any kind. I can't express in words how gratifying it is that I am no longer controlled by the need to take a pill each day to keep panic attacks at bay. Especially given the fact that the medications I was taking controlled my life for a long

period of time. That long road wasn't easy, but it was worth it. Now I'm privileged to share all I learned through years of trial and error with you, so you can heal. It's your turn.

There are two terribly important things I want you to bear in mind.

First, I'm not one for blowing smoke and making promises that are impossible to keep.

Second, in this book I will be presenting you with a total life strategy and not a piecemeal attack on symptoms in a vacuum.

I will present you with practical information that you can use to find real hope and begin the journey to a happier, healthier and more fulfilling life right away. At the heart of this is a simple idea: People deserve honesty and to be given realistic expectations, so my focus is real help for regular people living real lives. I'm not looking to substitute a new dependency for an old one, but to help empower you to free yourself from the terror of panic and anxiety.

To do it, I'll present you with a *Holistic Approach* to healing from panic.

It's not one thing, but a combination of things that constitute important personal changes that are fairly simple to make and will yield tangible rewards you'll see and feel. Your panic attacks are the result of a combination of things and present themselves via a variety of symptoms. In this book we aren't curing symptoms, but dealing with you in the largest, most inclusive sense.

A more complete, total-life strategy that puts you back in control with less fear.

And I'd like to inspire you to look beyond the medicine chest for relief. Medicine and the world of pharmaceuticals have their place in life, but becoming dependent upon anything for the rest of our life is simply unacceptable.

Far better to adopt healthy changes that set you free and can naturally be sustained which will also provide you with a clearer mind, healthier body, and a refreshed and renewed spirit. All of this is inside you waiting to be released. And when you make these changes, you will experience the satisfaction of knowing you are able to take care of

yourself and not dependent on pills to find the peace and happiness you deserve.

Everything does happen for a reason even if we don't always understand why while we are going through it. I won't tell you it's going to be easy, but if you follow the steps outlined in the following chapters, you will not only feel better physically, but feel better mentally and either reduce or completely eliminate your panic attacks. I've done it and you can, too.

Use this book to find the health, happiness, peace and joy that is available to all of us.

Believe That You Can; I *Know* You Can

One of my greatest joys is helping others live the life they dream of but have come to believe is unattainable and out of reach. But it is attainable and health, happiness, peace and joy are available to all of us.

Consider this book to be the bearer of a very important message that has the ability to help you heal your life and change the way you look at the world. Start by looking at how you're living and what you're doing presently. If you feel you are ready to make changes that will bring you lasting peace and contentment, this is the right book for you.

I will provide you with the information you need, but it's up to you to supply the will and determination to change your life so that you may experience the greatness that you deserve and are destined for.

Choose to Make a Fresh Start

For all the pain and horror of panic attacks, I've learned that even what seems to be the very worst that life gives us is a blessing in disguise. The only difference is the way that you look at it.

Handled properly panic attacks can be a powerful teacher and catalyst for change.

It's time for you to take back your life. Use these helpful strategies and guidance to tap into your own personal fortitude and desire. Put an end to going through the motions and make life count. You can do great things; I am here to help you.

I made the choice to live again and vowed not to squander my new opportunity. I thank God that my life is richer and fuller than it has ever been and I'm truly grateful. My promise is that when you make it through your struggle, at the end you'll feel the same way.

I'm on your side and wrote this book in order to help you through the anxiety, fear and panic that you are struggling with. My hope is that the words and tools provided in the following chapters will help you to greatly reduce or eliminate your symptoms of panic, allowing you to live a more fulfilling life where you are free to shine your inner light brighter than you ever thought possible.

It is possible. I'm living proof!