

## GROUP COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY FOR PATIENTS WITH PANIC DISORDER

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Panic disorder is a severe and often disabling condition with a lifetime prevalence rate of 4.1% to 8.8%. The treatment of choice is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Over past 20 years, behavioral, cognitive, and cognitive behavioral procedures (primarily exposure and cognitive reconstruction based treatments) were found to be effective in the treatment of panic disorder. CBT is the best studied non-pharmacological approach and can be applied to many patients, depending on its availability. CBT of panic disorder was most studied in individual setting, but group format of treatment could be also effective.

**Method:** We describe step by step the cognitive-behavioral group therapy of patients with panic disorder. We are explaining the concept of cognitive model of panic disorder, vicious circle, cognitive reconstruction, control of breathing and exposure. We also present personal experience with group cognitive-behavioral therapy and possible complications that may occur.

**Results:** The results of our research in this group concerning the efficacy of the program, changes in the heart rate variability during program and EEG changes (using sLORETA) are presented. We also try to point on possible complications that may occur during the therapy and coping with them.

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