

Life... Tragedy on TV making me upset

Situation:

As I was watching the news coverage of the incidents in New York and Washington today, I found myself more and more anxious and down.

Symptoms:

I felt scared, for the people who were there. My mind started racing to what else might happen. I wondered if I was in any real danger even though I live in the middle of the United States. I wondered whether the whole country was going to get blown up. I thought of relatives that I have in other major cities and wondered if I'd ever see them again.

The more I sat and stared at the TV, the worse the symptoms got. I started feeling light-headed, and my stomach was getting upset even though I had skipped lunch because I just didn't feel like eating.

Really I was feeling pretty miserable – lost, sad, alone and scared.

Solution:

At first I couldn't think of what to do to pull myself together. I asked myself: "What's making me this upset and anxious?" When I answered honestly, it was because I had spent four hours watching the horrible scenes. Even though part of me wanted to keep watching, because I knew that everyone would be talking about what happened, I chose to push the Off button on the remote. I moved my muscles to do what was best for my mental health.

As I stared at the blank screen I was still thinking about the images I had seen, so I decided to go out and take a walk – again moving my muscles and doing something healthy for me.

As for all the insecure thoughts I was having about the future, I simply repeated: "I don't know, I don't know, I don't know." Realistically no one could predict the future before today's' tragedy, and certainly no one could from this point on in time either.

I'm still a bit shaky when I think back to what I saw, yet I am more in control.

In the past:

I would have never got up from in front of the TV. The more I watched, the worse I would feel. I would have watched all day long. My mind would have raced on and on, and I know I would have started pacing around. I would then switch from being very angry that something like this happened, to very, very scared.



I had no idea that I could actually command my muscles and swap my scary thoughts for more realistic and secure ones.

I really thought that because everyone else was watching the news, that I had to also.

As I was walking I remembered that no matter how terrible things were, all that was going on was my outer environment and I had no control whatsoever over it.

