Eye Contact!!

Slow Down

I. Can’t breathe, arms tingling, dizzy, heart flying.

--Pause--

II. Happened three years ago – told later I had a panic attack.
III. Learned about condition and research for speech.
IV. Today -- nature of panic attacks, people affected, treatment options.

(Let’s start with the nature of panic attacks.)

--Pause--

Body

I. Severe condition with physical and mental symptoms.
   A. Defined by NIMH: “unexpected and repeated episodes of intense fear
      accompanied by physical symptoms.”
      1. Come out of nowhere.
      2. Few minutes to several hours.
   B. Common symptoms.
      1. Physical -- heart, breath, dizziness, numbness or tingling.
      2. Mental -- fear, disaster or helplessness, detached from one’s own body.

(Now you know nature … look at people affected.)

II. Affect millions of people.
   A. American Psychiatric Assn -- 6 million.
   B. Groups with higher incidence.
      1. NIMH: Women twice as often as men.
      2. Most people develop symptoms before age 24.
(Given severity … wonder how treated.)

III. Two major options for treatment.
   A. Medication.
      1. Antidepressants most prescribed.
      2. Rearrange brain’s chemical levels.
   B. Cognitive-behavioral therapy.
      1. Techniques to control symptoms and feelings.
         a. Breathing.
         b. Thought patterns.
      2. Effective says *Clinical Handbook of Psychological Disorders*.

---Pause---

Conclusion

I. As we have seen, panic attacks affect millions of people.
II. Fortunately, there are treatment options for preventing and dealing with attacks.
III. In my case, both medication and cognitive-behavioral therapy have helped.
IV. May never be free of attacks, but now I know what they are and what I can do about them.