

# Your Emotional Thermometer

- Imagine a thermometer marked from 0-10. The highest number 10 represents the most anxious you have ever felt, 0 is the calmest, and 5 represents midway. This is your anxiety thermometer.
- The numbers 8, 9, 10 represent an anxiety level for events that involve a disaster that is about to happen or has already happened, such as serious accidents, fires, and illness. Events that warrant 8-10 are quite rare in most people's lives.
- The numbers 5, 6, 7 are for serious events that may have bad consequences, such as missing a job interview or your car breaking down on the highway at night. Even events that warrant 5-7 on the anxiety thermometer are still fairly unusual.
- Most of the things we get anxious about on a daily basis are not serious enough to deserve high levels of anxiety, although they may feel more intense to anxious people. Everyday events would be somewhere between 1 and 4 on the thermometer.
- Level 8-10 situations can be thought of as crisis and level 1-7 as different sized hassles.
- The next time you feel your anxiety rising, stop and ask yourself these two questions to help you calm down by putting the event in a realistic context:
  1. How serious is this, really, in terms of life and death?
  2. How much anxiety is it really worth?

