

Target Panic—the cure?

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Updated January 31, 2025

I can sure relate to your frustration. I too have suffered from this demon for years and tried every regimen that's out there, in print and recommended—none worked for me, until now.

I know TP comes in various forms and some may not benefit as much as others from these drills. My PANIC was not being able to hold on target while aiming. Once I began to draw and framed the shot the arrow was off. I couldn't hold at anchor and even worse, most times I couldn't even get to full draw before the arrow was gone.

I believe our eyes have created some type of short-circuit to the brain. When you're on, you "have" to shoot. I'm convinced you have to transfer the stimulus to shoot and the CURE for this demon is in the holding while aiming and not in the shooting. What I mean is, being able to hold (and aim) in complete comfort, control, confidence and letting the shot take care of itself afterward. I believe target panic is nothing more than a confidence issue. Once you begin to regain your confidence, each of these drills will bring on more.

I'm going to share with you what I've done. Give it a try and let me know how you get along. Remember... if you can shoot just one arrow in control, you can shoot all of them in control. CONFIDENCE, I believe is the key.

You've been dealing with this stuff for a long time-right? So... in the words of President Trump, "What in the hell have you got to lose?"

Before you begin, you'll have to ask yourself if you're willing to spend at least 63-days (maybe more) on a STRICT regimen of drills and then continue to work on it... perhaps the rest of your archery life. If not, you'd just as well read no further. If you're willing to pay the price, put in the time and not cheat, you may end up like me and be thrilled that the demon is gone; if not gone, at least under control—
FINALLY!

You absolutely **MUST** have a shot sequence and use good consistent back tension during these drills. The sequence could go something like this: Draw, anchor

(HOLDIING HARD AND TIGHT), set back tension, then (and only then) immerse in aiming, expand and keep pulling to conclusion. Go over each part of your shot sequence every time and when you come to full draw (WHILE HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT), you must consenstrate on aiming while keeping tension in your back (specifically, the rhomboid muscle). When I use the word immerse, it means total and complete thought towards aiming. In the end, you'll be able to hold on the target while aiming without that NEED to open your fingers and release the string. Take your time while aiming; enjoy the sight picture and intentionally change the time frame of your hold (HARD AND TIGHT). Hold (HARD AND TIGHT) for two or three seconds this time, maybe five seconds the next time and maybe 10 or 12 seconds the next.

I've heard that only goal-oriented folks suffer from target panic and process oriented folks never suffer from it. I believe that to be true and these drills are designed to make you take complete control of your shot sequence. You ABSOLUTELY MUST concentrate on each and every aspect of your shot sequence while performing these drills. Make sure you do each step before proceeding to the next and only then are you permitted to even consider releasing an arrow. If there is a breakdown in that shot process you'll need to let down and start over.

To quote Bill Jinks, "Rehab: Involves a value system overhaul placing execution over result along with retraining of the mind exercising strict adherence to a shot sequence."

Depending on how badly you're afflicted with this devil, you may not be able to advance, or extend your distance as quickly, or feel as comfortable as we'd like. So.... if at any time you're not comfortable, slow up and go back to the previous step. We're in no hurry here; stay with it—you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. NEVER stress yourself; don't let any anxiety come it. Stay where you are, or go back a step or two. Do NOT try to advance until you KNOW you're ready to.

During your drills, you're going to have one of those AH HA moments. You're going to gain so much confidence and control that you think you've got this thing down and you can shoot more arrows than the drills call for--YOU DON'T, so DON'T do it. You must NEVER try to advance beyond your COMPLETE control. You have to pay the price and it'll be worth it in the end--trust me.

Get a light bow in 20 to 30# range, or lighter if need be. The bow must be light enough so you can hold (hard and tight) without stress. Remember, you must be able to completely overpower the bow.

***If at any time the anxiety creeps back in, just go back to the previous step. Repeat it until it's gone, then advance to the next.

**You'll notice that the anchor is emphasized throughout these drills. Be aggressive... push as tight as you can to your anchor while pulling as hard as you can. This is most important.

Are you ready? Okay... here we go! Keep in mind, you must do at least 30 drills a day. If you're strong, not fatigued, and are comfortable doing more—have at it, but never less than 30.

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PHASE I

Day 1: Put an arrow on the string, stand about *three feet* away from your target; draw your bow to anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) following your normal shot sequence (say it to yourself every time), set your back tension and then (**and only then**) aim. Not only aim but completely immerse yourself in aiming at THAT SPOT on the target while maintaining tension in your back (keep pulling, keep pulling, keep pulling), then let down. Do this 30 times during the day (or more). No, you don't have to do all 30 at once, nor do you have to do consecutive days, but you must do at least 30 during the day without a less-than perfect drill for 21 days. If you have a booboo, start over and do it until you can do 30 repetitions. ***You MUST NOT shoot an arrow the first 21 days and you must NEVER try to advance beyond your CONTROL.*** If you have a less-than, REMEMBER, you'll have to start over. These wall drills are all about gaining control of your ***hold (HARD AND TIGHT) on target while aiming*** and building confidence.

Day 2-5: Again, start at three feet, draw, anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) and let down five times. Back up a yard at a time drawing and letting down five times and each yard. By the end of day-two you will have reached six yards and you should begin to feel a little more comfortable and bit more in control.

By the end of day-5, you should have complete control at six yards, so it's time begin to move back. Remember, you've had this stuff a long time and it's going to take time and repetition to gain control of it. Do NOT cheat. Any time you have a less-than, start over from where you left off.

Day 6 - 8: Again, start at the three feet mark; draw five times (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) doing all those things you need to do with your shot sequence, immerse in aiming while keeping tension in your back (keep pulling, keep pulling, keep pulling) and let down. Go to five yards, draw five times and let down. Go to 10 yards, draw five times and let down. Go back to three feet and repeat the process.

Day 9 - 11: Again, at the three feet mark, draw, anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) and this time, hold six times, then let down. Do the same at five yards, 10 yards, 15 yards, 20 yards.

Day 12 - 16: Start at the three feet mark, draw anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) five times and let down. Then go to 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25 yards and do the same.

Day 17 - 21: This time, start at five yards and draw five times and let down. Then go to 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 yards and do the same.

So... how are you doing? I trust you're in complete control of your shot sequence and by now the anxiety should be gone while holding. If not, just continue the drills until all the anxiety is gone, then advance to the next step.

Good luck and please let me know how you're getting along. Should you have any questions along the way, feel free to contact me any time

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PHASE II

Now it's time to shoot some arrows!

Keep in mind, you can always do more drills, but you must never do less than the 30 and NEVER advance beyond your control.

Day 22: Go to three feet, draw, anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) nine times and let down, then shoot one arrow--repeat two more times

How did that go? I'm thinking you just shot three arrows and you were in COMPLETE control of those shots. Remember... if you can do it once, you can do it EVERY time.

Day 23: Start at three feet, draw, anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) nine times and shoot one arrow; go to five yards, draw nine times and shoot one arrow, then go to 10 yards and repeat.

I'm thinking you just shot three more arrows with complete control.

Day 24 –26: Repeat Day 23.

Now it's time to back up a bit and you may even go up in weight a few pounds--I'm talking three to five pounds.

Day 27 – 30: Start at five yards, draw, anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) nine times and shoot one arrow, then 10 yards, then 15 yards.

Day 31 – 34: Start at 10 yards and draw, anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) nine times and shoot one arrow, then 15, then 20.

Day 35 – 42: Mix it up at this point to suit yourself. Wherever you're comfortable draw nine times and shoot one arrow, but don't go beyond the 20 yard mark--yet. Make sure you get in the 30 drills.

Okay... are you in control? You've put in a lot of work and I trust you've seen some great progress. Now it's time to move to the final 21 days.

Good luck and please let me know how you're getting along. Should you have any questions along the way, feel free to contact me any time.

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PHASE III

Keep in mind, you can always do more drills, but you must never do less than the 30 and NEVER try to advance beyond your control.

Day 43 – 63: You should be in control by now, so.... starting at five yards, draw, anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT) four times and let down, then shoot one arrow. Repeat at 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30.

If at any time you feel the anxiety coming back, all you need to do is get closer and do more wall drills. Just go through you shot sequence: draw, anchor (HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT), keeping tension in your back (keep pulling, keep pulling, keep pulling), immerse in aiming and let down more often.

If you now have the confidence to shoot in control, I'd highly suggest that from now on (that's right--for the rest of your life) before every session, go up close, draw, anchor, aim and let down a few times. You may also find it helpful to do it prior to every arrow you shoot in practice sessions (1:1 ratio or less, depending on how your control is). If you're at the range or shooting with others, just remember... just because you drew the bow (WHILE HOLDING HARD AND TIGHT), doesn't mean you *have* to shoot the arrow. Let down as often as needed and make sure you **ONLY shoot strong *controlled* shots. Increase weight as you feel comfortable. You should now have the tools to control this demon and know what to look for to keep him at bay.**

Good luck and please let me know how you're getting along.

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Daily Regimen

Draw 30 times and let down for 21 days:

Draw 9 times shoot 1 arrow for 21 days:

Draw 4 times and shoot 1 arrow for 21 days:

Mark with an X when Completed:

X

X

X

Day 1
Day 2
Day 3
Day 4
Day 5
Day 6
Day 7
Day 8
Day 9
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Day 63