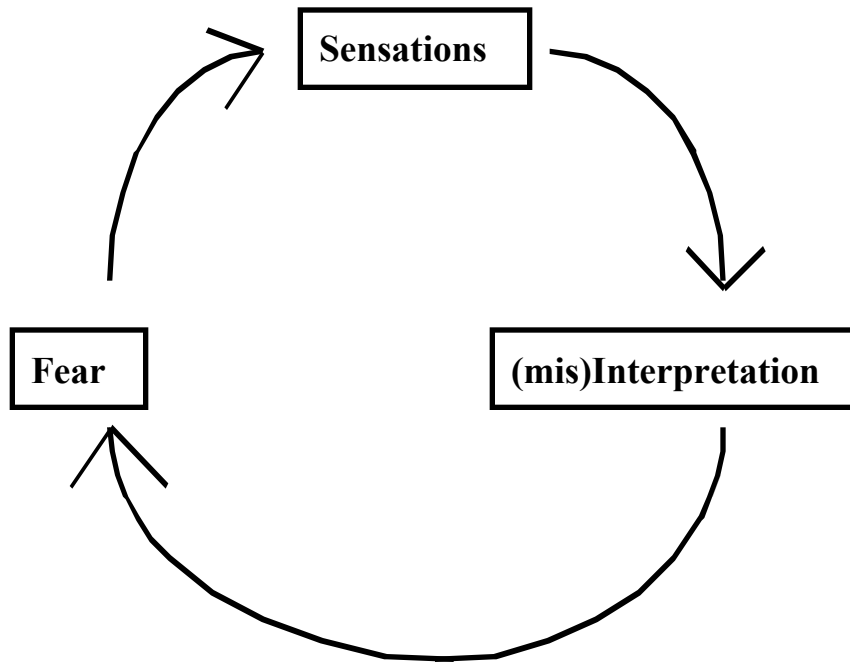


## A Cognitive View of Panic

(Cognitive is another word for thoughts, ideas, or mental images.)



From a **Cognitive** perspective, people with panic and phobias have:

1. A consistent tendency to **catastrophize**, along with
2. A **sensitivity** to specific mental images and thoughts.

Let's look at the **(MIS)INTERPRETATION**, because it includes the “**what if**” thinking that is so terrifying.

This is where we say to ourselves things like, What if I lose control?, What if I have a heart attack? What if I embarrass myself? What if I begin to panic just when.....?

Notice that these cognitions (1) are involved with events in the future; and  
(2) are preoccupied with disastrous outcomes.

This is called “catastrophizing.”

Your job is to catch yourself when you begin to have these anxiety-raising thoughts, and to change your thoughts to ones that do not raise anxiety