

## Farm Life... The cows got out

***Situation:***

I came home from taking a tractor part into town to be welded and saw my cows walking across the neighbors bean field and that's when I really began to work myself up

***Symptoms:***

My symptoms were shortness of breath, fatigue and I was griped with fear in the pit of my stomach. I was so upset my chest started hurting. I was afraid the cows had completely ruined my neighbor's crop.

***Solution:***

Immediately I tried calming down and it wasn't working. It was like trying to spit into the wind. So I stopped in my tracks. I took some deep breaths, and said to myself that this is not an emergency. At the time I didn't really believe it, but repeating it helped me change my thoughts.

I made a decision to try and entice the cattle home using a pail of corn. I didn't know if it would work, but I had nothing to lose. I moved my muscles, had the will to effort, trusted my basic bodily functions to carry me through and headed for the field.

The cattle surprised me by following me back to the pasture. I moved my muscles again and had the will to effort as I repaired the fence. As a calm feeling came over me, I knew that there really was something I could do about what I used to think was constant, unavoidable stress.

I gave myself a mental pat on the back for my efforts, and even had a smile on my face. I had a new respect for myself and my ability to cope with the anxiety of daily life.

***In the past:***

Before I would have had the same symptoms, but they would have been much stronger. I would have been more afraid and stayed worked up long after the incident had passed. It's a good feeling to know that I'm in a lot better control of myself now.