

Reading

1. Read about Jamie’s problem. Then write your advice for her.

I’m very scared of thunderstorms. Whenever there is one, I start shaking and can’t stop. I can’t figure out why I’m so scared except that I remember a thunderstorm when I was little. I was playing when lightning hit my house. I was sitting on a lamp cord and got a shock. Anyway, I’m scared of everything about thunderstorms—the lightning, the thunder, being near a tree, the power going out, EVERYTHING! I know there’s no reason to panic, but I can’t help it. I’m so weird.

Jamie, Age 15

My advice to Jamie: _____

2. Read the advice from Chris. Is it similar to your advice?

Dear Jamie,

First of all, you’re not weird. You, like everyone else, have a fear—a phobia. Dogs terrify me. My best friend is scared of spiders. Another one of my friends is afraid of snakes, and my dad has a fear of heights. Everyone is afraid of something.

Next time there’s a storm and you feel like shaking, tell yourself you’re not going to shake because it’s not that bad; it’s just a storm. Remember thunder is only a sound. It won’t hurt you. Keep telling yourself that. And lightning, the only thing that can hurt you—like when you were little—is almost always miles away from you. The next time you see lightning, start counting “one one thousand, two one thousand, three one thousand” and so on. Stop counting when you hear the thunder. That will tell you how far away the lightning is. If you count up to “three one thousand,” that means the lightning is three miles away. One mile is far away, so three miles is really far. If the lightning and thunder don’t happen at exactly the same time, you have nothing to worry about. Good luck!

Chris

Do you know anybody who is afraid of thunderstorms?
Do you agree with Chris’s advice? Why or why not?

