Accepting anxiety

Progress Psychotherapy

Anxiety feels difficult but it is a natural sensation. The body produces the response to trigger us to address or escape danger (if its just potential danger and not real). This means anxiety is natural. It can be managed to only trigger when needed but nobody can opt out of anxiety completely, in fact trying to do so makes it worse.

Why accept?

Trying to stop anxiety mislabels a normal sensation as always negative (anxiety is only negative when the trigger is a worry rather than a real problem). Seeing it as bad can actually trigger it as it becomes something we view as scary. This means refusing to accept anxiety makes it worse.

How to practice it

Recognise that not accepting anxiety can cause it. While anxiety can sometimes be unhelpful (when the worry isn't real) it is a natural survival mechanism. It is also useful in real dangers. It is not a failure to feel anxious. Finally, simply sitting and noticing the sensations of anxiety come and go will alleviate it. Try sitting, breathing and just noticing the changes. Anxiety is tolerable.

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