



Assembly Plan

Aims:

- Highlight that anxiety is a very natural feeling that everybody experiences**
- Help young people to recognise when these feelings become prolonged or severe**
- Encourage young people to be mindful of their self-talk**

This morning we are thinking about anxiety, something that we all have experienced in some way, shape or form. We are going to watch a short film, the purpose of films isn't to cure the problem or answer it but to start an important conversation and to get you thinking about how you relate to these topics.

Show film

I wonder if anxiety has ever held you back from doing something. From taking that risk, from putting yourself forwards for something, or perhaps even some of the everyday stuff like just coming to school or talking to someone new.

What would you have done in that situation in the video? Would you give in to what the anxiety is telling you and leave, or would you stick it out and face the day ahead?

And if you did decide to stay and face your fears, what would help you to still that anxious voice in your head or to calm some of those responses in the body?

These are the questions I want us to think about today.

Anxiety, or worry or fear, is a normal human emotion, it has a helpful purpose, it can give us the motivation and energy that we need to meet a challenge. It can save our lives when we are faced with danger because it releases adrenalin giving us supernatural strength and energy for running away or facing a life or death situation.

But what if we are not really in a life or death situation... there are no wild animals chasing us, no person to rescue from a falling rock, no bullets to dodge. What if that same fear response is triggered by an everyday situation and our body is flooded with the same energy but it has nowhere to go?

Instead of fuelling us, the excess energy just makes our heart pound so much it hurts, our hands and legs shake uncontrollably and our stomach feels like there's a strange creature living inside it. Those are the symptoms that the boy in the video experienced and it can be horrible, it can make you feel like you're really ill, making it even more likely that you want to hide away.

This is when anxiety becomes unhelpful. When it is triggered too easily and too often, having a negative impact on everyday life.



The good news is there is a reason why our body is responding this way and therefore there is a way to combat it. It just often takes some extra support to help us make some simple changes. So I would encourage you to have that conversation with someone if you feel that you need some extra support. It is definitely worth it if you can finally start leading the life you want and be the best version of yourself.

But in the meantime I think there are things we can all be doing to help in those nerve-racking situations we all face from time to time. What you find a bit anxiety provoking might be different to what others around you find anxiety provoking (*personal example*) but there are probably some real similarities to what is going on our heads.

When we become anxious we have negative thoughts going around that we tell ourselves: "I can't do this" "I'm going to fail" "people will think I'm really stupid." It's the voice of our anxiety, just like the character in the video. This is not inspiring or motivating! This is just going to trigger more anxiety and a feeling of helplessness so why do we do it?!

To say how pointless this type of thinking is reminds me of this quote about worrying... "worry is as effective as trying to solve an algebra

equation by chewing bubble gum." It is pointless, it is not going to work.

Can you imagine the effect it would have on a sports team if the coach went in before a match and said similar things? (*Give examples, show body language etc, would likely result in failing the match and feeling miserable.*)

What a good sports coach does is they psych up the team with encouragement and motivational phrases. "You can do this" "keep going" "Don't let them beat you, show them what you're made of." This is much more likely to send people off feeling empowered and ready for success.

We need to act like our own motivational coaches. We need to learn to recognise that voice of anxiety and to talk back to it. We don't have to listen to what it says, it's not truth.

The kind of self-talk that we adopt, the way we think about things really does matter and it something that we can change. Here is another good quote to inspire us to do this...

Quote "When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change"

What is going to be your phrase that you say to yourself to help you face those fears?

Dont forget to complete the feedback forms following delivery of this lesson.

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