



Feel-Good Friday

Your uncertainty or fear may become more manageable when you define it as only one part of your current experience. Rather than saying to yourself, "I'm anxious," "I'm shy," "I'm worried," try saying, "I'm having an anxious thought," "I feel shy at this moment," or "The worried part of me is talking to me." Those reframed statements can put some distance between you and the uncomfortable thought or feeling. That distance can give you a chance to notice more comfortable thoughts and feelings you may be experiencing at the same time. Here are some examples to consider:

- You might feel excitement about trying something new even while anxious about how it will turn out.
- You could be feeling friendly and want to have a conversation with someone even though you are also feeling the hesitation of shyness at first.
- You may feel determined to do something important to you even when you also feel worried that it will be difficult.

You can notice your thoughts and feelings without making judgements about them or about yourself. When a worry pops up, you can matter-of-factly tell yourself, "The anxious part of my brain is talking again." You can then become curious and ask yourself, "What are the confident and excited parts of my brain telling me?" This shift in thinking can help you proceed in situations where anxious feelings arise. When you repeatedly continue to do something even while feeling anxious, your brain has the opportunity to build new connections. Your brain can learn that you are safe in a similar situation and that there is no need to sound a worry alarm in the future.

You Can Benefit from Labeling Your Anxious Thoughts Rather than Labeling Yourself

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