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Anxiety: A Glimpse Of Our Mind

I stand before you as an ordinary person. That's a lie. I'm sorry. An ordinary person wouldn't be in tears right now. An ordinary person wouldn't be in constant anguish. An ordinary person wouldn't be ashamed of his actions in the past. An ordinary person wouldn't be so terrified of who he will be in ten, fifteen, twenty years. An ordinary person wouldn't be as indecisive as me. No, I don't stand before you as an ordinary person. Rather, I stand before you as a broken person; a shattered person in constant doubt and hesitation. A regretful person who reflects on the past with shame. An unreliable person who lives in the present with uncertainty. A hesitant person who peers into the future and sees nothing but a dark abyss full of fear and misery. Why, you may wonder, am I like this? Well, the answer is quite straightforward: I have anxiety. But explaining what that truly means may take me some time. So please bear with me, if you don't mind, and let me take you on a journey. Come, let me show you a glimpse of our mind.

First, you may be wondering why I say our mind instead of my mind. Well, anxiety is kind of like an ongoing war with our mind as the battlefield. Imagine you're organizing an event. Someone has a good idea (or, at least, what they think is good), and some people love it while others hate it. Now, you naturally have some kind of opinion about the idea, but your stance is irrelevant because, despite your stance, there will always be at least one person who disagrees with you. In a small event, a conflict like this can be resolved easily. But, as more and more

organizers are added, resolving the conflict becomes harder and harder since more people will have differing opinions. Now, add in a hint of doubt to half of the organizers, just enough to keep their opinions silent for fear of being wrong. How can an opinion be wrong? I have no idea. I'm sorry, again. Finally, add some cruel and rude attributes to the remaining half of the organizers. These people bully anyone who has a different opinion from them, and there are definitely people with different opinions than them. All of this finally creates one unsolvable situation: a bunch of scaredy cats and a bunch of bullies in a room together, arguing about one thing for all of eternity. Now, imagine all of that happening in your mind. A battlefield littered with different sides, none of them giving an inch. Do you understand the implications of this? If not, let me spell it out for you: Every one of those people is a version of you. You are doubting yourself at every moment. You are bullying yourself at every moment. And all of those people become those voices in your head, continuously reverberating and emphasizing your doubts, your fears, your weaknesses, in every single moment. Do you understand now, why I say our mind instead of my mind? It's because my mind is not my own. My mind is owned, is dominated by all of the voices who feed my anxiety and fuel my doubts and bully me constantly. My mind is not my own. Instead, it is a chaotic space full of pain and indecisiveness. My mind is not my own. It is our mind, where we can all argue and disagree and hate each other. My mind is not my own. It is our mind, and we are all at each other's mercy.

Now, let's talk about the shame of my past, the hesitance in my present, and the terror for my future. Anxiety is a feeling of nothingness. Well, that's a lie. I'm sorry, for the third time. Sometimes, it's a feeling of nothingness. Other times, it is a feeling of eternal despair; a feeling of dread for seemingly no reason. Try imagining another scenario: You're taking a math test that

you haven't studied for. During the test, you may feel nervous, right? Amplify that nervousness. Amplify it until you think only about failing. Amplify it until all you can see in your future is you failing. That is the terror for your future. When I think about my future, that is the mentality our mind applies to everything. Those feelings of terror and dread are what I feel whenever I think of the future. My heart races. My eyes shed tears involuntarily. My hands shake without me even realizing it. That is my terror for the future. Now, again, let's go to the scenario. You're taking the test, and you stumble onto a problem you have no clue about. And this problem just happens to be worth twenty points on a one hundred point test. You would feel scared, right? Uncertain of what to do, doubtful in your ability to solve the problem. Apply that fear to every aspect of your life. In every decision you make. Should I enter that math competition or not? Should I stay up to do my homework or sleep because I feel tired? Should I eat or should I skip it because I'm not doing enough work? That is my thought process. And every voice in my head feeds my dissonance, my uncertainty. One says I should do this, another says I should do the other thing, and another still says I should do neither. That is my hesitance in the present. Finally, imagine that after your test you feel scared. You think you should've studied. You feel stupid because, in the end, you couldn't figure out that last problem. You feel ashamed because you didn't do well enough. Once again, amplify that feeling. Extend it to every aspect of your life. You should've been a better friend, you should've been a better son, you should've been a better brother. "You did everything you could," says one of the voices in your head. But you know better, right? You should've done better. That feeling of hating yourself for not doing enough and the embarrassment of doing something wrong is what I feel constantly. That is my shame of the

past. And all of these emotions mix into a heap of chaos and madness. And in that chaos resides a scared little boy - me.

Of course, at this point, a few of you may think that I'm lying or over-exaggerating. Those few have probably never felt anxiety. So, to those of you that feel like I'm lying or over-exaggerating, I ask: Are you human? In the beginning, I said I was unordinary because of this feeling of anxiety. That's a lie. I'm sorry, one final time. The truth is, everyone can resonate with what I have felt at one point or another. All of you have probably felt some feeling of dread, some feeling of shame, some feeling of hesitance or indecisiveness, some feeling of terror. All of you have probably talked to some voice in your head. And though you may not feel these emotions as intensely as I've described them, you feel them nonetheless. And so I leave you with this one last bit of information: Anxiety is all-encompassing. Anxiety comes in shades, and everyone in their lives feels it at one point or another. Anxiety is as common as being born. Anxiety is an inescapable part of life. It lurks in every aspect of our existence, leaving no one out of its grasp. It strikes at seemingly random moments, at different moments for each person. Anxiety is all-encompassing. Earlier, I implied anxiety is what can make someone unordinary. I lied. In truth, anxiety is what makes someone ordinary. Anxiety is a glimpse into our - everyone's minds. Anxiety is all-encompassing. Anxiety is ordinary.