

Staying Sane – Anxiety Is There For A Reason

Toxic positivity is a thing. We all know someone with that ‘gotta look on the bright side, keep smiling’ outlook. You know, the person who makes you want to scratch your eyeballs out with rusty razors, writes Kate Ashley-Norman. She suggests not only steering clear of them but being in touch with reality so that anxiety focuses you on solutions not on masking the pain.

Kate Ashley-Norman says if you find you are in the constant company of someone who is always just too positive, don't be tempted to ask 'but the outlook is gloomy. how on earth do you stay positive?'

Instead, keep well away from them – toxic positivity is really unhealthy. It can dismiss or invalidate the reality of a situation, ignoring pain and actually blinding you to a way out.

Physical pain is there for a reason. If you break a leg the pain tells you that something is wrong, so you need to fix it. If the pain didn't exist, you'd carry on as usual, skipping through life while making the break worse.

Anxiety is there for a reason

When times are challenging, and anxiety kicks in, that emotional 'pain' is also there for a reason. If managed correctly, it can heighten your senses and widen your perspective, enabling you to be more open to potential solutions and opportunities in the world around you.

Psychologist Dr James Davies (PhD) calls this 'productive suffering' – you have to pass through a period of pain and discomfort to get stronger on the other side.

Give it time

Unfortunately, life has a habit of getting in the way. Sometimes it is not conducive to processing that discomfort when there are so many other pulls on your time and strength. This is, in very simple terms, why we have such a massive mental health epidemic. We block the pain, not giving it the time and space to resolve itself.

Of course, the flip side to that is to wallow in the negativity, burying your head in the sand as acknowledgement of what is going on in the outside world is just too painful to contemplate. This not only heightens your anxiety, it can place you firmly into the fight or flight mode, where cortisol and adrenalin flood your body in a permanent state of alertness, causing you to zone in to a narrow perspective which can get you trapped.

Balance

So how do you find that healthy balance where you can acknowledge the depressing nature of the current situation without succumbing to its all-consuming tentacles?

Staying Sane in and Insane World

Staying Sane in and Insane World – 10 Steps Towards Gentler Living is a book that I wrote some years ago. The ten premises still remain the same. I've decided to reignite them here, as even the most resilient of us can inadvertently start wandering along a damaging path if we don't check in on ourselves regularly. These ten premises are: Read a book. Turn off the news. Be ruthless in the company you keep. Stop hanging on to your past. Don't turn bad habits into addictions. Make your imagination work in your favour. Decide how you want your day to be the moment you wake up. Maintain perspective. Switch off social media. Smell the roses – literally as well as metaphorically.

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You can find a copy of the book on Amazon either as a free Kindle download or as a tangible book with pages and everything. I still like a book I can feel, smell, fold the corners down.

I'd love to know what you think. [f](#)

