

FROM ANXIOUS TO

AWESOME

**6 PROVEN TOOLS FOR ELIMINATING
ANXIETY WITHOUT THERAPY
OR MEDICATION**



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THE SPELLING BEE

It was just another day in elementary school, but I remember that the playground football game was particularly fun that morning. I returned from recess and took my seat in the third row of our third-grade class. My best friend sat down next to me as the bell rang, and we talked about the pass he threw to me in the end zone on the last play of the game. Our teacher, whom I will call Ms. Jones, walked to the front of the room after making sure we were all back from recess.

“It’s time for the spelling bee, kids!” she said. I had never been part of a spelling bee before, so I thought it would be fun. I was confident that my competitive nature would carry me through the first couple of rounds. Ms. Jones asked all of us to stand up. Then she gave each student a word in turn. They were easy words, and the first round was going faster than I thought it would. Finally, it was my turn.

“Spell the word *attitude*,” she said. I started, but my mind went blank. *Attitude is a hard word. Why do I get a hard word when everyone else gets*

easy words? “A-D-D-I-T-U-D-E,” I said. Immediately, the class burst into laughter, including my best friend. I was humiliated and felt an overwhelming sense of embarrassment. For the first time in my life, my face felt hot and turned red. Suddenly, I realized that I wasn’t as smart as everyone else. I didn’t fit in. This realization was a lot for me to deal with, and I never wanted to feel that way again.

The following week I went to Walmart with my mom. I saw a red folder with the word *attitude* printed on the front. I begged my mom to buy me that folder. She was confused. She had bought me a folder only a few weeks before and didn’t understand why I wanted another one. I didn’t tell her why. I just knew that I didn’t ever want to spell the word *attitude* wrong again. Ever!

When I think back to elementary school, my spelling bee experience in third grade is one of the only things I remember. I remember it because it got burned into my brain. That experience, that pain, that suffering changed the way I saw myself and my life. Our lives don’t depend on just one event that happens to us, but this event was significant. We all experience events like this in our lives. Some of these events in the past, though we may not realize it, are connected to the anxiety we experience in the present. Our fear, our embarrassment, and our nervousness are all connected to things we have experienced.

For me, for example, shaking someone’s hand made me super nervous. I didn’t know what to do or say after the handshake. Instead of smiling or just saying, “Nice to me you,” I would overanalyze the situation. My behavior was coming from a place of worry. I had unintentionally conditioned my brain to respond that way. Twenty years later, I discovered that it had all started in grade school. Eventually, my brain started figuring it out. I thought, *There’s this one thing that’s really dangerous and really scary, and it’s not a good idea to do it. That one thing is to talk in front of people. Public speaking and being in the spotlight are dangerous. People are going to laugh at you.*

I had more related experiences throughout high school and into adulthood. Eventually, my problem went beyond public speaking. If I said something in private that someone thought was dumb or even funny, I would feel embarrassed. So, my brain started to connect those things as well. I had 20 years of similar experiences that piled up. I was convinced

that those connections and feelings of anxiety were just part of who I was and who I was meant to be. I accepted it and at times wore it as a badge of pride. I saw other people who were outgoing, loved to talk to people, and weren't scared to meet new people or ask women on dates. I thought, *But that's just not me because being outgoing is scary.*

What I didn't realize is that I had built that paradigm. I had personally constructed that personality for myself, and my breathing, my physiology, my posture, my eye movement, and my brain chemistry all supported what I had built.

With that personal story in mind, I am now going to give you the secret to eliminating anxiety. This secret is the first of six tools. Tools 2 through 6 are worthless without Tool 1. This first tool is the big one, the granddaddy of them all! It's the one that makes eliminating anxiety possible. It's the secret to succeeding in making other life changes as well. I know because I have used it to make incredibly empowering and impactful changes in my life. I always start with it.

TOOL 1: THE SECRET

The secret to getting rid of all your anxious baggage is beliefs. Now, I know that sounds simple. Like, okay, if I just believe it's going to happen, it's going to happen, right? It sounds so fluffy and good that you could parade around with it on a T-shirt or post it on Facebook, where you'd get 10,000 likes because everyone would agree with it. Believing has been the message of marketing teams since biblical times, but I'm going to show you how you build beliefs, how you've already built them, and how you can crush old beliefs and build new ones. Why don't we put that on a T-shirt? Too wordy?

Beliefs about ourselves are made up of a different things. Think of beliefs as a table. The top of the table is the belief, and the legs under the table are the evidence that supports that belief.

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