

I lived it: Anxiety

The following is an anonymous submission from a member of the YES team.

For me, anxiety is that sense of panic and dread you feel in your stomach when you are faced with, or are thinking about something that you are unsure about or don't have enough belief in yourself to do.



Driving, talking, public speaking, presentations - anything where other people can judge you, even when they most likely aren't.

It manifests as distance, finding a way to avoid situations, even if it means missing out on great opportunities.

I moved to West Yorkshire in 2018, leaving my family and my friends behind.

I wanted a change of scenery and to start adulting, but it came with a huge amount of anxiety and loneliness, stepping into the unknown and learning all the slang!

Then, the pandemic hit which didn't help. It definitely impacted me and the people around me.



I wasn't doing the things I loved anymore, I would just sit at home and worry. Even movies and TV shows weren't fun to watch anymore.

I would think long and hard before I said anything in a group conversation, but by then the topic had moved on so I wouldn't say anything at all.

I turned down a lot of invitations because I wasn't used to talking to people. I would constantly believe I was boring people and couldn't think of anything to say.

I think they assumed I didn't like them because I was turning down their offers - now I look back, I wish I'd have done more, as it actually helps to jump in and go out.

The journey from 2018 to now has been long, but worth it.

By taking little steps and going out, even if I really didn't want to, I realised that it's better to go and try than to stay at home and worry.

I know it sounds hard, and it's way easier said than done, but I think everyone has a good time when they just take the leap and go out, or just join the conversation even if it takes some time.

More and more people I speak to say they are suffering from anxiety and depression these days, and I think a lot of it is probably related to social media and the heavy expectations we put on ourselves by comparing ourselves to others.



I'd like to see more positivity in life, the workplace and on social media, and I think we can manage that.

It can be something as simple as taking the time to say good morning or just asking people how they are doing - especially people that don't often talk about that, just checking in and making sure they are being included.

Don't assume that because someone is being quiet they are miserable or not wanting to get involved. They just need a bit of encouragement and support. In time, they will come out of their shell and feel like part of the team.