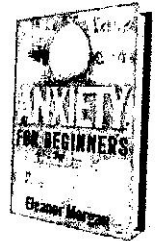


GOOD READ A LOOK AT THE BEST BOOKS ON HEALTHY LIVING

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH ANXIETY



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Anxiety for Beginners: A Personal Investigation
Author: Eleanor Morgan
Price: ₹699 (paperback)

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had been struggling to concentrate... Something weird was happening in my guts. I knew I shouldn't have had two sausage rolls... I was convinced I was about to detonate... Nothing made sense to any one of my senses. This was possession, pure and simple," writes journalist Eleanor Morgan, describing her first ever panic attack during her double biology class on Mitochondria. Morgan who has worked with The Guardian, Vogue and Vice, among others, uses her close encounters with anxiety to take a deep dive into anxiety disorders, which affects 3.6% of the world's population. The first-person narrative explains how easily

people with anxiety disorders learn to mask their symptoms just because others can't see what is going on inside their head.

Morgan's anxiety disorder took root when she was 17 years old and was operated for an infected appendix, which had made a few inches of her bowel gangrenous and caused septicaemia, a severe blood infection. She survived the illness. But, an incident was permanently etched in her memory. She had once lost control of her bowels. From then on, her life was governed by the two syllables — 'What if'. So much so that she would carefully map every travel plan and keep an eye out for toilets and exit signs wherever she went wondering 'what if' she had another episode. It took Morgan 15 years to take charge of her life, mainly because she had

trust issues with her therapist. She believed her condition could not be treated, that no one would understand her and that taking a medicine would make her a mental health statistic.

When her anxiety spiralled out of control, instead of taking medication, she was addicted to Google and online forums to research on antidepressants that could and did help with her symptoms. "The anxious mind is prone to fixate and, for me, the fixation was directed at something that could, potentially, help stop me fixating. There's a punchline in there somewhere," the author writes, adding humour to the narrative. Through the book, she discovers ways in which people with anxiety disorders can live a life that is not just manageable, but enjoyable.

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