

# HOW TO BREAK FREE FROM ANXIETY

A Transformational Guide to Wellness



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Dr Dov Phillips

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by

Dr. Dov Phillips

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To all my clients who have taken the leap of faith and placed their trust in me to help them take their lives back. I find your courage, determination and successes inspiring.

Thank you.

# Acknowledgements

Throughout life there have been many people who have positively influenced my thinking and helped me to evolve to where I am today. I want to give special mention to a few of the teachers who have helped me gain the insight I need to make the work that I do so powerful.

First, and most importantly, Donny Epstein, who has taught me so much. He has not only taught me how to see the world with a different lens but more importantly he has given me the skills that enable me to help people transform their lives. His work has helped me help thousands of people. I am truly grateful for the wisdom he has shared with the world.

I also want to thank Ken Wilber and Tony Robbins, because I have taken aspects of what they teach and incorporated it in helping my clients. These concepts are incredibly powerful; I use them often and they work – so thank you.

I also want to thank my editor, Gareth Jones, who has really helped me get this book ready and make it more reader friendly, reworking its structure and fixing hundreds of typos and grammatical errors.

I also want to thank you, the reader, and wish you luck on your journey in overcoming your anxiety.

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# INTRODUCTION

*You cannot open a book without learning something.*

Confucius

It's no surprise that, like many great discoveries, it took that unique combination of time and circumstance – by accident, you could say – for me to become *really* proficient at helping people deal with their anxiety.

As I worked more and more with clients who were referred to me by their friends or colleagues (and occasionally by their psychologist, therapist, yoga teacher or even breathing teacher!), I began to see a common thread running through their individual needs: the desire to relieve their anxiety with a drug-free and holistic approach.

Quite quickly, the majority of people coming through my door were there for the exact same reasons – and they all appeared to find my methods extremely enjoyable and, ultimately, successful where other doctors, medication, healers and techniques had previously failed.

In fact, some had been told by their health practitioners and psychologists that they were just going to have to *learn to live with it*. When word got out locally about the results of my particular treatment, things inevitably started to snowball.

But let's take a step backwards, shall we? After all, you're probably wondering just who I am. You'd be forgiven for picking up this book

and being shocked, at first glance, to see that the author (me) is not a registered psychologist, medical doctor, psychiatrist nor therapist.

I have no PhD, either...so why should you listen to me? How is my background at all relevant when it comes to helping you achieve the breakthroughs that you're looking for?

Before I share the story of my personal and professional experiences and successes helping people deal with anxiety, I'd actually like to assure you of just why I believe it's a big advantage that I *haven't* been formally trained in conventional methods of anxiety treatment.

The main reason is **preconceived notions**.

You see, true breakthroughs don't happen just by following what you're taught is "right". Preconceived notions often come saddled with assumptions; assumptions and theories mistaken as fact. With a mind completely free of this, I was able to come to my own studied conclusions based upon personal observation and repeated, real-world results – and not just based on what I'd been told throughout a "textbook" education, which probably would have put my "blinkers" on.

For my undergraduate degree, I majored in Pharmacology (the study of drugs and how they work). Back in my first Pharmacology 201 lecture we learnt that *all drugs are poisons, but not all poisons are drugs*. This almost instantly shifted my thinking – I'd always believed that medically-approved drugs were safe!

What I learnt is that each of these drugs was actually toxic. You see, when we take them, our bodies then have to go through an elaborate elimination process to get rid of this poison – to clear it out of the body

due to the more harmful components of the drug. I also learnt (and this also surprised me) that each of these drugs came with side effects.

I discovered that just because a drug was given by a medical doctor it did not make it safe at all.

Now what I found very interesting is that every drug headed to market goes through an approval process including clinical trials where their effectiveness is measured against a placebo. What stood out most to me was the fact that in almost every study, no matter what the (ineffective) placebo pill was being used for, it always managed to get positive results in quite a large number of participants.

But this doesn't only extend to drugs, either. Take, for example, the astonishing 2002 study by Moseley et al. entitled *A Controlled Trial of Arthroscopic Surgery for Osteoarthritis of the Knee*<sup>1</sup>.

Here, the team behind the study performed a double-blind controlled trial for knee surgery – meaning the people having the surgery had no idea if they were getting the *actual* surgery or not. There were 180 participants divided into two groups, real and sham.

One group of participants had the proper surgery while the other group had a placebo or sham procedure. For the latter group, the surgeons gave them anaesthetic, then made three 1cm incisions in the subjects' knees, asked for all instruments and then manipulated the knee as if arthroscopy were being performed. The subject was also watching the operation on a monitor, except what they were really watching was a pre-recorded video of the real surgery.

A fake procedure had been performed and yet the subjects still reported

a beneficial experience afterwards. In fact, it was recorded to be just as effective. To quote the study: *“In this controlled trial involving patients with osteoarthritis of the knee, the outcomes after arthroscopic lavage or arthroscopic débridement were no better than those after a placebo procedure.”*

What was amazing to me is that there was no benefit in the actual surgery or the expensive operation. But every day people are having this very same procedure. This study has given us a great insight into this condition but the specialists who are still performing this operation are somehow ignoring this. The public have no idea, and thousands of these operations are happening every day all around the world.

So why are people putting themselves under the knife? Most likely because they are being told to by an expert and not being made aware of what else is going on. They are not being told the full story.

After my first degree was completed, I went on to study Chiropractic (quite a contrast from my previous direction, given that it's the largest drug-free health care profession in the world!). Much of what I do today is based on those same chiropractic principles, but it's probably nothing like you'd think.

Generally, when people think of chiropractic care, they think of back pain and spinal manipulation – but few know that it's actually based on a vitalistic philosophy, taking into account body, mind and spirit at the same time.

The body itself contains its own wisdom for healing: cut yourself, and your body will gradually heal, break a bone and it will repair itself.

Chiropractic respects the body and mind, seeing each individual as a powerful person with the innate ability to heal.

There are actually chiropractors out there who never use any manipulation techniques – in its purest form chiropractic has little focus on the musculoskeletal system, turning its attentions instead to the nervous system as the master controller of all other functions of the body.

During my studies I came across a rather inspiring technique called Network Spinal Analysis (NSA), which transformed the way I look at the body's role in general health and wellbeing. NSA is taught only to chiropractors, and can be used as a specific chiropractic technique but it can also be used as the focal point where personal transformation meets health and wellbeing.

As soon as I graduated from chiropractic college I started my own practice, using these techniques to help others transform their lives. It's never been a traditional chiropractic clinic – not a single vertebrae has ever been manipulated – and I generally don't reveal my background in advance, because a closed mind can often shove you in a box and as soon as a preconceived notion of treatment is planted, it can be hard for some people to shift their thinking and remain open to the possibility of change. I also don't practice NSA with the chiropractic objective and I have evolved since then.

The reason I tell you this is because it is such an important, integral part of the development of the treatments that I use today. Please keep in mind that NSA is only one aspect of the work I do, integrated into a

framework called *Reorganizational Healing*.

I actually started focusing my efforts on treating anxiety in a roundabout way. Most of my clients would come into the clinic looking for help with musculoskeletal problems (which made sense given my background), but what started happening was that these same clients would come back and tell me that not only had their back pain vanished, but their persistent anxiety had too.

They revealed to me that they'd suffered with it for years, tried many different treatments including psychologists, drugs and so on, but it was only through working with me that they had finally been freed from it.

I began to get referrals from these clients – this time, coming in with anxiety as the primary problem. In the beginning I wasn't often sure whether I could really help them or not, but offered to work on calming their nervous system as I had done for others. Over time the results were speaking for themselves.

I never really thought about this too much. I just knew that the work I was doing was effective, and so I carried on. A few years later I was working on my website and had to figure out who would be searching for me for help, so I wrote out a list of all of the amazing changes that my clients and I had witnessed.

People who had suffered from a lifetime of debilitating migraines...

People who had been plagued with depression for most of their lives...

People whose back and neck pain was a daily misery...

People who felt trapped in adrenal or chronic fatigue, feeling empty or

drained all the time...

And people whose unrelenting anxiety had been holding them back every day...

All experiencing a remarkable kind of relief that they never, ever thought they would feel.

I started advertising to them and realised over time that the most fun clients to work with were those with anxiety – and it was also the group that had the greatest amount of need due to the lack of good alternatives out there. I started focusing on anxiety more and more, and the more I researched, the more I saw a greater need for what I was doing.

Saying all this, I'm smart enough to know that I can't help everyone in every circumstance and sometimes I do need to refer clients back to doctors, psychologists or people who have trained in a different way – but this is very rare.

This is because some sufferers of anxiety are experiencing it due to medical or pathological problems that produce anxiety as a symptom. Never feel ashamed or embarrassed to see your doctor if you think the cause could be something serious. Take the appropriate advice, and even if you find out that there is nothing going on medically, you can start to focus your attention and act accordingly towards resolving your anxiety with the correct knowledge behind you, comforting you.

With this in mind, it's only right to say that this book does carry with it its own limitations. I know it will help almost everyone who picks it up, but it won't necessarily act as be-all and end-all on its own.

This book will help you learn the mindset that you need to develop to overcome your anxiety – and for many, that will be enough. For others, more help could be needed – but after reading this, you’ll know what to do and where to go so you can make your anxiety-free goals a complete reality.

I have taken some of the most commonly helpful ideas and conversations that I have had with my clients – ideas and topics that have been responsible for helping them make these huge changes in their lives – and brought them together for you so that you, too, can benefit. Even if you don’t do anything else but really work on the mindset this book will help you develop, your life will improve.

That’s my guarantee to you.

See this book as a vital part of taking your life to the next level. It may drive a big enough change that it will completely resolve your anxiety – but if not it will at the very least be an incredibly important step towards breaking free.

Now let’s get your transformation started.

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## 1 A Controlled Trial of Arthroscopic Surgery for Osteoarthritis of the Knee

J. Bruce Moseley, M.D., Kimberly O’Malley, Ph.D., Nancy J. Petersen, Ph.D., Terri J. Menke, Ph.D., Baruch A. Brody, Ph.D., David H. Kuykendall, Ph.D., John C. Hollingsworth, Dr.P.H., Carol M. Ashton, M.D., M.P.H., and Nelda P. Wray, M.D., M.P.H.

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# WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS BOOK

*“It all depends on how we look at things, and not how they are in themselves.”*

Carl Jung

With this book, you are promised not only insight, but a whole new way of looking at anxiety.

This alone is so powerful because how you look at something can completely change your own experience of it – of what it means to you, what it represents, and ultimately, how you feel.

To illustrate this, I’d like to tell you the story of one of my clients, Anne.

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NOTE: Throughout this book, I’ll tell you lots of stories about my clients and personal experiences – some of which may seem a little off-topic. Bear with me, because ultimately they are extremely relevant (or they wouldn’t be here). every story is aimed at making you think about it, to have it sink in and for the metaphors to act as the powerful agent of inner change. the names have all been changed for confidentiality reasons and sometimes I have even merged a few different clients stories together as one, the reason being to help you better understand the content so you can make the shift.

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Anne's anxiety was triggered from a collection of different factors that all came together to impact massively on her. Little things all adding up as they so often do. Life just didn't seem to be working out. She felt overwhelmed, stuck in the wrong country, going nowhere and with no-one to turn to for help.

She knew she had to leave and go back to her home town, back to her family. Her husband, however, wanted to stay – at least for a few more years. Her eldest daughter didn't want to leave school, preferring to stay until her studies were finished rather than interrupt her learning with upheaval.

When you're stuck in a situation like this – your heart being pulled in multiple directions – it can be incredibly painful. The sense of pressure, of confusion and even guilt can quickly leave you feeling stuck – powerless and suffering.

For many people under this kind of constant stress, anxiety arises. Especially with the busyness of modern life still looming over everything; a pile of jobs that need to be done, with the time to do them rapidly vanishing. Daily life becomes overwhelming and anxiety can become a constant state, just as it did for Anne.

Anne finally made the decision to go back home and trust that her daughter would be fine, and that the trip might be great for her partner and her. She knew she needed to do it.

Once she made this decision she told me that she was feeling overwhelmed with all the packing and jobs that needed to be done. I asked her why she was going. Her immediate answer was “because I feel

homesick and by not going I feel like I am NOT being true to myself". She had been painfully stuck for so long and was now doing something to get rid of this stuck feeling. But here her motivation was to move away from the pain (feeling stuck) – which meant she was focusing on her pain and in doing so, increasing it. To add to this, she had all these extra jobs she HAD to do.

And right at the point of overwhelm, she would shift her focus and think that maybe her decision was wrong, that maybe she was a coward for leaving, and who was she as a mum for leaving her daughter and who was she as a wife for leaving her husband behind for a few years.

So we explored and uncovered a few gems.

I wanted to find out what was happening on a deeper level, so we got to digging. Anne soon came to the realisation that by going home she was actually being courageous. She was listening to her heart, not fighting it. She was willing to do what was hard, what would be judged by others.

She was being both courageous and expressing willpower – two amazing qualities to display.

She knew that this move would allow her to flourish. Now everything began to fall into place – the big list of jobs she HAD to do instantly shifted: now she was doing what she WANTED to do and preparing for herself and her life to thrive.

The jobs became an exciting next step because they were signs of her evolution, her progress towards living the life she really wanted. Having come to this realization, she walked out in a happy state...much more calm and with an open willingness to do what needed to be done.

I spoke to her daughter a year later (she and her sister had come in for a few sessions with their mum during that stressful time, because it was having an impact on the whole family). She told me that her mum being away for one year was a really positive thing for everyone. Everyone had grown, everyone was happier and the family bonds were actually stronger now.

This book will teach you how to shift your thinking just like Anne did. How to see things in a way that will work for you and make your life better every single day.

Sometimes it's a small shift with one thing you need to address and sometimes it's multiple ideas, concepts, thoughts, stories and perceptions that all add up to a greater effect. This book will give you the skills to become aware of what needs to be focused on and how to do just that.

But more importantly it will also give you a new way of looking at anxiety itself. A deeper knowledge and different perception that gives you the power to take different actions and overcome that trap. This book will help you to discover the gift at the core of the cause of your anxiety, and help you transform the coal into a diamond.

With the stresses of today's world bearing down on us, anxiety is on the rise. Having clients turn to me after the disastrous effects of being told by a person in a position of authority that they will suffer anxiety for the rest of their lives has shown me that many so-called healers out there are either not doing a good job, or are actually being destructive.

Of course, this isn't their intention...but it shows why there is such a

great need for this book.

So you can expect to turn to it anytime, anywhere for the practical support that you need.

And you can expect to never be abandoned...and never asked to *just live* with your anxiety.