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Developing a powerful mindset

Graham Price

Universities of Sheffield, United Kingdom

Since becoming a psychologist, I've taught thousands of clients how to deal with anxiety and other uncomfortable feelings. The difference, by the way, between a thought and a feeling is that thoughts only happen in the mind, while feelings also reflect themselves in the body. So anxiety, feeling cold, anger and compulsions are all feelings. I give my clients 3 questions to enable them to accept any feeling. First: Is it harming me? Answer: Nobody's ever been harmed by a feeling. For example, the source of feeling cold is being cold. Being cold can kill us, but the feeling is just a messaging system that goes up some nerves, and along some neurons to let the brain know the body is cold. Feeling cold is what we experience and is totally harmless. Second question Can I bear it? Answer: Every feeling, other than extreme pain, is bearable. The third question is a conclusion. So if the feeling is harmless and bearable, what exactly is the problem with experiencing it. There isn't one. So hopefully we're now willing to accept it. Where appropriate, I then get them to do the opposite of whatever the feeling is telling them to do. Anxiety, for instance, may be telling us to avoid something. Doing what a feeling is telling us to do always re-inforces the unconscious belief driving the feeling, whereas doing the opposite unwinds it. So, for example, someone with a dog phobia has created it by repeatedly avoiding dogs. Someone with OCD has created it by repeatedly doing what their compulsion is telling them to do, re-inforcing that compulsion. To cure the dog phobia, they need to accept the anxiety and walk past dogs. To cure OCD, they need to accept the compulsion and withhold the action. Accepting the anxiety or compulsion not only makes it easier to behave in the opposite way, it also contributes directly to unwinding the unconscious belief driving the anxiety or compulsion.

Biography

Graham Price is working in Universities of Sheffield, United Kingdom.

grahamprice@abicord.com

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