



AnxietyLab.org

3-4-5 Program Course

Muscle-Building Activity #1: Discomfort

It is now very common to suffer with anxiety problems. Whatever the severity or cause of your anxiety, it may help to practice certain things to build up your tolerance to mild negative feelings (which are inevitable in life). Many tasks are anxiety-inducing because we've lapsed into bad thinking habits. Perhaps our thinking is now leading us to believe that being uncomfortable for even a second is a real threat. Of course it is not, so learning to tolerate being uncomfortable could really help ease anxiety.

Exercise:

Practice being uncomfortable or anxious for a while. Know that being uncomfortable for a while will not kill you or hurt you in any way. Choose a mild activity that you know makes you uncomfortable or anxious and practice it. Do it mindfully for a few minutes at first then a little longer to build your tolerance (muscle).

Examples of common anxiety-inducing tasks that each person **MUST** be able to tolerate if they want to stay healthy and positive:

1. stand in a long line and patiently wait for your turn
2. look a stranger in the eye when ordering food or passing in a hallway
3. watch a show you don't like if your friend wants to see it
4. listen to music you don't like and try to find something good about it
5. force yourself to be on time to an appointment if you are a person who's late a lot
6. volunteer for a duty or task that you usually don't do because you don't like it
7. (After COVID) stand just a little closer to a stranger in a line or in an elevator. (They won't bite.)