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5 Things I Wish People Knew About My Anxiety (A Kid's Perspective)

by Renee Jain



If you're my family or friend, I know the way I worry all the time can be frustrating and exhausting. I want you to know, I feel the same. One of the worst things about my worry is how hard it is for me to talk about in the moment. Or after the moment. Or, really, just ever. I don't like to feel different or broken. Nobody does. More than anything, I wish I didn't feel so anxious, but I also wish that others had a better understanding of what I felt. If you love me and want to help me, there are a some things I need you to know.

1. I worry about being worried.

One of my biggest worries is that I worry too much. Sometimes people call me "a little worrier" or "worry wart" and I know they're not trying to be mean, but it hurts mostly because I think it's true. Sometimes I'm worried that no one will ever understand what I'm going through or that I'll ever belong. It's especially bad when I'm tired or frustrated. I worry. Then I worry about my worry.

2. Telling me to 'relax' isn't really relaxing.

I know I need to learn how to relax or calm down when I get really anxious. But hearing people say, "Just relax," or that "It's no big deal" reminds me that I'm not doing things right. There's a lot going on in my brain all the time: once I went to the fair and saw one of those people that spin lots of plates on poles... it feels like that. Relaxing is actually really hard for me. I know you're not trying to do this, but to hear you make relaxing sound so simple actually makes me feel worse. When my emotions take over, there's nothing else. All I can see are those big, overwhelming feelings. All I can see are the plates.

3. I like to know a lot about the things I don't know a lot about.

Not knowing what comes next is one of things that makes me worry the most. This is why I ask so many questions about things that are going to happen at school, parties, and when I meet new people. I like to know as much as possible ahead of time so I can think about how I'm going to act or what I'm going to do. Sometimes I even ask really off-the-wall questions that'll probably never happen, but it's my way of dealing with being nervous. Please be patient with me. It means a lot when you listen and respond without getting really frustrated.

4. Sometimes I forget how awesome I am.

When I feel calm, I know I'm a good person. I know I have strengths and talents and abilities. But sometimes worry takes over my life to the point that it's all I can see in myself. I only see my fear, how I'm different, and worst of all, I feel that others can only see those painful things, too. I forget that I'm capable. I forget that I'm loved. Sometimes I need to be reminded that I'm brave, awesome, and unique. I know I need to remind myself too. I know, which brings me to my last point.

5. I'm trying.

I really am. I'm not trying to play you. I don't like the attention I get from my anxiety. I want to learn to control my worry. I'm trying all the time, and you can help. Let me rephrase that: I need your help. Encourage my baby steps and small victories. Support and love me when I fail. It helps me to keep trying when you remind me that some worry is normal, that you worry sometimes, too, and that the scary feelings will eventually pass. I trust you more than anyone in the world, and I know I can do this with you on my side.