

Book review



The Anxiety Toolkit

Strategies for fine-tuning your mind
and moving past your stuck points

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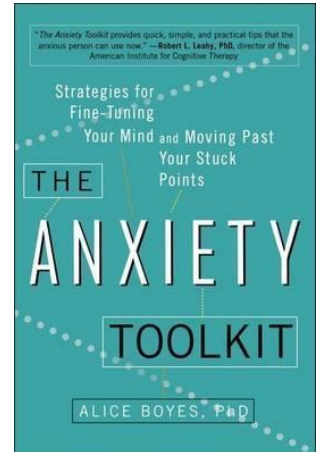
Author: Alice Boyes

Year: 2015

Publisher: Penguin Putnam, US

ISBN: 9780399169250

Audience: Supporting Myself



Summary: A useful toolkit for understanding and managing anxiety

What a great little book! I picked it up because the word toolkit indicated it might be more practical than wordy, and it is. The Anxiety Toolkit is divided into three sections – "Understanding yourself and your anxiety", "Overcoming your stuck points" and "Where to next?"

Chapters within these sections feature short questionnaires – to help you determine how a matter might apply to you –, practical steps and reinforced messages. This reinforcement is in a friendly, casual manner – not preachy. Actually none of the book is preachy, which along with its easy-to-read language and style is its best feature.

Contributing to the book's feel-good, uncritical style is that author Alice Boyes tells readers first up that she suffers from anxiety herself and uses many personal examples. I was interested to learn about my own particular anxiety issue – procrastination.

There's a chapter on that (and chapters also on letting your thoughts hold you back, paralysing perfectionism and fear of criticism) with steps to overcome it. I naturally said to myself that I'd get around to doing those steps one day. But then I was pleasantly surprised in part three to find my response acknowledged with gentle no-guilt-generating messages about how to counter it.

The author recommends this book be used as reference book, dipping into it when the tools are required. I am reluctantly returning this to the library and have already decided to buy a copy for myself.

Reviewed by Margaret Wikaire, Executive Assistant at the Mental Health Foundation

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