

**By Russell Rose. 2025**  
**No more than 500 words on Anxiety:**

In some respects we are becoming increasingly disembodied as a species, seduced away and sedated from our feelings, from the psychological body, and from the sensations of aliveness within our soma; and this is no more apparent than in the pervasive way in which we are culturally beginning to re-understand the nature of anxiety.

The experience of anxiety might be issue-specific, or a more habitual state of mind, and is essentially any feeling or set of feelings that are emotionally discomforting, characterised by perceptual and motoric indecision, and which threaten overwhelm or paralysis with a foreboding anticipation that doesn't necessarily conform accurately with realistic likelihoods, instead oftentimes fuelled by the evoked psychic residue of past experience.

Anxiety can be a rainforest of possibilities, turgid with emotions, sensations, hormones, bodymind psychological fragments and patterns, born from within, from relationality, from inter-generational storylines, and bound by a conflicted urge for expression that's in conflict with a conflicted urge for suppression. Anxiety is a gateway into a world of enshadowed self-experience and latent aliveness.

Increasingly often though I find that the first expedition into a client's anxiety doesn't get much past the jungle's outer frontier, at whose somatic border it can be seen that *anxiety* has become for many a synonym for any *feelings* that aren't pleasant or neutral; emotions and sensations in the body that are uncomfortable, unwanted; and often therefore imagined to have been imposed.

People are not so often anxious these days, but instead *have* anxiety. The descriptor has been diminished for a noun, suggesting an increasing preference for understanding anxiety as being something *other*. Anxiety is becoming as though an infection which with misfortune has been contracted, an affliction with a corresponding diminishment of personal identification and personal responsibility.

A detraction from our willingness to feel is a detraction from our capacity to live. If we won't sit with the feeling of ourselves, and instead assign outer origin, we can never be present in any given bodymind moment; and, ironically, the less present we are to our discomforting feelings the less likely they are to change.

Anxiety tends towards change when we look at and into it. Perhaps the wave of discordant sensation takes the more distinct form of identifiable feelings. Perhaps we discover that, within the feeling that we have identified, there resides layers of other feelings, memories, experiences, and psychological moments that might lead us in the direction of a deeper and more fulfilling experience. Perhaps we discover that being in the whirlpool of feelings and sensations isn't actually so bad as was instinctually feared. Perhaps we even discover that it's possible to observe our feeling-self without needing to intervene, allowing it space to spontaneously shift, change and transform; as all complex systems are inclined.

Anxiety is to be embraced, not disowned. Not seen as having been bestowed, but instead a cacophonous bubbling of feeling and animism that is rising uncomfortably towards the surface of consciousness, in the face of which it may be interesting to yield.