

Principal's Message: Assembly, Friday 25th January 2019

Anxiety vs Excitement

All of us suffer from being nervous or anxious from time to time. This is actually not a bad thing as it does improve performance. Being over anxious can paralyze us and prevent us from performing at all.

There is no doubt that there has been on the increase in levels of anxiety and we have noticed this at Bishops. A lot of it has to do with the frenetic world we live in.

Last year on the Epic I heard Mr Campbell Smith briefing the group who were about to go on the hike with him and he used the Ted talk by Simon Sinek which I think is very useful in dealing with anxiety.

How do you feel when you're anxious? Your heart races, you visualize the future, your hands get clammy and you're a little tense.

How do you feel when you're excited? Your heart races, you visualize the future, your hands get clammy and you're a little tense.

It's all the same thing, scientifically, it's the same stimuli. You're just interpreting it as either anxiety or nervousness. Both emotions suggest that some kind of uncertainty lies ahead, it's just that anxiety suggests it's something to be feared, whereas excitement suggests that the uncertain future is something to look forward to.

As part of a research study, journalists asked the same question to hundreds of Olympic athletes, "are you nervous?" with almost every athlete responding, "no I'm excited". If that was you, you'd be nervous right? It's just that they've learned to interpret that stimuli that most of us call anxiety into excitement. Of course, these athletes are slightly different, with athletes training their whole lives & millions watching, however they still face the same pressures as you and I, namely performance & uncertainty.

Having this interpretation your whole life (if you've faced anxiety) that you're feeling nervous or anxious, will take time to adjust this interpretation into excitement. You're changing the way you conceptualize the feeling. In your life, whenever you start to feel nervous or anxious, tell yourself that you're excited, say it out loud. When you're getting into a game/Epic hike or facing a test or exam, think to yourself, why am I nervous? Am I excited? Just keep telling yourself in all situations, you're not nervous, you're excited - tell yourself until it works.

In the end this will become a habit as you change your mindset and attitude to these challenges which face you. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SUTInEaQ3Q>

