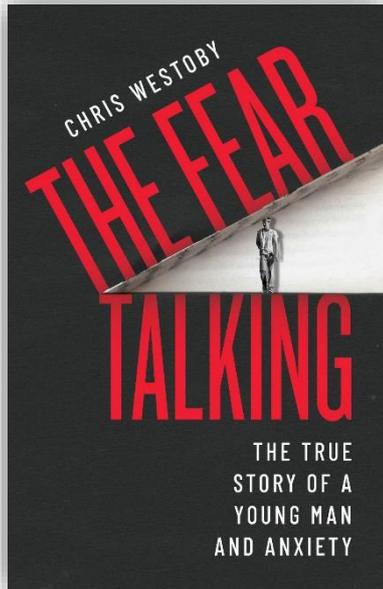




# The Fear Talking

Chris Westoby

**The true story of Chris Westoby and how he overcomes the undiagnosed generalized anxiety disorder that invades his teenage years.**



Category: Health and Personal Development / Memoir

Format: B-format

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## Key Selling Points

- The remarkable true story of Chris Westoby and how he managed to find the causes of his undiagnosed Generalized Anxiety disorder and help himself overcome it to change his life
- An honest heart-breaking account of how generalized anxiety disorder affected Chris, his family and everyone around him, yet went undiagnosed
- *"In The Fear Talking, Chris Westoby achieves the well-nigh impossible, giving us a fully immersive account of adolescent anxiety, allowing the reader to feel and experience with the narrator. If one of the main aims of the memoir form is to induce empathy in readers, Westoby's memoir succeeds brilliantly. The reader comes away with a new and profound understanding of what mental illness feels like from within."* Jonathan Taylor, author of *Take Me Home: Parkinson's, My Father, Myself*
- Will appeal to readers of Matt Haig and Philippa Perry's *The Book You Wish Your Parents Had Read*

**Description:** The Fear Talking tells the true story of Christ Westoby, who as a teenager, has a life-long anxiety condition, but he doesn't know it – no one does as he's undiagnosed. He wants to be alone, all day, forever, and swallows every aspiration that he has to complete his education, be a good boyfriend and live a life without perpetual fear. Deeply ashamed of his own thoughts, he juggles lies to friends and family to keep his anxiety secret. He seeks out secluded places in his hometown of Barton to avoid the world and find a way to get better. He begins investigating the patterns of causes and effect in his anxieties, the meanings and effects of the places that he goes to, the objects that he touches, the music that he hears and the words that he speaks. A sense of control might just be in reach, but it comes at a price that he doesn't know he's paying

**Campaign:** expect interviews with Chris on Radio and TV and reviews online and in national press.

**Author information:** Chris Westoby lives in Hull and works as a researcher in the Faculty of Health at Hull University. He has an MA and PhD in Creative Writing from the University of Hull and it was during studies there, that this honest and moving story of his undiagnosed generalized Anxiety disorder took shape

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## Praise for *The Fear Talking*

Anxiety is the most common form of mental distress and of course overlaps with normal human emotion. Yet it can be overwhelming and disabling and a gateway to other mental ill health notably depression and self-medication with alcohol and other substances. This engaging account throws a spotlight on how anxiety impacts on everyday life and relationships. – Patrick McGorry, Professor of Youth Mental Health, University of Melbourne

As a nurse of many years' experience I have heard countless stories of human distress and learned how to hold myself apart from other people's suffering. Chris Westoby's *The Fear Talking* expertly but gently slips past my professional guard to engage me in the life of a young man suffering from anxiety. The story is interesting, humorous, distressing, compassionate and intriguing, and as I read, I begin to understand the mental contortions behind the social paralysis anxiety brings, and then to discern its impact on self, family, friendships, schooling, work – the whole of life. Read this book, and you will never forget it. As a narrative it's fascinating. As the memoir of a life lived with anxiety, it's incomparable. - Peter Draper, Emeritus Professor of Nursing Education, University of Hull

Chris Westoby shows us what it is to make use of the resonant power of words to offer a portal into what it is really like. A vital touchstone for public and health professionals alike, to understand deeply, to see and to learn from first person experience. - Kathleen T. Galvin, Professor of Nursing Practice, University of Brighton

This book offers young people an insight into the range of unique ways the world can be experienced and the chance to reflect on their own struggles and know they are not alone in these. It offers health care practitioners a first-hand and powerful opportunity to understand how it feels to live with anxiety as a young person. The book has been used as a tool for those educating student practitioners in the field of mental health to support development of empathy and an enhanced emotional vocabulary. I have recommended this book to my academic colleagues, my students and my children. - Dr Judith Dyson, Reader Healthcare Research, Birmingham City University

*The Fear Talking* offers educators in the caring professions something which can generate feelings, opening up the space for students, professionals, trainees to talk about not only the lived experience of others but to engage with what they themselves feel. At once shocking and relatable, the immersive literary style coupled with the real-world experience acts as a means to foster empathy and reflection in the reader at a deeper level than traditional case studies. *The Fear Talking* offers us access to not only the story of a life marked by anxiety, although it tells that story so engagingly. It creates a feeling of anxiety in the reader, but with a sensibility of care and a common humanity. Chris Westoby cares for his readers and allows them to explore his experience and their own experience of being affected by that experience in a safe space. In doing so, he models a sensibility of care for readers to consider and discuss. My students have benefited from engaging with this work in their ability to make sense of experience and to challenge assumptions. - Dr Timothy Buescher, Programme Director for Mental Health Nursing, University of Hull