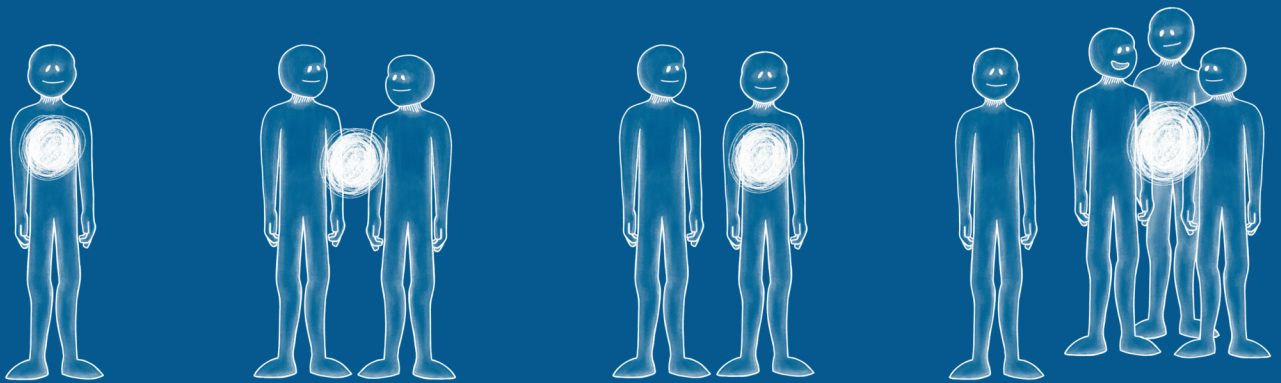


# THE FOUR SPACES OF ANXIETY



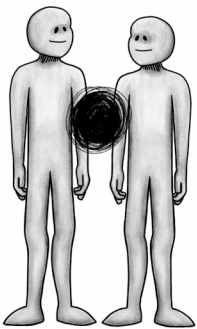
Notice the spread of anxiety,  
first in you and then in your people.



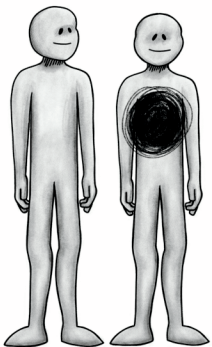
**CAPABLE LIFE**



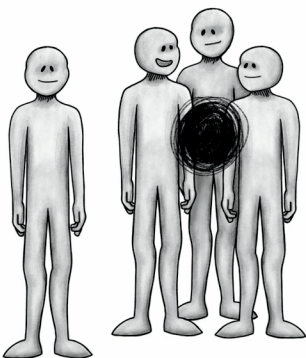
**THE SPACE INSIDE YOU.** What triggers you? What types of people irritate you? What assumptions do you have about yourself that you cannot live up to? 90% of all anxiety management is first paying attention to what is going on in you.



**THE SPACE BETWEEN YOU AND THE OTHER** is where you catch and spread anxiety, often in a conversation. Second space anxiety often turns into predictable recurring patterns. You each play a 'role' that is the same. If you've ever tried to get kids out the door for school in the morning, you've noticed predictable recurring patterns.



**THE SPACE INSIDE THE OTHER** is when your brain has crossed into someone else's brain. You are thinking about what someone else is thinking about. This is the one space that you cannot change. Only God can change a person. The difficult skill is to learn when you've crossed into third space, pause, and give that person to God. You cannot worry another person into change, and thinking about what they are thinking about cannot lead you to peace.



**THE SPACE BETWEEN OTHERS** is the space that already exists before you walk into a room OR the space that changes when another enters the room. Most of us infect every space we enter, so learning to be aware of the existing space and how a person changes it, can be powerful.

# PRACTICE NOTICING

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Noticing chronic anxiety is the simplest way of diffusing its spread. You can begin by noticing it on a television show or in your next team meeting. You can notice it in your family too, but that is harder to do. Pick a couple of events this week and walk into those events paying attention to the anxiety. Just by noticing you will be more immune to catching and spreading it.

## THIS WEEK YOU CAN NOTICE

- **Yourself.** It is tempting to focus on others, but focus on reactivity in you. 90% of anxiety management is working on yourself.
- **The Four Spaces.** Where is the anxiety? Who is the primary spreader? Who is catching it? How do I know I've caught it?

## FINALLY NOTICE GOD'S PRESENCE

Anxiety can be insidious. It makes you think it is all on your shoulders, it can numb you to God's presence.

Pause, breathe, connect to what is going on in you, name it to God, relax into God's presence.

"You can be a connected presence. Curious. Non-reactive. Keeping anxiety from spreading to others, sifting assumptions and false expectations. Connecting to self, others, and God. This is difficult and life-giving work."

-Steve Cuss