

5 Strong Solutions to Protect Your Mind

By Kenza Haddock

A recent new mental-health related TikTok trend has gained traction across the app's approximately 1.5 billion followers, claiming to "help" people overcome the pain of intrusive thoughts. The TikTok trend encourages users to give in to their intrusive thoughts, whether their own thoughts or from other people, calling the trend "Let Your Intrusive Thoughts Win."

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So, what exactly are intrusive thoughts? Intrusive thoughts are unpleasant urges, thoughts and images that come to our mind, to act on something compulsively. We all experience intrusive thoughts, but for some, these thoughts can be debilitating and disruptive.

Where do they come from? Intrusive thoughts are a direct product of what mental health professionals refer to in a group of diagnoses under the umbrella of anxiety disorders. These include obsessive compulsive disorder, panic disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or social anxiety, among several others. Each one, though they may differ in terms of symptoms, all share the common symptom of "intrusive thoughts." To clarify: Just because you experience intrusive thoughts does not automatically mean you meet the criteria for a mental health disorder.

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Over the last decade, anxiety has accounted for the majority of mental health diagnoses given by professionals on any given day, making it the No. 1 mental health epidemic of our day. It is not surprising, then, that another new social media fad involving intrusive thoughts quickly gained such popular traction.

So, if the trend aims to help people, what's the big deal? As a clinical counselor, I see red flags all over this trend. And as a pastoral counselor, I see where the enemy, disguised as an angel of light (Rev. 12:9), is using this trend to bring destruction upon its followers' lives.

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