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Women Are Using This Jewellery To Deal With Their Anxiety

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"Knowing that you have an object with you...that you can call upon whenever you need, [gives you] a small feeling of security," jewellery designer Kathy from Liverpool says. "I am quite a nervous person and shy away from busy social situations or crowded places, so [it's nice] knowing [I have} discreetly helpful pieces of jewellery to keep me grounded and give my hands an occupation."

The jewellery Kathy makes, you see, comes with a secret power; it can help people with anxious tendencies deal with uncomfortable situations.

You may not have come across "fidget jewellery" before but it's part of a growing market of "fidget" items. Think: last year's craze for fidget spinners. Think: the Kickstarter for the Fidget Cube, which aimed to raise over £11,000 and has, to date, raised £5 million.

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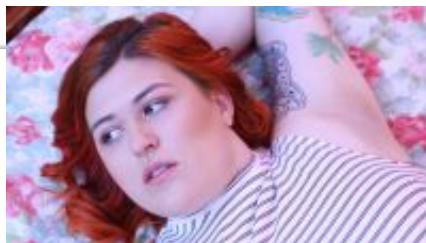
Fidget items, it would seem, are in high demand. So could fidget jewellery – jewellery that provides an outlet for restless hands – be the next big thing?

As anyone with anxiety knows, symptoms are physical and physiological as well as mental. A pumping heartbeat can accompany those feelings of dread; sweaty palms or fast breathing may be a sign of an impending panic attack. Restlessness and fidgeting can also be attributed to anxiety and depression and, with an estimated one in four Brits experiencing mental health issues, it's natural people would be interested in purchasing products that may help alleviate them.

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Fidget jewellery takes many forms: rings with beads on that can be twiddled, "spinner" rings that can be spun, pendants that can be fiddled with, twirled or even chewed on. Originally used to help with "stimming", a physical symptom of autism, there is now a growing interest from people who experience anxiety, who are keen to find out whether this jewellery can help with their symptoms, too.

There's little scientific research as yet into whether or not fidget objects actually work for anxiety. A [2006 study](#) into the use of stress balls by sixth graders (year seven) found that "attitude, attention, writing abilities, and peer interaction improved" when hands were kept busy with stress balls, suggesting that having an object to fidget with can help maintain a level of calm and focus. Just a few weeks ago, Dr Anna Lembke of Stanford University's psychology department spoke to [Vox](#) about fidget spinners, saying: "By engaging this hand motion, we reconnect with our bodies, which often has a calming phenomenon. You can achieve the same thing through exercise, right? People achieve a similar thing through meditation [where] your physical functions are redirecting your focus away from these abstract thoughts that can be so debilitating."

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"I think it's about distracting you," says Charlotte Howarth, creator of [Charlotte's Web](#), an Ibiza-based jewellery designer who sells a number of spinner rings. "It distracts you from your mind. At the end of the day, our minds are the thing that are telling us all the [intrusive thoughts] and most of the time they're not real."

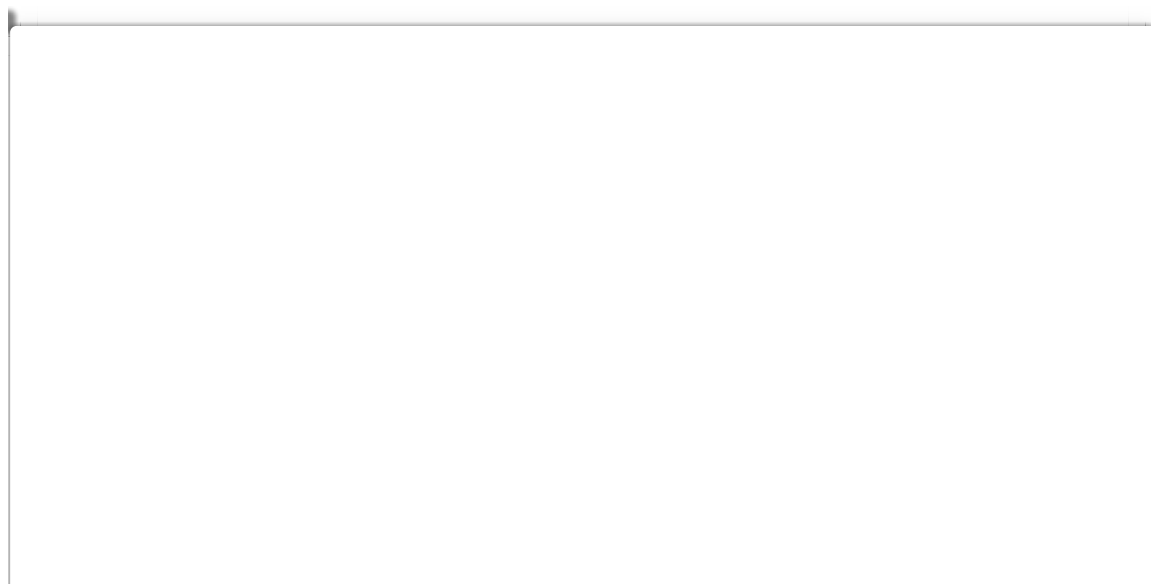
Life coach [Puja K McClymont](#), who recommends fidget objects to her clients, agrees. "From my own personal experience, I [always] used 'something' during my recovery of depression. I used various things from stones to meditation beads but when I used a piece of jewellery that I wear every day, it has helped me manage my challenges a lot better."

She continues: "For clients who come to me and discuss anxiety – which can range from overthinking through to not being able to leave the house – I recommend fidget/stim jewellery as a way to bring them back into the present."

The numerous reviews on the Etsy shop belonging to [LoveDawne](#) (one of the site's most prolific sellers of fidget jewellery) add to the anecdotal success. "It actually works so well for my anxiety," says user Shana. "The ring is delicate and subtle and the roll of the beads is super satisfying. I'd recommend this to anyone looking for something to keep their fingers busy during anxious days."

A huge appeal lies in the fact that fidget jewellery is just jewellery – something worn by everyone. For many, suffering from anxiety can mark them out as "other" or "abnormal"; the telltale actions of jiggling a foot or biting a nail might "out" them to people around them. But if that urge to fidget can be channelled into jewellery, all the better. "Anxiety can be debilitating and I think people want something that will give them even a small amount of relief," says Dawne of LoveDawne. "I think also that people are drawn to it because it's jewellery, so it doesn't scream, 'Look at me I have anxiety'."

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It's not just anxiety these rings are being used for. "I've had young teenage boys buying [the rings] because in schools they're not allowed fidget spinners anymore and it really helps aid with ADHD as well. So they can sit in the class and play with it," says Charlotte. They can apparently be useful for breaking bad habits, too. "A lot of people come to us and say, 'I stopped smoking, and this has really helped me'," she continues, while Dawne notes that she's had customers purchase her items to help stop nail-biting and skin-picking.

So is it something worth investing in? It's important to understand that it won't alleviate anyone's mental health issues overnight. For that, it's important – so important – that you get yourself to your GP or reach out to a mental health charity, like Mind. Similarly, don't expect fidget jewellery to magically stop anxious symptoms in their tracks – Kathy says that she still occasionally finds herself biting the skin around her nails when she's anxious, even when she's wearing fidget jewellery.

She says the small relief it can bring, though, is a help. "Obviously it's different for everyone, but if there is something, no matter what it is, that helps in any way, then it's worth it," she says. "If it serves as a small distraction and focuses the mind on something else, then it acts as a gentle self-soothing therapy."

Charlotte agrees: "I think now the modern world is pretty overwhelming and can get on top of

all of us at some point." If you can find something that might give you a small measure of relief, then why not?

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FIDGET JEWELLERY: CAN IT HELP YOUR ANXIETY?

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