

Just prior to asking me for help with her anxiety on the Sunday hike, Taylor had been talking excitedly about her sister's pregnancy. That's why I was able to propose this as a hypothesis, and we lucked out to come up with it so quickly. Often, it takes quite a bit of time, or even a few therapy sessions, before my patient and I suddenly figure out what the Hidden Emotion is.

Remember that only "nice" people get anxious, and Taylor is not only a superb clinician, but she's a really kind and compassionate individual as well, and she IS totally nice! Usually that's a strength, but it can also be a liability if your niceness prevents you from recognizing how you really feel.

In Taylor's case, she'd made a kind of "rational" decision not to get pregnant until her husband had finished his post-doctoral training as an emergency and intensive care physician in two years. They had discussed this months earlier, and both had come to this decision, which seemed to make good sense. So from her "nice" perspective, she felt she couldn't admit that she wanted a baby, and wanted one NOW, since she loved her husband and wanted to keep to their decision. Since her conscious mind and mouth could not say "I want to get pregnant now," her brain found another way to transmit the message that she just wasn't happy with going into private practice quite yet. Of course, Taylor and I both had to kind of "read the tea leaves," so to speak, to "get it!"

But once we stumbled onto the Hidden Emotion, it really rang her bell, so she brought it up with her husband immediately after the hike. He got excited, too, and agreed to go ahead and move ahead right away to have their first baby. Taylor's anxiety instantly disappeared. And guess what—their first wonderful boy, Ilan, arrived just nine months after that memorable Sunday hike! And now, Taylor has a wonderful family as well as a booming TEAM-CBT practice in New York city!