

WIRED TO WORRY

Guilt-Free Pleasures



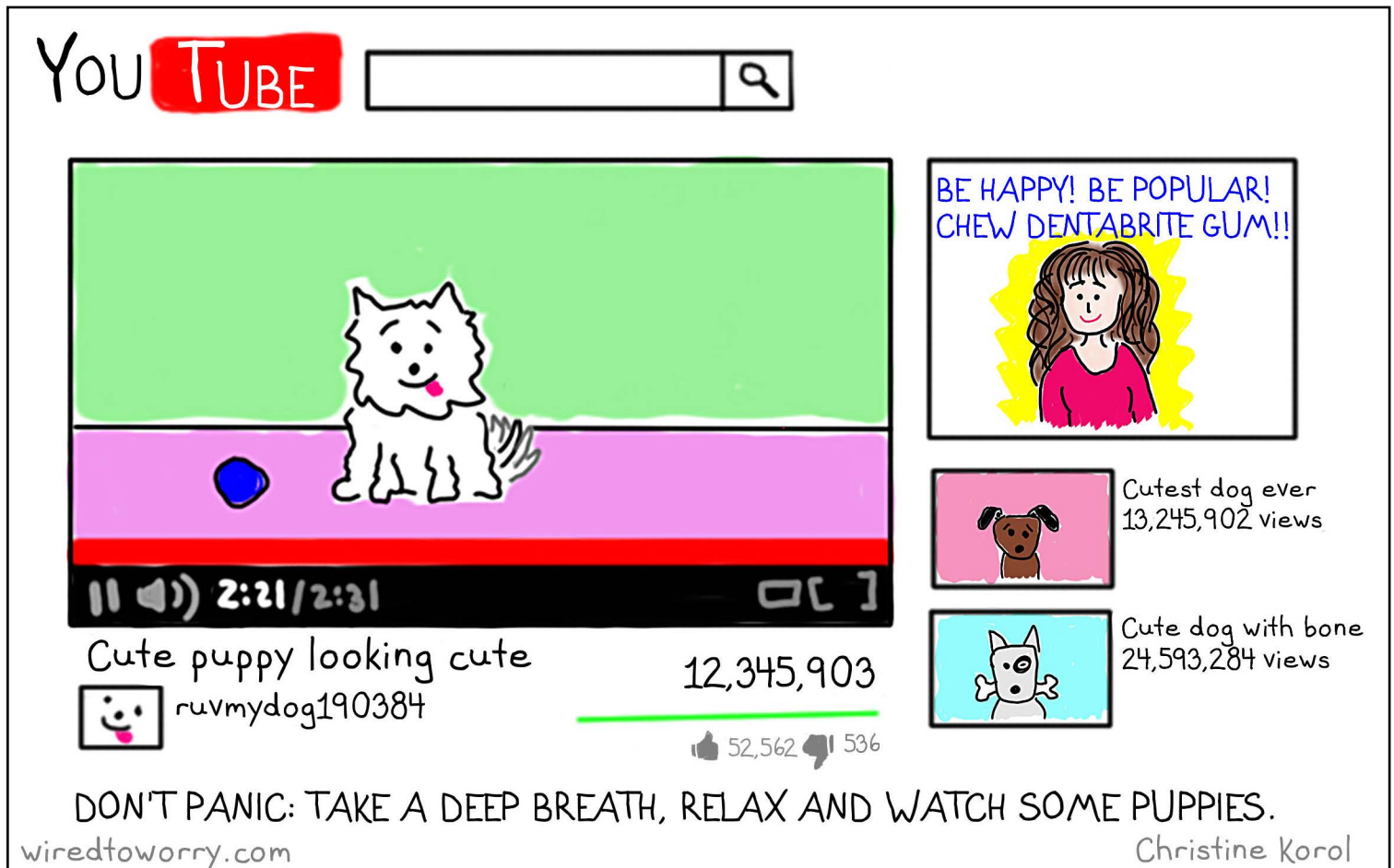
**Christine
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By the time that most people start therapy they have been struggling for some time with their concerns. Many have Googled their symptoms, read self-help books, or tried medications. Most are exhausted from working so hard on getting unstuck on their own.

In the first session, I always ask my clients what they like to do for fun. Usually, they are too busy for fun. Sometimes, with some

gentle coaxing, they timidly tell me how they spend their free time because there is so much guilt about having non-productive, mindless fun.

In recent years, I've gotten in the habit of helping people create room in their lives for the hard work of therapy, but most importantly, time for their guilty pleasures. I start by having clients review their to-do list and either eliminate or brainstorm shortcuts for the things



they hate doing. Once we have some breathing space, we add more fun into the program.

The most important thing is that the chosen activities are done without guilt! If you like dogs, watch videos of cute dogs. If you want to paint, by all means, paint. If you want to rock out to your favorite 80s hair band, I can't say that I share your

passion, but I do respect it. Please, feel free to ROCK OUT guilt free!

These pleasures make life worth living and when we indulge in them they give us the much needed energy boost that we need to face the problems that remain. Ironically, the solutions to those problems frequently pop into our heads when

we unplug from them and focus our attention elsewhere.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR:

Christine Korol, Ph.D. is a cartoonist, psychologist in private practice in Calgary, Canada and the host/producer of a podcast on WiredToWorry.com that provides free online anxiety and stress reduction education videos.