

ANXIETY

Managing and controlling our anxiety.

This interactive booklet is for children who are experiencing anxiety through this difficult uncertain times. They can work through this booklet themselves or a member of staff can sit with them and have a discussion about the various topics and gauge their understanding. There are some links to worksheets and videos included in this booklet.

There are 2 interactive booklets. One for general anxiety and the other is for health anxiety specifically.

To exit the booklet at any time just press esc on your keyboard.

We hope these booklets will be easy to understand and helpful for pupils and staff.

Thank you



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In uncertain times like these, when our way of life has been changed, there's no wonder that we all have some worries. This resource can't make the Corona Virus go away, but it can help us all to find some ways to help ourselves and others to deal with worries.

We hope you find this helpful.



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Anxiety is triggered when we think something bad might or will happen. This is actually a survival instinct and can be particularly helpful for us in real life-threatening situations.

Click the link below to watch a short video



FIGHT OR FLIGHT





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When we are anxious, it can take our attention away from everyday activities and even from important tasks.

Learning to retrain our attention is therefore an important step in overcoming your anxiety.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT ACTIVITIES THAT CAN
HELP US MANAGE OUR ANXIETY.....



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Here are some activities for you to try . Remember not every activity will work for you but give them a few tries before you make your mind up.

Click on the buttons below.

Mindfulness

Worry Time

Positive
Affirmations

STOPP!

Worry
Bucket

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MINDFULNESS

THIS APPROACH INVOLVES PRACTICING HOW TO NOTICE WHEN YOUR ATTENTION HAS WANDERED OFF, AND THEN BRINGING YOUR ATTENTION BACK TO THE PRESENT, TO THE HERE AND NOW.

Just like a puppy – our mind needs training to stop it from wandering off and sometimes it can take a lot of practice and patience.



Mindfulness is not an attempt to control your thoughts or sensations or to make them go away. It's about allowing these thoughts and sensations to be in your mind and body, but choosing to move your attention back on to your breathing.

Sit in a quiet and comfortable location and press start when you are ready.

Start

1. Observe

- ▶ Sitting down with a relaxed and alert posture
- ▶ Notice the sensation in your body
- ▶ Notice your thought, your worries and where your mind is
- ▶ Notice your feelings
- ▶ Do this without judgement, without trying to change them and without trying to make them go away
- ▶ Spend 30 seconds to 1 minute just observing what is going on for you.



Next

2. BREATHE

- ▶ Now bring your focus of awareness to your breath, focusing on the sensations of your breath as it moves back and forth in your belly.
- ▶ let all thoughts go and just focus on the movement of your breath coming in and going out slowly.
- ▶ If your mind wanders away to other thoughts, feelings and sensations – again do not try to change them or make them go away. Simply bring your focus back to the breathing.

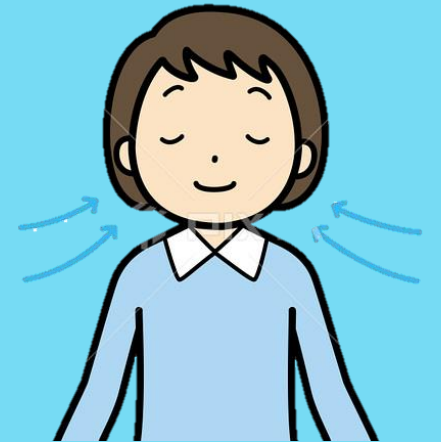
Tip: Your mind might wonder off a lot when you start practicing mindfulness but it will become easier.
Be kind to yourself



Next

3. BODY SCAN

- ▶ Now move your focus to your *whole body breathing*, being aware of sensations throughout your body. From your head to the tip of your fingers. Just notice the sensations.
- ▶ Allowing yourself to breathe with these feelings, and if your mind wanders to thoughts or worries, just acknowledge and let go of these - focusing back on sensing your whole body breathing.
- ▶ Try not to judge or give meaning to any of the body sensations you are feeling just notice them.
- ▶ Continue doing this for about 1 or 2 minutes.



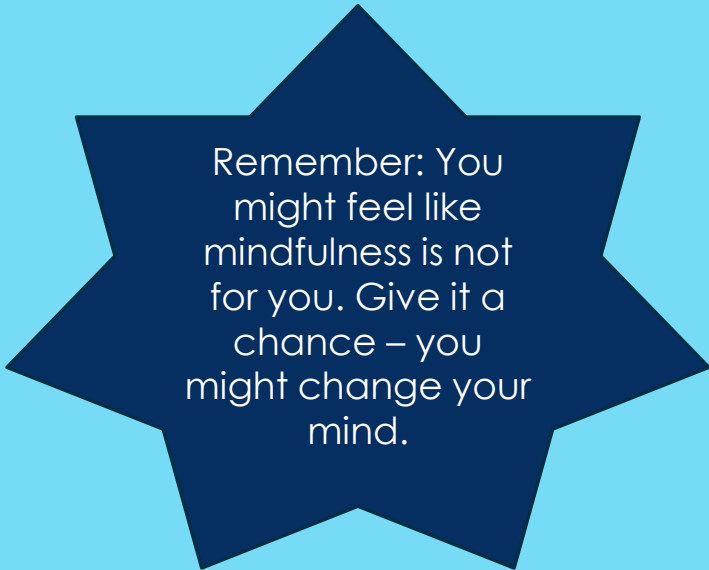
Next

WELL DONE!!

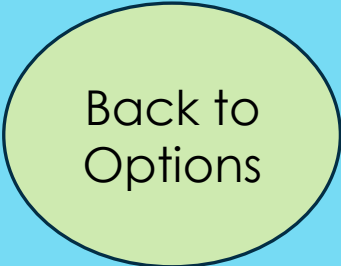
How was that for you? Take a minute to reflect on that activity.

Remember, not training the puppy will mean it will wander off more often and will be difficult to control.

The more you practice the easier it will get to focus.



Remember: You might feel like mindfulness is not for you. Give it a chance – you might change your mind.



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WORRY TIME

UNFORTUNATELY, TRYING NOT TO THINK ABOUT SOMETHING CAN HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT BY MAKING US THINK ABOUT IT EVEN MORE! FOR EXAMPLE, TRY NOT TO THINK OF A PINK ELEPHANT FOR THE NEXT FEW SECONDS AND SEE HOW WELL YOU DO.

Trying not to think or worry about something is like trying to keep a beach ball under water – it will always come back to the top.



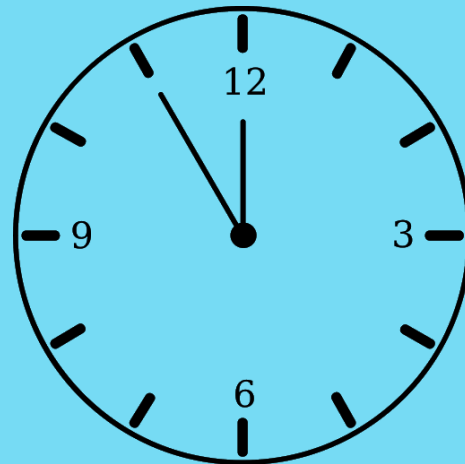
Worry time allows us to set a time in our day where we think or talk about our worries. It allows us to control when we think of our worries so it doesn't stop us from achieving day to day tasks.

Press start when you are ready to learn more about Worry Time.

Start

1. SET A WORRY TIME

- ▶ Set time, place and length of time to do all your worrying and focussing on symptoms.
- ▶ Sometimes talking about your worries can help.
- ▶ Try and keep your worry period the same everyday.
- ▶ Try not to set your worry period before bed.



Next

2. POSTPONE

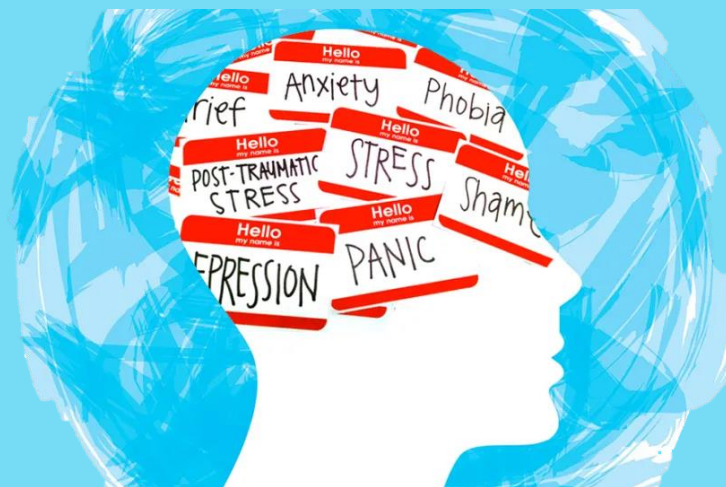
- ▶ When you notice yourself worrying or focussing on particular symptoms throughout the day, write it down in a notebook in a few words.
- ▶ Decide to think about it later and save your thoughts for your worry period.
- ▶ Use your attention skills to bring your attention back to the here and now and reassure yourself that you will deal with the worries and sensations during your worry period.



Next

3. WORRY TIME

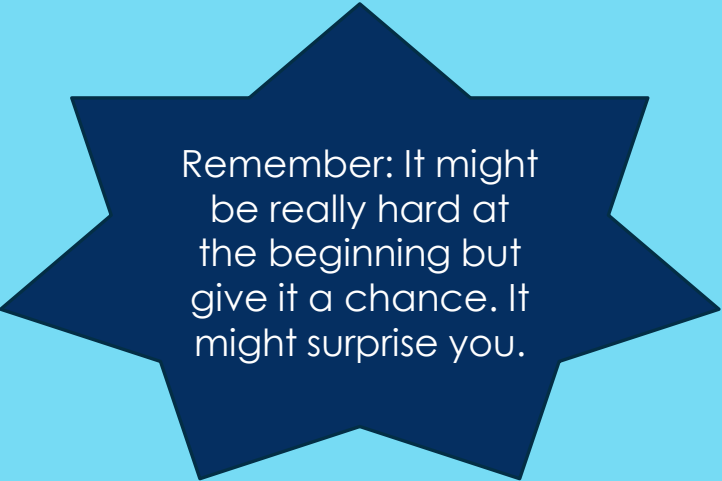
- ▶ Only think about the things you've listed.
- ▶ You don't have to worry about them if they no longer bother you, or if they no longer seem relevant to you.
- ▶ If you do need to worry, only worry for the set amount of time specified.
- ▶ If you run out of time during your worry period to cover all the things on your list, remind yourself that these items will be covered the following day during your next worry time.



Next

WELL DONE!!

- ▶ The more you practice setting time for your worries the easier it will become to control your worries.
- ▶ You might start to notice that you will need your worry time less and less as the time goes on.



Remember: It might be really hard at the beginning but give it a chance. It might surprise you.

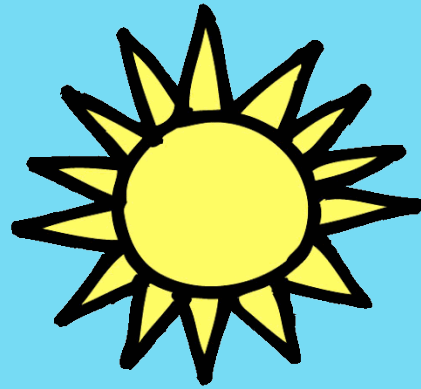


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POSITIVE AFFIRMATION

USING POSITIVE STATEMENTS CAN HELP US DEVELOP A NEW ATTITUDE TO OURSELVES AND OUR SITUATION.

We can get into unhelpful thinking habits, and think negatively about ourselves and situations. We might not even notice it because it's become an automatic thought process.



Press start when you are ready to turn your negatives into positives.

Start

1. UNHELPFUL THINKING HABITS

- ▶ It might be hard to identify your unhelpful thinking habits but once you have you will start to notice them more and more.
- ▶ Click below to find information about different thinking habits and try to identify which ones you have.



Unhelpful Thinking Habits

Next

2. YOUR POSITIVE AFFIRMATION

- ▶ Choose a statement that means something to you
- ▶ Use a statement that starts with “I” and use the present tense. E.g. “I am strong”, “I am healthy”
- ▶ Choose something realistic even if you don’t believe it right now
- ▶ Use the statement whenever you notice that negative/unhelpful thought.



Tip: Make or print a card with your affirmation on it and carry it with you.

Next

WELL DONE!

- ▶ Repeat, repeat, repeat your affirmation every day!
- ▶ The more you correct the unhelpful thought habits the easier it will be for the positive thought pattern to become your automatic response.



Remember: You might find it hard to believe your affirmation sometimes but that doesn't mean you should stop thinking it!

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STOPP

Emotional tool for when your emotions become difficult to control within stressful situations.

S - Stop
T - Take a Breath
O - Observe
P - Pull Back
P - Practice What Works



Press start when you are ready to
STOPP

Start

1. STOP

- ▶ As soon as you notice your mind and/or your body is reacting to a trigger. Tell yourself to Stop.
- ▶ Stop! helps to put in the space between whatever we are reacting to and our response.



Tip: The earlier
you use STOP
the more
effective it will
be.

Next

2. TAKE A BREATH

- ▶ Breathing a little deeper and slower will calm down and reduce the physical reaction of emotion/adrenaline.
- ▶ In through the nose, out through our mouth.
- ▶ Focusing on our breathing means we are not so focused on the negative thoughts and feelings, so that our minds can start to clear.



Next

3. OBSERVE

- ▶ Start to notice the thoughts going through your mind, notice what you feel in our body, and the urge to react in an impulsive way.
- ▶ What thoughts are going through your mind? What are you reacting to? What sensations do you notice in your body?
- ▶ Noticing helps us to reduce the power and control of our thoughts and the body's reaction.



Next

3. PULL BACK

- ▶ Take the Helicopter view.
- ▶ When we step back emotionally from a situation, and start to see the bigger picture, it reduces those distressing beliefs. We can do this by asking ourselves questions.
- ▶ What is another way of looking at this situation? What advice would I give a friend? What would a trusted friend say to me right now? Is this thought a **fact or opinion**? What is a more reasonable explanation?

Tip: Don't
believe
everything
you think!!



Next

4. PRACTICE WHAT WORKS

- ▶ Rather than reacting suddenly with unhelpful consequences, we can CHOOSE our more helpful and positive response.
- ▶ We can shift our focus of attention to a more helpful and positive thought.
- ▶ Ask yourself questions like; What is the best thing to do right now? What is the most helpful thing for me, for others, for the situation? Where can I focus my attention right now?
- ▶ Do what will be effective and appropriate.

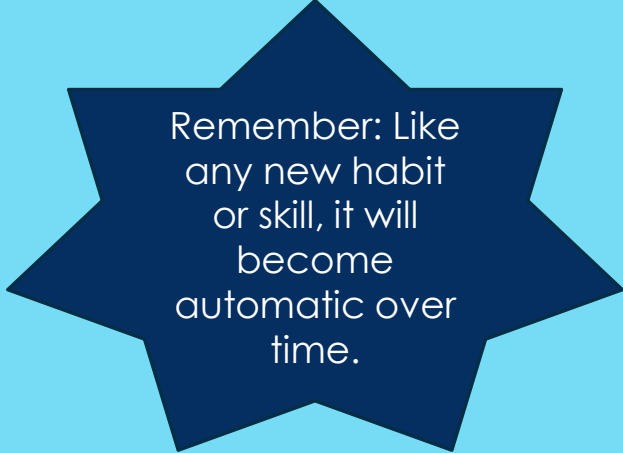


Tip: Don't
believe
everything
you think!!

Next

WELL DONE!

- ▶ Practise STOPP by running through all the steps several times a day, every day...when you don't need it.
- ▶ Start to use it for little upsets.
- ▶ Gradually, you will find that you can use it for more distressing situations.



Remember: Like any new habit or skill, it will become automatic over time.

For handouts, videos and more information about STOPP click the button below



More about STOPP



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WORRY BUCKET

Anxiety can be visualised like a bucket of water. Everybody's level is different.

Everyday events can make us feel stressed,. When we already feel stressed (high water level) it does not take much to trigger off the Anxiety Response (overspill).

Imagine a bucket which slowly fills up with water when you experience different types of stress. Sometimes you feel strong enough to carry a lot of stress, but it's important to find activities which help you open the tap to let some water out.

Press start to start emptying
your bucket.

Start

1. OPENING THE TAP

- ▶ When we focus on the negative thoughts and worries we are having – we are actually adding more things to our bucket and therefore making it more likely to overflow.
- ▶ **The key to good mental health is to engage with things which help to empty the bucket.**



Remember:
Everyone's
level of
stresses are
different.

Next

2. DISTRACTION

- ▶ Doing what we love most is a good way to let some water out.
- ▶ Think of your hobbies, things that make you happy/relaxed/energised.
- ▶ For example - Relaxation techniques, spending time with friends, talking to someone we trust, watching your favourite program, listening to music, taking your dog for a walk, exercise etc.

Tip: Do something that keeps your mind busy.



Next

2. IMAGINE

- ▶ The mind doesn't know the difference between real life and imagination.
- ▶ Imagining that we are doing something we enjoy or that we are somewhere where we feel safe and relaxed can help us reduce the stress and worries.
- ▶ In imagery, using all of your senses is what creates such a powerfully relaxing experience, and this is why it's so useful in managing stress and coping with difficult situations.

Tip: This might feel silly at the beginning but give it a chance.




Next


WELL DONE!

- ▶ Make sure you have plenty of activities that you can enjoy when you feel worried and stressed.
- ▶ Open the tap regularly before there is an overflow.

Try and complete the Worry Bucket work sheet



Remember:
Distraction can be
hard when you
have a lot of
worries. Bring your
mind back to the
activity.



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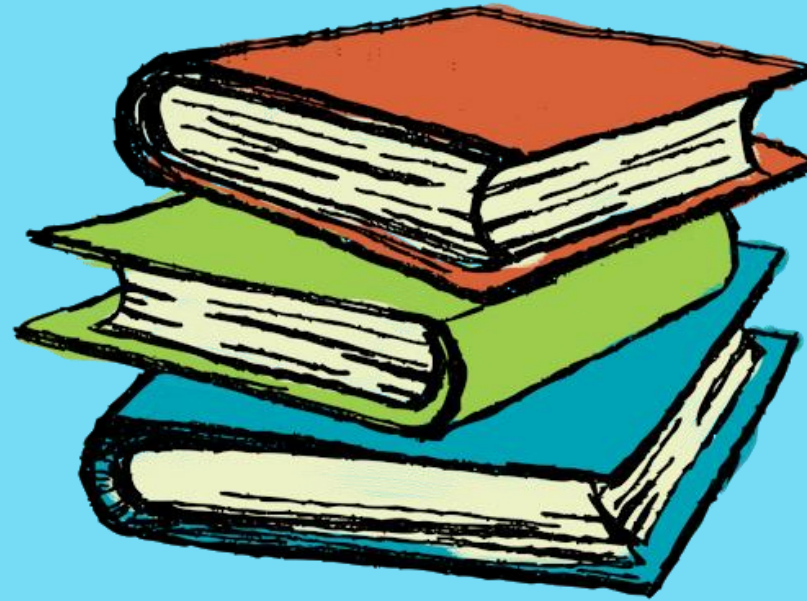
HELPFUL WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

Websites

- ▶ <https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/>
- ▶ <https://www.annafreud.org/>
- ▶ <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>
- ▶ <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- ▶ <https://meddwl.org/>

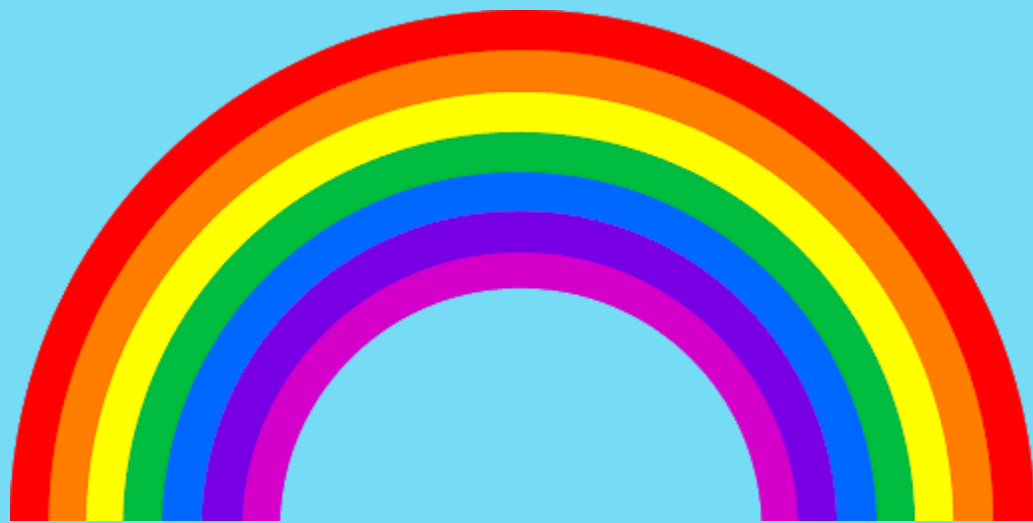
Apps

- ▶ STOPP
- ▶ Mindshift
- ▶ Happier You
- ▶ Headspace
- ▶ Smiling Mind



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TAKE CARE



Close