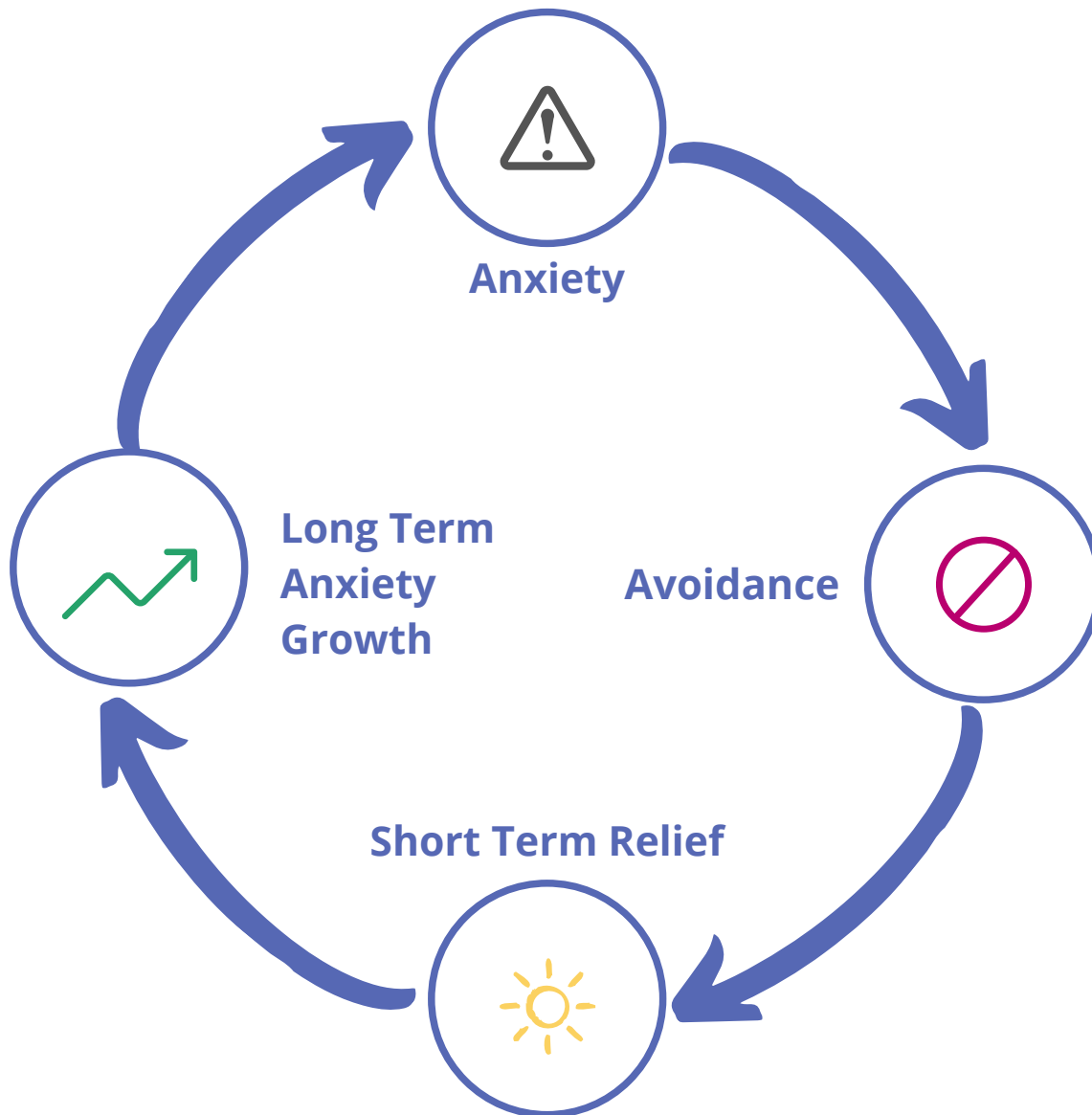


Anxiety Cycle



Anxiety

An anxiety producing situation leads to uncomfortable symptoms such as worry, fear, a racing heart, sweating, or feeling of being overwhelmed.

Avoidance

Uncomfortable symptoms are controlled by avoiding the anxiety producing situation. Examples of avoidance include:

- Skipping class to avoid a presentation
- Using drugs or alcohol to numb feelings

Short Term Relief

Avoidance of the anxiety producing situation gives an immediate sense of relief. The symptoms of anxiety lessen, but only temporarily.

Long Term Growth

The fear that initially led to avoidance worsens, and the brain learns that when the anxiety producing situation is avoided, the symptoms go away. As a result, the symptoms of anxiety will be worse the next time, and avoidance is more likely.