



# Anxiety

## MANAGE YOUR WORRIES ACTIVITY BOOK

Worksheets to help you explore  
understand and manage your worries





# ANXIETY

## More than just worrying



### What is Anxiety?

A worry is a feeling of unease, fear, or nervousness when thinking about unpleasant things. It is a type of thinking, often about something that might happen in the future, leaving you feeling frightened, nervous, or anxious. Some people call it worries, anxiety, or stress. Everybody experiences worries. However, if you are starting to feel worried more often or can't seem to stop thinking about your worry, leaving you feeling upset, you may be experiencing anxiety.

The distress from anxiety often interferes with a person's ability to lead an everyday life. For example, they often feel very nervous about the potential dangers of what could or might happen in certain situations, leaving them feeling constant worry, frozen with fear, stressed, and overwhelmed.

Anxiety disorders include specific phobias, panic, social, and generalized anxiety disorders.

## HAVING ANXIETY IS **NOT** A SIGN OF WEAKNESS

**ANXIETY IS A REAL ILLNESS THAT NEGATIVELY AFFECTS HOW YOU THINK, THE WAY YOU FEEL AND HOW YOU BEHAVE**



#### BODY

Stomachaches, cramps, constipation, fatigue, aches and pains, weakened immune system, weight fluctuations



#### THOUGHTS

Bias perception, unhelpful thinking, fearful, extreme worrying, having trouble concentrating, worrying about things in the future. "What if?"



#### BEHAVIOUR

Staying inside a lot, loss of interest in activities, withdrawal from people, feel unable to go to work, or avoid certain places.

As many as 1 in 4 people will develop **anxiety** in their lifetime



"I didn't know what was going on at first. I always felt panicky and nervous, and my heart was always racing. I often felt frozen with fear. I was ashamed to talk to someone, fearing they would not understand what I was going through."

### HAVING ANXIETY IS **NOT**

A CHOICE

AN OVERREACTION

A CHARACTER FLAW

BEING STUCK IN A RUT

## IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO START TALKING

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# THE CAUSE OF ANXIETY

Research suggests many possible causes of anxiety, including faulty mood regulation by the brain, genetics, personality type, and stressful life events.

It's believed that there is no single cause of anxiety (such as missing the happy gene), and sometimes several of these forces interact to bring on anxiety. Therefore, everyone's causes and triggers are different.



## ANXIETY IS NOT CAUSED BY

**Laziness**  
**Weakness**  
The inability to 'suck' it up

## THE ENVIRONMENT



Environmental factors include any stressful life events or situations, for example, death, trauma, or natural disasters, getting sick, abuse or even pollution.

## BRAIN CHEMISTRY



Many people need clarification about their cause. They feel they don't have "a reason" to feel that way. Some people lack substances in the brain (called neurotransmitters) could contribute to anxiety.

## PERSONALITY TYPE



Certain personality types are more at risk of developing anxiety than others, such as perfectionists, easily flustered, lack self-esteem, or want to control everything.

## THOUGHTS



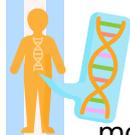
Negative thinking patterns can, over time, lead to anxiety. Experts have identified several cognitive distortion patterns that can cause anxiety.

## ACTIONS/BEHAVIOR



Preferring to be alone, withdrawing, spending too much time on social media, or playing video games. Being inactive or even having poor self care can all contribute to anxiety.

## GENETICS



Some research indicates that someone with a first-degree relative diagnosed with anxiety could be three times more likely to be diagnosed with anxiety in their lifetime compared to the general population.

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR ANXIETY



Anxiety has many possible causes. Use this worksheet to reflect on and explore the factors that may have contributed to your anxiety. You may have many for one category and none for others. There is no right or wrong answer.

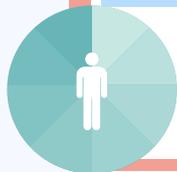
## THE ENVIRONMENT



## BRAIN CHEMISTRY



## PERSONALITY TYPE



## THOUGHTS



## ACTIONS/BEHAVIOR



## GENETICS



# THE ANXIETY ICEBERG

## WHAT YOU SEE

IRRITATED AND FIDGETY



SCATTERED



SPACED OUT

ON EDGE



NERVOUS



CRYING



NUMB



HOPELESS



CONCENTRATION DIFFICULTIES



HEADACHES



GRIEF

GUILT



RUN DOWN



RACING HEART

WORRY



INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS



## WHAT YOU DON'T SEE

SHAME



EMBARRASSED

PANIC

# THE ANXIETY ICEBERG

The iceberg theory is a model that represents the idea that, although anxiety is displayed outwardly, other emotions may be hidden beneath the surface; just like an iceberg, you can't see the full magnitude of what is hidden below the surface.

The behavior you see is "the tip of the iceberg"-- what you don't see are the emotional, social, and other factors that lie beneath the surface and cause that behavior.

WHAT YOU SEE



WHAT YOU DON'T SEE

## FILL IN YOUR OWN ICEBERG

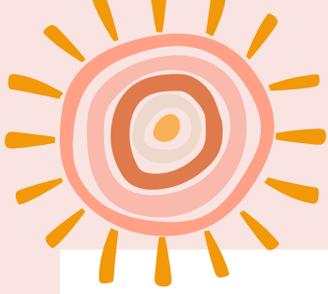
Sleepiness	Suicidal thoughts	Memory problems	Crying	Numb
Fatigued	Hopeless	Low appetite	Giving up	Grief
Low energy	Loneliness	Big appetite	Poor hygiene	Anger
Lack of concentration	Shame	Withdrawal	Low confidence	Insomnia
Self harm	Guilt	Addiction	Anxiety	Tremors

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# SYMPTOMS OF

# ANXIETY



## CHECKLIST

### PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

TICK ANY THAT YOU RELATE TO

- MUSCLE PAINS
- NAUSEOUS
- HEADACHES
- BACKACHES
- HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
- BLOATING
- STOMACH PAINS
- SICK AND RUN DOWN
- ALWAYS GETTING SICK
- WEIGHT LOSS
- CHEST PAIN

### THOUGHTS

HIGHLIGHT ANY THAT YOU RELATE TO

- "WHAT IF I CAN'T DO IT?"
- "I'M GOING TO DIE OF A HEART ATTACK."
- "PEOPLE ARE GOING TO LAUGH AT ME IF I MESS UP DURING THE PRESENTATION."
- "I'M GOING TO GO CRAZY IF I CAN'T STOP FEELING SO ANXIOUS."
- "THINGS ARE NOT GOING TO WORK OUT."

### BEHAVIOR

TICK ANY THAT YOU RELATE TO

- WITHDRAWAL
- BAD HYGIENE
- SLEEP DISTURBANCES
- CHANGES IN PERSONAL APPEARANCE
- NOT CALLING OR TEXTING PEOPLE BACK
- NOT DOING THINGS THAT YOU ONCE ENJOYED
- LACK OF EXERCISE
- MOVING MORE SLOWLY

### FEELINGS

TICK ANY THAT YOU RELATE TO

- OVERWHELMED
- HOPELESS
- EMPTY
- NUMB
- FRUSTRATED
- ANGRY
- IRRITABLE
- SADNESS
- GUILT
- GRIEF
- WORRY



# ANXIETY AND MY BODY

Our brains are wired to respond to a perceived threat, and we can't always distinguish between an actual physical danger (such as a tiger) or a threat caused by worry or fear.

The release of those chemicals is part of the sympathetic nervous system that involves involuntary physical responses.

Everybody's body will physically respond to anxiety in many different ways. But some common physical symptoms are shown below.

**Sweating**

**Heart  
beats  
fast**

**Pins  
and  
needles**

**Dizziness**

**Tense  
muscles**

**Fast  
breathing**

**Headache**

**Goosebumps**

**Wide  
eyes**

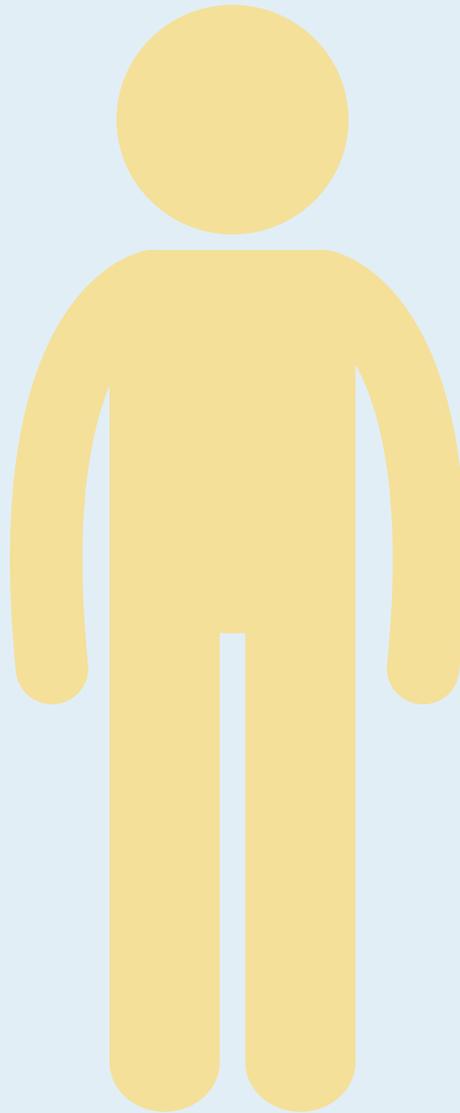
**Trembling**

**Butterflies  
in  
tummy**

**Nauseous**

**Weak  
knees**

**Urinating**

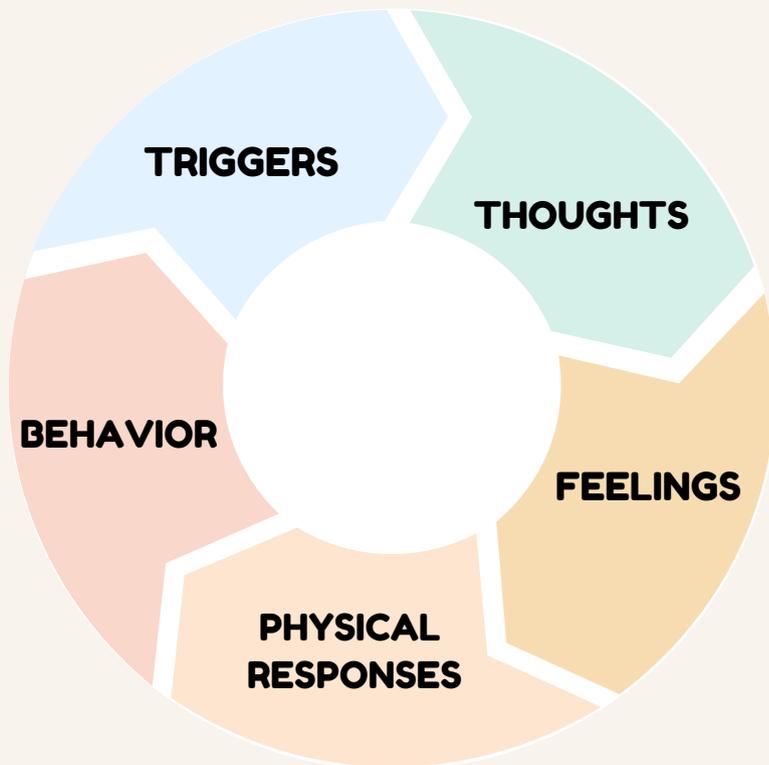


# THE CYCLE OF ANXIETY



Individuals living with anxiety may feel like they are constantly drained of energy, motivation, and hope; this can drastically affect their life, daily routines, and behavior. Unfortunately, these changes make their anxiety worse and prevent them from getting better.

Take a look at the anxiety cycle below.



## TRIGGERS

A trigger is any event or situation that causes stress or hardship. These may be short-term or long-term. And are different for everyone.

For example;  
Breakups, death, work/school or hormones are common triggers.

## THOUGHTS

Triggers often lead to negative thinking and thoughts, which may be irrational or magnified.

For example, "I always stuff everything up," "Nobody likes me," or "I'm hopeless".

## FEELINGS

How we think will affect our thoughts and feelings, and vice versa. So, likewise, how we feel will affect how we think.

For example, "I feel frightened"; therefore, there must be something to be frightened about.

## PHYSICAL RESPONSES

Anxiety affects much more than worrying thoughts; the body responds to triggers and negative feelings with physical symptoms. For example, some common physical responses are muscle pains, headaches, backaches, and nausea.

## BEHAVIOR

How we respond to those thoughts, feelings, and symptoms can feed our anxiety, worsen triggers, or create new stressors—for example, withdrawal, addiction, and lack of hygiene.

# REVERSING THE CYCLE OF ANXIETY



Individuals suffering from anxiety often get caught up in the downward spiral and don't realize they have the power to create change and reverse the cycle of anxiety. Reversing this cycle begins by using healthy coping mechanisms, such as positive self-talk, exercising, socializing, and much more.



## HAPPIER FEELINGS

Positive emotions can undo the physical effects of stress and help our nervous systems calm down. For example; Gratitude, learning, kindness, and giving.



## INCREASE ACTIVITY

Exercise and other physical activities help reduce the signs and feelings of anxiety. In addition, exercise can instantly increase your mood, making you happier than before you engaged in the exercise.



## FEELING MORE HOPEFUL

Training your brain to think more positively is a handy tool in helping beat the cycle of anxiety. Changing negative thoughts into positive ones can train your brain to think and feel more hopeful.

## IMPROVED ANXIETY

Engaging in more healthy coping skills daily will eventually positively impact your feelings, thoughts, and anxiety. At first, you might not feel any different, but if you stick with it, you will eventually see a positive change within yourself.

## GREATER ENERGY AND MOTIVATION

As anxiety affects your energy and motivation, you will see an increase in your energy levels when you feel happier within yourself. Use this increase to create even better habits and changes in your life for long-term success.



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS



When we think of accomplishments, we often think of big life moments. However, anyone celebrating all achievements, big or small, should be implemented them in their everyday life. All of your accomplishments are impactful to your success and deserve to be acknowledged.

## THINGS I'M GOOD AT

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## COMPLIMENTS I HAVE RECIEVED

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT I LIKE ABOUT ME

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## CHALLENGES I HAVE OVERCOME

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## I'VE HELPED OTHERS BY

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## I'M A GOOD FRIEND BECAUSE

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## MY BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## THINGS THAT MAKE ME UNIQUE

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# REFRAMING THOUGHTS

Our thoughts determine our behavior. Therefore, it is essential to have positive thoughts. Try and change negative thinking into more positive, productive thinking.

## Instead of..

## Try..

Everyone is going to stare at me



People might look at me because they like my outfit

What if I make a mistake



I won't know anyone at the party



I don't want to do this



No body at school likes me



I am a failure



I am going to come last



# SAFETY PLAN

When I'm feeling



My body feels like

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Warning signs that a crisis might be developing

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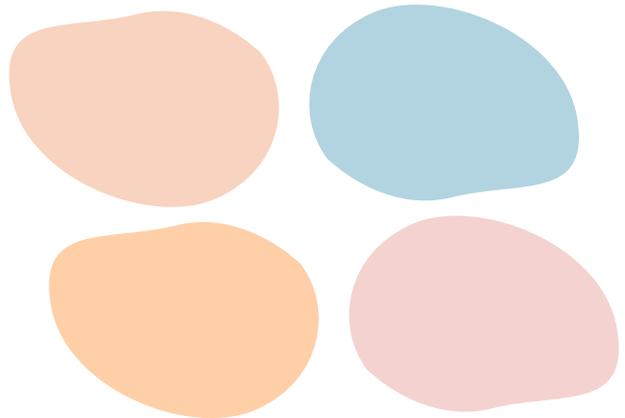
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Coping skills I can use



People I can call



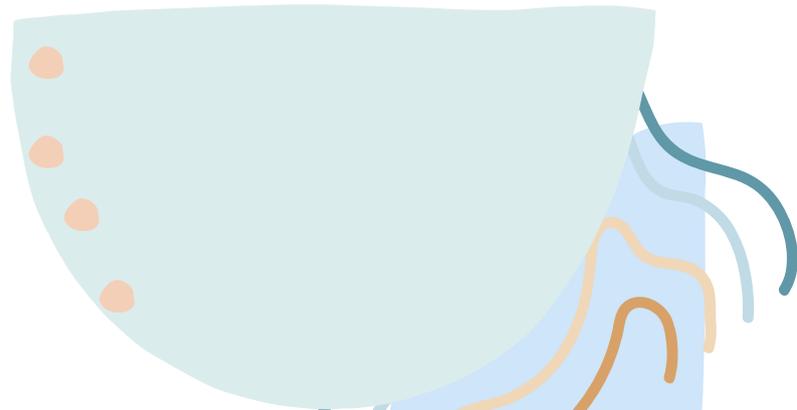
Professional agencies I  
can call

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Something or someone worth living for  
are..





# ANXIETY COPING STATEMENTS



**THOUGHTS  
ARE NOT  
FACTS**

**I AM  
SAFE IN  
MY BODY**

**ANXIETY  
IS A NORMAL  
HUMAN  
EMOTION**

**I TAKE  
CARE OF  
MYSELF**

**THIS FEELING  
IS A FALSE  
ALARM. I AM  
SAFE**

**IS THIS  
THOUGHT IN  
OR OUT OF  
MY CONTROL?**

**I DO  
NOT NEED  
TO SOLVE  
THIS FEELING**

**ANXIETY IS NOT  
ALWAYS A SIGNAL  
THAT SOMETHING IS  
WRONG**

**MY BRAVERY IS  
STRONGER THAN  
MY FEAR**

**I CAN FEEL  
ANXIOUS AND  
STILL HANDLE  
THIS**

**I NEED TO TRUST  
THE  
PROCESS.  
I AM OK**

**MY FEELINGS ARE  
NOT ALWAYS  
RATIONAL**

**I AM  
BRAVE**

**IF I REMAIN CALM I  
CAN OVERCOME  
THIS**

# FEELINGS TRACKER

This feelings tracker will help you to keep track of how you are feeling each day. Think about what emotions you feel throughout the day; color in the appropriate space, you may feel one feeling a day or more. There are three empty spaces for you to add your own.

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
<b>HAPPY</b>																																	
<b>SAD</b>																																	
<b>WORRIED</b>																																	

## NOTES

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# PUTTING THOUGHTS ON TRIAL

THE THOUGHT



WHAT IS MY WORRY OR THOUGHT?

THE DEFENCE



WHAT EVIDENCE DO I HAVE  
THAT MY THOUGHT IS TRUE?  
FACTS, NOT OPINIONS

THE PROSECUTION



WHAT EVIDENCE DO I HAVE  
THAT MY THOUGHT IS NOT  
TRUE?

THE JUDGE'S VERDICT



WHEN I EXAMINE ALL OF THE EVIDENCE, BASED ON THE FACTS, CAN I DECIDE  
WHETHER MY THOUGHT IS LIKELY TO COME TRUE OR UNLIKELY?

# ANXIETY TRIGGERS



Stressful or unfamiliar situations and events that cause fear, worry, or unease are what people call anxiety triggers. In addition, specific conditions or actions may cause anxiety, such as heights, lifts, spiders, social events, and more. Everyone's triggers may be different. However, it is essential to recognize your triggers.

## WHEN THIS HAPPENS

Blank space for writing when the trigger occurs.

## THIS IS WHAT I THINK

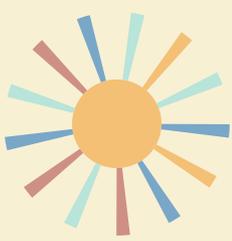
Blank space for writing thoughts.

## WHEN THIS WHAT I FEEL

Blank space for writing feelings.

## WHAT I CAN DO IN THIS EVENT TO REDUCE MY DEPRESSION

Blank space for writing coping strategies.



# ANXIETY TRIGGER CHECKLIST



Here is a list of everyday anxiety triggers. First, tick the ones that apply to you. Then, feel free to talk about any, not on the list.

- |                          |                         |                          |  |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Being left alone        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Going to new places                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Thinking about the past | <input type="checkbox"/> | Large crowds                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Watching scary shows    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Getting in trouble                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | School                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Homework                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Going to the doctors    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Loud noises                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public speaking         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Certain animals                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Parents fighting        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Watching the news                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Birthday parties        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Doing a performance in front of others     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Playing sport           |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Large open spaces       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Making new friends                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Being sick              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Going in a lift                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Violence                | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not knowing what the plans are for the day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The dark                |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sleeping on my own      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Being left out                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Trying new food         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Surprises                                  |



Coping skills that help with my anxiety

# Anxiety Scale



ONE

## MINIMAL

Little feelings of worry, fear, or nervousness.  
Still able to concentrate and get things done.  
Little physical symptoms such as heart pounding, butterflies in the stomach.

TWO

## MILD

Breathlessness, nausea, headache, muscle tension, heart pounding fast, chest tightness, sweaty, nervous feeling, weak legs, and arms, clumsy, trembling, vomiting.

Having a sense of impending danger, panic, or doom.

These thoughts and physiological responses are usually short-lived, and you can quickly move past the thoughts and feelings.

THREE

## MODERATE

All of the above symptoms plus:  
Symptoms are more intense and last longer.

Changes in sleep and appetite. Avoidance of things you used to find enjoyment in, or avoiding places or people that might trigger your anxiety.

Changes in concentration.

Fatigued.

FOUR

## SEVERE

All of the above symptoms plus:

Thoughts and feelings come from nowhere and interfere with daily life—intense and disproportionate emotional responses.

Can't let go of thoughts.

FIVE

## DEBILITATING

All of the above symptoms plus:

Waking up in the middle of the night with anxious feelings.  
Heart is constantly pounding, nervous and jittery feeling all day.

Dissociation.

Anxious thoughts and feelings have been ongoing for weeks or months.

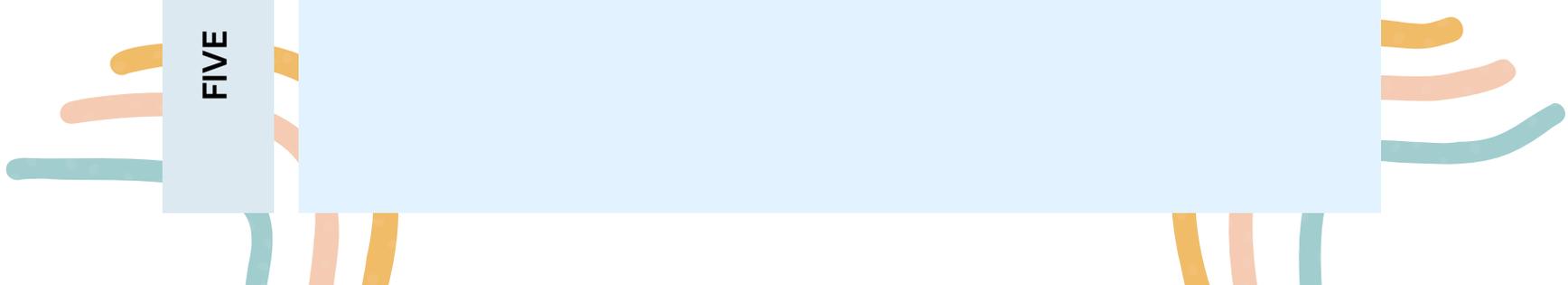


# Coping Strategies

Things I can do to help reduce my anxiety



ONE	MINIMAL
TWO	MILD
THREE	MODERATE
FOUR	SEVERE
FIVE	DEBILITATING



# Anxiety Action Plan

BEHAVIOUR		
<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>REDUCE/STOP</b>	<b>HOW WILL THIS MAKE ME BEHAVE DIFFERENTLY?</b>

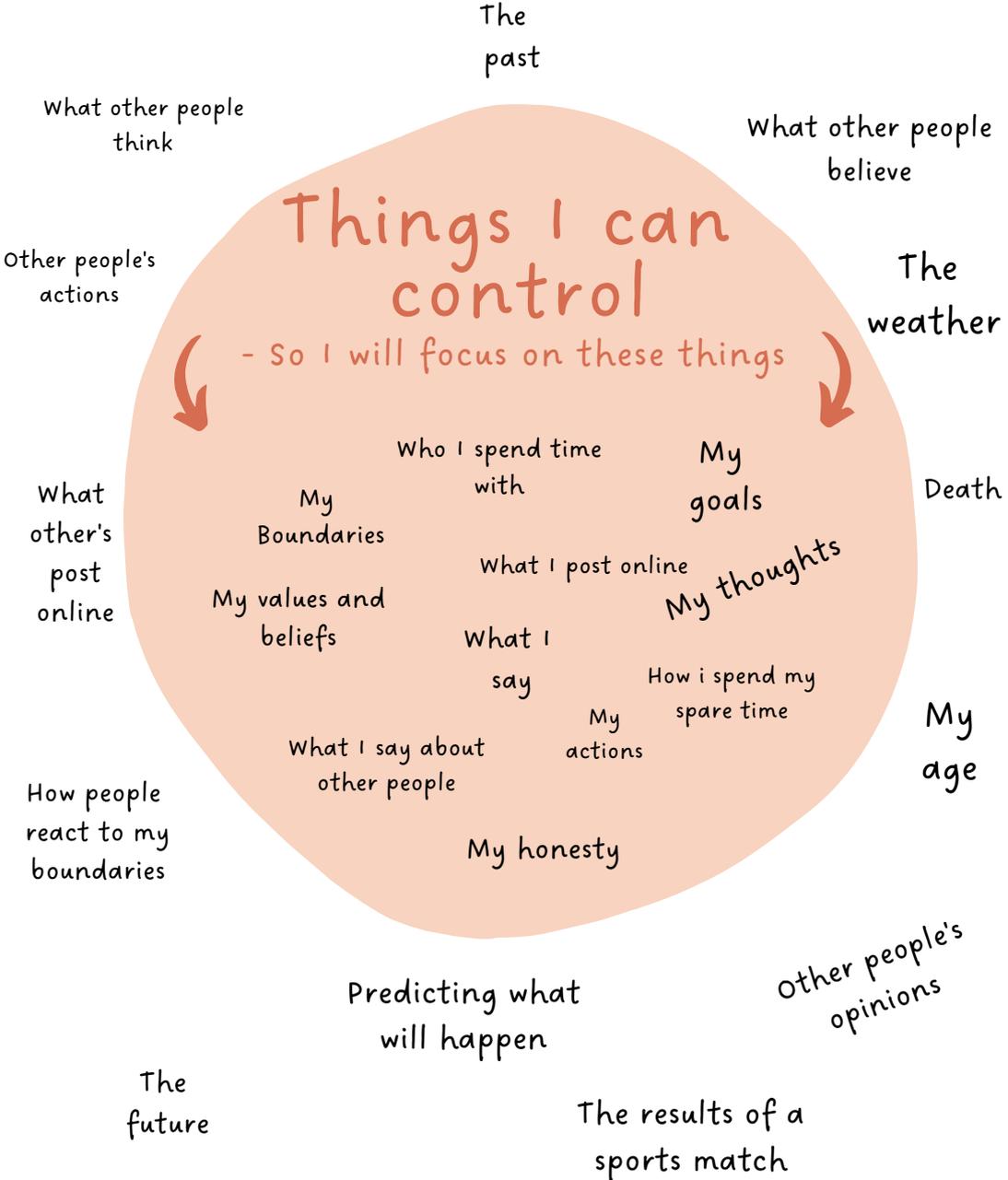
THOUGHTS		
<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>REDUCE/STOP</b>	<b>HOW WILL THIS MAKE ME BEHAVE DIFFERENTLY?</b>

FEELINGS/EMOTIONS		
<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>REDUCE/STOP</b>	<b>HOW WILL THIS MAKE ME BEHAVE DIFFERENTLY?</b>

"Feeling upset about something outside of your control is like sitting on a rocking chair....  
It gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere"

# Things I can NOT control

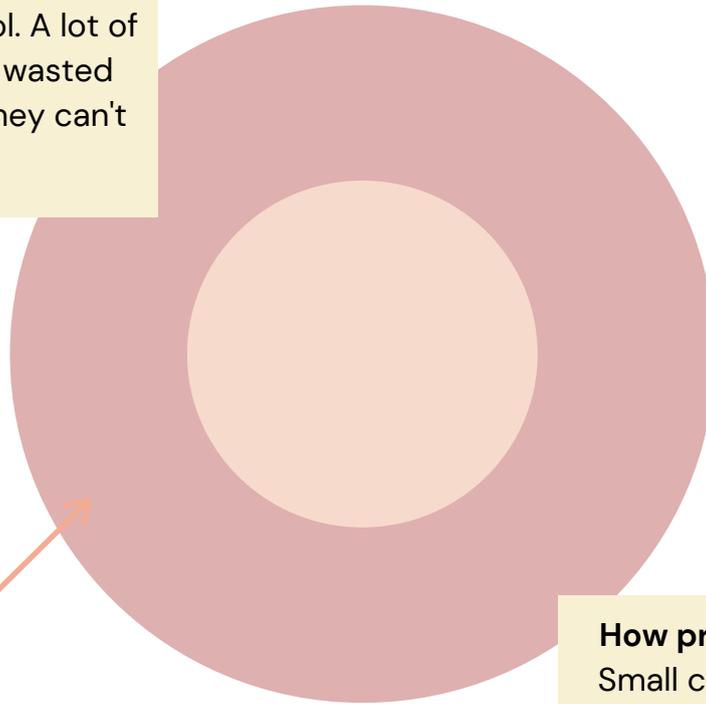
- So I can let Go of these things



# CIRCLE OF CONCERN

## How reactive people act

Large circle of concern and small circle of control. A lot of time and energy is wasted reacting to issues they can't control.

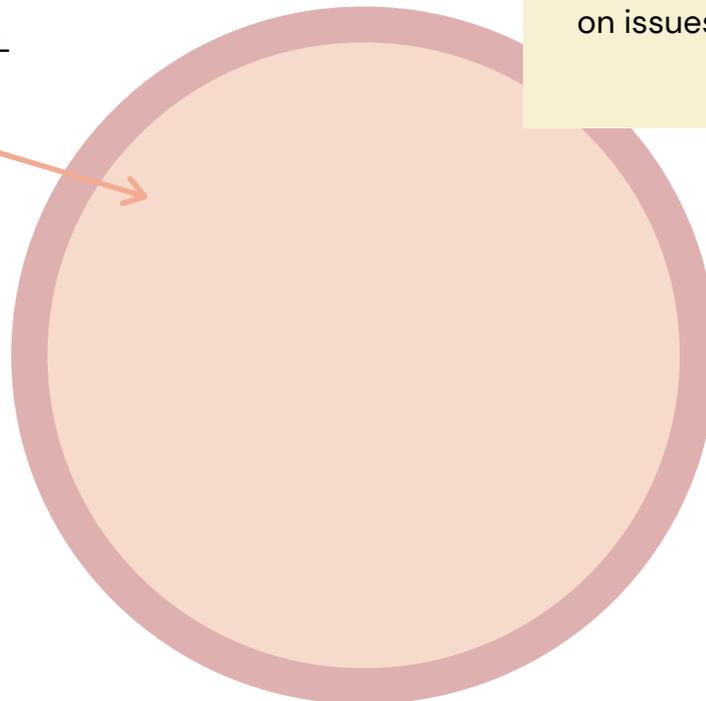


CIRCLE OF CONCERN

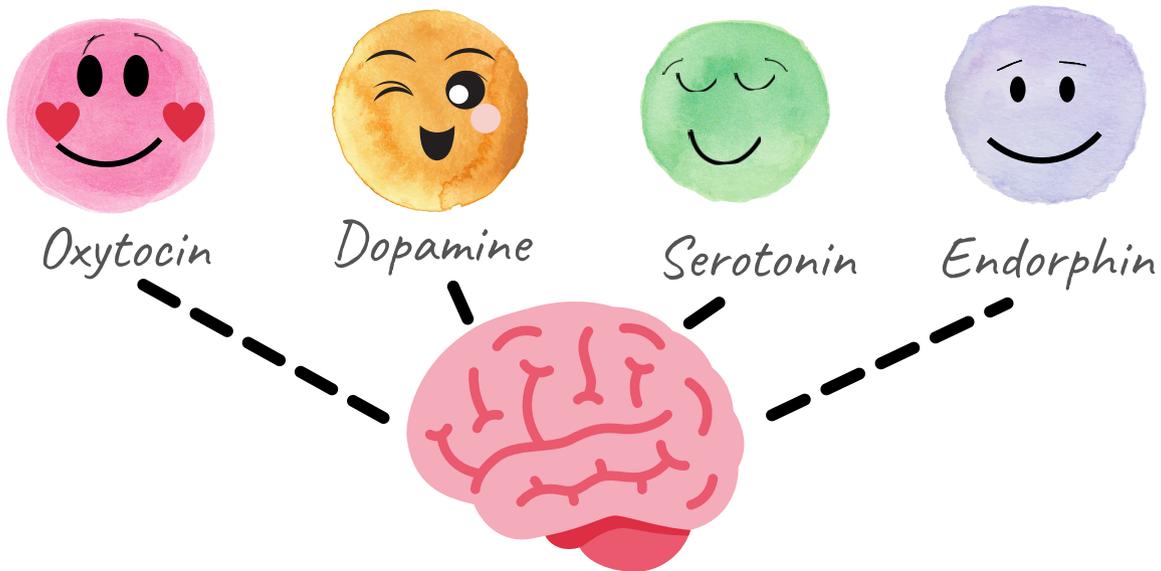
CIRCLE OF CONTROL

## How proactive people act

Small circle of concern and large circle of control. A lot of time and energy is focused on issues that are in their control.



# HELPING YOUR ANXIETY WITH THE 'HAPPY CHEMICALS'



## What are they?

Different glands across your body produce chemicals that travel through the bloodstream, acting as messengers and playing a part in helping regulate your mood.

Certain chemicals help promote positive feelings, including happiness, joy, and pleasure.

Four primary chemicals can drive the positive emotions you feel throughout the day, known as 'The Happy Chemicals' dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endorphins.

# ACCESSING THE 'LOVE HORMONE'



## OXYTOCIN The Love hormone

Oxytocin is the happiness chemical that helps us feel loved and connected to others.

Oxytocin is known as the love chemical as it is released when we have human-to-human contact, such as hugging and kissing,

It is also released when we feel trust. Social trust feels good because social alliances promote survival.

There are several things that you can do to help release oxytocin, such as

- Yoga
- Listening to music
- Getting or giving a massage
- Spending time with friends
- Engaging in conversations

**Write down 3 ways in which you could help release Oxytocin, try and be specific, how will you do it, where, when and with who?**



# ACCESSING THE 'REWARD CHEMICAL'



## DOPAMINE The Reward Chemical

Dopamine is often known as the reward or pleasure chemical; this chemical is released during activities considered pleasurable, such as exercise or eating. It rewards us with a hit of happiness and also when we expect a reward. It's that exciting feeling we get when we are about to be rewarded.

It accesses several areas of the brain and can affect many functions, such as memory, learning, behavior, and movement.

There are several things that you can do to help release dopamine, such as

- Completing tasks
- Eating your favorite food
- Practicing self-care
- Celebrating small achievements
- Setting goals and working toward them

**Write down 3 ways in which you could help release Dopamine, try and be specific, how will you do it, where, when and with who?**

# ACCESSING THE 'PAIN KILLER'



## ENDORPHIN The Pain Killer

Endorphins are considered natural pain relievers and mood boosters. It's released during laughter, exercise, listening to music, and eating chocolate.

Endorphins act directly on the brain's opioid receptors, reducing pain; when released, endorphins result in an energized, excited feeling.

Additionally, endorphins are released when we feel physical pain to give us a brief moment of excitement as a survival mechanism. Laughing and crying also release small bursts of endorphin.

There are several things that you can do to help release endorphins, such as

- Laughing out loud
- Watching a funny movie
- Eat dark chocolate
- Use essential oils
- Exercise

**Write down 3 ways in which you could help release Endorphin, try and be specific, how will you do it, where, when and with who?**

# ACCESSING THE 'MOOD STABILIZER'



## SEROTONIN *The Mood Stabilizer*

Serotonin is one of the critical hormones linked to our emotions and mood. It's associated with satisfaction and optimism and also affects our physical health.

Serotonin flows through the brain when we feel significant with ourselves and others. Serotonin starts flowing, for example, when we feel confident and take pride in our achievements and work.

There are several things that you can do to help release serotonin, such as

- Meditating
- Swimming
- Walking in nature
- Spend time in the sun
- Practice mindfulness

**Write down 3 ways in which you could help release serotonin, try and be specific, how will you do it, where, when and with who?**