



**Manchester University**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Trafford Thrive in Education



*"Supporting you to thrive ... your way"*



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## Anxiety Psychoeducation workshop for school staff

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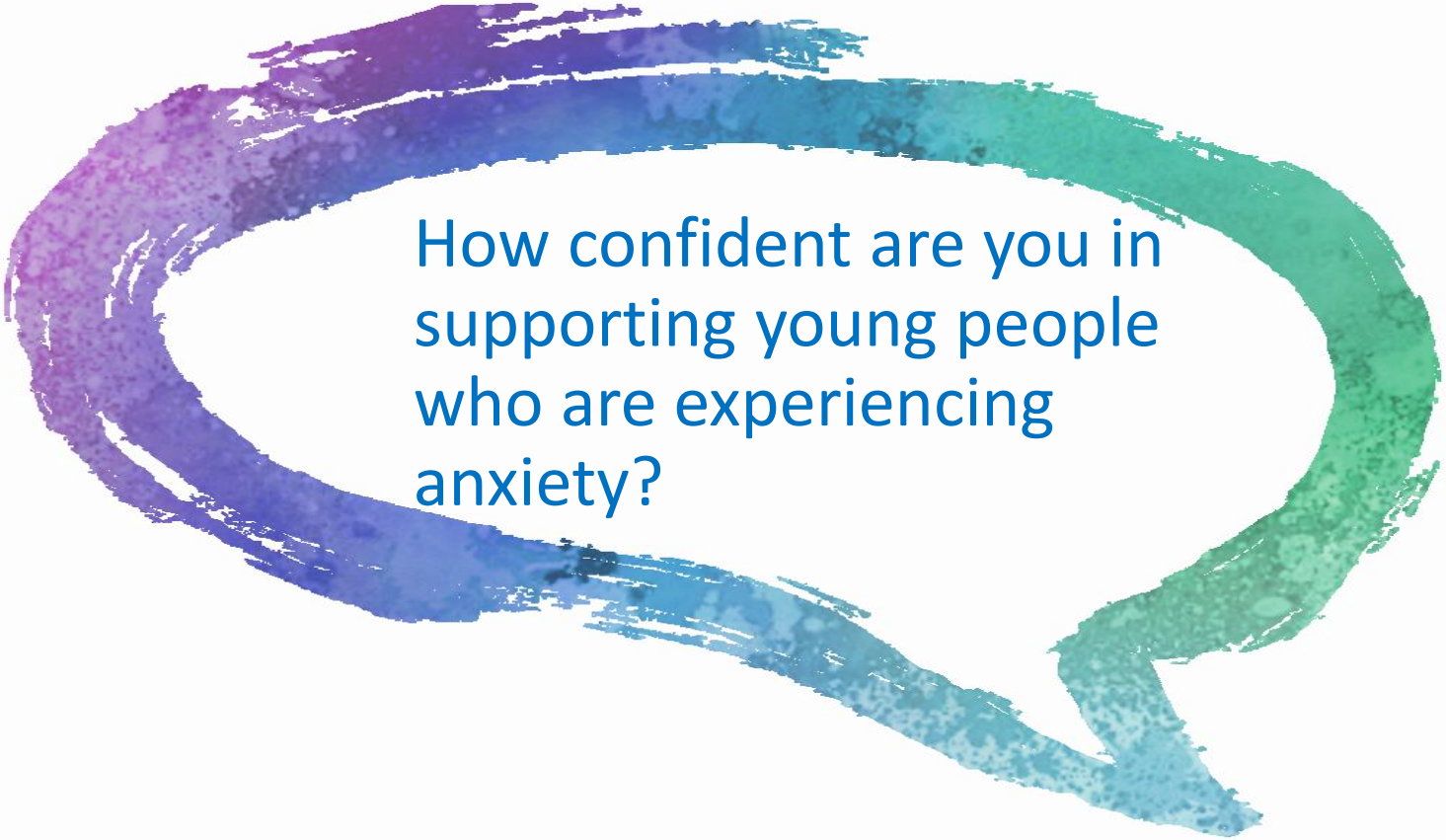


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# Session aims

- ▶ Understanding Anxiety
- ▶ Recognising Anxiety
- ▶ Evidence based coping strategies
- ▶ A toolkit for school staff when supporting young people presenting with symptoms of anxiety

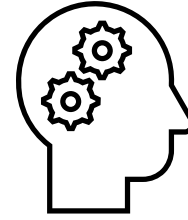
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How confident are you in supporting young people who are experiencing anxiety?



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# Psychoeducation

- ▶ *“Psychoeducation can be an important part of learning to thrive with a mental health condition. It is useful for everyone involved, and it can be the first step to better understanding, treating, and coping with a mental illness. When you learn about your condition, you can learn to live with it”.*
- ▶ *“Psychoeducation involves learning about and understanding mental health and wellbeing. It’s similar to physical education, where you learn about how your body works, how to look after it and the impacts of different strains or stressors - but instead you apply this to the mind.”*
  - ▶ Anna Freud
  - ▶ *“Supporting you to thrive ... your way”*

# What is anxiety?

Please use the chat box to write any words you associate with anxiety.

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# What is anxiety?

- Anxiety is a normal reaction to threat or danger
- We all feel anxious or stressed sometimes - and that's OK!  
However, it's important to strike a balance and find ways to manage worry to avoid feeling overwhelmed and distressed.



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# The fight, flight or freeze response



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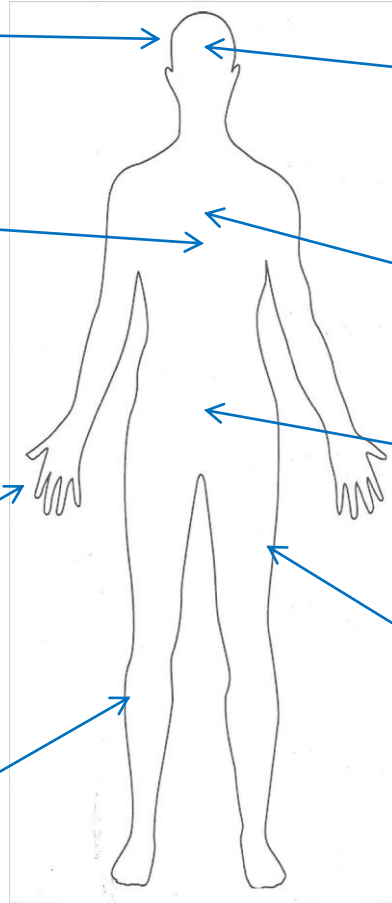
# What does it feel like?

**Dizzy/lightheaded** -  
due to taking in more  
oxygen

**Fast breathing** - to help  
us get more oxygen into  
our body

**Sweaty or hot** - this  
allows the body to cool  
down ready to fight or  
run away

**Tensed or clenched  
muscles** - as a result  
of more blood going to  
these areas



**Lots of thoughts** - your  
brain is looking for danger  
and keeping you safe from it

**Fast heart beat** - to pump the  
blood round your body

**Feeling sick/butterflies** - this is  
because blood goes away from  
your digestive system

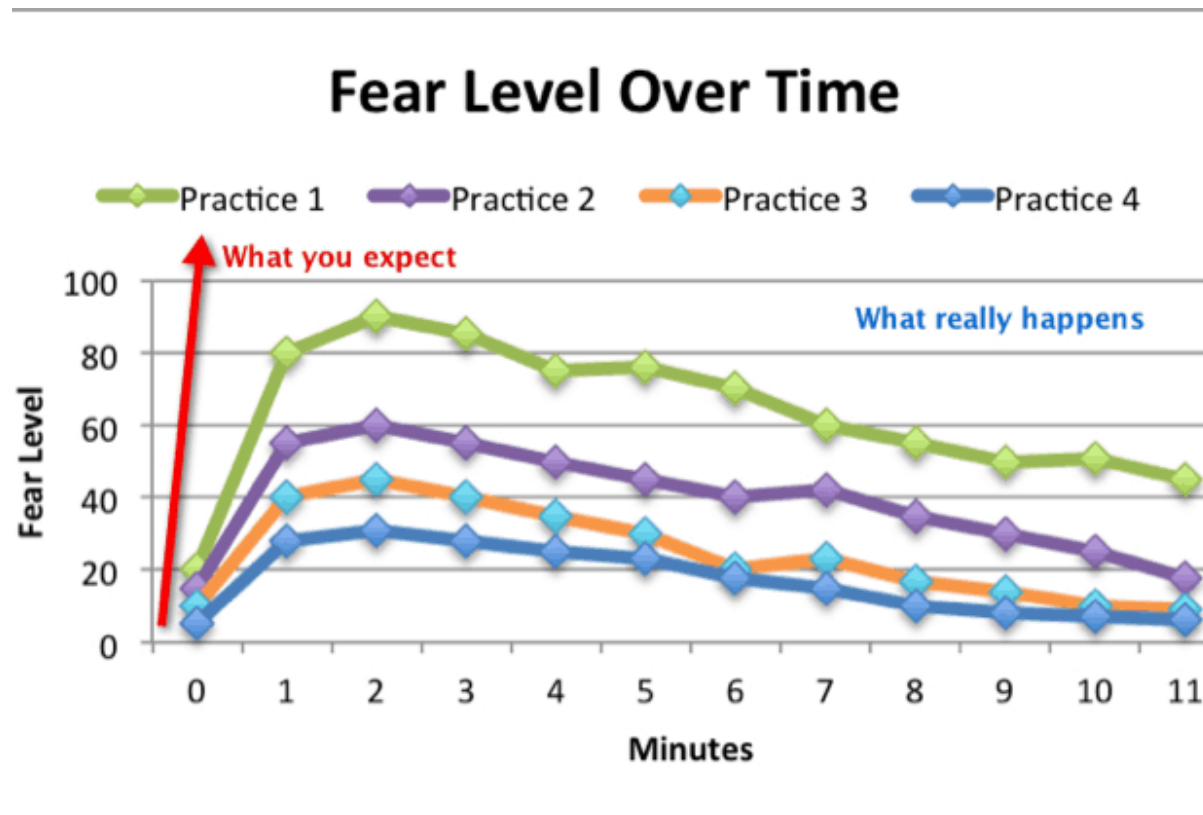
**Shaky hands/legs** - as  
blood is moving  
around your body  
quickly to different  
areas

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# Habituation

Getting used to things

The more you do it, the easier it becomes



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# Recognising the signs and symptoms of anxiety in the young people you support



# Some things to look out for:

- ▶ Not concentrating
- ▶ Falling behind with work
- ▶ Attendance difficulties
- ▶ Punctuality difficulties
- ▶ Being quiet and withdrawn
- ▶ Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- ▶ Pulling away from people and usual activities
- ▶ Having unexplained aches and pains
- ▶ Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- ▶ Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- ▶ Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head



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# Physical Indications of Fight or Flight Response



dilated pupils



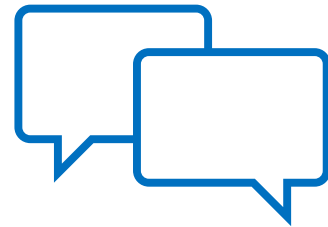
pale or flushed skin

trembling

rapid heart beat  
and breathing

# How to talk to a young person that you are worried about

LET'S TALK ABOUT  
MENTAL HEALTH



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# How to talk and how to listen

- ▶ ‘Ordinary Magic’
- ▶ Making talking about mental health a normal part of everyday life
- ▶ Give it your full attention and take it seriously
- ▶ Positive body language
- ▶ Ask open questions
- ▶ Praise them for bravery
- ▶ Stay calm / manage your own responses
- ▶ Offer empathy rather than solutions
- ▶ Encourage young people to think of what might help (give them control)
- ▶ Know what's out there
- ▶ Encourage them to come back

Tell me more about that...

So, this is what I think you have told me ...

Thanks for talking to me, that's a brave thing to do...

How is that making you feel?

What can I do to help?

It sounds like you're having a hard time...

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# Evidence based coping strategies



Strategies for managing worry / anxiety in young people

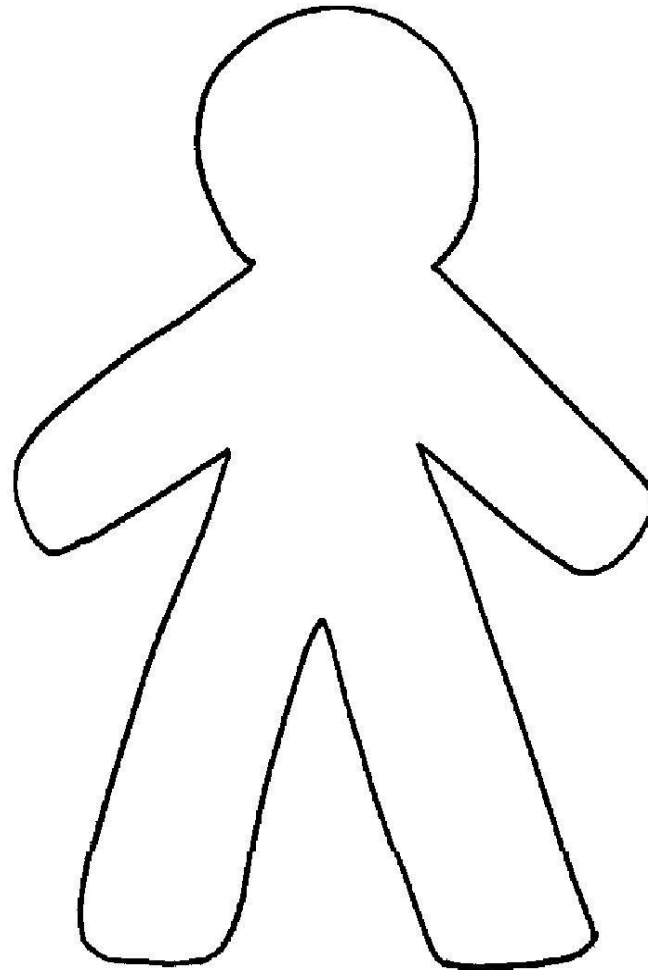


# Explore physical symptoms of anxiety

Share the anxiety video with the young person

Create a body map, listing their physical symptoms of anxiety

Explain that we all feel anxious or stressed sometimes - and that's OK! However, it's important to strike a balance and find ways to manage worry to avoid feeling overwhelmed and distressed.



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# Different types of worries

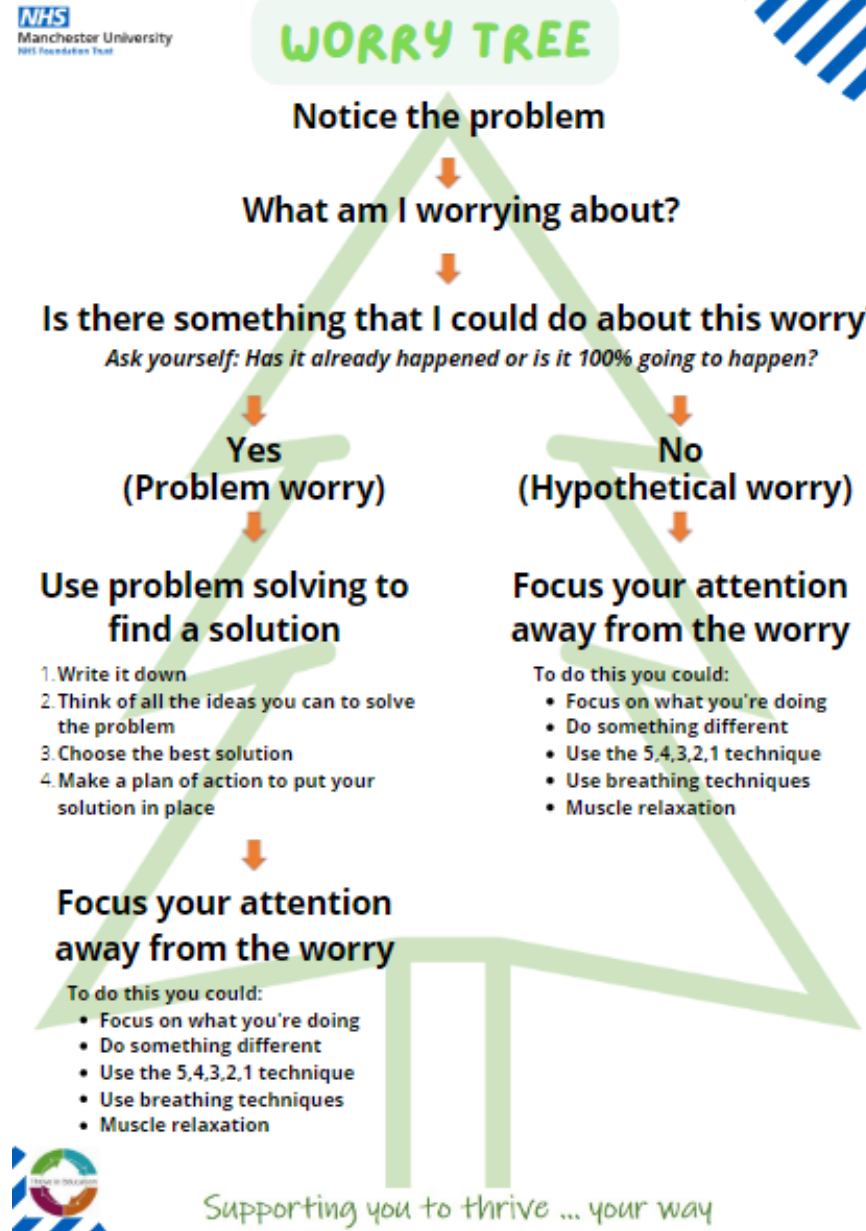
We can sort worries into two categories: hypothetical worries or problem worries.

- ▶ **Hypothetical worries** - things you're worried about that aren't something that you can do anything about because they **HAVE NOT ACTUALLY HAPPENED YET.**
- ▶ **Problem worries** - Worries that are a problem **NOW** and are about things that either have happened or will 100% happen.

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# The worry tree

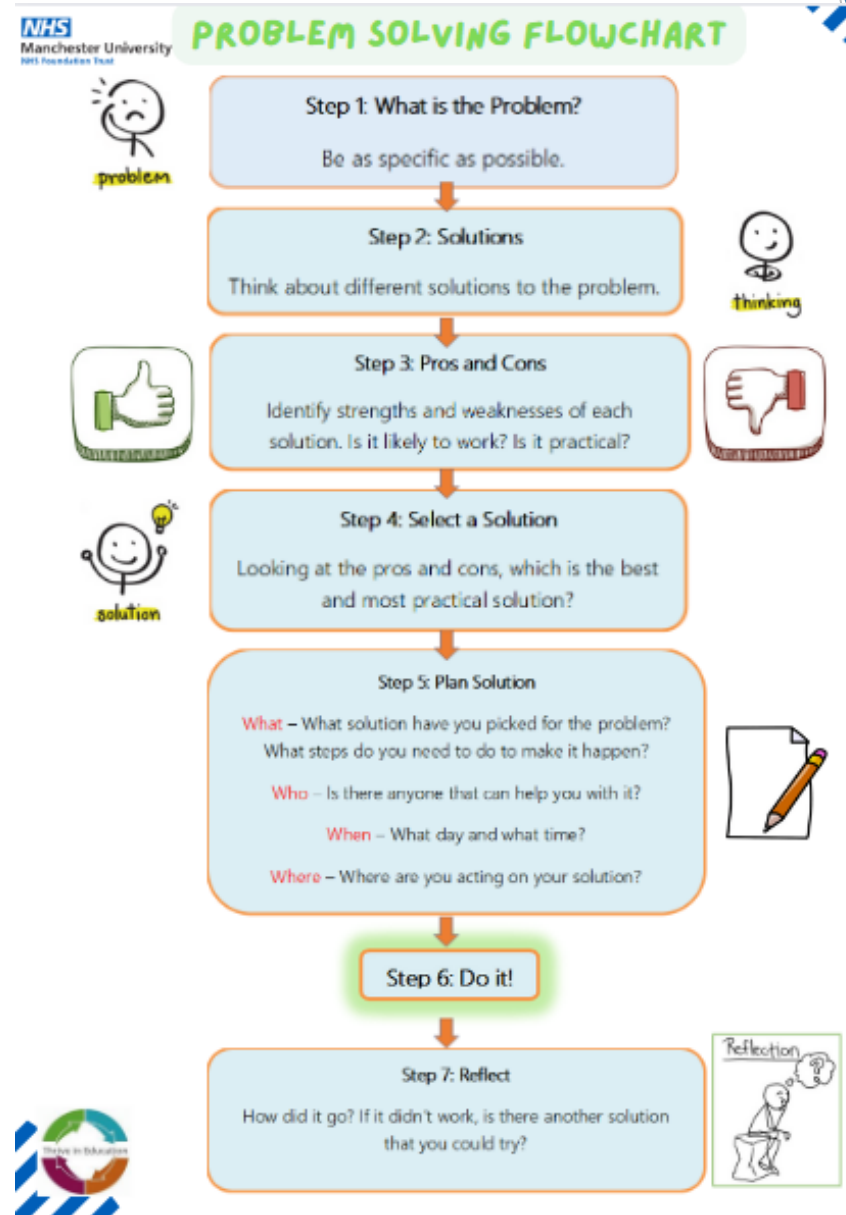
We can use the worry tree to sort our worries into hypothetical or problem worries and know what to do next.



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# Problem solving - a strategy for managing problem worries

This involves listing all the possible solutions to a problem, and then listing all the advantages and disadvantages of each solution. From this information, the best solution can be selected. It's useful to have a back up solution as well.



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# Here is an example of how to use problem-solving

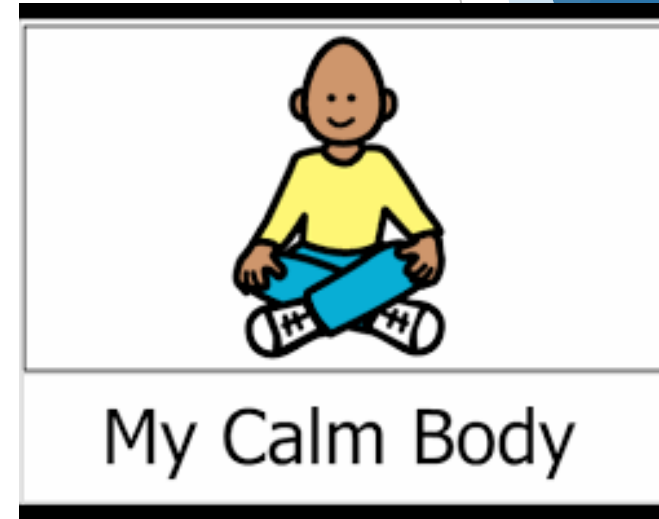
*Example problem worry: .....*

Potential solutions	Advantages	Disadvantages	List from best to worst	What steps I need to take

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# Calming techniques - strategies for managing hypothetical worries


- ▶ When we are overwhelmed by thoughts and feelings our body reacts to it by activating our stress response.
- ▶ By calming our body, we can overcome those unpleasant and doing what is important to us.
- ▶ Breathing, grounding and muscle relaxation techniques can help to calm us.



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# Calming techniques

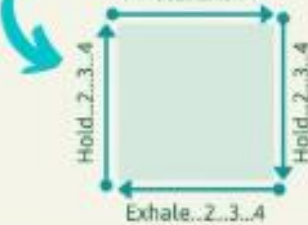
## Breathing




Breath control is a natural tranquilizer as it helps slow down our heart rate.

Place one hand on your belly and the other on your chest. When you breathe, your belly should expand, your chest should remain still.


**BOX BREATHING**  
Inhale..2..3..4  
Hold..2..3..4  
Exhale..2..3..4



**4:7:8 BREATHING**  
Inhale..2..3..4  
Hold..2..3..4..5..6..7  
Exhale..2..3..4..5..6..7..8











## Grounding




Grounding brings you back to the present, allowing your mind to calm and focus on what is important for you.

Use these exercises to help you ground in the present moment.

**5** Things that you can   
**4** Things that you can   
**3** Things that you can   
**2** Things that you can   
**1** Things that you can 


**ROOM SEARCH**   
Find everything in the room that fits one category. For example:  
Find everything that's green   
Find all of the squares in the room  
Count the  in the room

## Relaxation



By relaxing our body we can release the accumulated tension in our muscles.

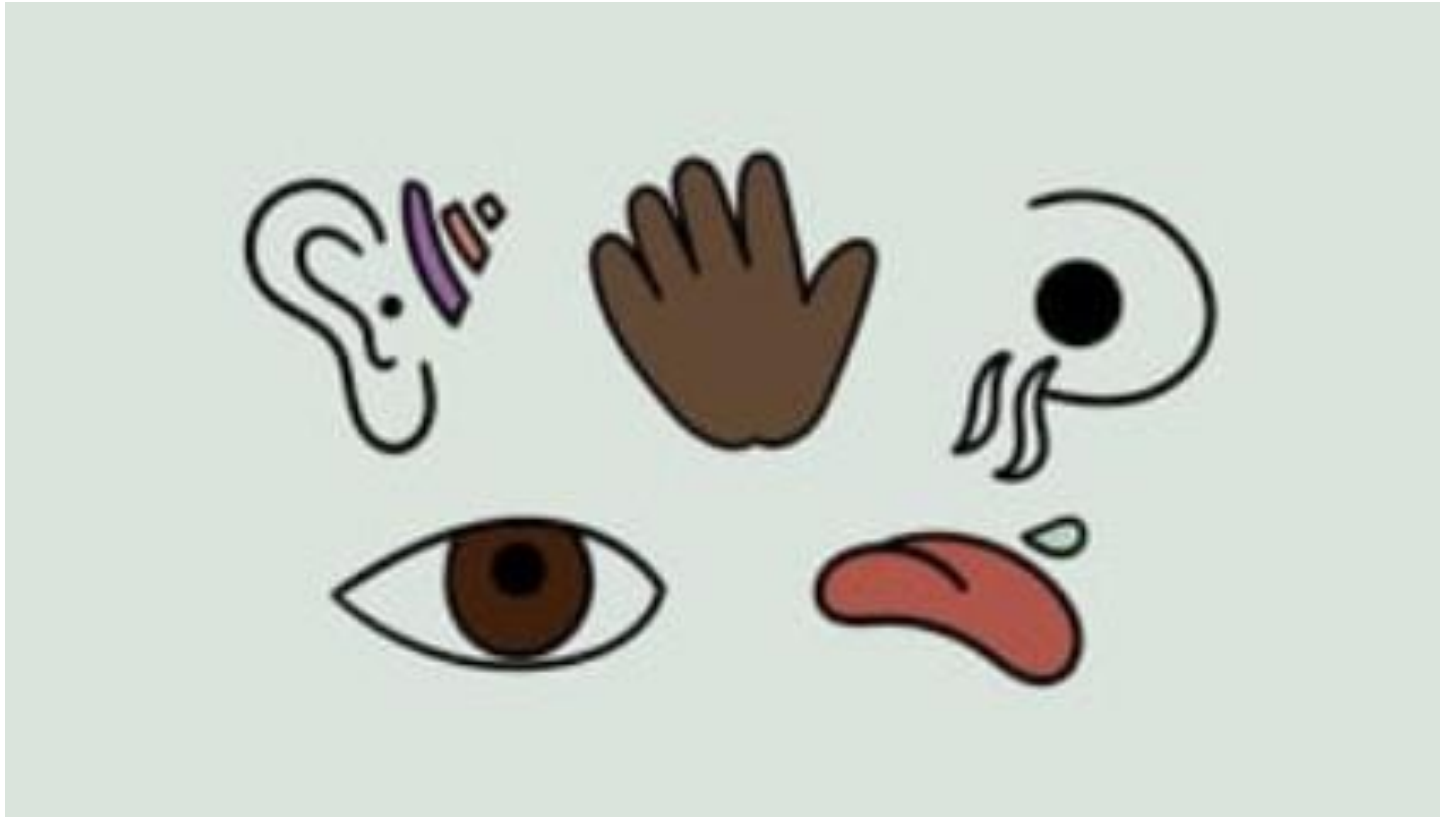
One way to do this is to tense and relax all the muscles in your body one by one:

**TENSE FOR 5 SECONDS**  **PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS**

1. Raise your eyebrows
2. Clench your eyelids
3. Open your mouth wide
4. Raise your shoulders
5. Take a deep breath
6. Clench your fists
7. Pull in your tummy
8. Tighten your buttocks
9. Pull your toes upwards
10. Curl your toes

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# Example Grounding Technique Video

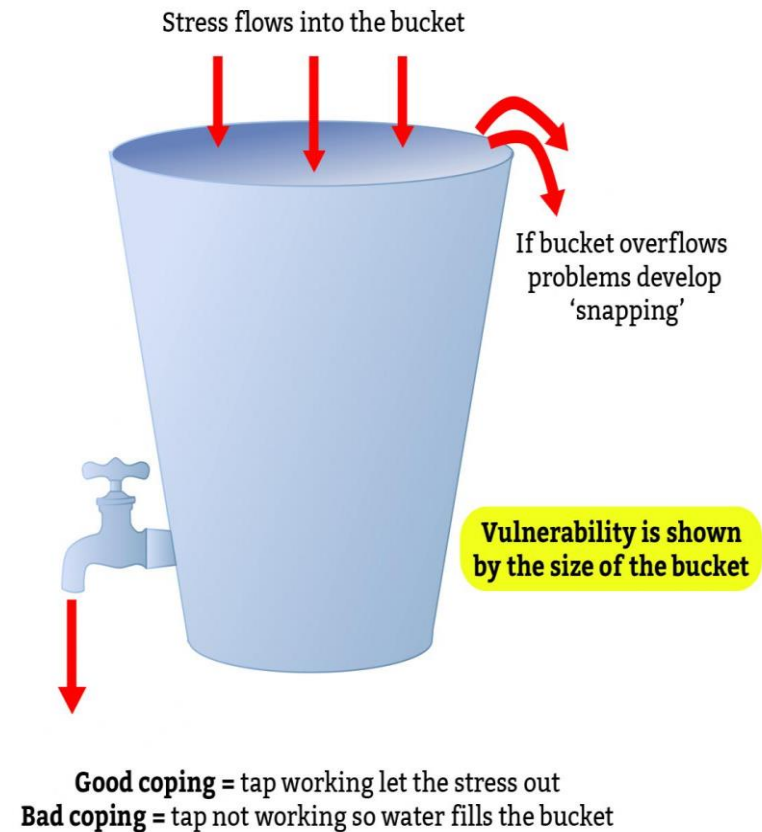


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# Identify stressors - The Stress Bucket

- Research shows that we need to also look at what is causing the distress
- Help the young person to identify the stress in their bucket
- What can they do to reduce the stress in their stress bucket, what can parents/carers do, what can school do, who else can help?
- It takes a village .... needs a co-ordinated team response

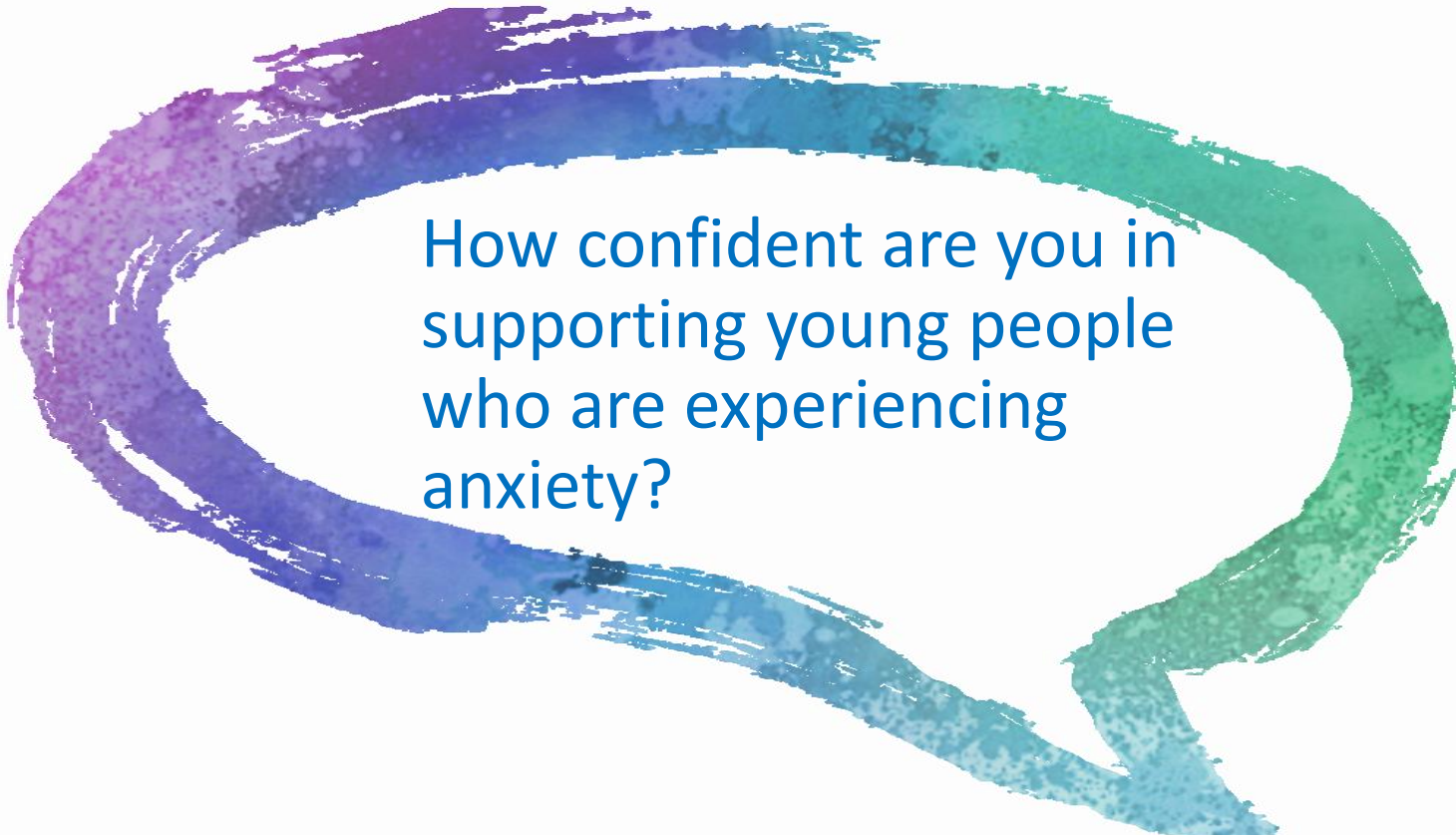


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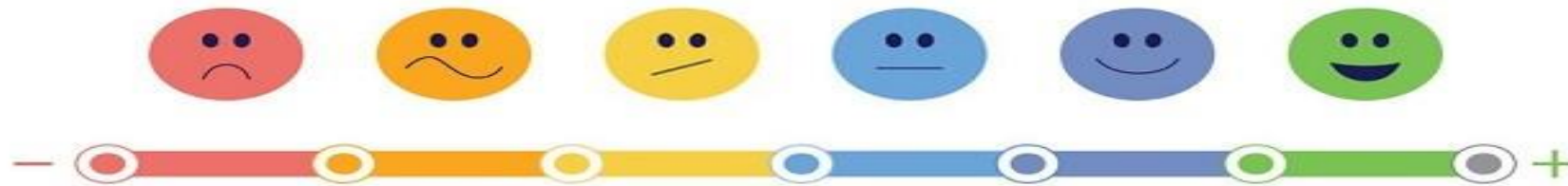
# Toolkit for school

- ▶ We have created a toolkit including the resources discussed today for school staff to support young people presenting with anxiety
- ▶ If you would like to receive the Toolkit, please include your email address on the feedback form

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How confident are you in supporting young people who are experiencing anxiety?




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# Useful information - services for young people



**Kooth**  
Kooth is a free online service offering emotional and mental health support for children and young people  
[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)



**PAPYRUS**  
PREVENTION OF YOUNG SUICIDE

**YOUNG MINDS**



CALL  
**111**



Anxious?  
Stressed?  
Need support?

Text **SHOUT** to **85258**  
for free and confidential support

**shout**  
**85258**  
here for you 24/7

[GiveUsAShoutInsta](#) [GiveUsAShout](#) [GiveUsAShoutUK](#)  
[giveusashout.org](http://giveusashout.org)

**NSPCC**

**42<sup>ND</sup> STREET**

**SAMARITANS**

**ChildLine**  
0800 1111 

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# Any questions?



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