



# **Understanding and Managing Anxiety Workbook**

**Designed and produced by the Involvement, Recovery and Wellness Centre.  
Please contact 01625 505647 for further information.**

## **References:**

All pictures used have been sourced from free website [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

Page 4 - 5: <sup>1</sup>Anxiety Self-help Guide – NHS Inform: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health/mental-health-self-help-guides/anxiety-self-help-guide>

Page 8: <sup>2</sup>Fight or Flight Response Symptoms, CBT4Panic: <http://cbt4panic.org/the-fight-or-flight-response-symptoms/>

Page 11: <sup>3</sup> Colour Breathing: www.get.gg © Carol Vivyan 2010. Permission to use for therapy purposes. [www.getselfhelp.co.uk](http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk)

Page 12: <sup>4</sup> 7/11 breathing: <https://www.in8.uk.com/information-resources/7-11-breathing/>

Page 13 - 14: <sup>5</sup> Diaphragmatic Breathing Technique with images: <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/26573625/diaphragmatic-breathing>

Page 15: <sup>6</sup> Mental Health Continuum Model: [www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/)

Page 15: <sup>7</sup> Stress Symptom's: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/stress/signs-of-stress/>

Page 18: <sup>8</sup> Quote from Lisa M. Hayes: [www.rawfoodforlife.org](http://www.rawfoodforlife.org)

Page 19 - 20: <sup>9</sup> Stress Bucket: <https://mentalhealth-uk.org/blog/the-stress-bucket/> Developed from an idea by Brabban and Turkington (2002) Exercise: <https://www.foryoubbyyou.org.uk/>

Page 21: <sup>10</sup> <https://www.sonia-jaeger.com/en/stress-and-the-glass-of-water/>

Page 23: <sup>11</sup> [http://counsellingservice.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Assertiveness\\_Table.png](http://counsellingservice.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Assertiveness_Table.png)

Page 24 - 27: <sup>12</sup> Problem Solving Technique extracted from Self-management of Long-term Health Conditions. A handbook for people with chronic disease. Kate Lorig, DrPH 2012

Page 28 - 29: <sup>13</sup> **CIRCLE of CONCERN and CIRCLE of INFLUENCE**: Adapted from The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R. Covey, Simon & Schuster 1992.

Page 30 - 31: <sup>14</sup> Anxiety Self-help Guide – NHS Inform; <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health/mental-health-self-help-guides/anxiety-self-help-guide>

Page 34: <sup>14</sup> Mindfulness in 5 4 3 2 1 utilised by many therapists worldwide

Pages 35 - 36: <sup>15</sup> Action Planning Technique extracted from Self-management of Long-term Health Conditions. A handbook for people with chronic disease. Kate Lorig, DrPH 2012

Page 37: <sup>16</sup> Visualisation Script Exercise: Anxiety Self-help Guide – NHS Inform: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health/mental-health-self-help-guides/anxiety-self-help-guide>

Page 40: Self-Management Checklist: devised by staff and users of CWP Specialist Mental Health Services via IR&WC 2018

*Booklet assembled by staff of IRWC CWP NHS FT 2019, pending consultation with people who use our services and their carers*

# WELCOME

This booklet has been designed to be used as a standalone tool with any other support you might be receiving and alongside the Understanding and Managing Anxiety workshop. It is designed to help you **self-manage** symptoms of anxiety. Part of self management is knowing when you need further support. If you find your symptoms continue to stay the same or worsen, please be sure to seek further support from your care team or GP.

## PERSONAL INFORMATION



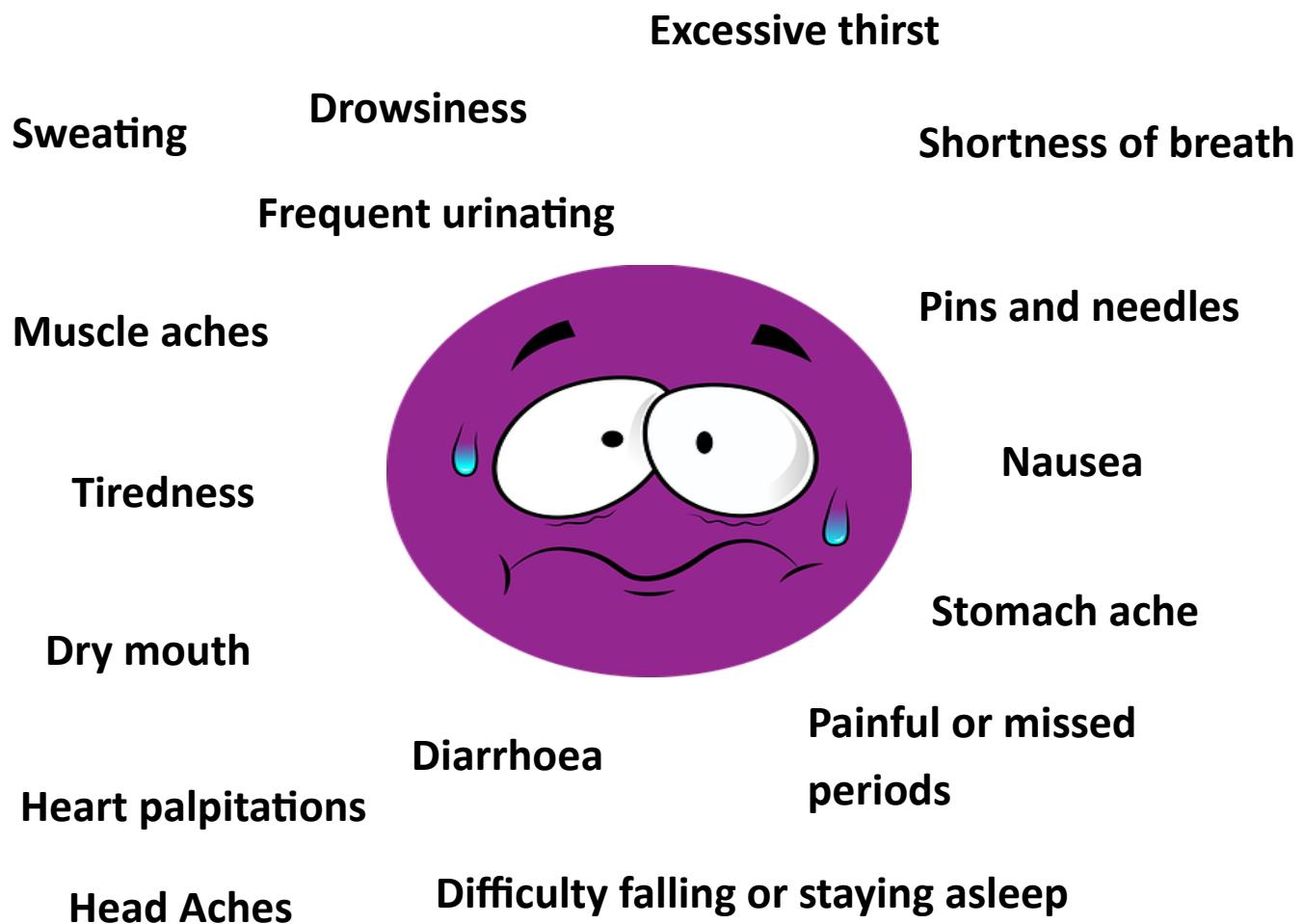
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<b>Postcode:</b>
<b>Contact number:</b>
<b>Diagnosis:</b>
<b>Other medical conditions:</b>

# WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety is a general term used for several disorders that cause nervousness, fear, apprehension and worrying. It can vary from day to day and throughout the day.

One of the ways you can spot when you are anxious is by looking at the **physical** symptoms of anxiety.

***Take a look at some of the physical symptoms of anxiety below and circle which you feel apply to you when you are anxious.***



These unpleasant symptoms can cause people to worry that what is happening is harmful. These fears can consequently, make people even more anxious, which can create a vicious cycle.<sup>1</sup>

***What other things might you notice if you are experiencing anxiety?***

***Circle those that you have noticed yourself and add your own <sup>1</sup>***

**Feelings you might have:**

On edge	Scared
Nervous	Overwhelmed
Panic	Irritable/Lack of Patience
Stressed	Uptight

**How your body might feel:**

Breathing faster/Feeling breathless	Sweating
Stomach churning	Tense/sore muscles
Chest tight/painful	Dizzy/faint
Heart racing/palpitations	Difficulty concentrating

**Things you might do:**

- Avoid things that make you anxious or things you normally enjoy
- Find it hard to relax
- Snap at people easily
- Talk very quickly

**Thoughts you might have:**

- I'm going to die
- I can't cope
- Others are not safe / they're going to die
- Something bad is going to happen
- I'm not safe



# WHAT CAUSES ANXIETY?

A mixture of the following factors can contribute to someone being more likely to have trouble with anxiety. ***Write in the boxes below examples of which factors you think could be contributing to you feeling anxiety.***



**Genetics/  
Biological  
Processes**

**Life  
Experiences**

**Environmental  
and external  
factors/ Stress**



# IS ANXIETY NECESSARY IN OUR LIVES?

Sometimes feeling anxious can be beneficial, for example to prepare for an interview or a race. However, anxiety is considered a problem if it starts to interfere with things like sleeping, eating, socialising and otherwise functioning.

***What aspects of your life do your symptoms of anxiety interfere with? Try to be honest and remember that knowing how anxiety affects you is the first step to working on it and feeling better.***

**My anxiety affects me by...**

*“It stops me from going to visit my family!”*

**Anxiety** is a general term for several disorders that cause nervousness, fear, apprehension, and worrying.

***Anxiety experienced by everybody.***

Many of the physical symptoms link into the **fight or flight response** as adrenaline pumps around the body, preparing you for battle or to escape the situation causing anxiety.

Have a look at next few pages to help you understand what happens when our body goes into the fight, flight, freeze response.

## FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE

2

Mind and body set on high alert watching out for signs of danger.



Rapid breathing helps to divert blood to vital organs

'Tunnel Vision' - Peripheral vision is diminished so that sight is centrally focused (on any danger)  
Pupils of the eyes widen to let in more light.

Adrenaline increases heart rate sending blood to major muscle groups - to prepare for action.

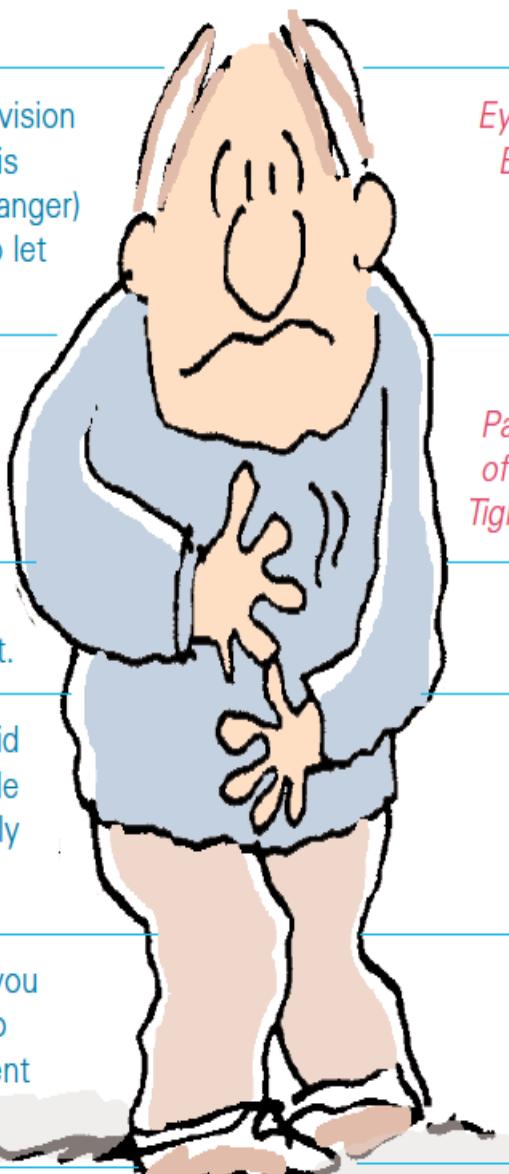
Increase in sweat so that the body does not overheat.

Stomach produces extra acid and digestive juices. Muscle action increases to quickly digest and eliminate food

Muscles tense to prepare you for a quick departure and to make the body more resilient to attack.

Blood vessels to skin constricted reducing any potential blood loss especially in hands and feet.

## RESULTING SYMPTOMS



Sense of danger, impending doom, Agitation - uneasiness - can't relax

Dizziness - Lightheadedness - Hyperventilation

Eye strain - Fear of going blind  
Blurred vision / spots in front of eyes - Sensitivity to light  
Feelings of unreality

Rapid heart beat - Palpitations - Flutters - Feeling of 'skipped' or 'missed' beats.  
Tight chest - Choking sensation

Sweating (even in cold)  
Hot and cold flushes

Frequently needing toilet  
Nausea 'Butterflies'  
Churning stomach Acidity  
Indigestion - Diarrhoea

Muscle tension - Shaking  
Stiffness Trembling - 'Jelly legs' - Twitching  
Even severe pain at times.

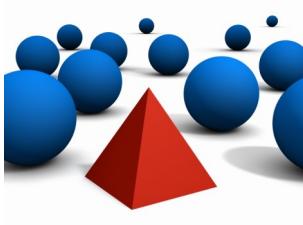
Cold clammy hands - 'Pins and needles' - Tingling sensations or numbness in hands and feet

Your brain does not recognise any difference between a real danger i.e. fear, e.g. a snarling dog and a perceived danger e.g. being worried about answering the telephone (anxiety). Therefore, you will have the same response to both fear and anxiety.

# THE FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE



The “fight or flight” response happens in our bodies and brains when we feel there is a danger.



The “fight or flight” response is different in different people.



There are many things that can happen when someone has a “fight or flight” response.

- You might start breathing faster or not breathing as deeply
- You might get a dry mouth
- You might get sweaty
- You might suddenly need the toilet
- You might find it hard to concentrate
- You might feel sick



There are also other things not on the list that can happen.

You can get the “fight or flight” response whether the danger is real or not.



You could get the “fight or flight” response when the danger is real, like an angry dog growling at you. This is called **fear**.



You could also get the “fight or flight” response when the danger is not real, such as being in a crowded place. This is called **anxiety**.



Everyone can experience both anxiety and fear.

When the “fight or flight” response happens, you can use breathing techniques to calm down.



Breathing techniques slow your breath down.



Breathing techniques send a signal to your brain that the danger/anxiety has passed.



Breathing techniques take time and practice to be effective.

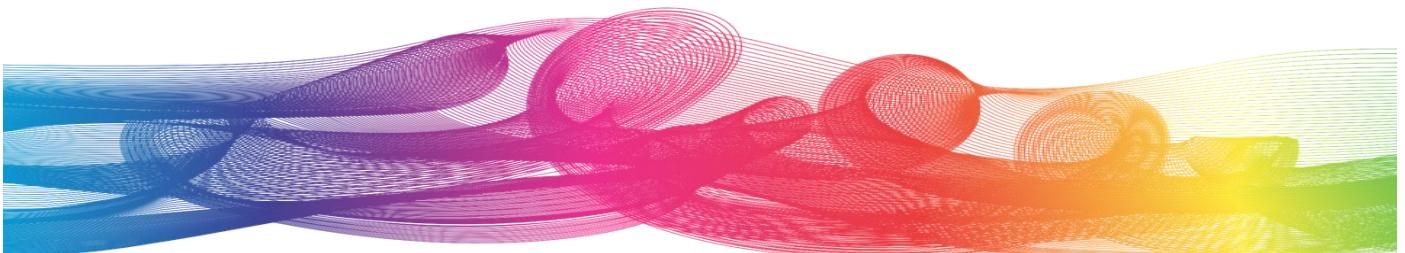
# BREATHING TECHNIQUES

Below are some breathing techniques you could try. Not every technique works for everyone. Try a technique a few times and see if it works for you.

## Colour breathing <sup>3</sup>

Colour breathing involves mentally picturing or meditating on a colour that represents how you want to feel and/or what you want to let go of in your life.

For example, you could breathe in the colour **blue** for peace and breathe out the colour **grey** to breathe out low mood. Or you could picture yourself breathing in **gold** and the energy filling your body as you breathe in.



Some more examples of colours for colour breathing:

**Blue** is the colour of relaxation and peace.

**Turquoise** is the colour of calm and cleansing.

**Green** is colour of healing.

**Magenta** is the colour of release.

**Orange** is the colour of fun, happiness and joy.

## 7/11 breathing <sup>4</sup>

Breathe in and count from 1 to 7 on each “in” breath (this does not have to be 7 seconds, it can be for 7 counts)

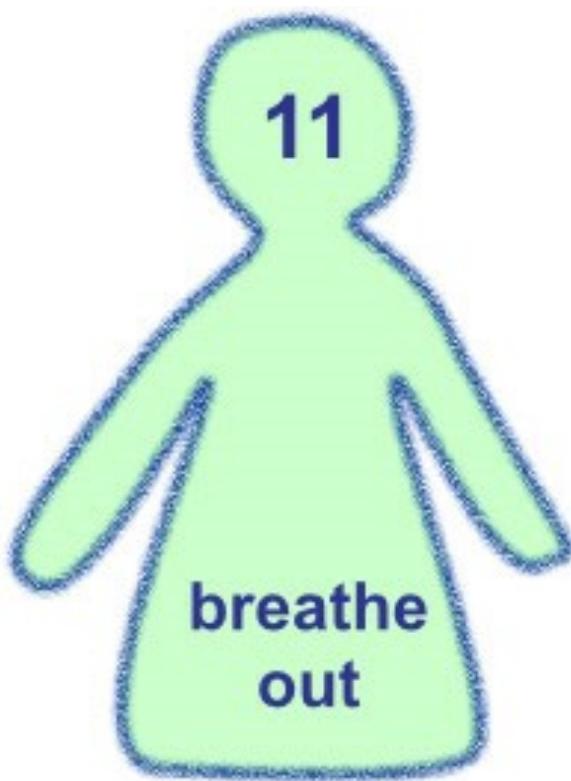
Breathe out then count at the same rate, from 1 to 11 on each “out” breath.

If breathing in for 7 and breathing out for 11 is too long, you can try breathing in for 3 and breathing out for 4.



### Count 1 to 7

First, count from one to seven  
on each “in” breath . . .



### Count 1 to 11

. . . then, counting at the same  
rate, count from one to eleven  
on each “out” breath

# Diaphragmatic breathing technique<sup>5</sup>

The diaphragm is the most efficient muscle of breathing. It is a large, dome-shaped muscle located at the base of the lungs. Your abdominal muscles help move the diaphragm and give you more power to empty your lungs.

Diaphragmatic breathing is intended to help you use the diaphragm correctly while breathing to:

- Strengthen the diaphragm
- Decrease the work of breathing by slowing your breathing rate
- Decrease oxygen demand
- Use less effort and energy to breathe

## Diaphragmatic breathing technique

1. Lie on your back on a flat surface or in bed, with your knees bent and your head supported. You can use a pillow under your knees to support your legs. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm move as you breathe.



2.

Breathe in slowly through your nose so that your stomach moves out against your hand. The hand on your chest should remain as still as possible.

3. Tighten your stomach muscles, letting them fall inward as you exhale through pursed lips. The hand on your upper chest must remain as still as possible.



When you first learn the diaphragmatic breathing technique, it may be easier for you to follow the instructions lying down. As you gain more practice, you can try the diaphragmatic breathing technique while sitting in a chair, as shown below.

## To perform this exercise while sitting in a chair:

1. Sit comfortably, with your knees bent and your shoulders, head and neck relaxed.



2. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm move as you breathe.

3. Tighten your stomach muscles, letting them fall inward as you exhale through pursed lips. The hand on your upper chest must remain as still as possible.

Note: You may notice an increased effort will be needed to use the diaphragm correctly. At first, you'll probably get tired while doing this exercise. But keep at it, because with continued practice, diaphragmatic breathing will become easy and automatic.

## How often should I practice this exercise?

At first, practice this exercise 5-10 minutes about 3-4 times per day. Gradually increase the amount of time you spend doing this exercise, and perhaps even increase the effort of the exercise by placing a book on your abdomen.

# THE MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM<sup>6</sup>

Anxiety can show itself in different ways in people, and can range from mild to severe. The **mental health continuum model** is a visual way of showing this.

*Where are you on the mental health continuum when you are feeling well? Where are you when you are not feeling so well?*

[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/)

## Mental Health Continuum Model



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Normal mood fluctuations</li><li>• Calm &amp; takes things in stride</li><li>• Good sense of humour</li><li>• Performing well</li><li>• In control mentally</li><li>• Normal sleep patterns</li><li>• Few sleep difficulties</li><li>• Physically well</li><li>• Good energy level</li><li>• Physically and socially active</li><li>• No or limited alcohol use/ gambling</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Irritable / impatient</li><li>• Nervous</li><li>• Sadness / overwhelmed</li><li>• Displaced sarcasm</li><li>• Procrastination</li><li>• Forgetfulness</li><li>• Trouble sleeping</li><li>• Intrusive thoughts</li><li>• Nightmares</li><li>• Muscle tension / headaches</li><li>• Low energy</li><li>• Decreased activity/socializing</li><li>• Regular but controlled alcohol use / gambling</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anger</li><li>• Anxiety</li><li>• Pervasively sad / hopeless</li><li>• Negative attitude</li><li>• Poor performance / workaholic</li><li>• Poor concentration / decisions</li><li>• Restless disturbed sleep</li><li>• Recurrent images / nightmares</li><li>• Increased aches and pains</li><li>• Increased fatigue</li><li>• Avoidance</li><li>• Withdrawal</li><li>• Increased alcohol use / gambling is hard to control</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Angry outbursts / aggression</li><li>• Excessive anxiety / panic attacks</li><li>• Depressed / suicidal thoughts</li><li>• Over insubordination</li><li>• Can't perform duties, control behaviour or concentrate</li><li>• Can't fall asleep or stay asleep</li><li>• Sleeping too much or too little</li><li>• Physical illnesses</li><li>• Constant fatigue</li><li>• Not going out or answering phone</li><li>• Alcohol or gambling addiction</li><li>• Other addictions</li></ul>
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# **STRESS OR ANXIETY? 7**

**Stress** is a response to an external cause, such as a tight deadline at work or having an argument with a friend, and subsides once the situation has been resolved.

**Anxiety** is a person's specific reaction to stress; its' origin is internal. Anxiety is typically characterised by a "persistent feeling of apprehension or dread" in situations that are not actually threatening. Anxiety persists even after a concern has passed.

Stress and anxiety can affect us physically, emotionally and behaviourally.

<b><u>PHYSICALLY</u></b>	<b><u>EMOTIONALLY</u></b>	<b><u>BEHAVIOURALLY</u></b>
FATIGUE	DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING	EATING MORE/LESS
DRY MOUTH	ANXIETY	SMOKING MORE
POUNDING HEART	PANIC ATTACKS	AVOIDING THINGS
SWEATING	TEARFUL	NAIL BITING
NAUSEA	LOW SELF-CONFIDENCE	SLEEPING MORE/LESS
STIFF MUSCLES	ANGER	DRINKING MORE
SHAKING	FEARFULNESS	NOT CARING FOR YOURSELF
ERRATIC BREATHING	CONFUSION	BEING OVERLY TALKATIVE
DIZZINESS	DEPRESSION	BEING QUIET/SHY
RESTLESSNESS	IRRITABILITY	SWEARING MORE

# **SELF TALK**

Self talk is the way you talk to yourself, or your inner voice. You might not be aware that you're doing it, but you most likely are. Self talk is important because it has a big impact on how you feel and what you do.



**Examples of negative self talk can be seen below.**

“I know I look awful today.”

“I’m sure he hates me”

“I’m so stupid!”

**Can you think of your own examples? Write them in the box below**

“I’m useless!”

**How could you change the above to something more positive?**

“I’m not able to do this at the moment, but in the future...”

## POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS

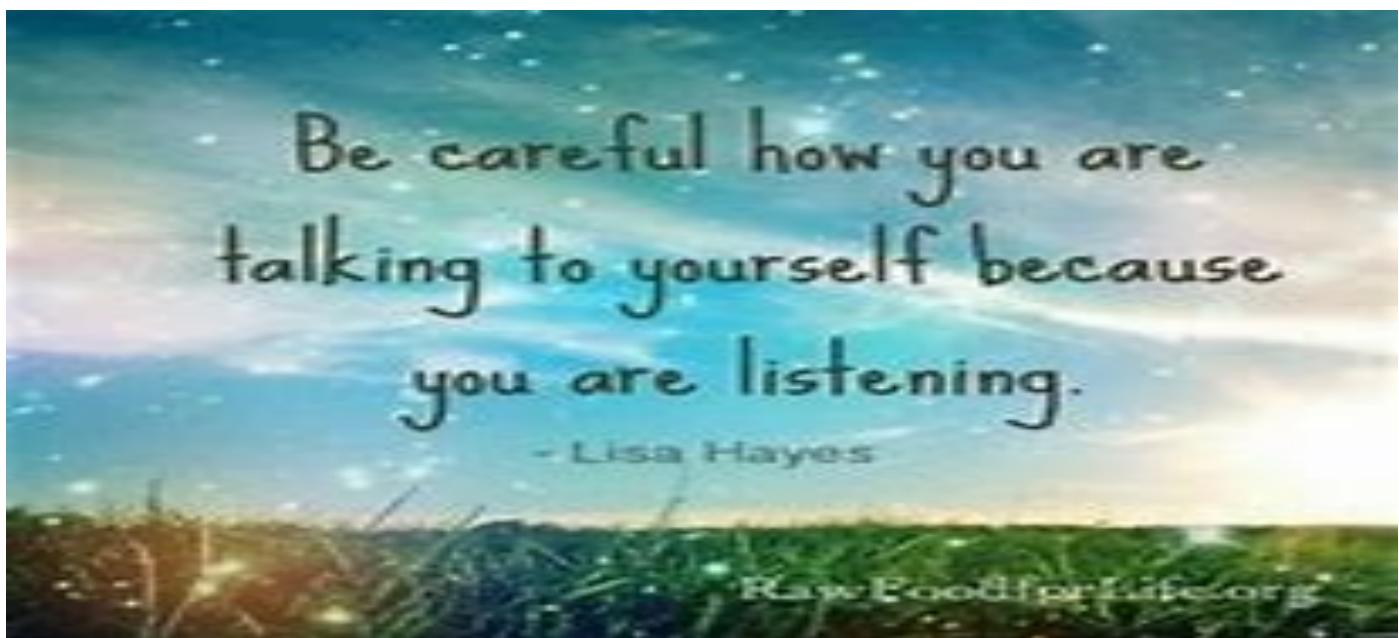
Affirmations are thoughts or words we can say, to trick our brains into being more positive or to make us feel better.

When feeling  
anxious we  
could...

Remember that  
this will pass

Feel the fear and  
do it anyway!

This is just my fight  
or flight response  
and it means my  
body is working.

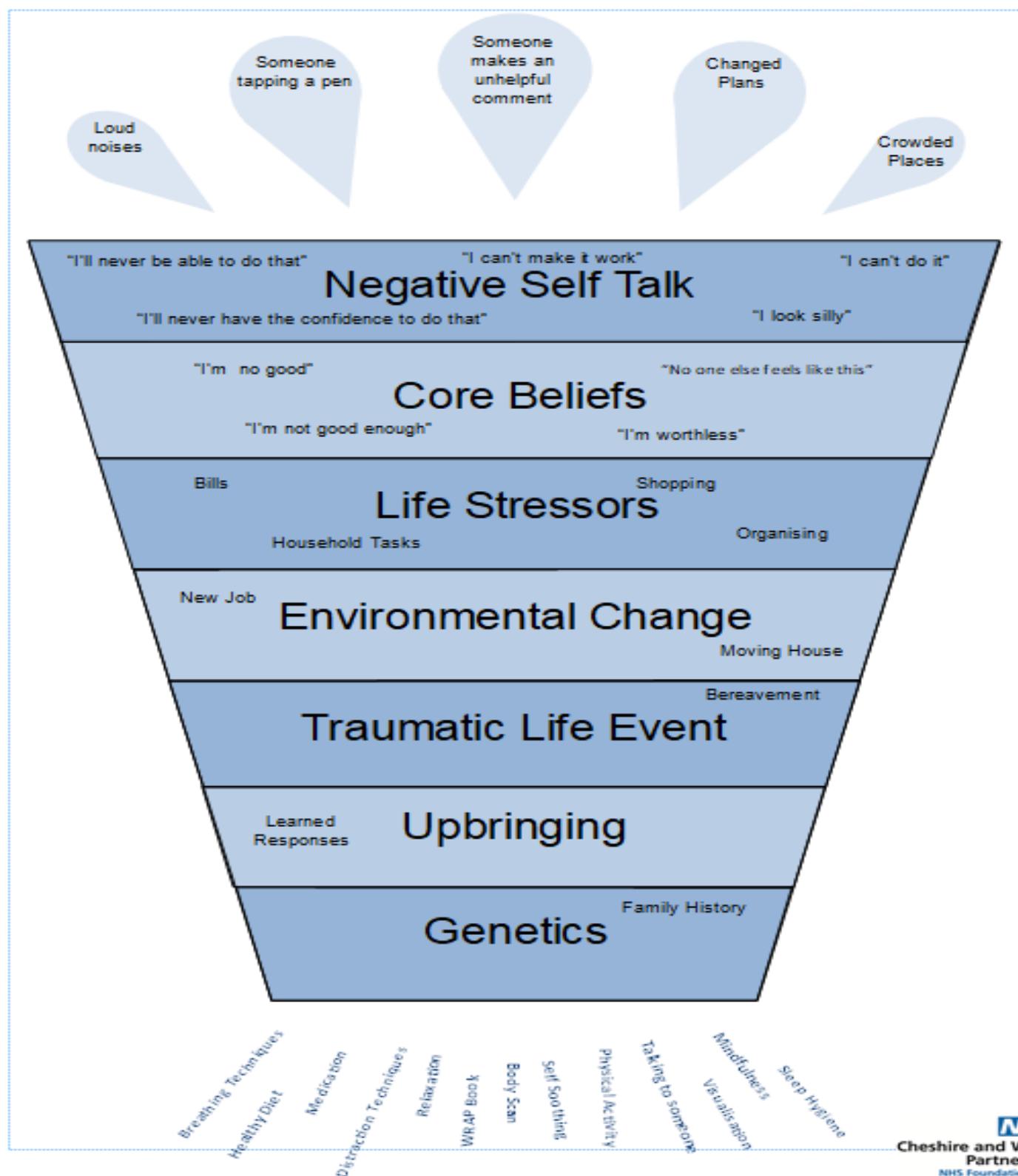


# THE STRESS BUCKET <sup>9</sup>

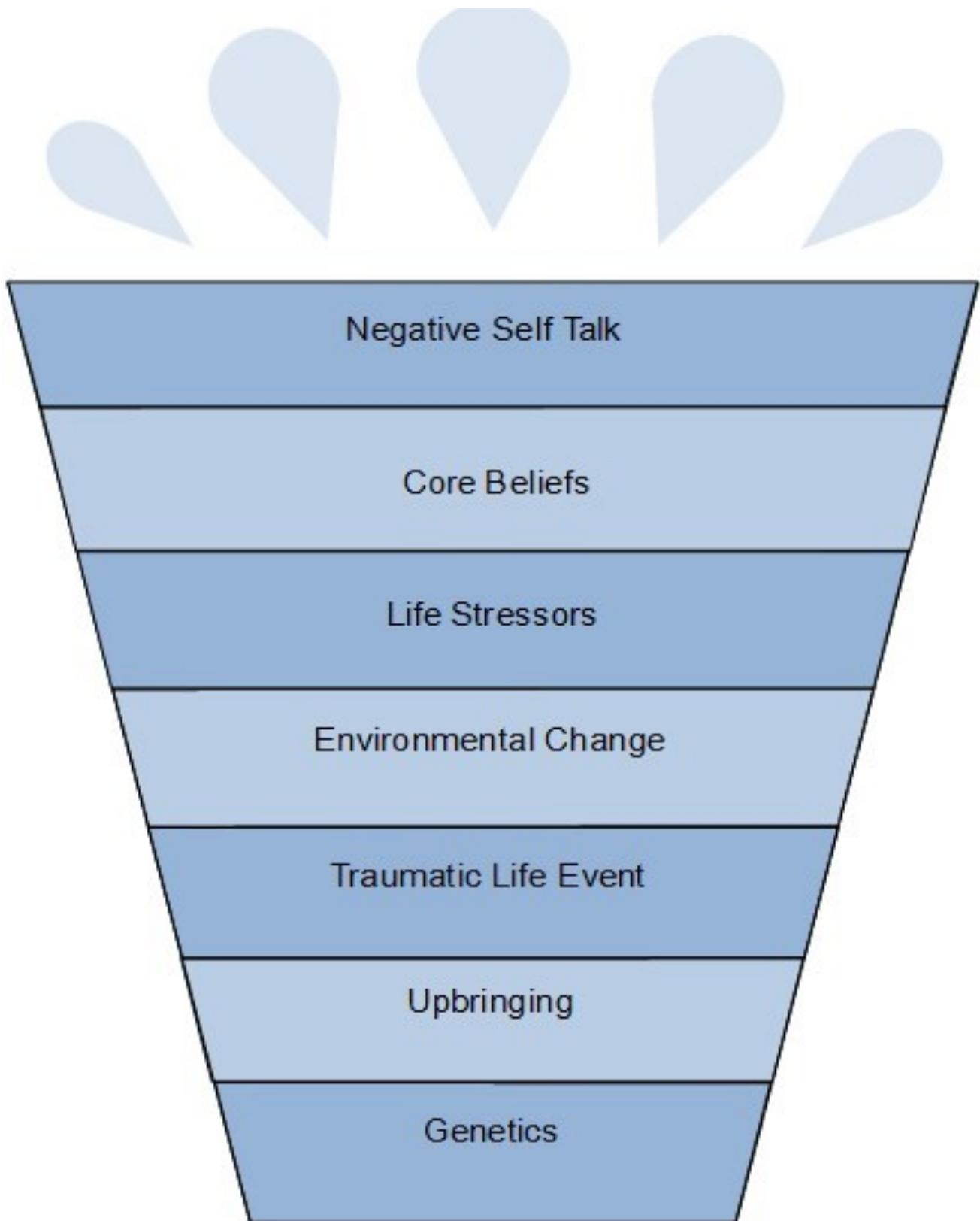
Imagine there's a bucket you carry with you which slowly fills up when you experience different types of stress. Sometimes you feel strong enough to carry a lot of stress, but it's important to find activities which help you lighten the load.

What helps you reduce stress?

How can you keep those activities going when other pressures build up?



Complete your own stress bucket and see where your stresses





A psychologist raised a glass of water and asked the class -

“How heavy is this glass of water?

The group replied with guesses of 150 grammes, 300 grammes.

She replied,

“The actual weight doesn’t matter, but the longer I hold it the heavier the glass feels.”

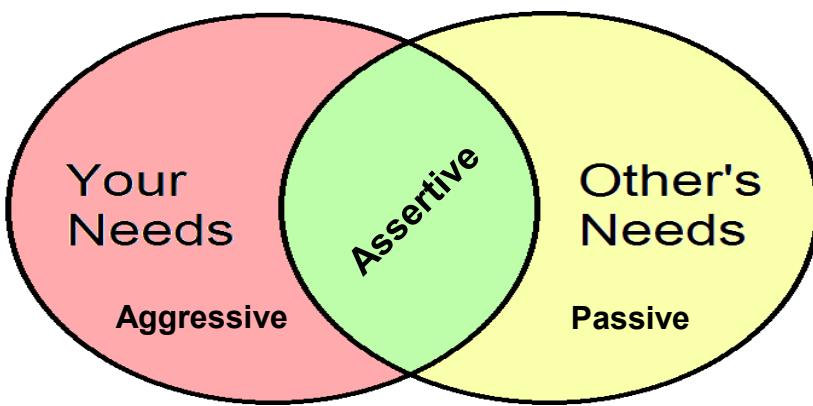
The stresses and worries in life are very like that glass of water. If I think about them for a little while, nothing happens. If I think about them for a bit longer they begin to hurt. And if I think about them all day long, I will feel paralysed and incapable of doing anything!”

Try to remember to put the glass down!”<sup>10</sup>

# COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Be assertive
- Be straight-forward
- Learn how to say “No” without feeling guilty about it!
- Use ‘I’ messages rather than ‘you’ messages
- Allow enough time for yourself to get your message across
- Write down some notes about what you’d like to communicate
- Bring someone with you to support you if necessary
- Use good eye contact
- Be aware of your body language
- Use short and simple sentences
- Speak clearly and loud enough to be heard
- Sit face to face
- Try to ensure you have no distractions





The Aggressive Person	The Assertive Person	The Passive Person
Interrupts and 'talks over' others	Speaks openly	Is afraid to speak up
Speaks loudly	Uses a conversational tone	Speaks softly
Glares and stares at others	Makes good eye contact	Avoids looking at people
Intimidates by using expression	Shows expression which matches the message	Shows little or no expression
Stands rigidly, crosses arms, invades the personal space of others	Relaxes and adopts an open stance and expressions	Slouches and withdraws
Controls groups	Participates in groups	Isolates self from groups
Only considers own feelings and/or makes demands of others	Keeps to the point	Agrees with others despite personal feelings
Values self more than others	Values self equal to others	Values self less than others
Hurts others to avoid being hurt	Tries not to hurt anyone (including self)	Hurts self to avoid hurting others
Reaches goals but hurts others in the process	Usually reaches goals without hurting others	Does not reach goals and may not even know goals
I'm okay, you're not	I'm okay, you're okay	You're okay, I'm not

# ASKING OTHERS FOR SUPPORT

Sometimes certain ways of thinking can get in the way of being assertive. Some of these ways of thinking can be seen below.

**See if you can think of more helpful ways of thinking for each example below.**

- “Asking for help is a sign of weakness.”

*It takes courage to ask for help, because I know how hard it is for me.*

*Helping others helps me to feel useful. Maybe others might feel useful helping me?*

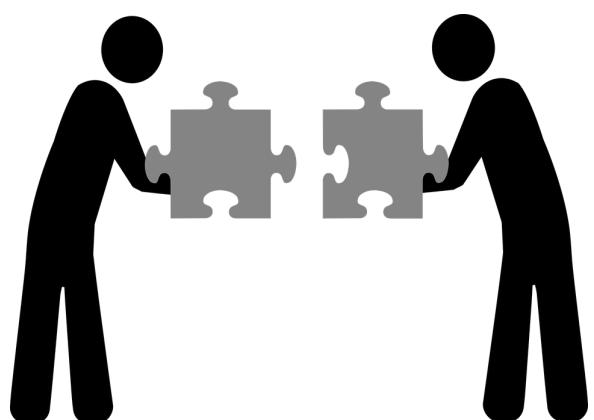
- “People don’t have time, I’m just a burden.”

- “I’m not worthy of help or support.”

- “Asking for help means I’m incompetent.”

- “I’m the only one who can do this properly – it’ll just be quicker and easier for me to do.”

- “I’ll have to reciprocate if I ask for help.”



We'll be looking at Unhelpful Thoughts in more detail later.

**Joan often finds that she has a number of tablets left at the end of the month when she should have taken them.**

## **Problem-Solving**

### **Exercise**

<sup>12</sup>

**She normally has to take 6 tablets in the morning and 4 in the evening.**

**Think of any possible solutions or ideas to ensure Joan takes her medication correctly.**





## Part 1. Solutions to help Joan remember to take her medications properly.....

### Part 2. List all the solutions you can think of

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

Part 3. Agree on the best solution and try it out. ***Circle which solution you would like to try out.***

Part 4. Review the results – if that idea doesn't work don't give up! Go back to the list and choose another idea.

Part 5. Utilise other resources such as friends/family or professionals.

Part 6. When all solutions have been tried it may be that the problem is not solvable at this point in time. At this stage, you can try another self management strategy.

**Joan often finds that she has a number of tablets left at the end of the month when she should have none. She normally has to take 6 tablets in the morning and 4 tablets in the evening before bed.**

**What can she do to help her remember to take her medications?**

### **Possible Solutions:**

Joan could get in contact with her pharmacy and ask if they can provide a pre-packed blister pack.

- She could ask her care giver or a family member to ring and remind her each morning and evening.
- Joan could set an alarm reminder on her mobile
- She could put her medications beside or near her tooth-brush as brushes her teeth at the same time her tablets need taking.
- You can also use a dry-erase board to keep track of pills you have taken, erasing reminders after each Turn your bottle upside down after you take meds
- Leave yourself notes to help you remember. Post-it notes on your bathroom mirror or nightstand work great.
- Keep a diary and write down each time you take your tablets.

**Try out the chosen solution, if it works - great; if not, follow steps 4, 5 and 6.**



# Try this yourself... PROBLEM SOLVING

Sometimes worrying about a problem can make anxiety worse. Problem solving can be an effective technique to find a solution or to realise that at this time there is no solution and another self management strategy is required.

The steps to problem solve can be seen below. ***Try using a problem you have and writing out a problem solve below.***

1. Pinpoint a problem or goal. ***Write down what your problem or goal is. Try to be as specific as possible.***

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2. List all the possible solutions and ideas. ***List your ideas below. Don't worry if they sound silly—the trick here is to just list as many ideas that you can think of.***

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3. Agree on the best solution and try it out. ***Circle which solution you would like to try out.***
4. Review the results – if that idea doesn't work don't give up! Go back to the list and choose another idea.
5. Utilise other resources such as friends/family or professionals.
6. When all solutions have been tried it may be that the problem is not solvable at this point in time. At this stage, you can try another self management strategy.

# CIRCLE OF CONCERN AND CIRCLE OF CONTROL<sup>13</sup>

Some issues are within our control. However, there are some things we cannot control. The trick is being aware of what is within our control and what is not.

- Be honest with yourself
- Don't waste energy on things you can do nothing or very little about!

**Have a look at the examples below and fill in your own circles on the next page.**

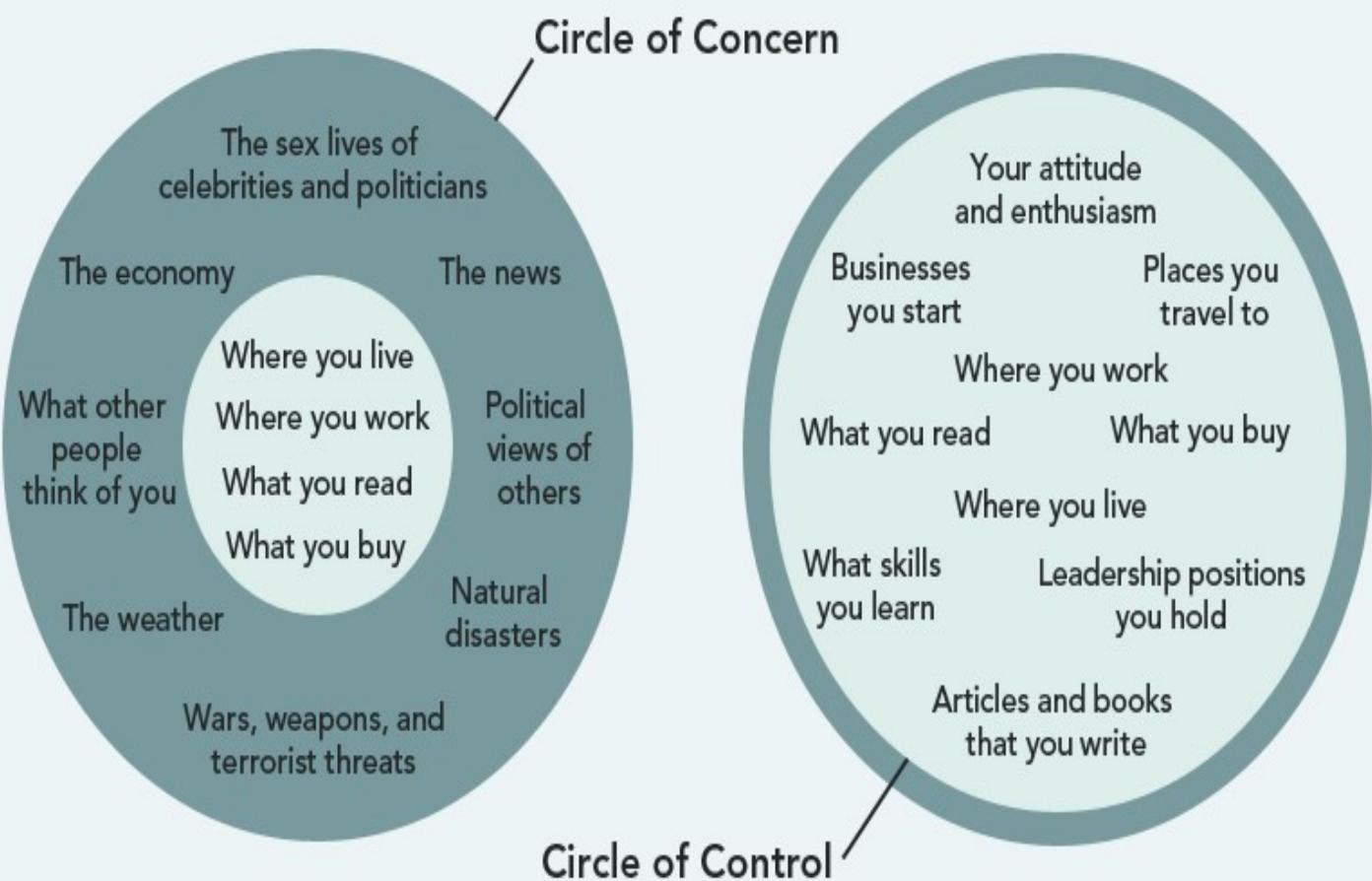
## Circle of Concern vs. Circle of Control

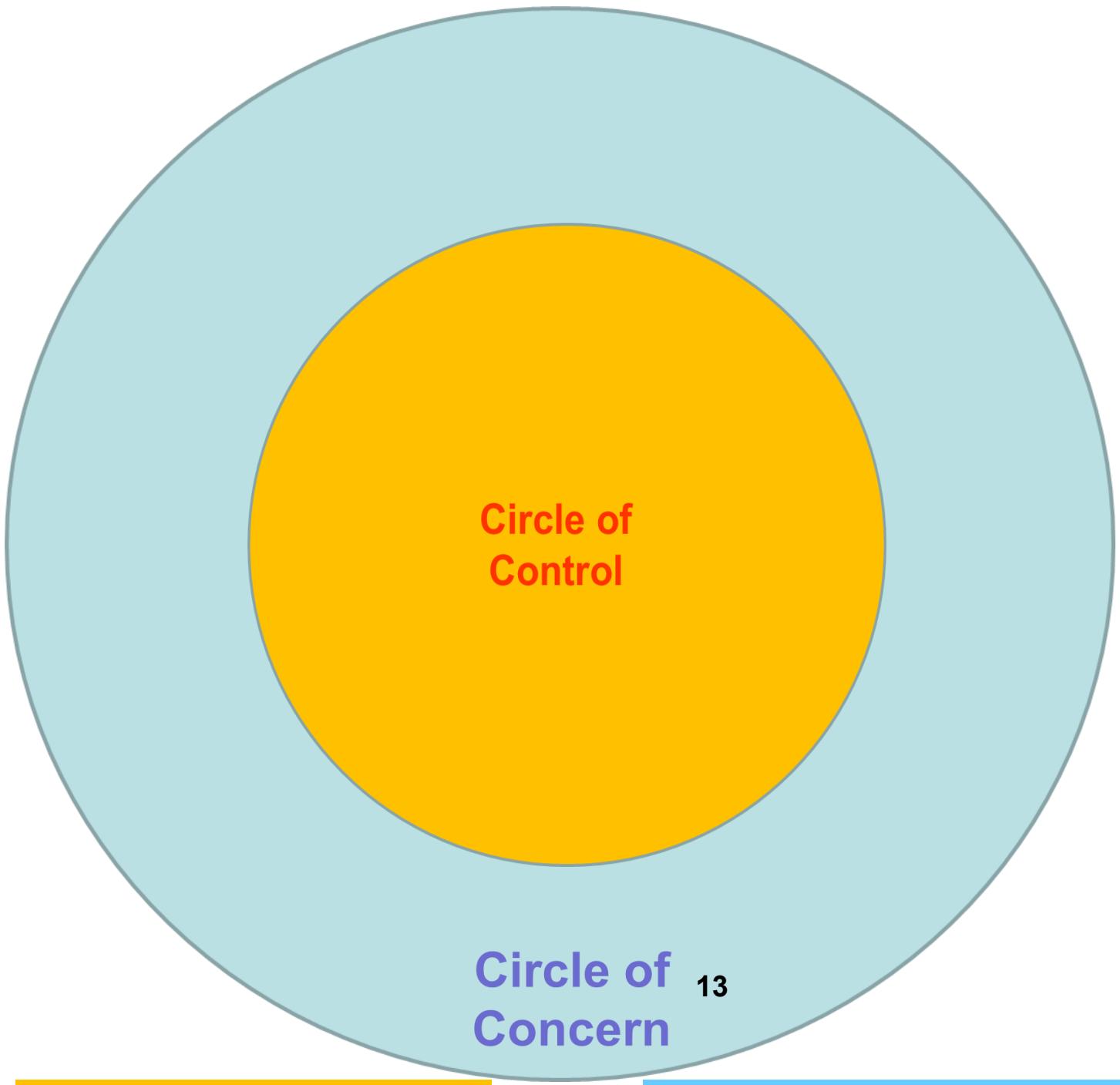
### How Reactive People Act

Large Circle of Concern and a small Circle of Control. A lot of time and energy is wasted reacting to issues that they can't control.

### How Proactive People Act

Small Circle of Concern and a large Circle of Control. A lot of time and energy is focused on issues that are within their control.





### Reactive

If you have a large circle of concern and a small circle of control, a lot of time and energy is wasted reacting to issues that you can't control.

### Proactive

If you have a small circle of concern and a large circle of control, time and energy is focused on issues that are within your control.

## **Common Unhelpful Thinking Patterns:** <sup>1</sup>

1. Catastrophising: People often catastrophise when they're anxious, making them feel things are far worse than the actuality, e.g. "My partner is late, they must have been in an accident."
2. Black and White Thinking: We often see things in black and white when anxious—leaving no 'in between.' e.g. Gary hasn't been to see me for ages, he must hate me.'
3. Emotional Reasoning: This is treating your emotions as if they are facts: I'm terrified of going to the new group—something bad is going to happen.'
4. Must and Should Statements: People can live by fixed rules they have put in place for themselves about what the 'should' or 'must do, e.g. "I should be able to manage."
5. Jumping to Conclusions: We often assume we know what other people might be thinking and these suppositions lead to 'what if' scenarios about the future, e.g. "I can't drive anymore, I'm not going to be able to do anything anymore."

## **How can we Challenge these Unhelpful Thoughts:**

1. Take note of the situation
2. Denote your feelings about the situation
3. Write down your unhelpful thought
4. Breakdown evidence for and against the unhelpful thought
5. Use the evidence checking questions on the following page to help you.

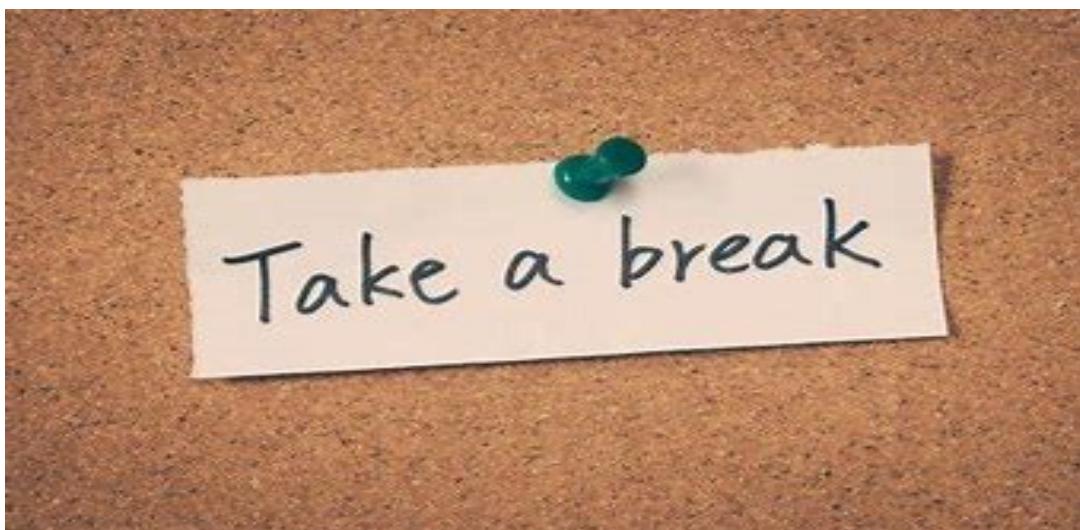
Helpful questions to ask yourself to determine if your unhelpful thought is fact or opinion:<sup>1</sup>



Let's use one of our previous unhelpful thoughts as an example:

**"My partner is late, they must have been in an accident."**

1. **Is there any evidence against this thought?** E.g. They've never had an accident before; They're a safe driver, Nobodies phoned to say there's been an accident.
2. **Is there any evidence for this thought that is based in fact?** E.g. 'they're usually only half an hour getting home', 'they're not usually late', 'they call me if they're delayed'.
3. **Can you identify any unhelpful thinking patterns?** E.g. thinking that they've had an accident is catastrophising.
4. **What would I say to a friend in a similar situation?** E.g. 'They've probably got stuck in a traffic jam and can't ring you.'
5. **Is there another way of looking at this situation?** E.g. 'They might have just forgotten to ring me to say they'd be delayed'.
6. **Is there a more proactive solution to this unhelpful thought? This would be the more balanced thought.** E.g. Maybe I could do a crossword to distract myself and if they haven't arrived in 15 more minutes I'll try phoning them.'



# Take your thoughts to court to gain a balanced viewpoint

## Thought Record

Event/ Circumstances/ Trigger	Anxious Thoughts	Feelings and Sensations
See friend, wave at them but get no response	She's fallen out with me / doesn't like me anymore	Sick, sad and worried

## Breaking it down

Evidence Supporting My Anxious Thoughts	Evidence Against My Anxious Thoughts
She didn't wave back so must be ignoring me	Maybe she didn't see me as it was quite busy
She's not contacted me for ages	She's got a lot on her mind, maybe she was busy thinking and didn't notice me
Nobody likes me	My family and friends like me
I must have done something to cause this	I haven't done anything to my knowledge that would annoy her

# Now it's your turn

## Thought Record

Event/ Circumstances/ Trigger	Anxious Thoughts	Feelings and Sensations

## Breaking it down

Evidence Supporting My Anxious Thoughts	Evidence Against My Anxious Thoughts

# Mindfulness

Can be used when you feel ....

anxious, angry,  
uneasy, sad, content,  
happy, joyful, grateful...

**Anytime!**

Think of...

5

Things you can see

4

Things you can hear

3

Things you can feel

2

Things you can smell

1

DEEP BREATH

## Action Planning <sup>15</sup>

To help you meet  
your goals



What? A specific task	
How much? Measurable	
When? Day/Time	
How many times? How often that week?	
Score 0-10 ? We look for a 7 or more.	

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step Lao Tzu

# **Example Action Plan <sup>15</sup>**

What? A specific task	Go for a short walk
How much? Measurable	15 mins
When? Day/Time	Wednesday and Friday at noon
How many times? How often that week?	Twice
Score 0-10 ? We look for a 7 or more.	7 If you're score is under 7 you might need to change it!

**Now you try.....**

What? A specific task	
How much? Measurable	
When? Day/Time	
How many times? How often that week?	
Score 0-10 ? We look for a 7 or more.	

# Relaxation/Visualisation Script: Exercise <sup>16</sup>

- I invite you to take a deep breath and when you're comfortable, begin to close your eyes [pause].
- I wonder if you would take a moment to imagine yourself being more calm, peaceful and focused [pause].
- And as you allow your unconscious mind to naturally conjure an image of what that would feel like; consider what you might be seeing [longer pause], hearing [longer pause] and what you might be feeling [longer pause] that shows you are more calm, peaceful and focused [pause].
- And perhaps you are already feeling more calm, peaceful and focused [pause].
- If not, notice that your unconscious mind can reveal how you might do this [longer pause].
- Now, maybe you can think of a simple way to incorporate this feeling of calm into your life in the days and weeks ahead [longer pause].
- And after you have done that, know that it really can be this easy to create a little more peace and calm in your life [pause].
- So, I invite you now to take a breath for a moment, and begin to move your attention back to the room, listening to the sounds around you and begin to open your eyes [pause].

**So, how was that? What did you learn?**

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# DISTRACTION

Can you think of other ways to help with your anxiety?

## Activities

Ways to help you feel calmer

# DISTRACTION

Can you think of other ways to help with your anxiety?

## Activities—examples

Read a book or magazine

Spend a bit of time with a good friend or family member

Watch your favourite television show

Listen to the radio

Play golf or go for a swim at the local baths

Do something creative—paint, draw, knit,

Do some exercise—go for a short walk, go to the local shops

Do some gardening if the weather permits

Keep with my routine: Use action planning

Play a card game e.g. solitaire

## Ways to help you feel calmer— examples

Self-soothe with a relaxing bubble bath

Practice self-compassion—Write yourself a compassionate letter

Do a controlled breathing exercise

Use a mindfulness exercise such as the 5 4 3 2 1 method

Do a visualisation / relaxation exercise

Listen to your favourite relaxing music

Stroke your pet if you have a cat, dog or other

Get a nice hug from a loved one

Light a scented candle e.g. Lavendar

Have a nice treat e.g. slice of cake with your cuppa

<b>Self Management Checklist</b>		✓
a)	Talk to someone—a good person for me to ring is .....	
b)	Breathing techniques—I like to use .....	
c)	WRAP book—do I have any action plans that will help me?	
d)	Mindfulness—staying in the moment. One mindful activity I enjoy doing is .....	
e)	Self Soothe—something I like to do to comfort myself (eg relaxing bath, music) Something I do to self soothe is .....	
f)	Get my muscles moving to release endorphins. A type of exercise I enjoy is .....	
g)	Distraction—focusing attention else where can help, like doing a puzzle. I like to .....	
h)	Relaxation CD or meditation—like a visualisation or body scan. I like to do .....	
i)	Medication—is it being taken properly or can I take PRN medication	

## Notes:

**Notes:**

Please remember that we are all different and have had different life experiences, but there are ways in which we can help ourselves.

However, it is important to remember to go slowly and take pleasure in the journey, and to realise that change takes time and practise.

*Patience is not the ability  
to wait, but the ability to  
keep a good attitude  
while waiting.*

**New things take time so remember  
to be patient with yourself!**