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.

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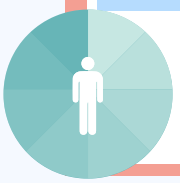
UNDERSTANDING YOUR ANXIETY

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

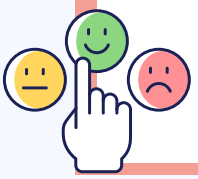
BRAIN CHEMISTRY

PERSONALITY TYPE

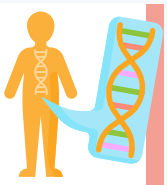


THOUGHTS

ACTIONS/BEHAVIOR



GENETICS



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THE ANXIETY ICEBERG

WHAT YOU SEE

SPACED OUT

ON EDGE

IRRITATED AND FIDGETY

NERVOUS

SCATTERED

CRYING

WHAT YOU DON'T SEE

NUMB

WORRY

HOPELESS

INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS

CONCENTRATION DIFFICULTIES

RUN DOWN

HEADACHES

SHAME

GRIEF

EMBARRASSED

PANIC

GUILT

RACING HEART

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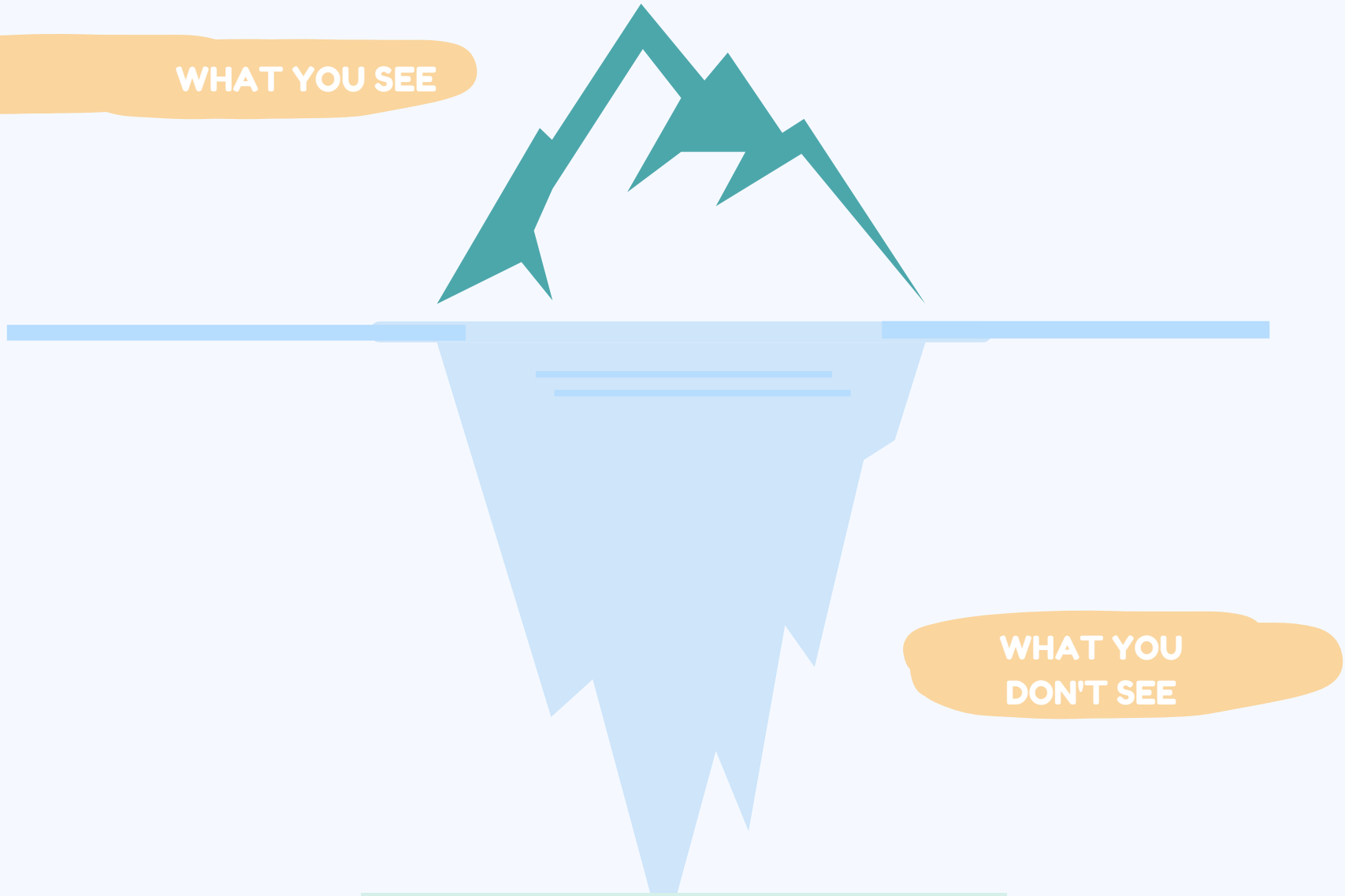
THE ANXIETY ICEBERG

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.



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 ☐

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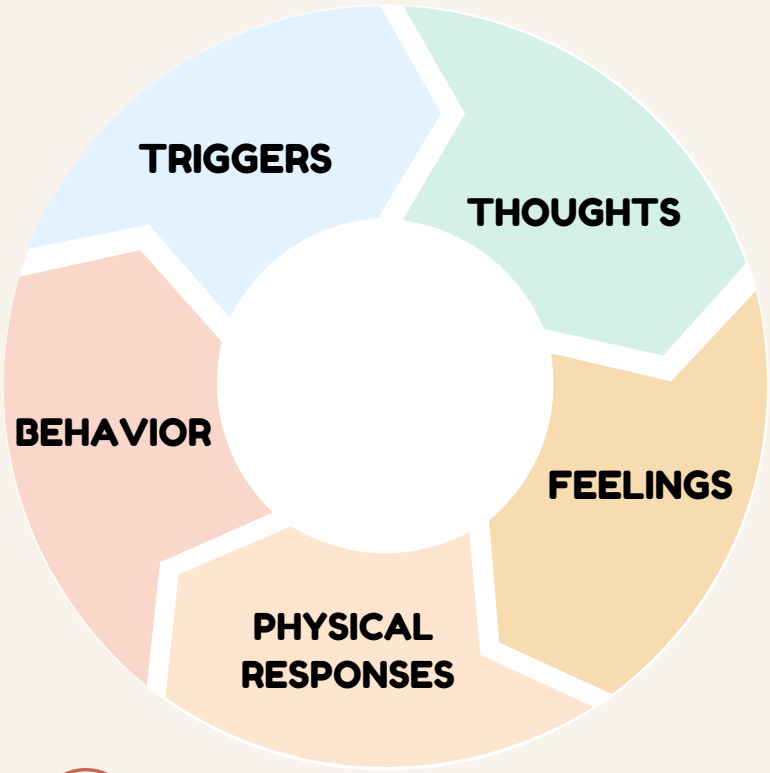
ANXIETY AND MY BODY

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
- Urinating
- Weak knees
- Nauseous
- Butterflies in tummy
- Trembling
- Wide eyes

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.

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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;
Gratefulness, 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.

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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

- _____
- _____
- _____

IDENTIFY YOUR PATTERN

Spot the triggers and change your destructive thoughts

SETTING/ EVENT	TRIGGER	ACTION/ RESPONSE	RESULT/ CONSEQUENCE

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 wont 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

Warning signs that a crisis might be developing

Coping skills I can use

People I can call

Professional agencies I can call

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 NEED TO TRUST THE PROCESS. I AM OK

MY FEELINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS RATIONAL

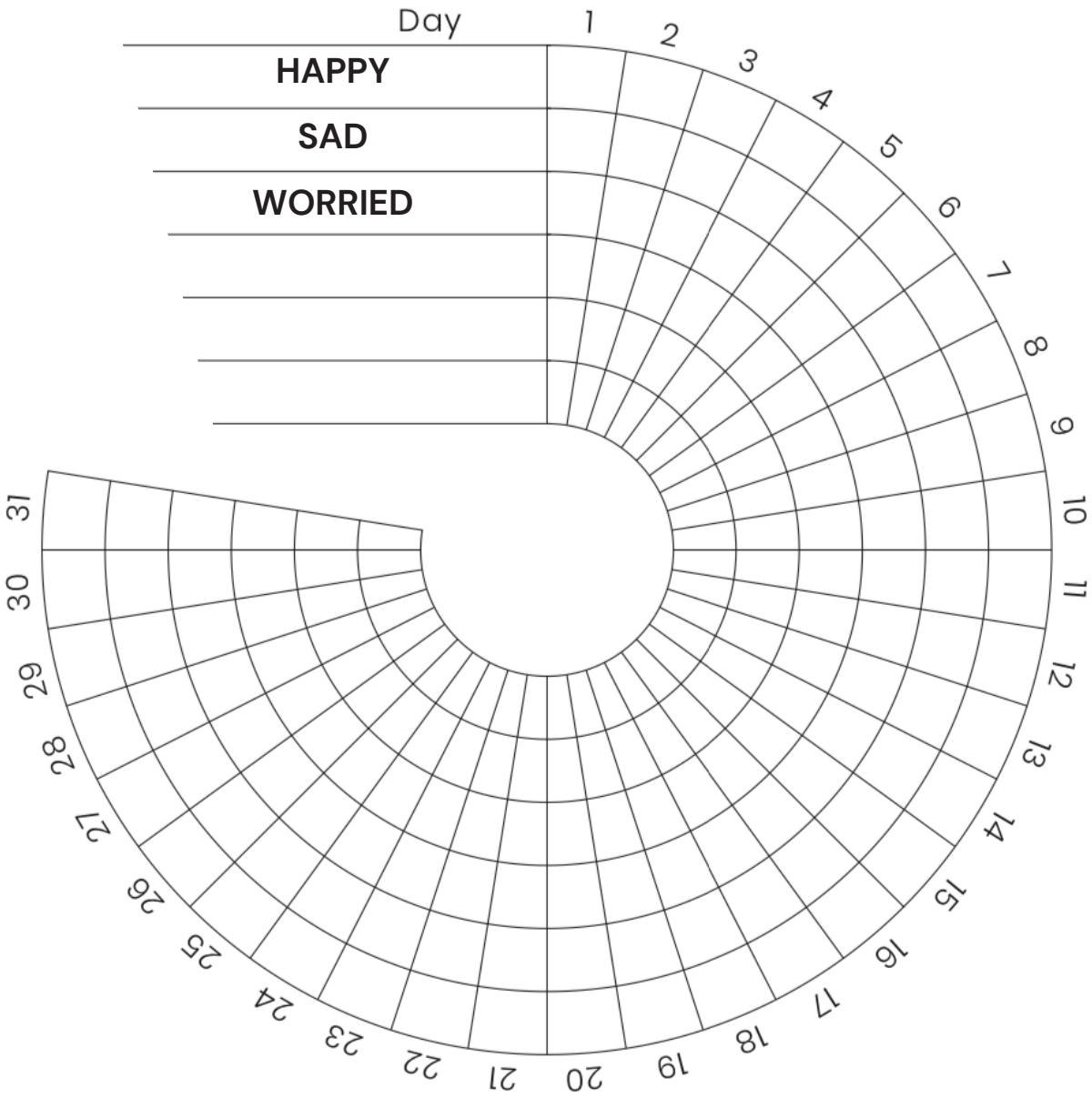
I CAN FEEL ANXIOUS AND STILL HANDLE THIS

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.



NOTES

PUTTING THOUGHTS ON TRIAL

THE THOUGHT

What am I worrying about?

THE DEFENCE

Do I have any evidence that my thought could be true? - They must be facts.

THE PROSECUTION

Do I have any evidence that my thought could not be true? - They must be facts.

THE JUDGE'S VERDICT

When I look at all of the evidence, can I decide whether my thought is likely to come true or not?

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

THIS IS WHAT I THINK

WHEN THIS WHAT I FEEL

WHAT I CAN DO IN THIS EVENT TO REDUCE MY DEPRESSION

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.

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

Coping skills that help with my anxiety

Anxiety Scale

1 MINIMAL

- Feeling calm and relaxed
- No noticeable physical symptoms
- Able to focus and concentrate easily
- Able to engage in activities without distress

2 MILD

- Slight restlessness or uneasiness
- Slight increase in heart rate or mild butterflies in the stomach
- Minor difficulty in focusing or concentrating
- Occasional worry or nervousness

3 MODERATE

- Noticeable feelings of worry or nervousness
- Increased heart rate or palpitations
- Difficulty in concentrating or focusing
- Muscle tension or trembling
- Occasional difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep

4 SEVERE

- Feeling highly distressed, worried, or on edge
- Rapid heart rate or skipped heartbeats
- Intense difficulty focusing or concentrating
- Profound muscle tension or trembling
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- Difficulty making decisions or taking action

5 DEBILITATING

- Overwhelming feelings of panic or terror
- Rapid, pounding heart rate or irregular heartbeat
- Severe difficulty in focusing or concentrating
- Frequent panic attacks or feeling of impending doom
- Sleep disturbances or insomnia
- Avoidance behaviors or extreme distress in certain situations

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

INCREASE	REDUCE/STOP	HOW WILL THIS MAKE ME BEHAVE DIFFERENTLY?

THOUGHTS

INCREASE	REDUCE/STOP	HOW WILL THIS MAKE ME BEHAVE DIFFERENTLY?

FEELINGS/EMOTIONS

INCREASE	REDUCE/STOP	HOW WILL THIS MAKE ME BEHAVE DIFFERENTLY?

"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

The past

What other people think

What other people believe

Other people's actions

The weather

Death

What other's post online

My age

How people react to my boundaries

Predicting what will happen

Other people's opinions

The future

The results of a sports match

Things I can control

- So I will focus on these things

Who I spend time with

My goals

My Boundaries

What I post online

My thoughts

My values and beliefs

What I say

How i spend my spare time

My actions

What I say about other people

My honesty

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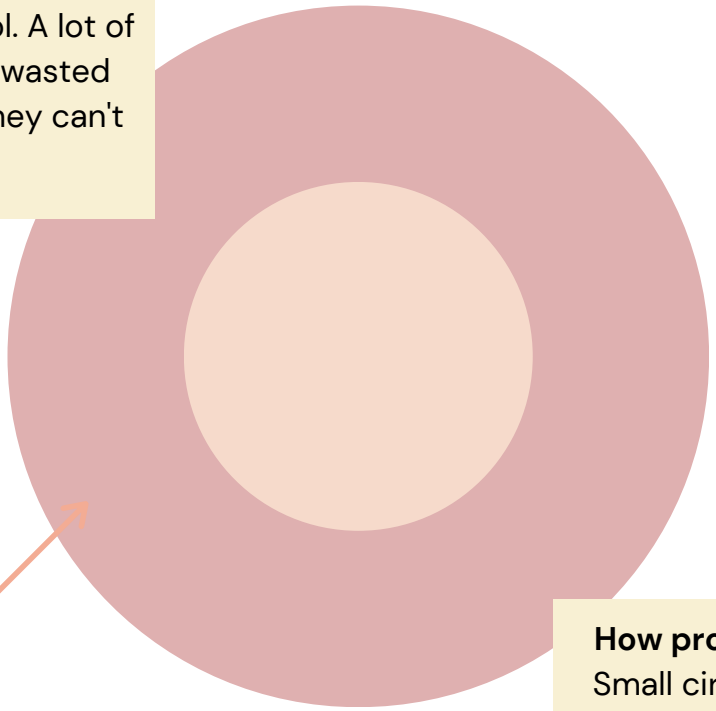
CIRCLE OF CONCERN

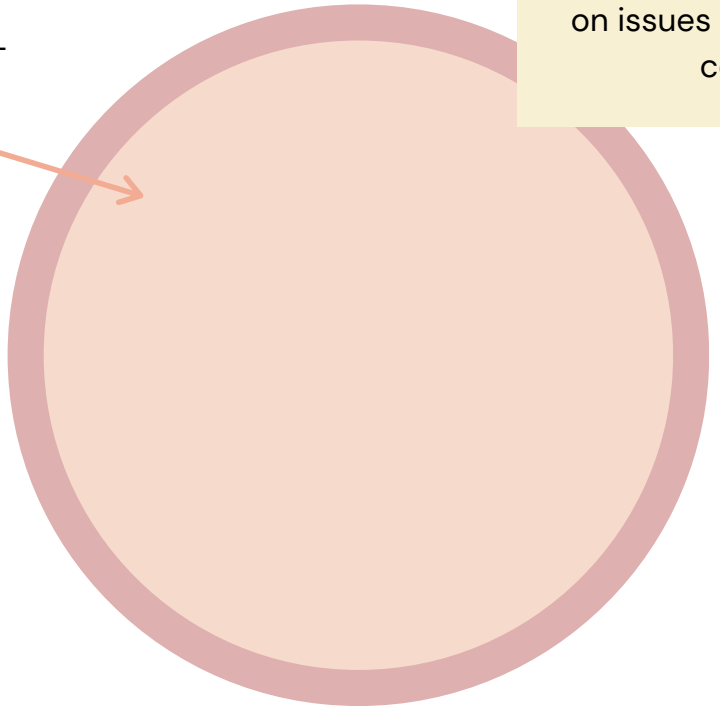
How reactive people act
Large circle of concern and small circle of control. A lot of time and energy is wasted reacting to issues they can't control.



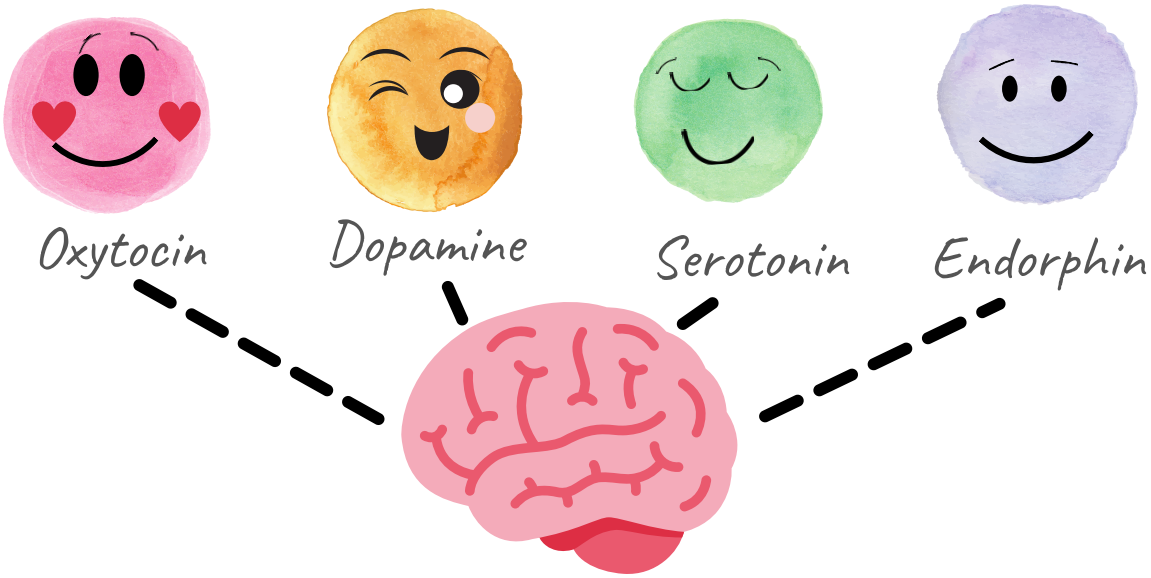
CIRCLE OF CONCERN

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?

REFLECTION