

Worry Management: Your Self-help guide

This booklet has lots of different types of information and advice that can help keep you well.



What is Anxiety?



What is Worry Management?



The Worry Tree



Worry Time



Distraction Techniques



Problem Solving

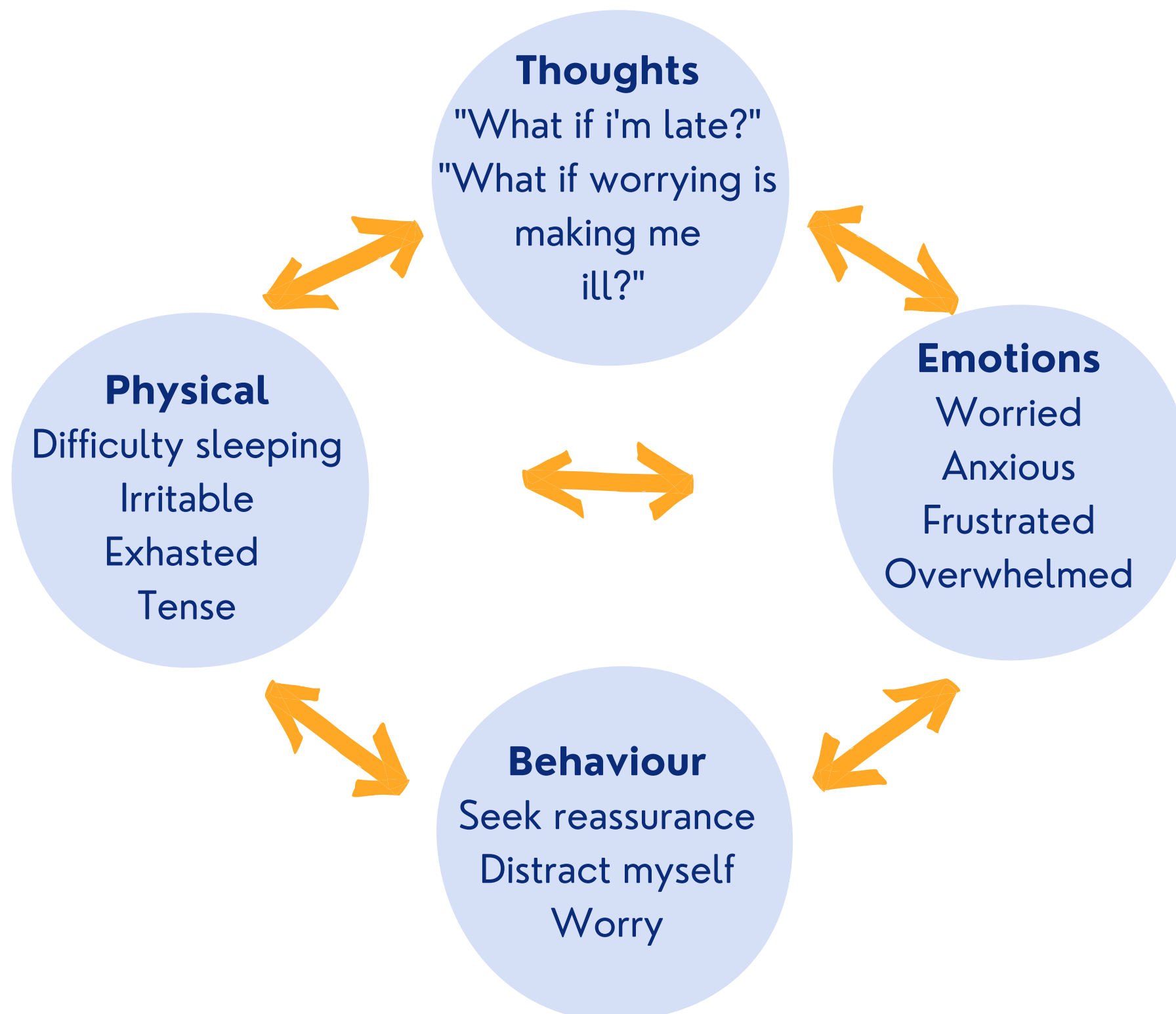
For more information please speak to your Education Mental Health Practitioner



what is anxiety?



Anxiety is a normal emotion that everyone will feel at some point in their lives. It can be difficult to control and can impact our lives by making it difficult to do certain things.



Understanding your symptoms of anxiety is the first step to getting better. Remember, though these symptoms are upsetting, they are a **NORMAL** reaction and are caused by our body's natural reaction. This is called the **Fight or Flight** response which is how our body reacts to something it sees as **dangerous**.



Symptoms of anxiety



Feeling worried & guilty

Feeling anxious for a long time can make us focus on the bad things in life, making us feel like nothing is good. We might also feel guilty for thinking this way and be more irritable than usual.

Concentration

Sometimes anxiety can get in the way of day to day life and we can get caught up in our thoughts. This makes it harder to us to focus on things such as school work.

Nervousness

When we feel anxious there may be situations we feel nervous in, or dread. We may try to avoid doing these things or seek reassurance from others. These can be uncomfortable feelings for us to feel but are a very common symptom of anxiety.

Sleep

Changes to our hormones can make it difficult to get to sleep. Equally, anxious thoughts could also stop us getting to sleep. You might also notice you spend more time in bed or at home due to feeling overwhelmed.

Panic

Anxiety can cause us to overthink things, so we build things up in our brains. This might mean we become too frightened to do the things we'd usually want to do.

Physical feelings

Examples of physical feelings include:
A notably fast, strong or irregular heart beat, a dry mouth, dizziness, shaking, feeling sick, headache, stomach ache, pins and needles, trembling, sweating, muscle ache and tension.



Fight or Flight



So why I do feel like this?

We all have the same automatic response to danger called the **FIGHT** or **FLIGHT** response. Humans developed this as cave men because it was a much more dangerous time to live back then (think running away from saber tooth tigers and hunting for food). The fight or flight response meant that cave men's bodies went into survival mode whenever their brains sensed danger. This meant their heart rate and blood pressure would increase so they had a better chance of running away or fighting the danger!

Even though we don't face the same dangers today, our brains and bodies still react in the same way to the things we see as dangerous, scary or worrying.

This means our increased heart rate and blood pressure causes us to feel **anxious!**

Imagine you have a smoke alarm that is overly sensitive and goes off all of the time, even when there isn't a real fire. Our Fight or Flight response is just like this - it goes off and causes physical changes in our bodies, even if there isn't any real danger.

it's because
of science!

AAA!





what is worry Management?



Worry management is a set of techniques to help reduce the impact of worrying or to solve practical problems. Worry management includes identifying and classifying worries then using either Worry Time or Problem Solving to manage these. There are two main types of worries; practical worries and hypothetical worries.



EXAM

Practical worries are often about a current situation that you can do something about. For example this can include things like; "I don't have enough time to complete my work", "I have a tooth ache" or "I need to book leave for my holiday". It is quite normal when we are feeling anxious or overwhelmed not to act on our worries and to start putting things off. However this often leads to our worries piling up and we can become overwhelmed and stuck in a vicious cycle.



Hypothetical worries are often about the future and what might happen. These worries are about things that we do not currently have control over and therefore cannot do anything about. Hypothetical worries often come in the form of a "what if", for example; "What if the car breaks down?", "What if the train is late?" or "What if I get lost on my way home?". These worries can be very overwhelming and can lead to us worrying about worry.



what is worry management



To begin with it may be difficult to capture our worries as it is not something we do in our day to day lives. By using a worry diary like the one below we can begin to identify the worries that are causing us to feel anxious.

Worry Diary

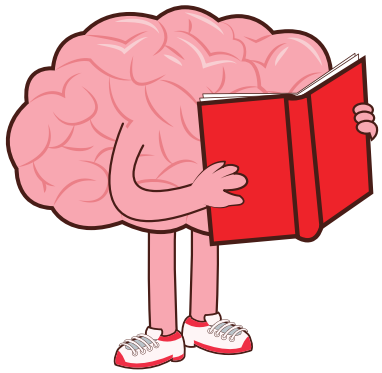
Situation: What was happening? Where were you? Who were you with?	Worry: What were you thinking?	Intensity of anxiety (0-100%): Rate how intense the feeling was (0-100%)	Classify - Is it a practical (P) or hypothetical (H) worry?



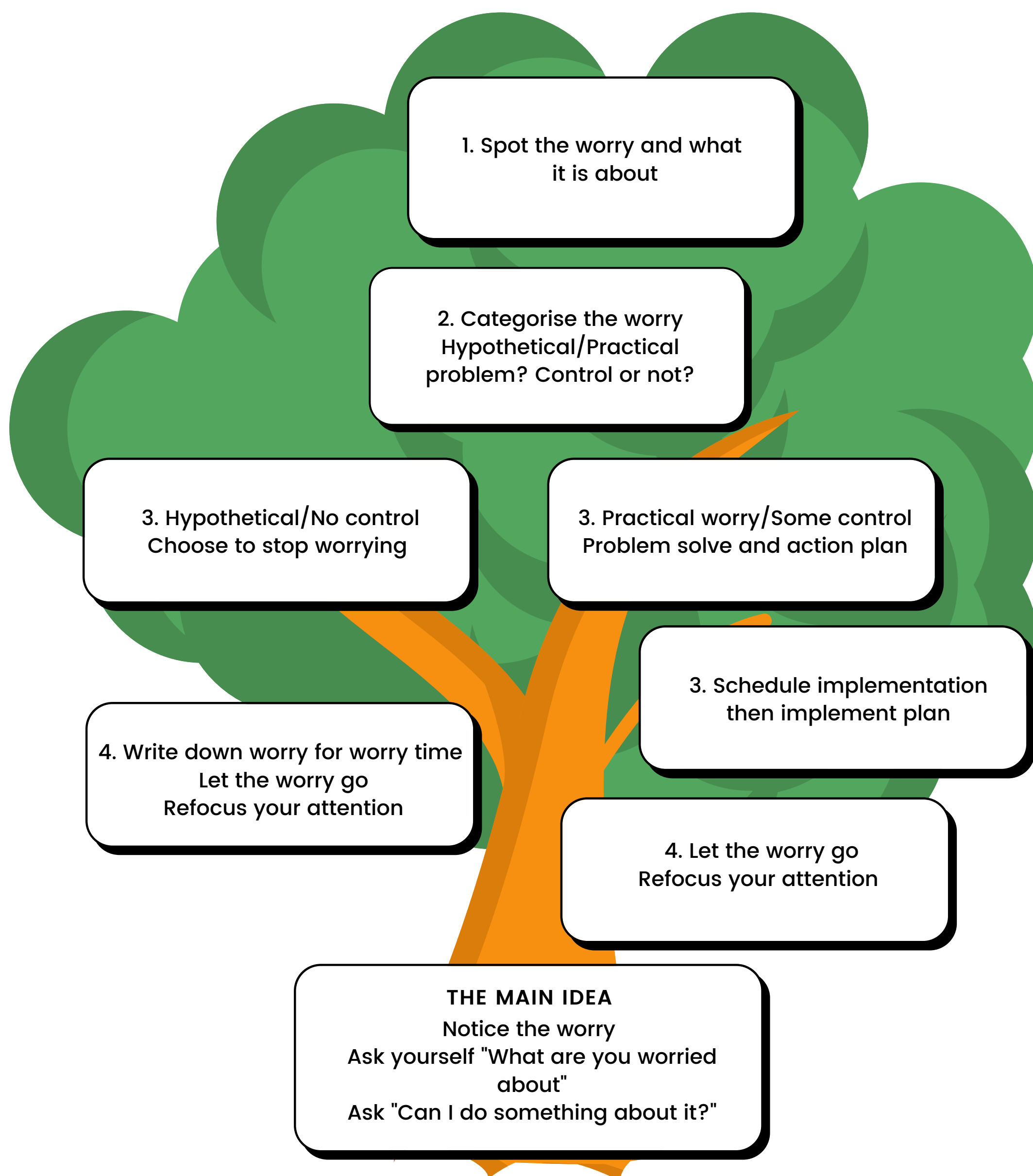
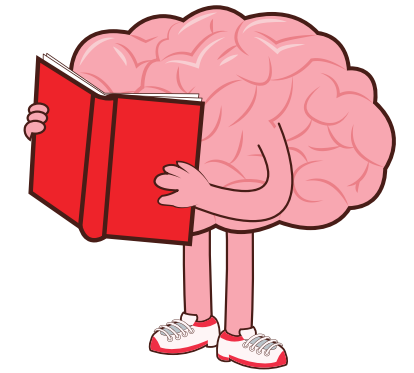
The Worry Tree



We manage the two different types of worries in different ways, the worry tree sets out a way for us to do this. This is where writing worries down comes in useful as we are then able to spot the worry and categorise it.



This worry tree allows you to think about how to manage worries - follow the steps from the top of the tree!





worry Time



Worry time is used for dealing with hypothetical worries. These are worries that we can't do anything about.

How does it work?



1. Schedule a time in the day to have your worry time (no more than 15 minutes)



2. Write down your hypothetical worries like a shopping list.



3. Go back to focusing on what you are meant to be doing.

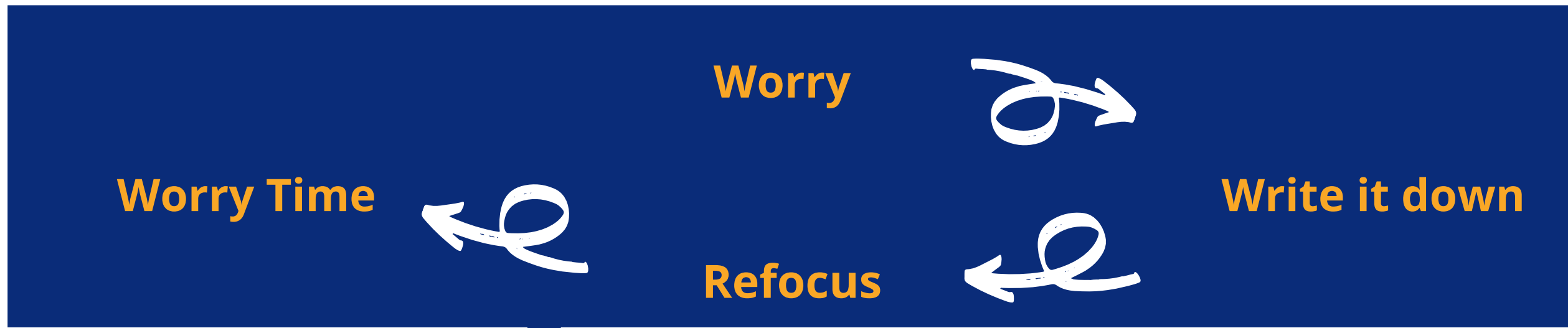


4. Worry in the scheduled worry time (don't try to problem solve!)



5. Let the worries go and refocus.

If you look at your worry diary, these worries usually imagine what could happen, instead of what has or is actually going to happen.





Distraction Techniques



Calming or Grounding techniques are a good way to reduce our heart rate/blood pressure when feeling worried or anxious. It helps us refocus our attention and overcome those unpleasant feelings so we can feel better and do more.

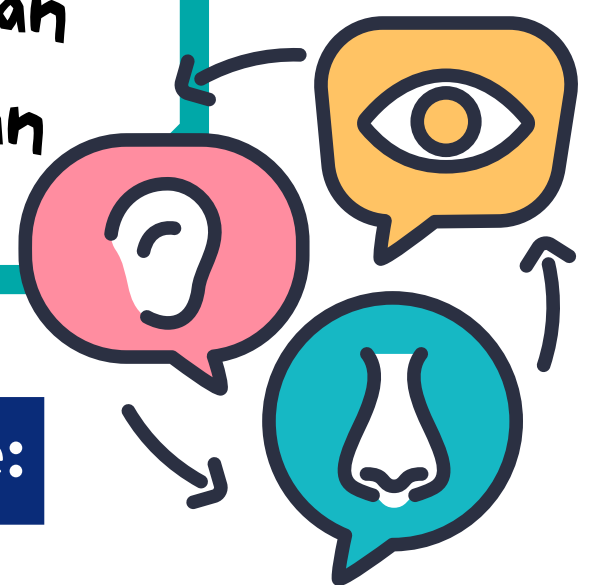


Think about and name facts about what is going on right now. For example, think: My age is... My name is... i am wearing... The weather is... i am in...

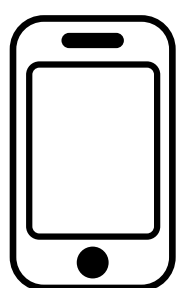
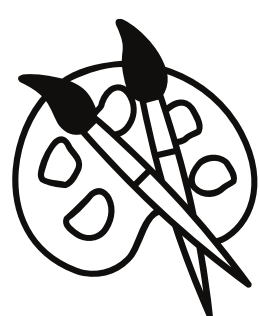


Think of a category and search the room for it. For example, look for: Everything that is a ... colour. Everything that is a ... shape. Things that feel of... Things made of ...

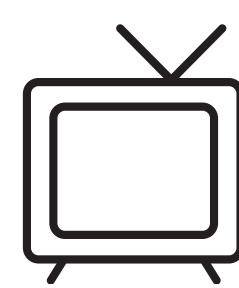
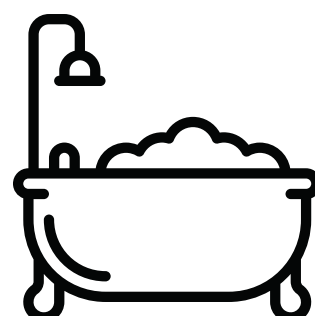
Take notice of your senses by thinking of: 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can feel/touch, 2 things you can smell, 1 thing you can taste.



Activities I could do to refocus after worry time are:



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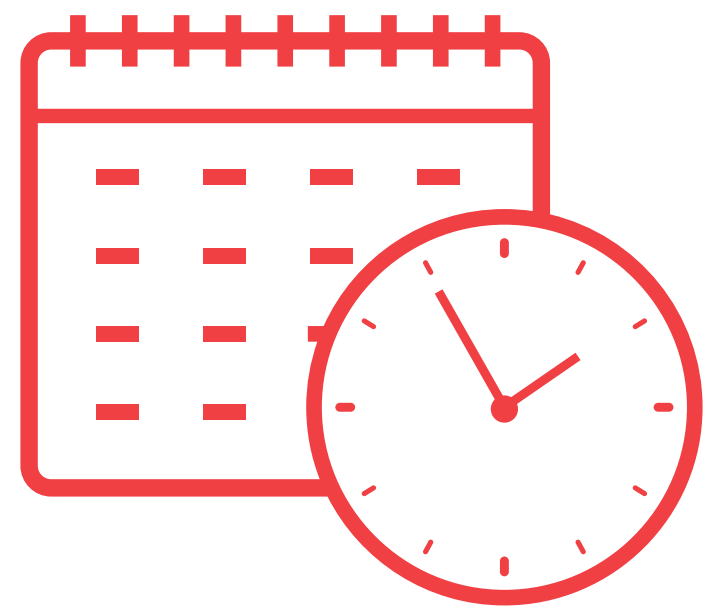
Top Tips



Struggling with Worry Time? Here are some top tips to help you make it effective.

Schedule it for the same time every day

Habits form when something is easy to do. Schedule your worry time for the same time each day, preferably a time when no one else has demands of you. Many people find around 6pm to 7pm is about right as it's not too close to bed time. Remember to make it no longer than 15 minutes.



Find somewhere calm and quiet (and uninterrupted)

Worry time is an act of self-care for many people so make a calm space for yourself. Find yourself somewhere peaceful where you won't be interrupted and make sure the people around you know to leave you alone for that time.

Write down your worries throughout the day

Worry time is that it is the only time during the day when you allow yourself to worry. So as things crop up and worries pop into your head throughout the day, make a note of them in your diary, on your phone or a post-it-note, whatever works for you.



Think about what you'll do after your worry time - make it a routine

Set an alarm so you don't go over your time, it's really important that you stop at the end. Always have something you enjoy that will be a bridge for you to transition out of your worry time. This gives you something to look forward to and move you into a positive mindset again

Keep practicing

Worry Time takes practice and you may find it isn't effective for you the first time you try it. However, if you persist and use the strategies then it can become an effective way of managing worries so they don't impact your day to day life.

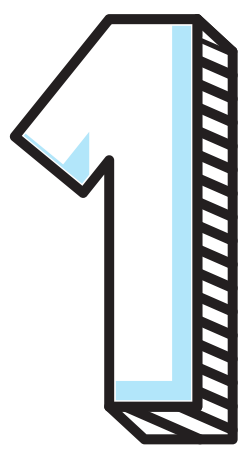




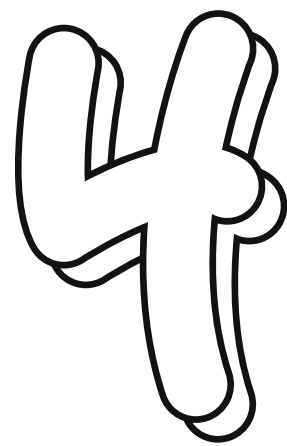
Problem Solving



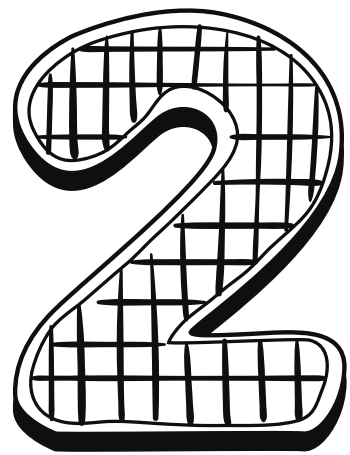
If you become aware that you have a realistic worry or a problem that you feel may be causing you anxiety, you can try problem solving. Problem solving is a 7 step process that can help with our practical worries. These are problems that exist and if we don't attend to them can have consequences. If when you come to review the steps you feel that the plan is not working then return to step 3 and choose a different solution and see if that works better. These steps can be repeated as many times as possible.



Identify the problem:
How has the problem been constructed?



Select the solution based on the outcome of step 3.



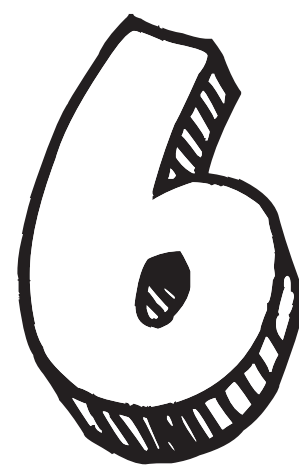
Identify solutions: As many as possible. Think outside the box!



Plan implementation: how will you achieve this? What resources will you need?



Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the solutions.



Implementation: Use a diary to implement the plan and reflect on how it went.



Review: How did it go? What went well? What changes need to be made?



Ask your Mental Health practitioner for a copy of the problem solving sheet and have a go!



Problem Solving



Worrying can take up a lot of our time and is very distressing, therefore we might not have enough time or energy to tackle everyday problems. If this happens our problems can pile up and cause us even more worry.

Problem Solving is helpful in order to create a manageable action plan to start solving the worries. When we follow the 7 steps of problem solving, this allows us to build up that plan.

Here is an example of a table you can use to problem solve any practical problems you are having.

what is the problem:

	Possible solutions	Advantages of the solution	Disadvantages of the solution	Is the plan doable? (Y/N)	How good is the outcome (0-10)	Select plan - how did it go?
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3.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

Where to access help when you need it

Keeping the MHST updated

Sometimes our situation changes. This can mean your problem has got better, or you are finding things more difficult. If you are finding you are struggling, take a look at your WRAP Plan. If your situation has got worse its important that you let us know of any changes so we can make sure you are getting the correct support. Talk to your school who will be able to get advice from us or put a referral into our team.

To contact us, call 0300 123 5062. If you are asked to leave a message, please provide us with your name and date of birth. If you need immediate help with your mental health, please use one of the services at the bottom of the page.

Other places to find help & information:

Apps

- **Mindshift** contains information and more on anxiety.
- **Moodometer** Helps you track you mood in different situations.
- **Calm Harm** This app is designed to help people resist or manage the urge to self-harm.
- **WorryTree** aims to help you take control of worry wherever you are.

Online Chat/Websites

- www.kooth.com
- www.getselfhelp.co.uk
- www.themix.org.uk
- www.mind.org.uk
- www.childline.org.uk

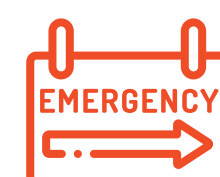
CAMHS Duty
0300 123 6632
07748 933609

NHS
111

ChildLine
0800 1111

Shout
85258

Samaritans
116 123



In emergencies call 999

