

SUPPORTING DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IN YOUNG PEOPLE

PARENT/CARER GUIDE



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LAUNCHPAD
Tuition Services

INTRODUCTION TO ANXIETY



Hundreds of thousands of years ago, early man was faced with many dangers. From large predators to small poisonous snakes, they needed a way to make sure that if they were faced with danger, they could react quickly and keep themselves away from harm.

This is called the **fight or flight response**. It is your body's natural reaction to danger.

It is triggered by a part of your brain known as the amygdala. The amygdala sends messages to your body that you're in danger, increasing your heart rate (so that you can run faster), causing you to sweat (to keep you cool), and so on.

At its core, this fight or flight system is critical for your life and safety.

Unfortunately, many people find that their fight/flight system has gone haywire, and is causing them to experience significant distress even when no immediate danger is present. When your body is reacting like it's in danger without any threat to your safety, you have anxiety.

So... What is Anxiety?

It is because anxiety is the activation of your fight or flight system that anxiety, at its core, is a **good thing**. Without anxiety, you would walk into dark alleys alone at night, get into fights with people 10 times your size, and drive 150 miles per hour in a residential area.

ANXIETY IS DESIGNED TO KEEP YOU SAFE.

Types of Anxiety

Why does anxiety have different "types"? That's not entirely clear. But anxiety isn't the same for all people.

Some people experience constant, low levels of anxiety that don't stop them from living their life, but affect everything they do.

Others experience huge bursts of ONLY physical anxiety symptoms, so severe that they think they're dying, only to go away 15 minutes later as though nothing was wrong.

It's why anxiety is so complex, and why education and understanding of anxiety is so important.

SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY

Everyone, even if they have never experienced any form of severe anxiety, has some idea of its symptoms. They're the same symptoms that you experience when you're scared or in danger, including:

- Sweating
- Heart Pounding
- Shaking/Jitters
- Nervous Thoughts
-

These are all very common. But what you may not know is that anxiety, and the many different types of anxiety disorders, can cause hundreds of different symptoms – from the common to the rare.

Indeed, you may know that anxiety can cause lightheadedness, but did you know that it can cause a sore throat? You may have guessed that anxiety can cause nausea, but did you know it can cause both arm pain and joint pain?

There are hundreds of different anxiety symptoms, and some of them seem to have no relationship to anxiety at all. But that's because anxiety isn't just anxiety. When you have anxiety, you often struggle with supplementary issues, such as:

- Trouble Sleeping
- Hyperventilation
- Chronic Stress and More

These, in turn, lead to their own symptoms. For example, when you're stressed you may find yourself with slightly blurry vision, which in turn leads to squinting, which in turn leads to eye pain. When you're not sleeping, your body may not be recovering, which can lead to muscle pain, temporary nerve damage, and more.

Stress also affects digestion, which means you may not be processing food correctly, which THEN means you may be experiencing symptoms associated with nutritional deficiencies.

In addition, anxiety has a symptom known as "hypersensitivity." This is when your brain is highly sensitive to the way your body feels. Even if you experience a tiny pain or discomfort that 99% of people ignore, YOU will ALWAYS notice it, and that makes it feel more severe than others experience.

As you can see, the symptoms of anxiety are vast, because it's not just anxiety. It's also the symptoms of the issues that anxiety causes. That said, anxiety symptoms can often be broken down into the following groups.

Mental Anxiety Symptoms

Many anxiety symptoms are mental. That means they are related to thoughts. For some people, thoughts are what characterize the disorder. For example, obsessive compulsive disorder is caused by persistent, uncontrollable thoughts. Generalized anxiety disorder can cause frequent worries about otherwise inconsequential things.

The list of mental anxiety symptoms is extensive, but for a brief overview of some of the most common, start here:

- Racing Thoughts
- Weird Thoughts
- Strange Thoughts
- Obsessive Thoughts
- Bad Thoughts
- Irrational Thoughts
- Crazy Thoughts
- Scary Thoughts
- Recurring Thoughts
- Unwanted Thoughts



Most of these types of thoughts trigger physical symptoms as well. But not all of them. There are people living with anxiety that struggle with these thoughts but don't necessarily "feel" anxious. They still have anxiety, because anxiety affects people in different ways.

In addition, thoughts can change. If we asked you right now "what types of thoughts are you having?" you might say scary thoughts or irrational thoughts. But if we ask you again in two weeks, you might say weird or racing. So don't feel like you have to limit yourself to one type of mental symptom.

Physical Anxiety Symptoms

As we talked about earlier, there are also considerable physical anxiety symptoms. These could be:

- Stomach Pain
- Head Pressure
- Chest Pain
- Nausea
- Lump in Throat
- Feeling Ill
- Chest Tightness
- Diarrhea
- Shaking
- Shortness of Breath
- Tiredness
- Muscle Tension
-



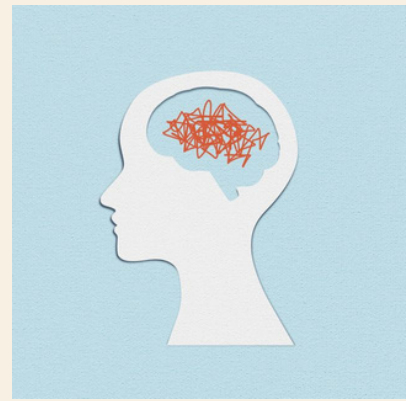
If you read the previous section on mental anxiety symptoms, you'll notice we said there are some people that experience mental anxiety symptoms with no (or close to no) physical symptoms. They worry often or have anxious thoughts, but physically they feel fine.

Similarly, there are millions of people that have the physical anxiety symptoms with NO mental symptoms. These individuals feel fine mentally, without too many worries, but physically their bodies are reacting as though they're in danger. Many people with panic attacks report that their panic attacks seem to come from nowhere, when they're not even feeling stressed.

Again, all of this is normal. You don't hear about it very much from psychologists and in media, but there's no right or wrong way to experience anxiety. Millions of people experience it different ways and live successfully alongside anxieties.. What we need to start to learn is how to **manage** anxiety.

(www.calmclinic.com)

INTRODUCTION TO DEPRESSION



Low mood, sadness and depression

Most people feel low sometimes, but if it's affecting your life, there are things you can try that may help. Support is also available if you're finding it hard to cope with low mood, sadness or depression.

Symptoms of a low mood

Symptoms of a general low mood may include feeling:

- sad
- anxious or panicky
- more tired than usual or being unable to sleep
- angry or frustrated
- low on confidence or self-esteem

A low mood often gets better after a few days or weeks. It's usually possible to improve a low mood by making small changes in your life. For example, resolving something that's bothering you or getting more sleep.

Symptoms of depression

If you have a low mood that lasts 2 weeks or more, it could be a sign of depression.

Other symptoms of depression may include:

- not getting any enjoyment out of life
- feeling hopeless
- not being able to concentrate on everyday things
- having suicidal thoughts or thoughts about harming yourself

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



FINDING THE MAGIC WAND.

The hard fact is, there isn't a magic wand, which is frustrating when we all want a quick fix.

But research shows that avoiding situations that makes us feel anxious actually makes anxiety worse over time.

Your brain will record your feelings as evidence for your next experience. So if you are constantly feeling anxiety when thinking about or attempting to do something but not going through with it. All your brain now knows is anxiety.

For example:

If you are anxious about going on a bus and don't even buy your ticket or leave the house. What will your brain tell you next time you need to go on a bus trip. Your brain will say, STOP this is unsafe.

However if you push yourself to get on the bus, even if only for a few stops, your brain has the evidence that it wasn't so bad last time, you survived that experience and that its ok to try again. And so the de-sensitization process begins.

USING A TOOLBOX.

So there may not be a magic wand, but there is actually an awful lot you can do to help yourself, or help someone else. Start by finding out what works for you and your loved ones and arm yourself with knowledge and understanding. Too often we look for solutions from outside sources and become frustrated when they don't have the answers, or your referral is bottom of a very long list.

If we start with the basics such as sleep and nutrition, exercise etc. we can build on solid foundations. This isn't meant to sound patronising, but we know our ability to function when we are tired or hungry is very low. Yet we often overlook the basics when faced with difficult situations.

HOW STRESS AFFECTS THE BODY

SENSES

Eyes dilate to see more & mouth becomes dry

LUNGS

Fast, shallow breathing

STOMACH

Indigestion & nausea as digestion is inhibited

GENERAL

Immune system weakened, reduction in libido, lack of energy & reduced concentration.

HEAD

Tension & Headaches

HEART

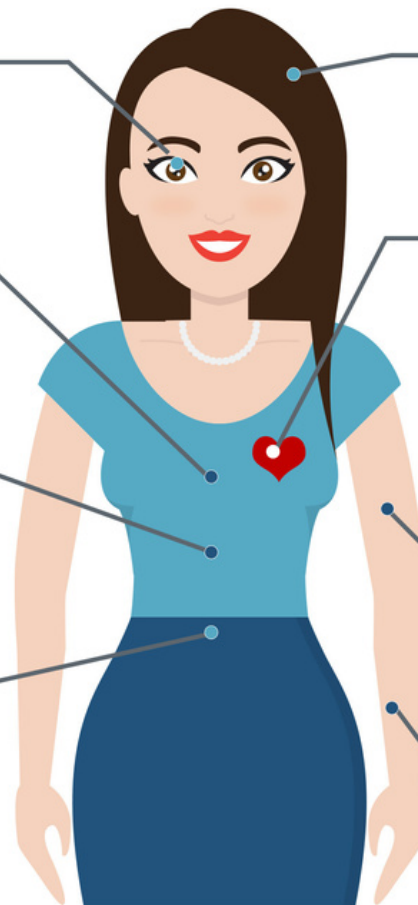
Increased blood pressure, fast heart beat (palpitations) as more blood is pumped around the body carrying oxygen to provide energy

MUSCLES

Tension in muscles as they contract ready for action

SKIN

Blushing & sweating



Mindful Teachers

A LITTLE BIT OF SCIENCE

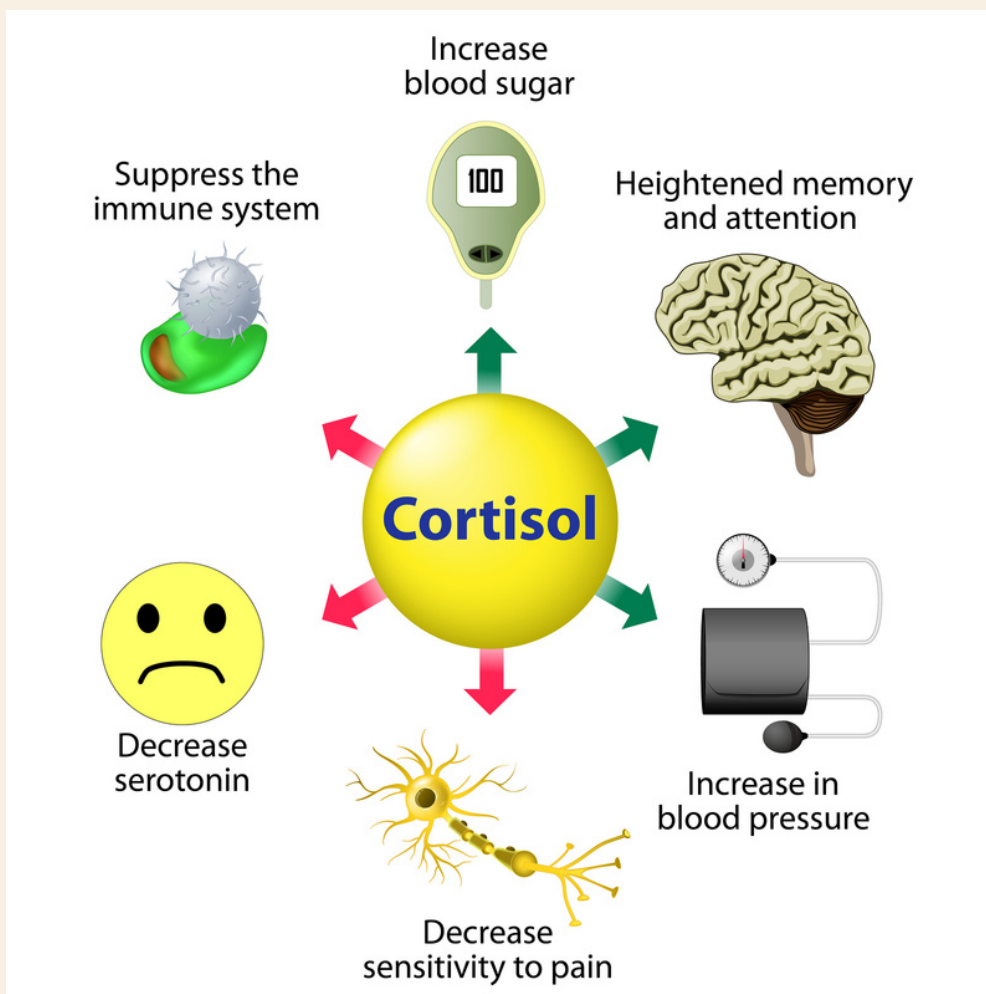
What is happening in our body when we are continuously stressed or anxious? We produce **CORTISOL**

Cortisol is a **stress hormone** the adrenal glands release. It helps your body deal with stressful situations, as your brain triggers its release through the sympathetic nervous system — the “fight or flight” system in response to many different kinds of stress.

While the short-term release of cortisol can help you run quickly from danger, when **cortisol levels are too high for too long**, this hormone can hurt you more than it helps.

Over time, this can lead to an array of health issues such as weight gain, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, insomnia or difficulty sleeping, mood irregularities, and low energy levels.

www.healthline.com



A LITTLE BIT MORE SCIENCE

Adrenaline, also known as epinephrine, is a hormone that is released into the bloodstream in response to stress. So when you are stressed- your body reacts by releasing **adrenaline**.

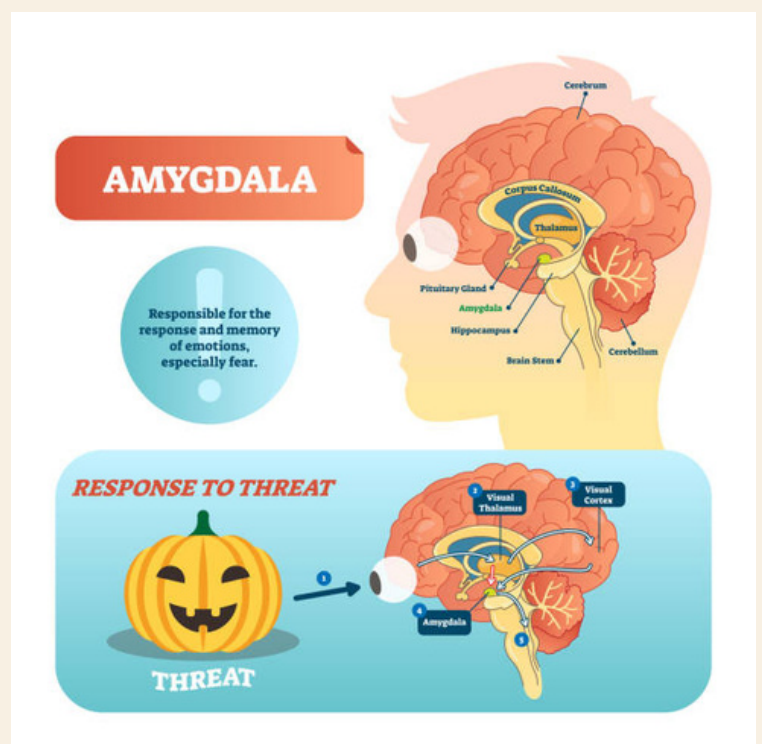
Adrenaline then travels to your heart, and it makes your heart beat faster. Adrenaline also travels to your brain, and there is an association between adrenaline levels and negative feelings, so the adrenaline makes you feel even worse when you are stressed.

Unfortunately, when you have chronic stress and anxiety, then this adrenaline response is constantly triggered, which is not helpful, as your body is thinking there is a real danger in the environment, when in actuality, the danger is being triggered by the way you think, behave, and deal with your stressors.

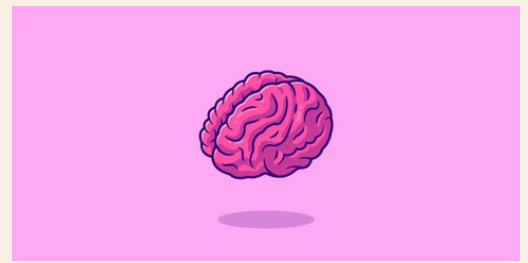
So the adrenaline response is a negative consequence of chronic stress.

The amygdala causes the **adrenal glands** to release the hormones adrenaline and cortisol into the blood.

www.anxietyboss.com



VAGUS NERVE



WHAT IS THE VAGUS NERVE?

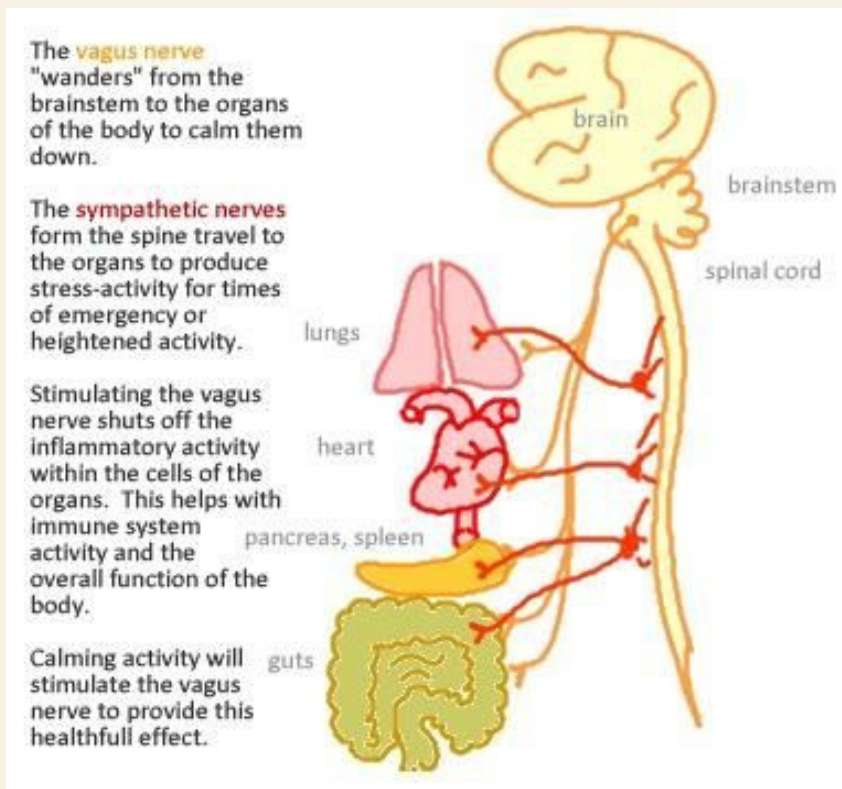
IT IS A NERVE THAT RUNS FROM YOUR BRAIN INTO YOUR STOMACH

It helps body relax faster after stress.

The more you vagal tone is increased the more you mental and physical health will improve.

Stimulating your vagal nerve improves your vagal tone.

IMPROVING YOUR VAGAL TONE



- COLD EXPOSURE/COLD WATER
- DEEP AND SLOW BREATHING (SIX BREATHS PER MINUTE)
- SINGING, HUMMING, CHANTING, GARGLING
- MEDITATION
- PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- MASSAGE
- SOCIALISING AND LAUGHING
- EATING FIBRE
- SUGAR

10 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR BRAIN HEALTHY

 @BELIEVEPHQ

MENTAL HEALTH

Look after your mental health. Spend time each week to practice some self care



EXERCISE

Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise



HYDRATION

Keep topped up regularly through the day to help your brain and body out



BREATHE

Take time to breathe and slow down



SLEEP

Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night



HABITS

Maintain healthy habits. Don't smoke or drink excessively



LEARNING

Keep learning and engaging your brain with new and exciting content. Why not join a new class or course?



CONNECT

Stay socially active. Keep in contact with friends and family

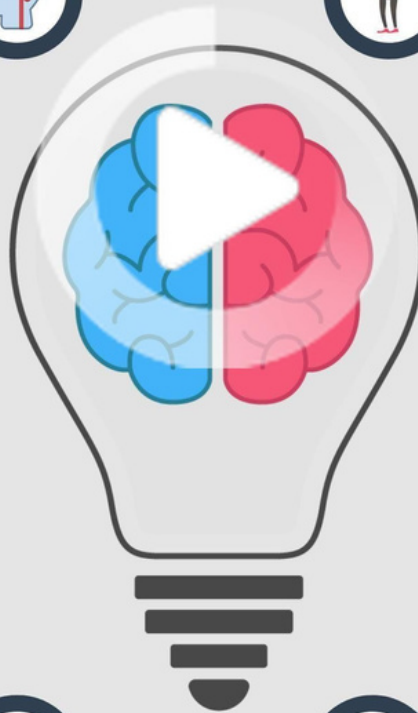
CHALLENGE

Engage in mentally challenging activities



DIET

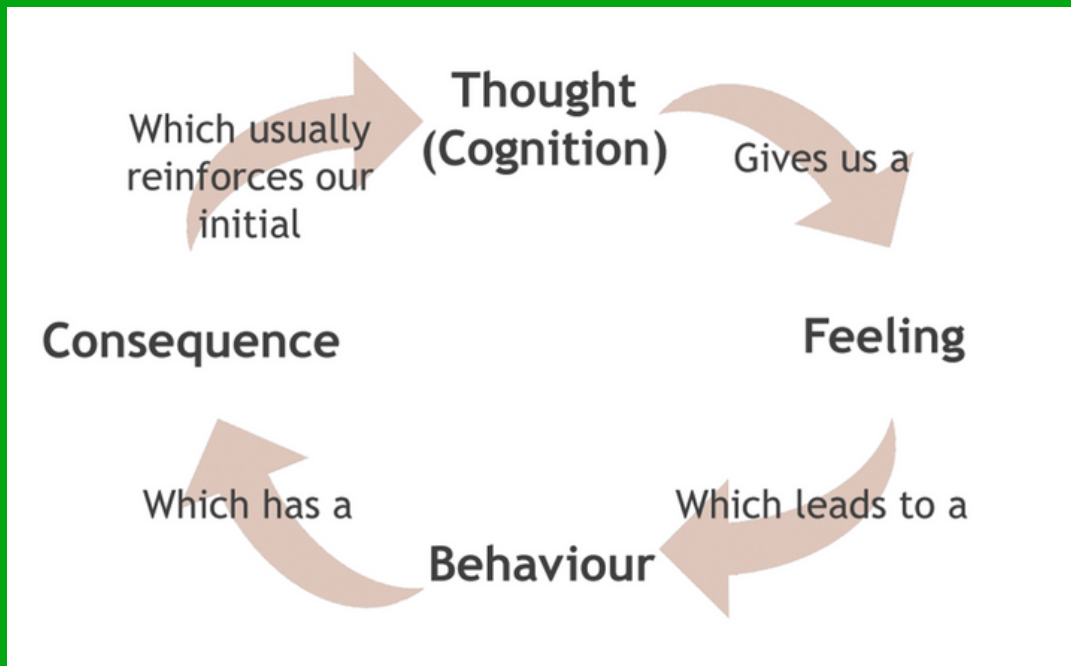
Eat a well balanced diet and make sure you don't skip meals



CBT

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a short-term form of behavioral treatment. It helps people problem-solve.

CBT also reveals the relationship between beliefs, thoughts, and feelings, and the behaviors that follow.



Advantages of CBT

Research has shown CBT can be as effective as medicine in treating physical conditions, like low back pain, as well as mental health conditions, like depression.

CBT can be completed in a relatively short period of time compared with other types of talking therapies.

www.livehealthy.com

TEACHING YOURSELF TO THINK DIFFERENTLY.

IT'S NOT ACTUALLY ABOUT POSITIVE THINKING.

IT'S ABOUT **THINKING DIFFERENTLY.**

BAD POSITIVE THINKING

Everyone loves me

Today is going to be brilliant, nothing can upset me

I feel great, depression is gone forever

Nothing is going to hurt me again

GOOD POSITIVE THINKING

I am feeling nervous about the event but I have a plan and I will be ok.

I am feeling anxious and worn out due to lack of sleep. I will get more rest and remember these feelings are natural and will pass.

It will be ok.

CHANGING YOUR THOUGHTS CHANGES YOUR FEELINGS CHANGES YOUR BEHAVIOUR

NEGATIVE THOUGHT	FEELING	FACT THAT BACKS UP THAT THOUGHT	NEW THOUGHT	NEW BEHAVIOUR
I'm failing in Maths	Useless and unmotivated. Wanting to give up.	It isn't fact. I just screwed up a test cause I didn't revise.	I will try harder to revise so I can get a better grade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revision timetable created.• Signed up to extra tuition

PARENT MODELLING



THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENT MODELLING TO SUPPORT A YOUNG PERSON TO MANAGE THEIR ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

- We cannot protect our children from anxiety, it is an important part of life.

- What's important is that we teach our children to manage their anxiety so that it does not become overwhelming or stop them achieving.

- If we try to protect our children from anxiety, we are only making the situation worse. We are making their comfort zones smaller which will inhibit them in the future.

- It is unrealistic to think we can protect our children from every hurt in life.

- Research shows that adults with SEN/SEMH are more successful when their parents and helpers allowed them to become as independent as possible as they grew up.

- It's important that we empower children to understand the challenges of neurodiversity and develop strategies to manage those.

- We must also help our children understand their strengths and ability. Work on positive psychology rather than any medical deficit model.

PARENT MODELLING



1 MANAGING ANXIETY

If we do not help our children increase their ability to tolerate feeling uncomfortable and manage anxiety, they will be less likely to try anything new in the future.

2 EMPOWERMENT

Our role isn't to protect our children from harm. Our role is to empower our children to be able to problem solve and deal with the challenges of life.

3 INDEPENDANCE

As children grow, they should become more independent. We don't become adults and suddenly know what to do. It is a gradual learning process. Our job as parents is to guide them on that learning process so they can be successful adults able to manage their own lives.

4 POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

If I tell you not to think of blue monkeys you will think of them. If I hadn't mentioned blue monkeys you wouldn't have thought of them. This is the power of our words. If we only talk of negative outcomes then that is what will be in the mind of our children.

5 LANGUAGE

The language we use is important. We should use positive language and reframe failure. By constantly using negative language we are teaching our children to always think negatively. It's better to think of all the things that could go right. If something goes wrong, we should believe we can deal with it and learn from it. We will be ok.

www.samanthagarner.co.uk

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

WHATS IN YOUR TOOLBOX.

- SLEEP
- NUTRITION
- EXERCISE
- CBT
- MEDITATION
- MINDFULNESS
- SOCIAL INTERACTION
- HOT BATH
- CBT AND THINKING DIFFERENTLY
- GRATITUDE JOURNAL
- WALKING
- BREATHING EXERCISES
- ONLINE FORMS
- TALKING
- ART JOURNALLING
- PARENT MODELLING
- SETTING SMALL GOALS
- REWARDS AND SANCTIONS
- STRETCHING
- BOUNDARIES
- MASSAGE
- THERAPY
- MINDFUL COLOURFUL
- BEING AROUND NATURE
- DIARY
- HOBBIES

ALL OF THESE HAVE SCIENTIFICALLY SHOWN TO IMPROVE DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

THE SPOON THEORY

THIS IS A CONCEPT WAS CREATED BY CHRISTINE MISERANDO IN THE EARLY 90'S TO EXPLAIN CHRONIC ILLNESS BUT CAN BE ADAPTED

What is it?

Imagine that units of energy are represented by spoons and the **average** person has 12 spoons a day.

They may use:

- 3 to get up, showered, get to work/school.
- 5 to get through the day
- 3 for dinner/evening activity and
- 1 for their bedtime routine

A person with a disability or anxiety/depression may use:

- 5 to get up, showered, get to work/school.
- 7 to get through the day

This means they have no spoons (energy) to get through the evening.

If this sounds familiar or your child gets home and crashes/has a meltdown, its likely they have used all their spoons.

GETTING MORE SPOONS

Firstly identify what during your day is using the most spoons and why? How can you adapt your day to accommodate this? What can you use from your toolbox to help your spoons last longer? Can you borrow a spoon from another day? (e.g. if you have a busy Saturday then have a quiet Sunday so you can rest before the school/working week)

The Spoon Theory

DYSAUTONOMIA INTERNATIONAL



AWARENESS



ADVOCACY



ADVANCEMENT

The Spoon Theory is a creative way to explain to healthy friends and family what it's like living with a chronic illness. Dysautonomia patients often have limited energy, represented by spoons. Doing too much in one day can leave you short on spoons the next day.

If you only had 12 spoons per day, how would you use them? Take away 1 spoon if you didn't sleep well last night, forgot to take your meds, or skipped a meal. Take away 4 spoons if you have a cold.



get out of bed



get dressed



take pills



watch TV



bathe



style hair



surf the internet



read/study



make & eat a meal



make plans & socialize



light housework



drive somewhere



go to work/school



go shopping



go to the doctor



exercise

The Spoon Theory was written by Christine Miserando, which you can check out on her website www.butyoudontlooksick.com.

FURTHER HELP

Anxiety UK

Anxiety UK is a user-led organisation that supports anyone with anxiety, phobias, panic attacks or other anxiety-related disorders.

03444 775 774 or text 07537 416 905

Beat

Beat act as a champion, guide and friend to anyone affected by eating disorders, giving individuals experiencing an eating disorder and their loved ones a place where they feel listened to, supported and empowered. 0808 801 0711

Big White Wall

Big White Wall is a unique online mental health and wellbeing service offering self-help programmes and creative outlets.

Bipolar

Bipolar UK is the national charity dedicated to supporting individuals with the much misunderstood and devastating condition of bipolar, their families and carers. 0333 323 3880

CALM

CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) is a helpline for young males aged 16 to 35 years, suffering from depression and low self-esteem. It offers counselling, advice and information. 0800 58 58 58 (or London based callers can dial 0808 802 58 58)

My CAMHS Choices

My CAMHS Choices is a website that provides necessary information required to help young people make meaningful choices about their care.

Childline

Childline provides help for anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. 0800 111

COAP

Children of Addicted Parents and People (COAP) provide a welcoming, safe, and supportive online community for young people affected by parental drug and alcohol abuse.

Ditch The Label

Ditch The Label help young people navigate through issues related to bullying, such as improving mental health, body image, coming out and building confidence and self-esteem.

Doc Ready

Doc Ready is a digital tool that helps young people to prepare and make the most out of mental health related GP visits. It helps young people to know what to expect during a GP consultation, plan what to say and record the outcomes of their appointments.

Get Connected

Get Connected is a support and signposting service for young people under 25. Telephone, email, text and webchat support.

HeadMeds

Owned and managed by the national charity YoungMinds, HeadMeds is a website for young people about mental health medication.

Kooth

Kooth is an online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people, accessible through mobile, tablet and desktop.

LifeSIGNS

LifeSIGNS provide information about self-injury and support people as and when they choose to make changes in their lives.

Listening Works

Listening Works offers a dedicated support helpline, providing out-of-hours emotional and practical support for care experienced adults aged 18 – 30.

Listening Works is available 6pm – midnight – 7 days a week. You can call any time and leave them a message on their voicemail, asking for a call back when we're open again.

Maytree

Maytree is a registered charity supporting people in suicidal crisis in a non-medical setting. They offer a free 4-night/5-day stay, and the opportunity to be befriended and heard in complete confidence, without judgement and with compassion and warmth.

0207 263 7070

Mind

Mind provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health issue. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding. 0300 123 3393

MindEd

MindEd for Families give safe and reliable advice to parents and carers about young people's mental health.

The Mix

The Mix is the UK's free, confidential helpline service for young people under 25 who need help, but don't know where to turn.

0808 808 4994

Moodscope

Moodscope exist in order to help people to positively manage their moods.

Muslim Youth Helpline

is a charity that provides free and confidential faith and culturally sensitive support services targeted at vulnerable young people in the UK. 0808 808 2008

NACOA

The National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACOA) provide a free helpline and support service to help address the needs of children growing up in families where one or both parents suffer from alcoholism or a similar addictive problem. 0800 358 3456

National Self Harm Network

National Self Harm Network is a forum that provides support for individuals who self harm, and for families and carers that may be affected by self harm.

Nightline

Nightline is a student listening service which is open at night and run by students for students. Every night of term, trained student volunteers answer calls, emails, instant messages, texts and talk in person to their fellow university students about anything that's troubling them.

OCD Action

OCD Action provide support and information to anybody affected by OCD. 0845 390 6232

OCD-UK

OCD-UK is a national charity that provide evidence-based information, advice and support to those affected by Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.

Papyrus

Papyrus gives non-judgemental support, advice and information for those dealing with suicide, depression or emotional distress.

08000 68 41 41

Recover Your Life

Recover Your Life (RYL) is one of the biggest and best Self-Harm Support Communities on the internet.

Rethink Mental Illness

Rethink Mental Illness helps those affected by severe mental illness.

Samaritans

Samaritans offer a safe place for you to talk any time you like, in your own way – about whatever's getting to you. 116 123

Sane

Sane works to improve quality of life for anyone affected by mental health issues. 0300 304 7000

Selfharm UK

Selfharm UK exist in order to support and nurture young people who may be experiencing difficulties with self-harm.

Student Minds

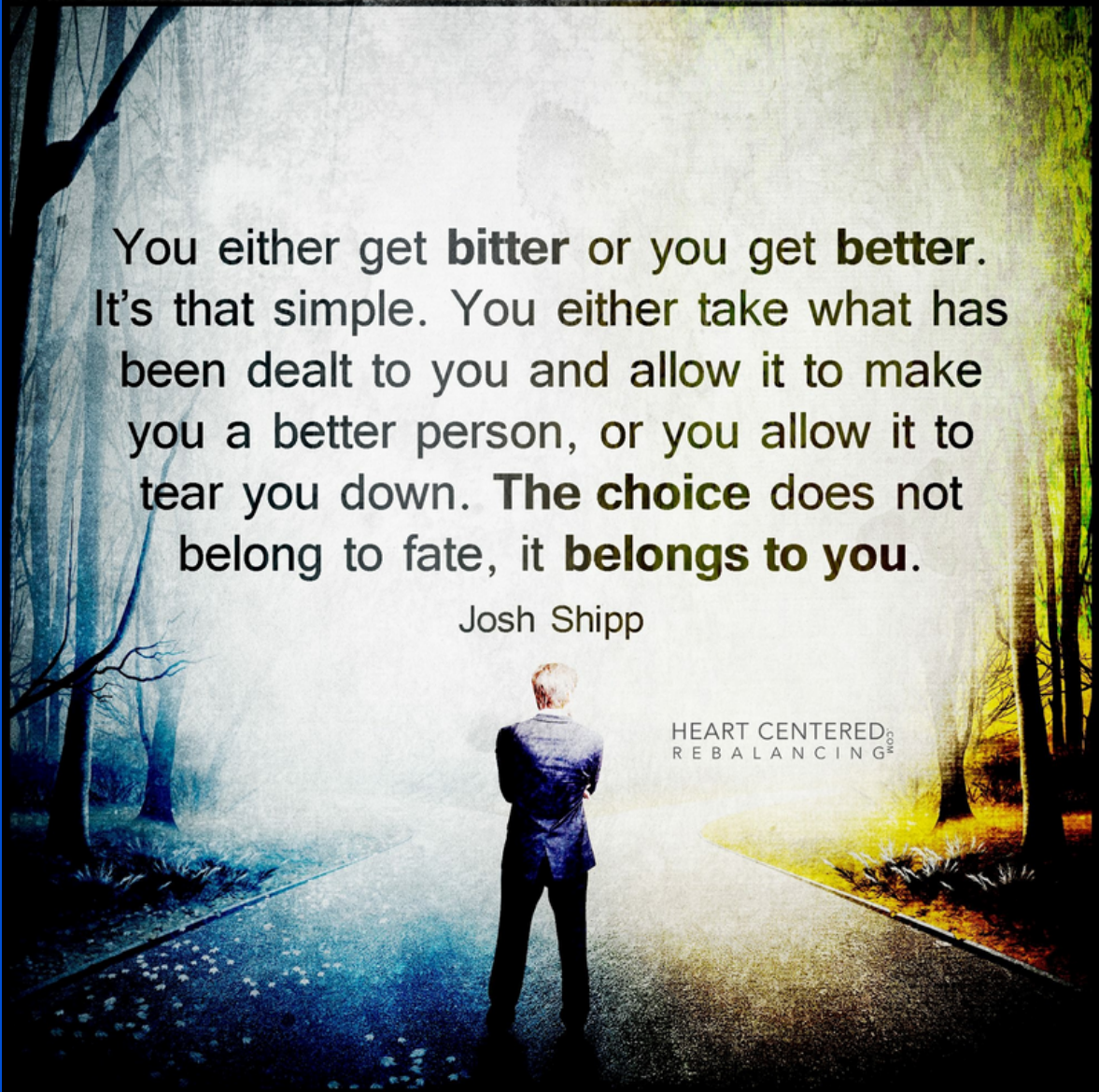
Student Minds is a mental health charity that works with students, service users, professionals and academics to develop new and innovative ways to improve the mental health of students.

Students Against Depression

Students Against Depression is a website offering advice, information, guidance and resources to those affected by low mood, depression and suicidal thinking.

Young Minds

Young Minds provides information, advice and training for young people, parents, carers and professionals.



You either get **bitter** or you get **better**.
It's that simple. You either take what has
been dealt to you and allow it to make
you a better person, or you allow it to
tear you down. **The choice** does not
belong to fate, it **belongs to you**.

Josh Shipp

HEART CENTERED^{co}
REBALANCING