

*Theresa Babbs-Durrant*

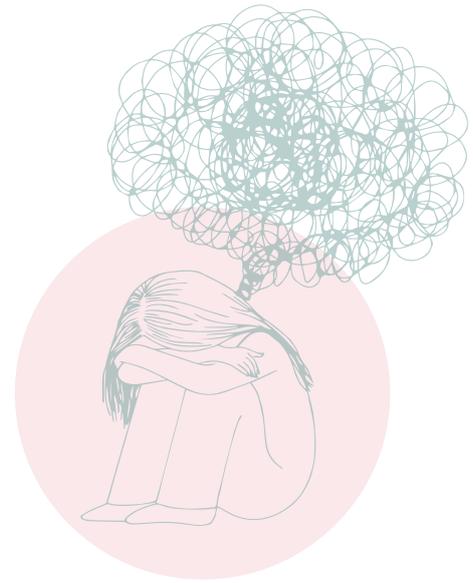
MENTAL HEALTH COACH & THERAPIST



# ANXIETY WORKBOOK

## WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety is a natural response to stress or danger, often described as a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome. It helps keep us alert, focused, and motivated to solve problems, enhancing performance in various situations. While this level of anxiety is beneficial, excessive or persistent anxiety can interfere with daily activities and overall well-being.



## ANXIETY DISORDERS

While everyone experiences anxiety at times, an anxiety disorder is characterised by persistent, severe symptoms that significantly disrupt daily functioning and quality of life, and can impact work, relationships and overall well-being.

### Remember

Anxiety disorders are treatable, and many individuals find significant relief from their symptoms with appropriate support and treatment.

# UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY

Anxiety is more than just feeling stressed or worried. It's a persistent and overwhelming sense of fear or unease that doesn't go away and can get worse over time. Anxiety is not a sign of weakness, and you can't simply "get over it" without help. It can often require a combination of treatments and strategies to manage effectively.

Seeking help early can make a difference for anxiety. Treatment options include medication, therapy, or a combination of both. Self-care, like exercise, sleep, and mindfulness, can also aid managing anxiety.

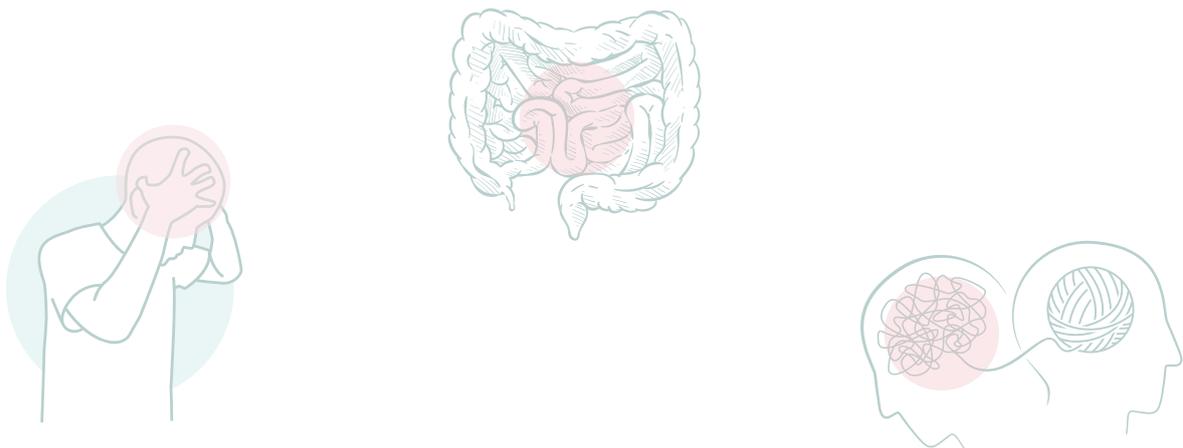
There are several types of anxiety disorders, each with unique features and treatment approaches:

- Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
- Panic Disorder
- Social Anxiety Disorder
- Specific Phobias
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

## CAUSES AND RISK FACTORS

Anxiety can be caused by a combination of genetic, environmental, psychological, and developmental factors. Stressful life events, trauma, and certain medical conditions can also contribute to the development of anxiety disorders.

Chronic anxiety can interfere with daily activities, and overall well-being and can lead to physical health issues, such as headaches and digestive problems, and impact mental health, potentially leading to depression.



# FEAR AND ANXIETY

Fear and anxiety are often used interchangeably but they are distinct emotional responses. Understanding their differences can help you better manage and address these feelings.

## FEAR

- A natural response to specific events.
- Temporary and less intense.
- Does not typically impair daily functioning.
- Improves with time and support.

## ANXIETY

- A mental health disorder with no specific trigger needed.
- Persistent and often severe.
- Significantly impairs daily functioning.
- Requires professional treatment for improvement.

Aspect	Fear	Anxiety
Nature	Fear is an emotional response to a know definite threat.	Is a vague, unpleasant emotional response to an unknown threat.
Trigger	Specific and immediate danger or threat.	Anticipation of future threats or dangers that are not present.
Duration	Short-term, lasting as long as threat is present.	Can be long-lasting, persistent when no threat around.
Purpose	Tiggers flight-fight response to protect from danger.	Prepares for future threats, but can be disproportionate.

# TYPES OF ANXIETY DISORDERS

**Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD)** - involves persistent and excessive worry about various aspects of life, work, health or social interactions.

**Panic Disorder** - is characterised by recurrent, unexpected panic attacks, or sudden periods of intense fear or discomfort.

**Social Anxiety Disorder (Social Phobia)** - involves an intense fear of social situations where one might be judged or scrutinised by others.

**Specific Phobias** - are characterised by intense fear of a particular object or situations, often out of proportion to the actual danger.

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)** - involves unwanted, persistent thoughts (obsessions) and repetitive behaviours (compulsions) performed to alleviate anxiety.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** - can develop after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event, leading to intense disturbing thoughts and feelings.

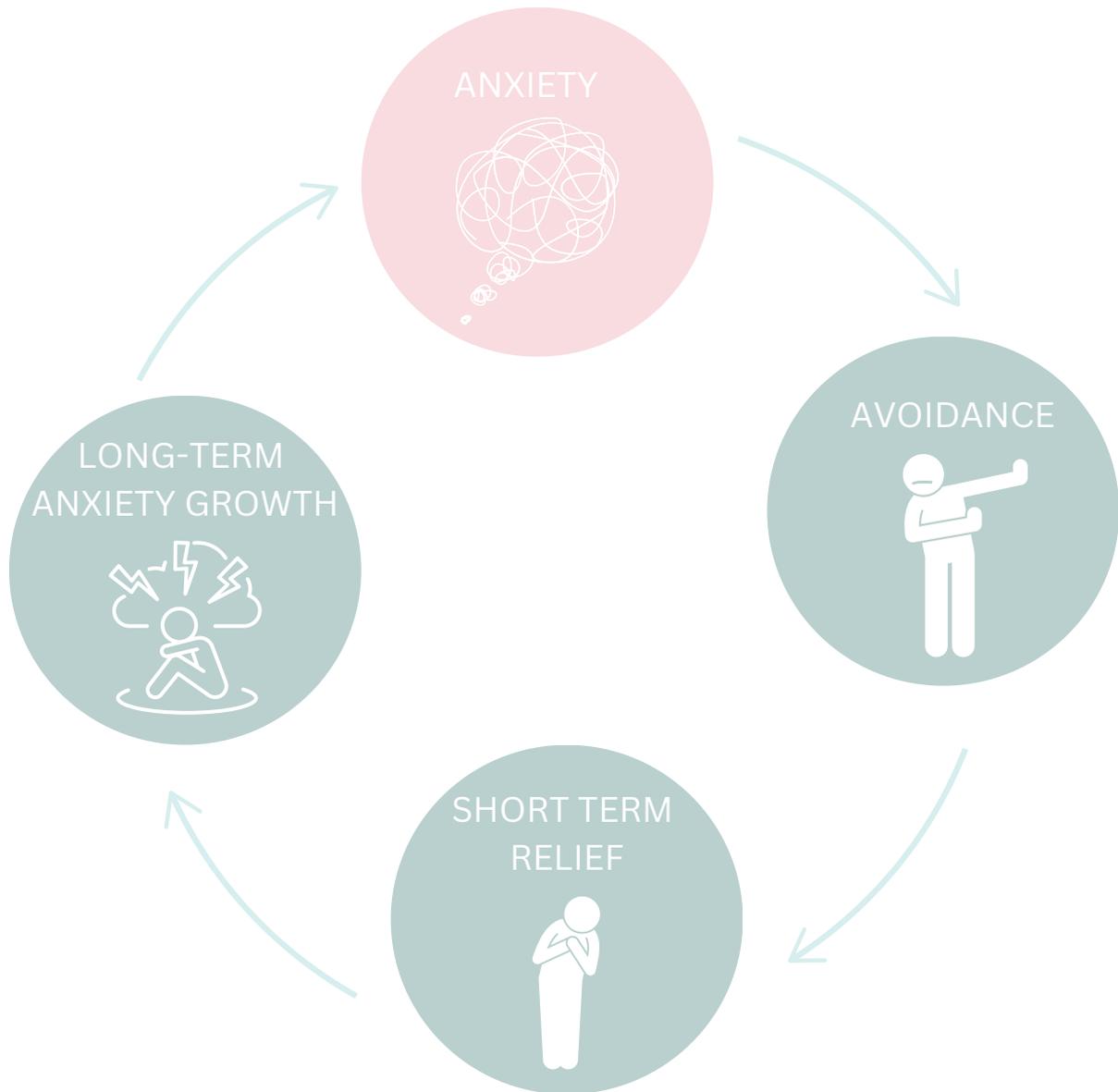
**Separation Anxiety Disorder** - involves excessive fear or anxiety about being separated from those to whom the individual is attached.

**Agoraphobia** - is the fear of situations where escape might be intricate or help might not be available during a panic attack.





# ANXIETY CYCLE



The anxiety cycle starts with a trigger that leads to anxious thoughts. These thoughts cause physical symptoms like a racing heart, which may lead to avoidance behaviours that provide short-term relief but reinforce long-term anxiety. To break this cycle, begin by identifying the specific triggers. Practice facing these triggers in small steps, using breathing exercise or relaxation techniques to manage the symptoms instead of avoiding the situation.

# IDENTIFY YOUR ANXIETY TRIGGERS

Understanding what triggers your anxiety is the first step towards managing it effectively. Anxiety triggers are specific situations, thoughts, or events that provoke an anxious response. Identifying these can help you anticipate and prepare for potential anxiety-inducing scenarios.

## *Situation Triggers*

- *Public speaking*
- *Crowded places*
- *Social gatherings*
- *Other:*

## *Cognitive Triggers*

- *Negative self-talk*
- *Catastrophic thinking*
- *Fear of failure*
- *Other:*

## *Emotional Triggers*

- *Stress*
- *Conflict*
- *Overwhelming responsibilities*
- *Other:*

## *Environmental Triggers*

- *Loud noise*
- *Bright lights*
- *Certain smells*
- *Other:*

## *Physical Triggers*

- *Lack of sleep*
- *Hunger*
- *Caffeine consumption*
- *Other:*

## *Other Triggers*

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# ANXIETY TRIGGERS

Triggers are stimuli that can cause you to re-experience your trauma or feel distress. Identifying these triggers is the first step in managing your response to them. You can develop strategies to cope with your triggers effectively by understanding them.

SITUATION	BODY RESPONSE	EMOTIONS	THOUGHTS	ACTIONS

What strategies can you use in the future to cope?

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# SUPPORTING SOMEONE WITH ANXIETY

Supporting someone with anxiety can be challenging, but your compassion and understanding can make all the difference. The worksheets are designed to help you learn effectively ways to support a loved one experiencing anxiety. Use this guide to develop a supportive approach and create a safe environment for them to express their feelings.

## Understanding Anxiety

- Anxiety is a normal and often healthy emotion, but it can become overwhelming.
- Common symptoms include excessive worry, restlessness, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, and physical symptoms such as increase heart rate and sweating.
- Understanding anxiety can help you respond more effectively.

## Practical Support

- Help with daily tasks and offer assistance with chores or responsibilities when they feel overwhelmed.
- Encourage healthy habits and suggest activities that promote well-being such as exercise, a balanced diet and regular sleep.

## Encourage Professional Help

- Suggest professional support and encourage them to seek help from a mental health professional.
- Be patient and supporting. Recognise that seeking help can be difficult, offer to accompany them to appointments if they feel comfortable with it.

## Creating a Supportive Environment

- Reduce stress and help create a calm and relaxing space.
- Be a positive influence by modelling healthy coping strategies and a positive attitude. Encourage them to take small steps and celebrate success.
- Don't dismiss their emotions, validate them.

## Take Care of Yourself

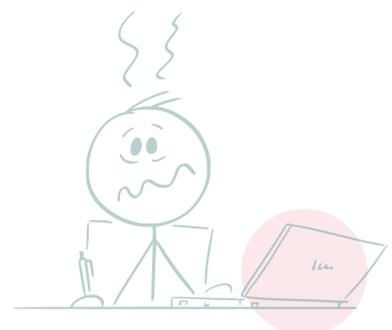
- Supporting someone with anxiety can be emotionally taxing. Ensure you are also looking after your own well-being.

# WORK RELATED ANXIETY

Work-related stress is a common issue that affects many people. It can arise from various workplace aspects, including job performance pressures, deadlines, conflicts with colleagues, or fear of job loss.

To manage work-related anxiety, focus on what you can control. Set small achievable goals to combat feelings of overwhelm. Use time management to help to break large tasks into smaller steps. If conflicts arise, practice assertive communication by calmly stating your needs and boundaries.

COMMON SOURCES	TIPS FOR MANAGING WORK-RELATED STRESS
Job Performance or unclear expectations	Prioritise, organise and set realistic goals
Conflict with colleagues, fear of job loss	Effective time management and communicate clearly
Work-life balance, environment, or lack of control	Set boundaries, seek support, focus on work-life balance
Lack of career progression	Seek professional development, finding copy strategies

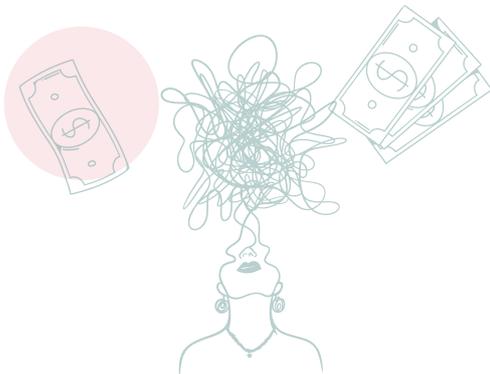


# ANXIETY AND FINANCIAL WORRIES

Financial anxiety often stems from uncertainty around money, fear of debt, or not meeting financial obligations. This can lead to sleepless nights, constant worry, and physical symptoms such as headaches or tension.

To manage financial anxiety, break down your concerns into actionable steps. Start by creating a detailed budget to understand where your money is going. Explore ways to cut unnecessary expenses, and prioritise building an emergency fund to reduce uncertainty.

COMMON SOURCES	TIPS FOR MANAGING FINANCIAL ANXIETY
Debt	Identify financial worries and create a detailed budget
Income and expenses	Reduce expenses and see where you can increase income
Lack of savings	Create a saving plan, build an emergency fund
Economic uncertainty	Seek professional advice, set realistic goals, practice self-care



# MANAGING ACADEMIC PRESSURE

Academic pressure is a common source of stress for students at all levels of education. It can arise from various sources, including exams, assignments, presentations, and the need to balance study with other responsibilities. Understanding how to manage and reduce academic pressure is essential for maintaining overall well-being and academic success.

COMMON SOURCES	TIPS FOR MANAGING ACADEMIC PRESSURE
Exams and presentations	Prioritise and organise, set realistic goals
Assignments and peer competition	Effective time management, develop healthy study habits
Parental expectations, or self expectations	Practice relaxation, seek support, maintain a health lifestyle
Future uncertainty, and balancing responsibilities	Limit procrastination, focus on learning, not just grades



# RELATIONSHIP ISSUES

Relationship issues can be a significant source of anxiety for individuals at any stage of life. These challenges may stem from communication problems, unmet expectations, or conflicts that arise from personal differences. Navigating the complexities of a relationship while managing the emotional and mental toll can lead to heightened feelings of worry, insecurity, and stress. Understanding how to address and resolve relationship conflicts healthily is crucial for reducing anxiety and maintaining emotional well-being.

COMMON SOURCES	TIPS FOR MANAGING RELATIONSHIP ISSUES
Communication problems, trust issues, different expectations	Improve communication, build trust, set realistic expectations
Lack of time, financial stress, family interference	Prioritise time, manage finances, establish healthy boundaries
Power imbalances, intimacy issues	Promote equality, and enhance intimacy
Conflict resolution, or life changes	Develop conflict resolution skills, promote adaptability



# COPING STRATEGIES FOR SOCIAL ANXIETY

Social anxiety can make interacting with others challenging. However, there are effective strategies that can help you manage and reduce anxiety in social situations. This page provides an overview of several coping strategies you can use before, and after social interactions.

## Before the Interaction

- Prepare and plan. Take some time to prepare for the interaction. Consider the potential scenario and how you might respond.
- Practice relaxation to help calm your mind and body, such as deep breathing, mediation, or progressive muscle relaxation.
- Positive visualisation. Imagine yourself having a successful and positive interaction. Visualise the details of the situation and how you will handle it confidently.

## During the Interaction

- Focus on the moment. Pay attention to the present moment, rather than worrying about what others think, or what might happen next.
- Use positive self-talk, by replacing negative thoughts with encouraging and reassuring statements.
- Practice deep breathing, by taking slow, deep breaths to help manage the physical symptoms of anxiety.

## After the Interaction

- Reflect on the experience and consider what went well and what you can improve next time.
- Reward yourself and give yourself credit for facing a challenging situation and reward yourself for your efforts.
- Talk to a supportive person and share your experience with someone you trust who can offer support and encouragement.

# SLEEP DIARY - MORNING REFLECTIONS

Taking a few moments each morning to jot down your thoughts and experiences can help you identify patterns and adjustments to improve your sleep quality and overall well-being. By consistently tracking these details, you'll gain valuable insights into how different factors affect your rest and anxiety, empowering you to make informed changes to your routine.



Let's start by reflecting on last night:

What time did you go to sleep?

What time did you wake up?

Total number of hours sleep:

Rate the quality of your sleep (0-10): **Poor** 0 ----- **Excellent** 10

Did you wake up during the night? **Yes / No**

If yes, how many times did you wake?

How long did it take for you to fall back to sleep?

Describe any dreams or nightmares:

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Rate your anxiety level upon waking (0-10): **Low** 0 ----- **High** 10

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# SLEEP DIARY - EVENING REFLECTIONS

By taking a few moments each night to review your daily activities, anxiety levels, and bedtime routine, you can better understand how these factors impact your sleep and overall well-being. Consistently tracking these details will provide insights into what works best for you, allowing you to make informed changes to improve your rest and manage your anxiety.

Let's end the day with a thoughtful reflection:



What time did you start preparing for bed?

Describe your bedtime routine:

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Rate your anxiety before bed (0-10): **Low** 0-----10 **High**

Did you consume alcohol or caffeine today? **Yes / No**

If yes, what and when?

Did you exercise today? **Yes / No**

If yes, what and when?

Did you take any naps today? **Yes / No**

If yes, what and when?

Are there any significant events or stressors today?

Thoughts or worries on your mind before bed:

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# ANXIETY SCALE

Regularly rating your anxiety levels can help you track your progress and identify patterns or triggers. Use this scale to assess your feelings at different times and create an exposure ladder to gradually face your fears.

**0-3 Mild Anxiety:** minimal anxiety, manageable and not interfering with daily activities

**4-6 Moderate Anxiety:** noticeable anxiety, somewhat interfering with daily activities, but still manageable with effort.

**7-8 High Anxiety:** significant anxiety, affecting daily activities and requiring active management strategies.

**9-10 Severe Anxiety:** extreme anxiety, overwhelming and interfering with most aspects of daily life, requiring immediate coping strategies or professional help.

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8

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1

0

**ANXIETY-  
PRODUCING  
SITUATION**

# ANXIETY LOG

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

WHAT HAPPENED?

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HOW DID I FEEL?

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## Physical Symptoms

- Increased heart rate
- Shortness of breath
- Sweating
- Trembling
- Other:

## Cognitive Symptoms

- Fear of losing control
- Frightening thoughts
- Poor concentration
- Other:

## Emotional Symptoms

- Nervous
- Frightened
- Edgy
- Other:
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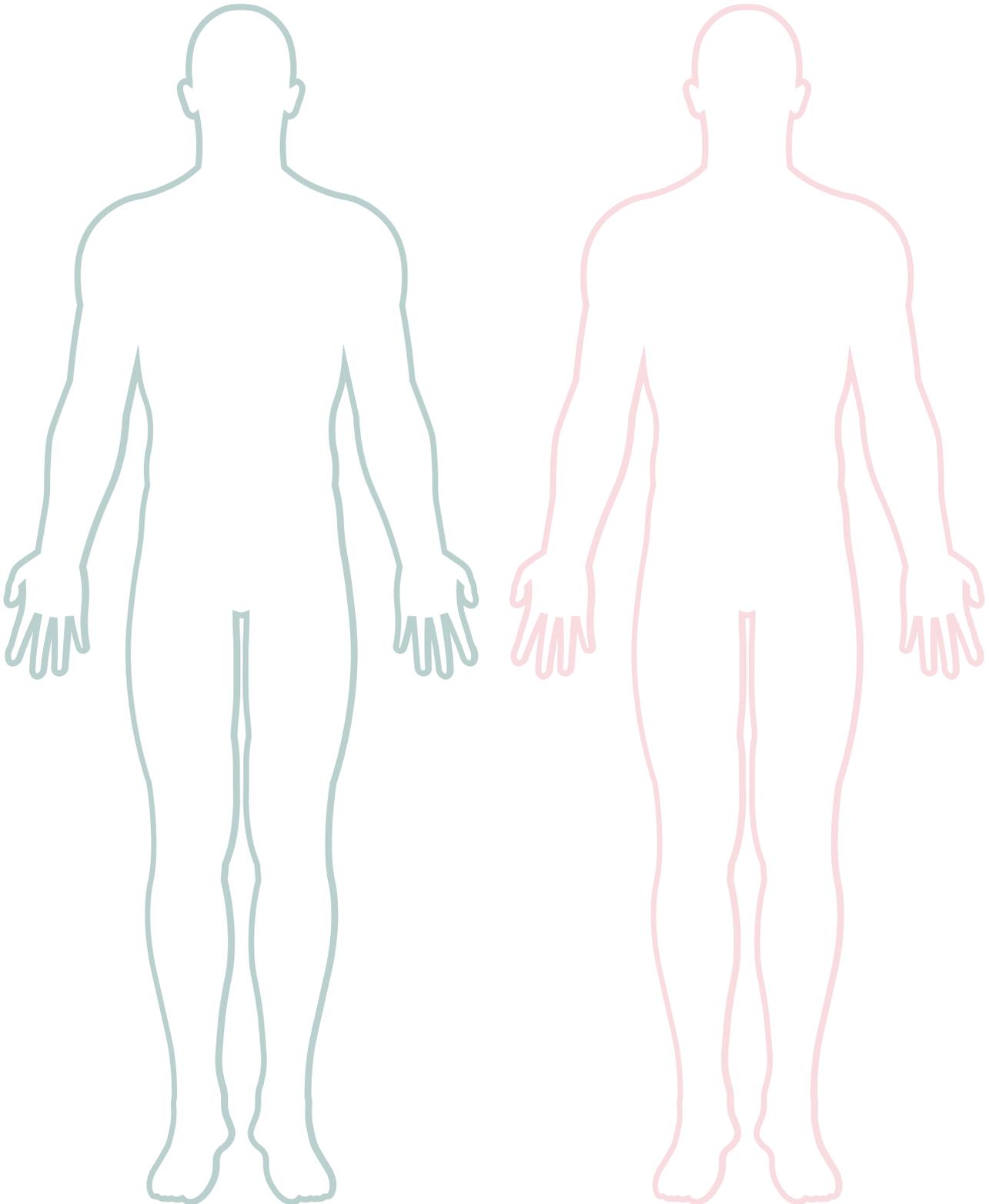
## Behavioural Symptoms

- Avoidance
- Reassurance seeking
- Restlessness
- Other:

# ANXIETY IN OUR BODY

Anxiety can cause a range of physical symptoms in different parts of the body. Identifying where your anxiety symptoms manifest can help you better understand and manage your anxiety.

*Use the body outline below to mark where you experience anxiety symptoms. Shade or circle the areas where you feel the physical effects of anxiety.*



# ANXIETY REFLECTION

To enhance emotional awareness, dedicate five minutes daily to sitting with your feelings. Set a timer and allow yourself to experience your emotions without suppressing or dwelling on them. Focus on observing the physical sensations they provoke. This practice can help you become more emotionally aware and in tune with your inner experiences.

After the five minute session of sitting with your feelings, reflect on the experience by considering the following prompts:

- What emotions did I notice during this time?
- Were there any physical sensations accompanying these emotions?
- Did any thoughts or memories surface while experiencing these emotions?
- How did I react to these emotions initially?
- Did my perception or understanding of these emotions change during the five minutes?
- What did I learn about myself or my emotional patterns from this experience?

These prompts can guide your reflection and help deepen your emotional awareness and understanding.



# CBT FOR ANXIETY

CBT is based on the concept that our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are interconnected and that changing negative thoughts and behaviours can improve emotional well-being. This structured, time-limited therapy focuses on current problems and finding practical solutions. In CBT, we examine how our thoughts influence our feelings and behaviours and how our behaviours can reinforce our thoughts and feelings.



# STRATEGIES TO INTERRUPT THE CYCLE

Identifying and addressing the different components of your anxiety cycle can help you break the pattern of anxiety. Use this worksheet to develop strategies for managing triggers, challenging anxious thoughts, changing behaviours, and coping with physical symptoms.

## Strategies to Address Triggers

Identify your anxiety triggers and develop strategies to address them.

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## Challenging Anxious Thoughts

Write down your anxious thoughts and create alternative, more balanced thoughts.

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## Changing Behaviours

Identify your current behaviours in response to anxiety and plan, new healthier behaviours.

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## Managing Physical Symptoms

List the physical symptoms you experience and develop coping strategies to manage them.

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# DESIGNING A PHYSICAL SAFE SPACE

A physical safe space is a designated area where you can retreat to feel calm and secure during moments of anxiety. This space should be tailored to your preferences and needs, incorporating elements that promote relaxation and tranquillity. Here are some tips and ideas for creating your own physical safe space.



## LOCATION

Choose a private and comfortable location. This could be a corner of a room, a specific chair, or an entire room dedicated to relaxation.



## SOOTHING SOUNDS

Incorporate sounds that you find calming. You could use nature sounds, music, or white noise.



## COMFORTABLE FURNITURE

Select furniture that promotes comfort and relaxation. For example, a cosy chair or sofa, pillows, cushions, and blankets are good choices.



## CALMING VISUALS

Visual elements can significantly enhance the calming effect of your space, including artwork, plants, and colours.



## OTHER ELEMENTS

Consider additional items that contribute to a calming environment, like soft lighting, aromatherapy, and books or journals.

# CREATING A PHYSICAL SAFE SPACE

## Location

Where will your physical safe space be?

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## Soothing Sounds

What sounds will you include to create a calming atmosphere?

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## Comfortable Furniture

What furniture will you use to ensure comfort and relaxation?

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## Calming Visuals

What visuals will you add to promote tranquillity (e.g. artwork, plants)?

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## Other Elements

What other items or elements will you include in your safe space?

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# DESIGNING A MENTAL SAFE SPACE

A mental safe space is a calming place you visualise, providing a retreat from anxiety whenever needed. This mental sanctuary can help you feel secure, grounded, and relaxed no matter where you are. Here are some tips and ideas for creating your own mental safe space.

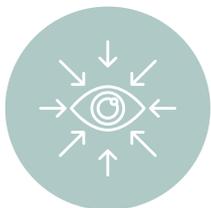
## When to Use:

- During moments of high stress or anxiety
- Before a challenging situation to centre yourself.
- As part of a daily relaxation or mindfulness routine.

## How it Helps:

- Provides a mental escape from stressors.
- Promotes relaxation and reduces anxiety.
- Reinforces a sense of control and safety.

### Visualisation



Visualising a mental safe space involves imagining a place where you feel completely at ease. This could be an actual location you've been to or an entirely imagined environment.

### Soothing Thoughts



Incorporate positive and calming thoughts or affirmations that help you feel secure and relaxed.

### Imaginary Sensations



Engage your senses fully by imagining the sensations that contribute to the calming effect of your mental safe space.

# CREATING A MENTAL SAFE SPACE

## Visualisation

Describe your mental safe space (real or imaginary)

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## Soothing Thoughts

List positive affirmations to use in your safe space

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Write down calming mantras to repeat

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## Imaginary Sensations

Describe the visual details of your safe space.

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Describe the sounds that make you feel relaxed.

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Describe the smells that enhance your sense of calm.

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# THOUGHT OBSERVATION EXERCISE

Observing your thoughts like clouds can help you develop a sense of detachment and mindfulness. As clouds pass by in the sky, your thoughts can pass through your mind without clinging to them. Use this worksheet to practice viewing your thoughts objectively and peacefully.



# MY THOUGHT LOG (CBT)

To help manage anxiety triggering situations, I plan to complete a thought record afterward to reflect on my thoughts and emotions.

## Situation

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## Automatic Thoughts

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## Emotions

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## Evidence For

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## Evidence Against

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## Alternative Thought

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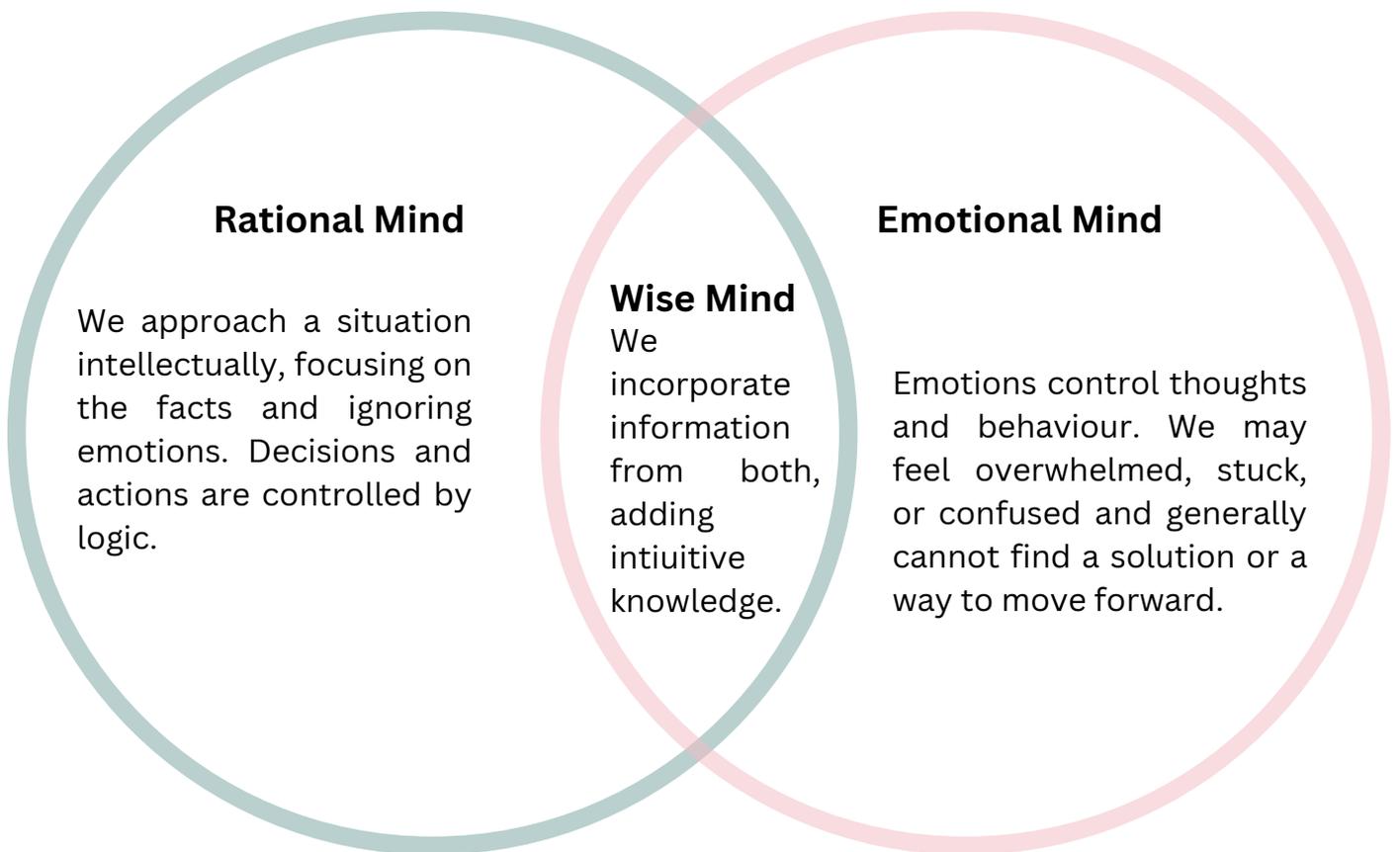
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# WISE MIND

In Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), the concept of a Wise Mind helps individuals balance their emotional and rational thoughts to make better decisions. A Wise Mind integrates the emotional and rational minds, allowing for a more balanced and effective approach to life's challenges.

The Wise Mind is the middle ground between the emotional and rational minds. Feelings and impulses drive the emotional mind, while logic and facts drive the rational mind. A Wise Mind combines both, leading to balanced and informed decisions.



# RECORDING YOUR LIMITING BELIEFS

Limiting beliefs are negative thoughts and perceptions that prevent you from reaching your full potential. By identifying and recording these beliefs, you can challenge and change them. Use this worksheet to explore your limiting beliefs and take steps toward a more empowered mindset.

Write down the negative thoughts or belief that are holding you back.

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Explain how this belief affects your life, actions and decisions

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Think about where this belief came from. Was it influenced by past experiences, family, friends, or society?

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Question the validity of this belief. Is it based on facts or assumptions? What evidence do you have to support or refute it?

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# WORRY EXPLORATION

Exploring your worries can help you better understand them and find effective ways to manage them. Use this worksheet to reflect on your worries and develop strategies for coping with them. Use the following questions to explore each worry in more detail.

What is the worst case scenario?

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What is the best case scenario?

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What is the most likely scenario?

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What evidence do I have that supports this worry?

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What evidence do I have that contradicts this worry?

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What can I do to address this worry?

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# POSITIVE REFRAME

Positive Reframing is a powerful technique for changing how you perceive and respond to adverse situations. You can reduce stress and improve your overall well-being by reinterpreting a negative thought or view it in a more positive light.

## Negative Thought

- I made a mistake at work
- I didn't get the job I wanted
- I'm overwhelmed with everything I have to do
- I argued with my friend
- I missed my workout today
- I feel lonely
- I had a bad day at work
- I don't have enough time for my hobbies

## Positive Reframe

- Mistakes are opportunities to learn and grow
- This allows me to explore other jobs that might be a better fit
- I have a lot on my plates because I'm trusted with important tasks
- This is an opportunity to understand each other better and strengthen our relationship
- I can use this time to rest and come back stronger tomorrow
- This is an opportunity to explore new hobbies and meet new people
- I can use this as a reminder to focus on the positive aspects of my job and work on what I can improve
- I can prioritise my schedule to make time for what I love

Positive reframing is a skill that gets easier with practice. Try incorporating this technique into your daily routine by identifying negative thoughts and finding positive perspectives.

# SELF REGULATION

Self-regulation involves managing your emotions, thoughts and behaviours in a productive and positive way. Practicing self-regulation strategies can improve your emotion well-being and enhance your ability to handle stress.

Self-regulation is the ability to control your responses to emotions and impulses. It involves being aware of your feelings and using techniques to manage them effectively.

## Key Components:

- Awareness: Recognising your emotions and triggers
- Control: Using strategies to manage your reactions
- Adaptability: Adjusting your behaviour in response to changing situations

## Try it Yourself!

- Mindfulness and mediation
- Deep breathing exercises
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Positive self-talk
- Journaling
- Exercise and physical activity
- Reading
- Painting or drawing
- Walking in nature
- Listening to music
- Cooking or baking
- Gardening



# OPPOSITE REACTION

When overwhelmed by emotions, our decisions may be influenced by our emotional state, guiding our actions. Essentially, a dominant emotion drives you toward a particular decision. Rather than acting on these emotions, consider taking the opposite approach.

Emotions are integral to our experiences, prompting us to react to different situations. For instance, fear signals a threat to something essential to us. Through the opposite action skill, we can intentionally choose a response that goes against our natural biological reaction.

## Examples:

- Anger prepares us to attack. It activates us to attack or defend ourselves.
- Fear prepares us to run or hide. It activates us to escape danger.
- Sadness prepares us to be inactive. It activated us to avoid contact.
- Opposite Action: Show kindness / concern or walk away.
- Opposite Action: Approach the situation or stay present.
- Opposite Action: Engage in activities or seek social interaction.

## REMEMBER

It's essential not to disregard or shun emotions. Opposite action focuses on acknowledging and understanding the feelings steering your actions. This technique requires you to create a gap and detachment between your feelings and how you respond.

# MANAGING SOCIAL ANXIETY

Reflecting on your social interactions can help you understand what works and what can be improved in managing social anxiety. Use this worksheet to evaluate recent social interactions, assess the effectiveness of your coping strategies, and plan for future improvements.

Describe a recent social interaction

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How effective were the coping strategies you used?

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What positive outcomes did you observe during this interaction?

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What could you improve for next time?

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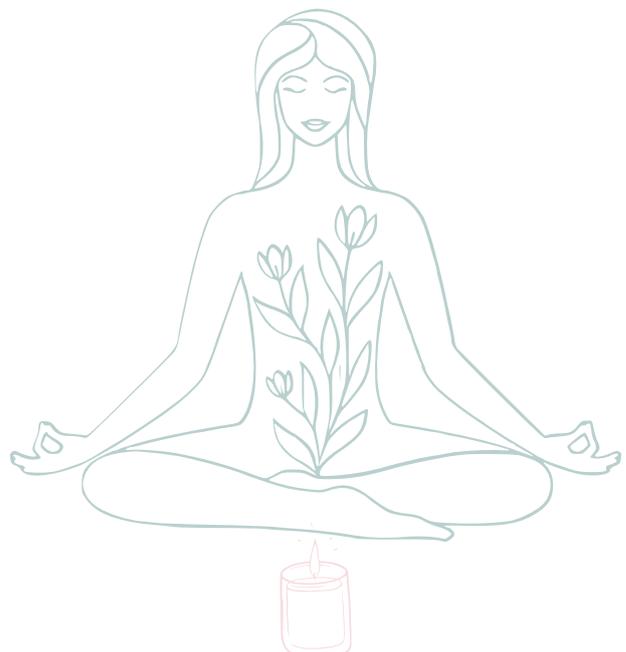
# MEDITATION PROMPTS

Meditation can help you find space, clarity, and balance. Use the prompts below to guide your meditation practice. Find a quiet space, sit comfortably, take a few deep breaths before you begin.

- Think of three things you are grateful for today. Visualise each one and feel the gratitude filling your heart.
- Bring your awareness to different parts of your body, starting from your feet and moving up to your head. Notice any sensations without judgement.
- Be aware of your breathing. Notice the rise and fall of your chest with each and if your mind wanders, gently bring it back to your breath.
- Imagine a place where you feel completely safe and at peace. Picture every detail about this place and allow yourself to relax there.
- Identify something that is causing you stress or tension. As you breathe out imagine letting go of this tension.
- Send loving-kindness to yourself and others. Begin with yourself, then extend this feeling to loved ones, acquaintances, and even people you find challenging.
- Choose an object to focus on. Observe it carefully, noticing all of its details without labelling or judging.

## Tips for Meditation

- Find a quiet space
- Sit comfortably
- Set a time limit
- Focus on your breath
- Be present
- Be kind to yourself
- Practice regularly



# 4-7-8 BREATHING TECHNIQUE

1. Find a quiet place to sit or lie down comfortably.
2. Follow these steps:
  - a. Inhale through your nose for 4 seconds.
  - b. Hold your breath for 7 seconds.
  - c. Exhale slowly through your mouth for 8 seconds.
3. Repeat the cycle 4-8 times.

How did you feel before and after practicing the 4-7-8 breathing technique?

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Did you notice any changes in your physical sensations (e.g. heart rate, muscle tension) after practicing?

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How effective was this technique in reducing anxiety on a scale of 1-10, and why?

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# DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING TECHNIQUE

1. Find a quiet place to sit or lie down comfortably.
2. Follow these steps:
  - a. Place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen.
  - b. Inhale deeply through your nose so your abdomen rises, not your chest.
  - c. Exhale slowly through pursed lips.
3. Continue this practice for 5-10 minutes.

How did focusing on diaphragmatic breathing affect your awareness of your breath and body?

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Did you experience any difficulties or distractions during this exercise? How did you handle them?

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On a scale of 1-10, how effective was diaphragmatic breathing in calming your anxiety, and why?

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# PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

1. Find a quiet place to sit or lie down comfortably.
2. Follow the steps below to progressively tense and relax different muscle groups.
3. Note your anxiety levels before and after the exercise.

## FEET AND LEGS

- Tense your feet and legs by pointing your toes and holding the tension for 5-10 seconds.
- Relax the muscles and focus on the sensation of relaxation for 10-20 seconds.

## ARMS AND HANDS

- Tense your arms and hands by making fists and holding the tension for 5-10 seconds.
- Relax the muscles and focus on the sensation of relaxation for 10-20 seconds.

## SHOULDERS AND NECK

- Tense your shoulders by shrugging them towards your ears and holding the tension for 5-10 seconds.
- Relax the muscles and focus on the sensation of relaxation for 10-20 seconds.

## FACE

- Tense your facial muscles by scrunching your face and holding the tension for 5-10 seconds.
- Relax the muscles and focus on the sensation of relaxation for 10-20 seconds.



# JOURNALING PROMPTS

Journaling is a powerful tool for self-reflection and personal growth. These prompts are designed to help you explore your thoughts, feelings and experiences in a structured way.

*Use these prompts to reflect on your day and gain insight into your experiences.*

- What was the highlight of your day and why?
- What challenges did you face today, and how did you overcome them?
- What are you grateful for today?
- Describe a time when you felt truly at peace. What contributed to that feeling?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses? How can you leverage your strengths to improve your weaknesses?
- Where do you see yourself in five years? What steps can you take to get there?
- What makes you feel happy and fulfilled? How can you incorporate more of that into your life?
- How do you practice self-care? What activities help you relax and recharge?

## Tips for Journaling

- Be consistent
- Find a quiet space
- Be honest
- Don't worry about perfection
- Reflect on your entries
- Stay positive



# GRATITUDE JOURNAL

Keeping a gratitude journal can help you focus on the positive aspects of your life and improve your overall well-being. By writing down your thoughts, you'll notice patterns of joy and contentment that might have gone unnoticed.

*Use these prompts to reflect on your day and gain insight into your experience.*

- Today, I am grateful for...
- Something good happened today...
- A positive experience I had recently.
- A person who made a difference to my day.
- A moment that made me smile.
- An accomplishment I'm proud of.
- Something I am looking forward to.

Remember, your gratitude journal is a personal space, so be honest and open. There are no right or wrong answers - just your unique experiences and feelings. Over time, you'll find that this practice brightens your outlook and strengthens your resilience and sense of connection to the world around you. Happy journaling!!

Take a moment each day to reflect on the small and big things that bring joy and meaning to your life. Whether it's the warmth of a morning coffee, a kind word from a friend or colleague, or a moment of quiet contemplation, these entries will serve as reminders of the beauty that exists even in the most ordinary days. Embrace this journey with an open heart, and watch as your gratitude journal becomes a cherished companion, guiding you towards a more mindful and fulfilling life.

# IDENTIFYING YOUR STRENGTHS

Understanding your internal strengths can help you build confidence, overcome challenges, and achieve your goals. Use this worksheet to identify and reflect on your unique qualities and abilities.

Internal strengths are the personal qualities and abilities that come from within. These strengths help you navigate life's challenges, achieve your goals, and contribute to your overall well-being.

Reflect on your experiences and consider the qualities that have helped you succeed. Use each star to note down an internal strengths.



# IN CONTROL

Understanding what is within your control and what is not can help reduce anxiety and stress. This exercise enables you to identify those aspects and focus your energy on what you can change.

Life presents many situations that can cause stress and anxiety. Recognising which aspects are within your control and which are not, can help you manage your reactions and focus efforts more effectively.

**Out of my control:**



# SELF-COMPASSION EXERCISE

Self-compassion involves treating yourself with the same kindness, care and understanding you would offer to a good friend. This worksheet is designated to help you cultivate self-compassion through various exercises. Use it regularly to build a more compassionate relationship with yourself.

*Write a letter to yourself as if you were writing to a close friend who is experiencing your struggles. Be kind, understanding and supportive.*

What are you struggling with right now?

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What would you say to a friend in this situation?

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Write your compassionate letter here.

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# SELF-COMPASSION PHRASES

Choose a few self-compassionate phrases that resonate with you. Repeat them to yourself throughout the day, especially during challenging moments.

Examples of self-compassionate phrases:

- I am doing the best I can
- It's okay to make mistakes
- I deserve kindness and understanding
- I am worth of love and compassion

*Write your chose phrases here:*

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_

# AVOIDANCE AND ACCEPTANCE

Avoidance is a common response to difficult emotions and situations, offering temporary relief but often leading to increased long-term stress and anxiety. Examples include avoiding social events, suppressing emotions, or procrastinating on tasks. While avoidance may seem helpful in the short term, it reinforces anxiety over time.

## Examples of Avoidance Behaviours:

- Not attending social events to avoid anxiety
- Suppressing or ignoring difficult emotions
- Procrastinating on tasks that feel overwhelming

In contrast, acceptance involves acknowledging and embracing thoughts, feelings and experiences without judgement. This approach allows you to face difficult emotions calmly, leading to improved mental health and resilience. Examples of acceptance include allowing yourself to feel emotions, accepting circumstances beyond your control, and embracing personal strengths and weaknesses. Shifting from avoidance to acceptance helps reduce anxiety and helps to build emotion resilience.

## Examples of Acceptance Behaviours:

- Allowing yourself to feel emotions without trying to change them
- Accepting circumstances that are beyond your control
- Embracing your strengths and weaknesses

### Try it Yourself

Choose one of the avoidance behaviours you identified and think about how you can approach it with acceptance instead.

Reflect on the process of moving from avoidance to acceptance. How did it feel to embrace your emotions and experiences? What did you learn from this?

# ACCEPT EVERY DAY

Acceptance is a powerful tool that allows us to acknowledge and embrace reality without judgement. Practicing acceptance can lead to greater emotional resilience, reduced stress, and a more balanced perspective on life.

Here are some opportunities to practice acceptance in your daily life.

- Accepting a sudden change in your work schedule and adjusting your plans accordingly.
- Accepting that a friend has a different opinion on a topic without feeling the need to convince them otherwise.
- Accepting that you may not be able to run a marathon but can enjoy a healthy walk or jog.
- Accepting sadness or anger without judgement and allowing yourself to process them.
- Accepting the uncertainty of a job interview outcome and focusing on doing your best.
- Accepting wrinkles and grey hair as natural signs of aging and focusing on overall wellness.
- Accepting a mistake you made as a learning opportunity rather than a failure.

## Try it Yourself

Situation:

Description:

Initial Reaction:

Acceptance Reframe:

# OVERCOMING AVOIDANCE

Avoidance behaviours can temporarily reduce anxiety but often lead to increased stress and missed opportunities in the long run. Learning to face and manage these behaviours can help improve your overall well-being and quality of life. Use this worksheet to identify your avoidance behaviours and develop strategies to overcome them.

## Identifying Avoidance Behaviours

Start by identifying situations, tasks, or activities that you tend to avoid. Write them down in the space below.

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## Understanding the Consequences

Consider the short-term and long-term consequences of your avoidance behaviours. Reflect on how these behaviours impact your life.

**Avoidance  
Behaviour**

**Short-term  
Consequences**

**Long-term  
Consequences**

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## Developing Strategies

Developing strategies to face and manage avoidance can help you build confidence and resilience. Create a plan for overcoming avoidant behaviour below.

**Avoidance  
Behaviour**

**Strategy To  
Face It**

**Steps To Take**

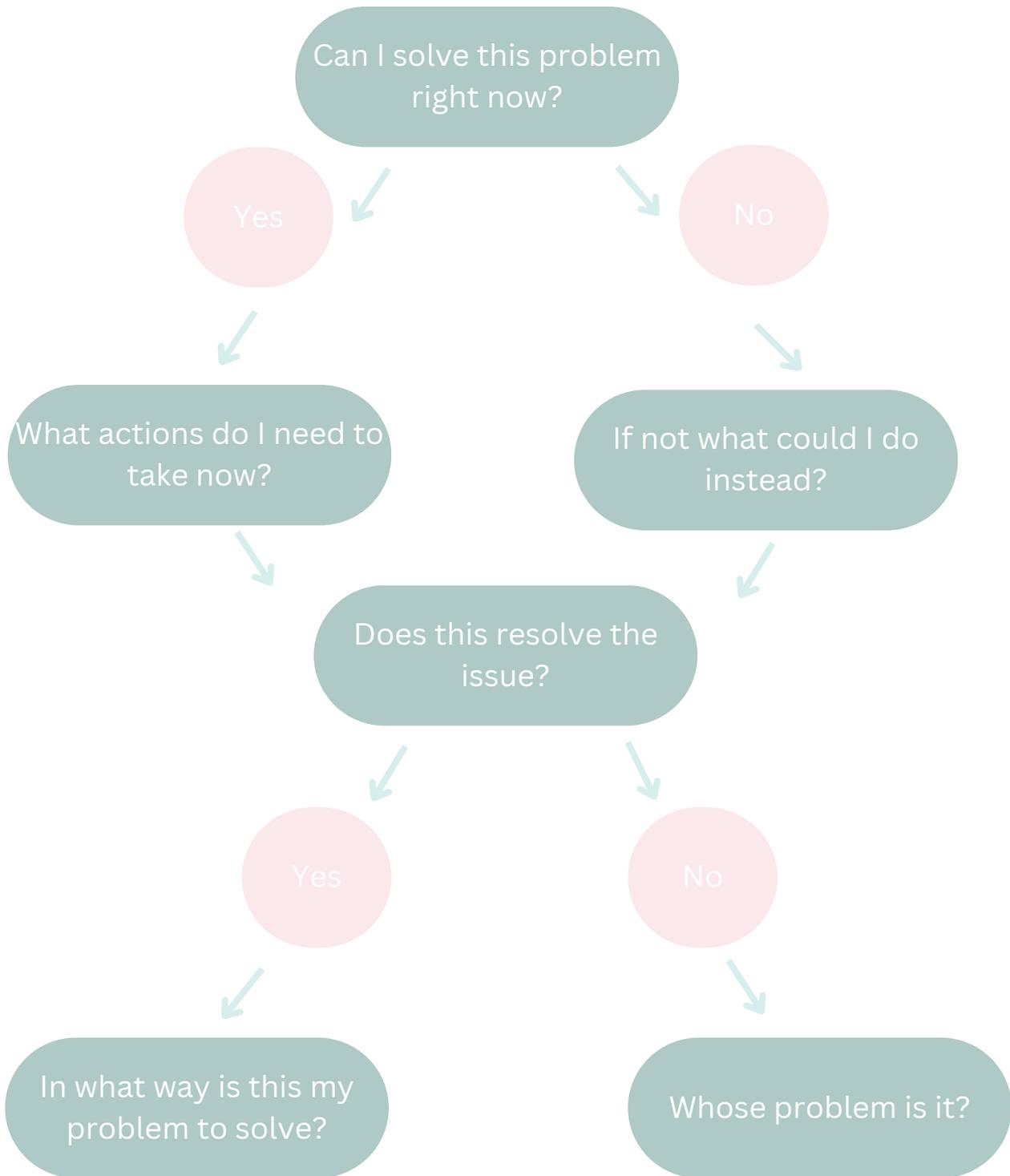
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# PROBLEM SOLVING WORKSHEET



# ONE STEP AT A TIME

Emotions can feel overwhelming in the moment, but their intensity often changes as time passes.

What will this look like in one minute?

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What will this look like in one hour?

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What will this look like in one day?

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What will this look like in one week?

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What will this look like in one month?

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# SCHEDULING WORRY TIME

Worrying can take up a lot of mental energy and time, often leading to increased anxiety and stress. You can manage your worries more effectively by scheduling a specific time each day to worry. This technique helps you to set aside a dedicated time for worrying, allowing you to focus on other activities without constant anxiety. Use this worksheet to structure your worry time and reflect on its impact.

- Choose a specific time each day for your worry session. Aim for 15-30 minutes.
- Throughout the day, note any worries that arise. Do not dwell on them immediately, instead tell yourself you'll address them during your worry time.
- Reflect on each worry and consider if there are any actions you can take to address them.
- If you cannot consider what other options are available to you, such as asking for help and support from a friend, family member or colleague.

## Reflection

Did setting time aside for worrying, enable you to get on with your other daily activities? How effective was scheduling worry time in managing your anxiety on a scale of 1-10, and why?

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Were you able to set aside your worry outside of the scheduled time? If not, what challenges did you face?

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# REFLECTING ON CALM MOMENTS

Understanding the moments when you feel calm and your anxiety is not triggered can help you incorporate more of these experiences into your daily life. Reflecting on these situations, environments, and activities can guide you in creating a more relaxed and balanced life.

Think about specific situations where you feel calm and relaxed. Describe these moments in detail.

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Reflect on any location or settings that help you to feel calm and relaxed, such as a specific chair, room, or place. Describe it in detail.

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List the activities that help you feel calm and reduce your anxiety. These could be hobbies, routines, or specific practices.

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Reflect on ways to add more calm and relaxation to your life through specific situations, environments and activities.

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# SELF-SOOTHING ANXIETY ACTIVITIES

Self-soothing activities help calm your mind and body when you feel anxious. They can also help you manage anxiety and improve your overall well-being. Use this worksheet to explore and practice various self-soothing techniques.

Breathe

Ask for help

Write or journal

Talk to someone

Draw, paint or craft

Take a warm bath or shower

Listen to music, or watch a comforting show

Practice mindfulness, or meditation

Do some exercise or physical activity

Enjoy a walk in nature

Cook or bake

Do some gardening

# RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

Sometimes, when we experience intense emotions, we may react by blaming the situation, other people, or even ourselves for these emotions. Regardless of these reactions, the truth is that the feelings remain. Radical acceptance is the complete and total acceptance of reality. This means accepting the reality of a situation in your mind, heart and body. It involves realising that fighting against what is already happening only leads to more pain.

Radically accepting reality doesn't mean you approve of it or that you are giving up on making changes. Instead, it is about acknowledging the present moment as it is, without judgement. This acceptance allows you to conserve your emotional energy and redirect it towards constructive actions and solutions. It is about being in the present moment, and recognising you cannot change what has already happened.

Additionally, it can be helpful to engage in self-compassion, recognising that experiencing emotions is a natural part of being human. Ultimately, radical acceptance can lead to greater peace and resilience, allowing you to navigate life's challenges with a clearer mind and an open heart.

## Remember

- Life is worth living, pain cannot be avoid.
- Although life feels painful now, it is often temporary and will eventually fade.
- You don't need to understand why it has happened, just that it has happened.

# RADICAL ACCEPTANCE WORKSHEET

Radical acceptance is the complete and total acceptance of reality. This means accepting the reality of the situation in your mind, heart and body. It involves realising that fighting against what is already happening only leads to more pain.

Reflect on a challenging event in your life that you struggle to accept, whether current or past.

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Consider all the facts that contributed to the event without judgement or blame, expressing them neutrally.

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Make a note of any emotions that come up for you when you think about the event or situation.

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Try to notice if you feel any sensations in your body as a manifestation of the emotion. Describe these sensations.

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Whatever you feel, accept it fully. Remind yourself you cannot change what has already happened. Recognise that you can bring closure, by recognising and fully accepting the emotion and physical sensations.

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# YOUR ANXIETY TOOLBOX

A coping skills toolbox contain all the tools, techniques and strategies you can carry to manage stress and anxiety, so you can be better prepared to handle difficult situations.

Think about the coping skills that work best for you. Write down or draw these skills in the toolbox below.



