

Coping with Anxiety

Session 1

Introduction

This workbook has been produced by Coventry and Warwickshire Mind Children and Young People's Service.

It can be used whilst you wait for face to face support from the team.

If however, you are not waiting for any support but think you might need some, please see the 'Information Page' at the end of this workbook on how to access support.

You can use this workbook however you like; however we would recommend leaving a few days between each session to give you time to get used to the strategies and leave enough time for you to complete your session target.

Who is this workbook for?

This workbook is for any young person who is 11+. If you are under 11 we have another workbook for you to complete with a parent/carer on our website.

The aim of this workbook is to support young people who are currently experiencing anxiety and it will aim to teach you about anxiety as well as helping you learn new strategies and techniques to help you cope whilst you wait for professional support.



What is Anxiety?

The NHS Every Mind Matters website says:

"Anxiety is something everyone experiences at times, and feeling anxious is a perfectly natural reaction to some situations. But sometimes feelings of anxiety can be constant, overwhelming or out of proportion to the situation and this can affect your daily life."

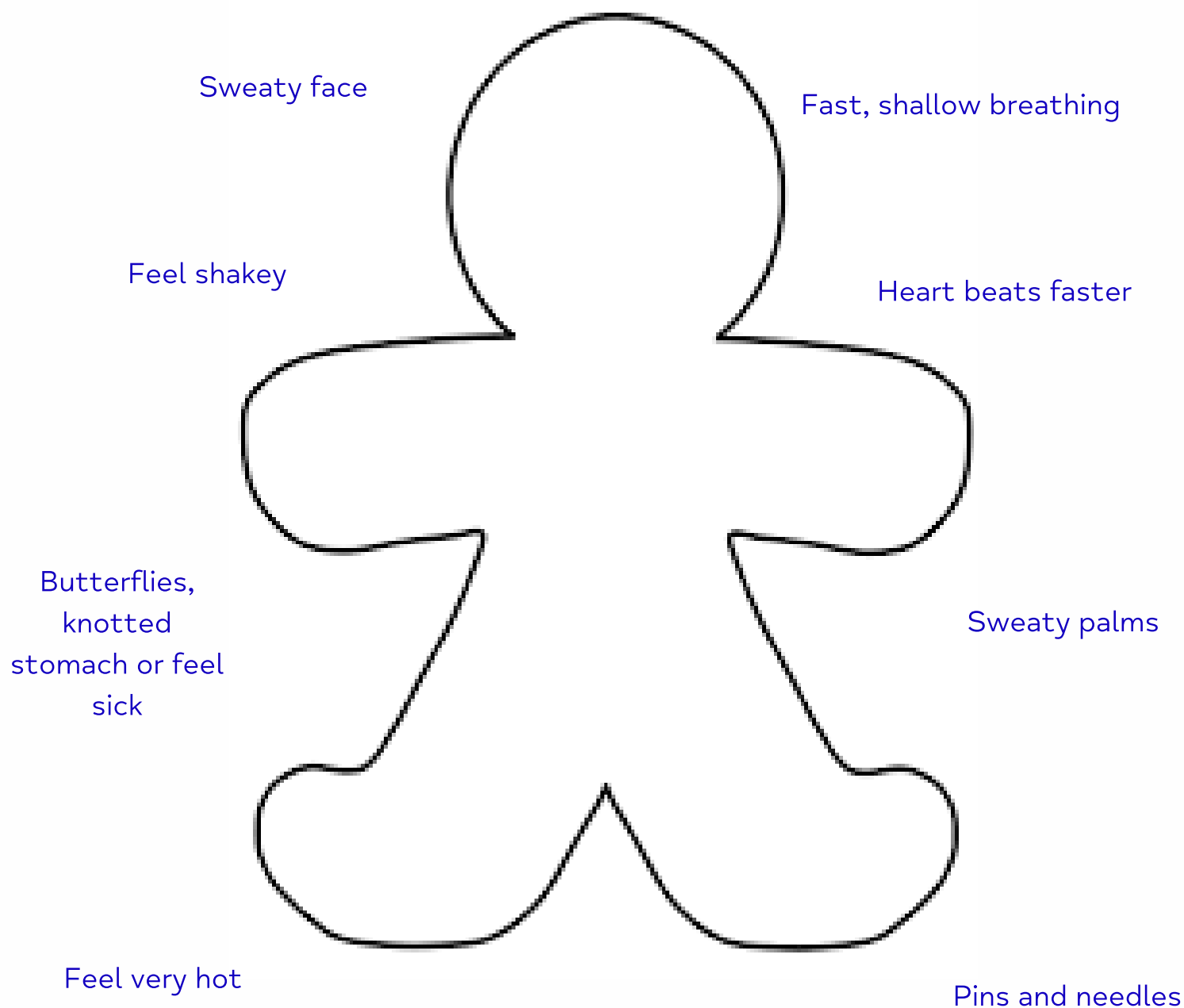
"Sometimes it can be difficult to know what is making you anxious, which can be upsetting or stressful in itself. That's why learning to recognise what is making you anxious can help so you deal with the uncertainty better.

Some people react more naturally than others, and there are times where everyone may go through stressful situations and feel more anxious because of uncertainty or perceived threat."

"Anxiety is a feeling of unease, like a worry or a fear, that can be mild or severe. Everyone feels anxious from time to time and it usually passes once the situation is over. It can make our heart race, we might feel sweaty, shakey or short of breath. Anxiety can also cause changes in our behaviour, such as becoming overly careful or avoiding things that trigger anxiety."

Can you identify anything that might have caused you to feel worried or anxious?

Anxiety and the Body



These are some of the most common physical symptoms that might happen if you are suffering with anxiety. We call them "Early Warning Signs". By learning what happens to our bodies when we feel anxious, we will be able to start to recognise anxiety in ourselves and start doing techniques or activities that can prevent our anxiety getting worse. Circle the ones you have experienced or you can add or draw on your own.

Relaxation and Anxiety

Learning how to relax, can be one of the first steps into helping us overcome our worries and anxiety. There are many different relaxation techniques that you can use that will help you to calm both your mind and relax your body.

Relaxation is an individual experience, to be able to achieve a true state of relaxation, we would encourage you to engage in an activity that both you enjoy, but it's also important that you find it calming; where you are in control .

Some suggestions could be:

1. Meditation
2. Breathing exercises
3. Reading a book
4. Light exercise
5. Gardening
6. Mindfulness

The more you practice learning how to relax, the more effective the activity will be at helping you to manage your anxiety. You will also increase your emotional resilience too!

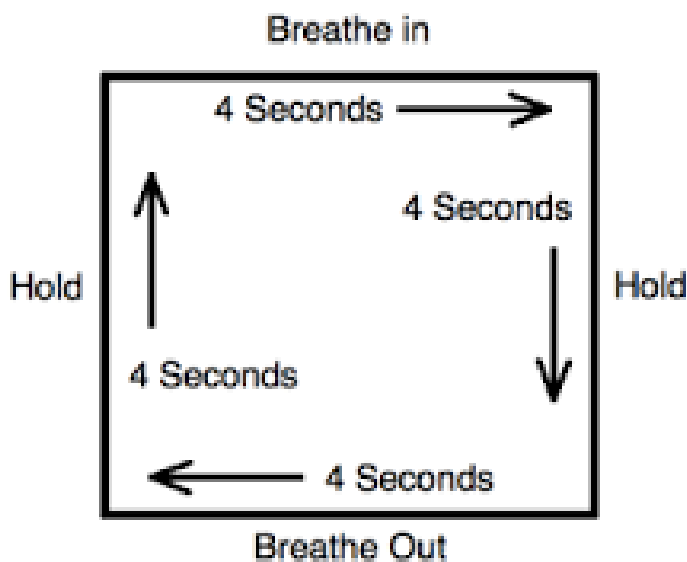
Can you think of any activities that help you to feel relaxed?

For more information on Mindfulness and relaxation, click the candles!



Controlled Breathing

When we feel anxious, one of our Early Warning Signs might be that our breathing may become quite fast and shallow. This can lead to us becoming faint, dizzy or maybe even feeling more panicked. By taking back control of the rate you breathe, changing to a slow but regular pace, the quicker it can help us to calm down.



How to use the Breathe box:

1. Lay down in a quiet comfortable place on your back, and breathe in only through your nose.
2. Inhale for 4 seconds, whilst feeling your belly fill up like a balloon.
3. Hold the breath for up to 4 seconds or whatever feels most comfortable for you.
4. Exhale out of your mouth, controlling the air flow so your lungs empty after 4 seconds and your belly deflates.
5. Take a 4 second pause after the exhale.
6. Repeat as many times as you feel necessary.

What are some of the benefits of using the breathe box?

- Reduces your heart rate
- Lowers your blood pressure
- Increases the blood flow to your heart and lungs
- Increases your energy and reduces the physical symptoms of anxiety and stress
- Helps your mind to focus
- Can help improve your sleeping patterns

Weekly Targets

Targets are a great way of motivating us to make changes to our lives. Every time we complete a target we are getting closer to our end goal AND it helps us feel like we have achieved something.

Think of it as a river; if you want to reach the other side you can't just take a big jump - you're likely to fall in. In order to get to the other side we must follow the stepping stones and take one step at a time. Every week you will have a small target to do- it might not feel like much but over time it will help you get to your end goal.

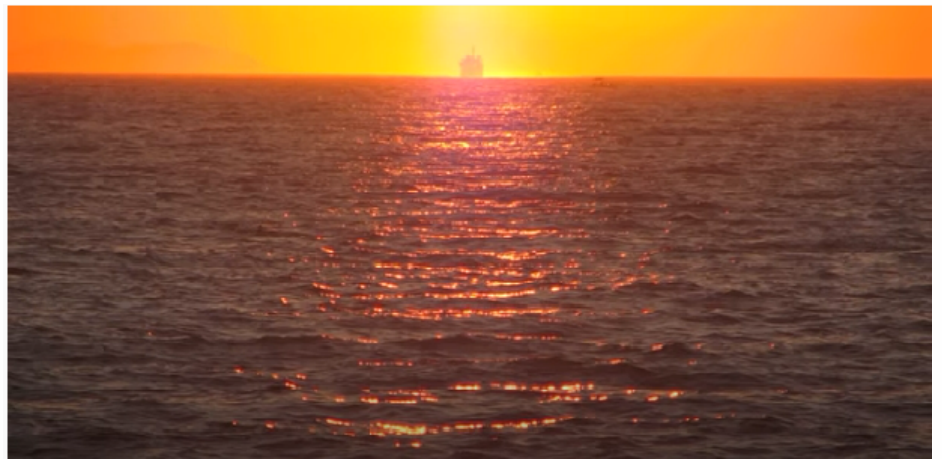
Can you think about what your end goal might be?



Weekly Targets

Daily Relaxation

Click on the picture of the sunset to be taken to our relaxation video on Youtube



By completing this every single day, you are starting to build up your emotional resilience which will help you to manage your anxiety. It is important to remember this will only work if we are consistent with completing this target every single day.

Once you have learnt the routine within the video, you may find you wish to adapt the exercise, maybe play your own music. It is important that what you do suits your needs but also is helpful in tackling your anxiety.

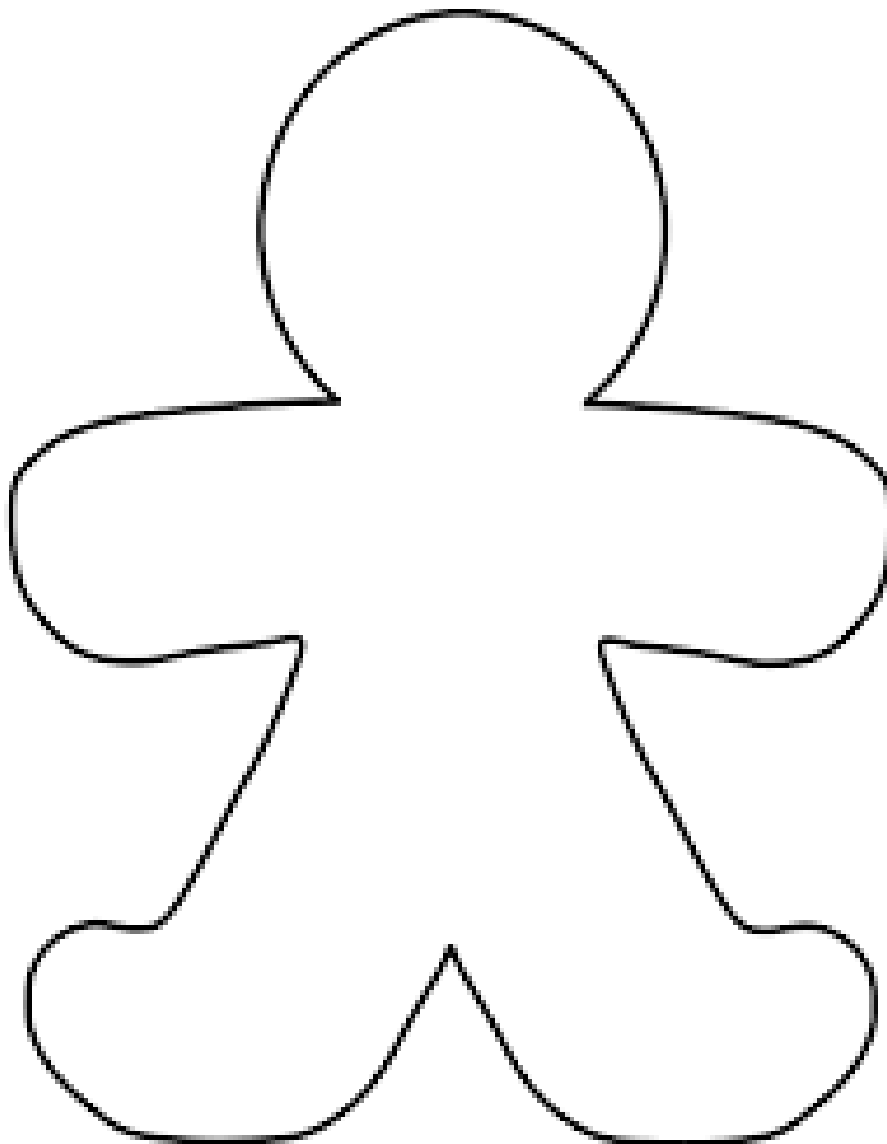
Things to think about before doing my daily relaxation:

- Am I somewhere comfortable?
- Am I hungry or thirsty before I start?
- Am I likely to be disturbed or distracted once I have started?

Weekly Targets

Take notes of your Early Warning Signs

Remember the activity you completed earlier where you looked at what anxiety can do to the body? Design and label the template with what Early Warning Signs you experience. When you learn your own Early Warning Signs, you are more likely to be able to start the techniques to help calm your anxiety faster, in time allowing you to manage your anxiety more effectively.



Information Page

ONLINE RESOURCES

A list of websites & apps that are helpful for managing mental health

NHS Every Mind Matters

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters

This website offers a range of mental health advice as well as an interactive quiz that's designed to help you feel more in control of your emotional/mental wellbeing.

Kooth

www.kooth.com

This site contains free mental health support with their online counsellors. It is a free sign up service that has resources such as discussion boards, helpful tips/articles written by young people and an option for them to write mood journals & set positive goals.

Childline

www.childline.org.uk

A mental health charity for children & young people that has a wide variety of helpful videos, games and articles. They have a free telephone helpline (0800 1111) and message boards where young people are encouraged to share experiences and support each other in a positive way.

Papyrus

www.papyrus-uk.org

A mental health charity dedicated to preventing young suicide by providing support and resources for young people and their families. They have their "Hopeline" (Call: 0800 068 4141 / Text: 078600 39967 / Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org) for children and young people who are experiencing thoughts of suicide, or for anyone concerned for a young person that could be thinking about suicide.

Calm Harm

An app to help teenagers manage/resist the urge to self harm by providing a wide range of distraction techniques.

Combined Minds

This app contains psycho-education for parents, families & friends with practical advice on how to provide mental health support to children & young people.

Cove

A relaxing musical app that helps people try to capture their mood and express it by making music within the program and capturing it in a journal format. Note: you do not need to know how to play an instrument to use this app.

Stem4

www.stem4.org.uk

A charity that promotes positive mental health in teenagers as well as encouraging them to build resilience and manage difficult emotions via online resources.

YoungMinds

www.youngminds.org.uk

A mental health charity that gives help and advice for young people, as well as encouraging them to get involved in fundraising/campaigning to raise awareness for children & young people's mental health.

Samaritans

www.samaritans.org

A charity that offers mental health support & information online for everyone. Their helpline is free and available to all ages. Call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org 24/7.

Child Bereavement UK

www.childbereavementuk.org/young-people

A site which has resources for young people who are grieving, as well as providing information & advice to families/professionals on how to best support a young person who is bereaved. A helpline is also available on 0800 028840.

Clear Fear

An app to help children & teenagers manage anxiety through distraction & helpful activities.

Calm

A mindfulness app that includes various relaxing sounds to listen to as well as "sleep stories" & some guided meditations.

Headspace

A mindfulness app that has more of a "podcast feel" to it with various talks, guided meditations and helpful videos available.



Midlands Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

Information Page

If you do feel that you need further support, please check out our dedicated young people section on our website for more resources and support.

<https://cwmind.org.uk/children-and-young-peoples-services-temporary-service/>



You can find resources, helplines and a Mental Health Survival Kit on our website by following this link:

<https://cwmind.org.uk/category/children-young-people-resources/>



Please aim to leave at least 5 days before completing session 2 of this workbook. This will give you time to repeat the relaxation link to get used to it and to provide time for you to think about your Early Warning Signs.