

Supporting your child with their worries

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CAMHS InReach Early Help Service

Working in partnership with

Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

'Anxiety is a feeling of unease, worry or fear. Everyone feels anxious at some point in their life...'

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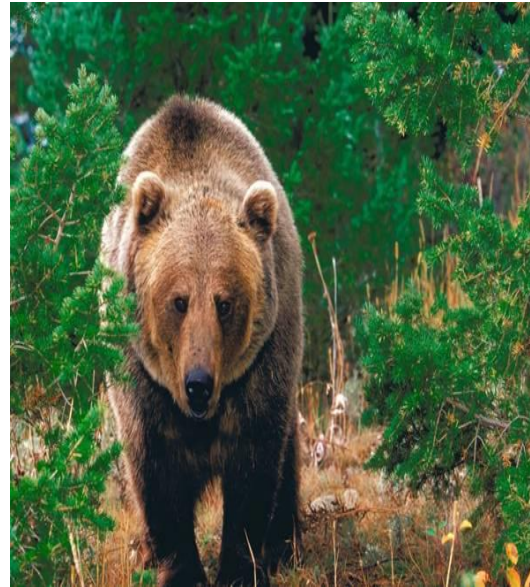
When does anxiety become a concern?

- When it starts to interfere or limit what they do most of the time
- Worrying over what may appear to be insignificant situations
- Avoidance becomes an automatic response in many situations
- They feel constantly 'keyed up'
- When coaxing or reassurance appear ineffective

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So why do we feel anxious?

FIGHT



FLIGHT

FREEZE

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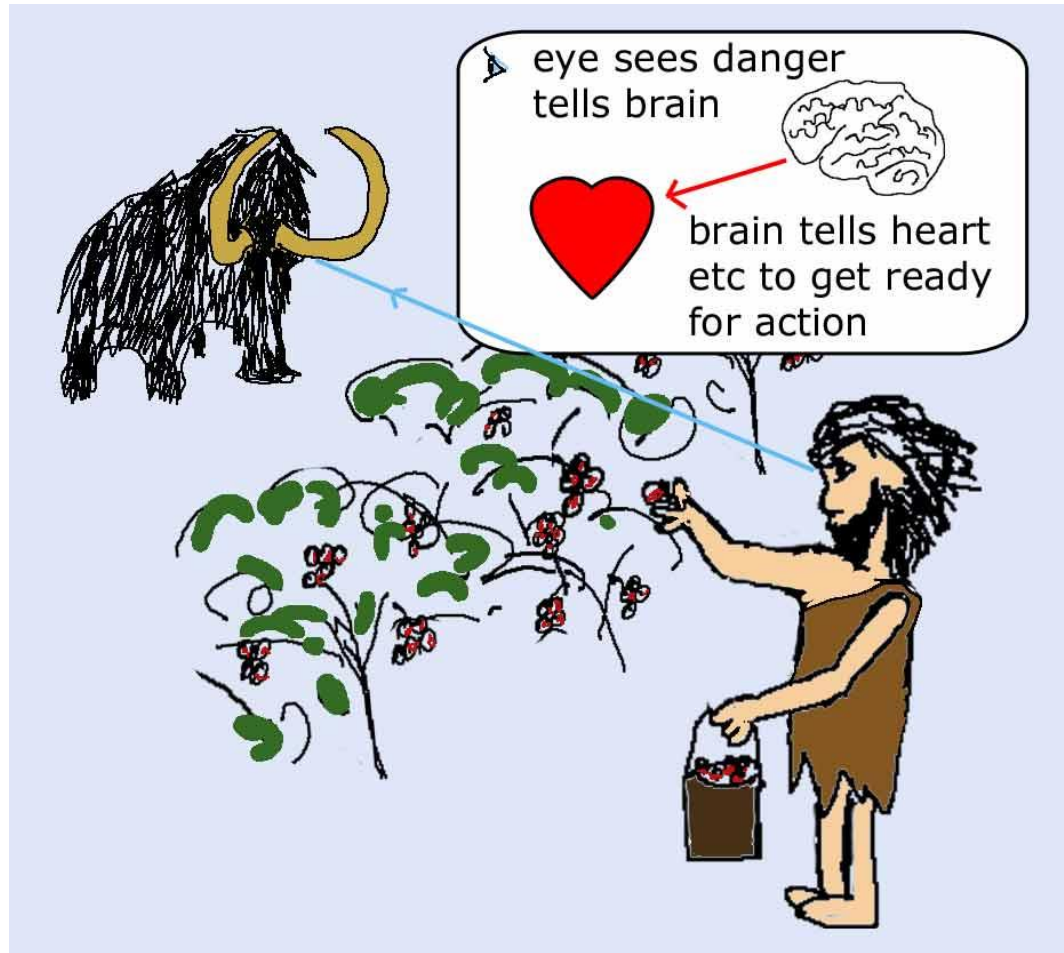
tunnel
vision

Heart beats
faster

Muscles
tense

Breath
quickens

blood
circulation
increases



Pupils of
eyes
change

Need to go
to the
toilet

blood
pressure
goes up

chills &
sweating

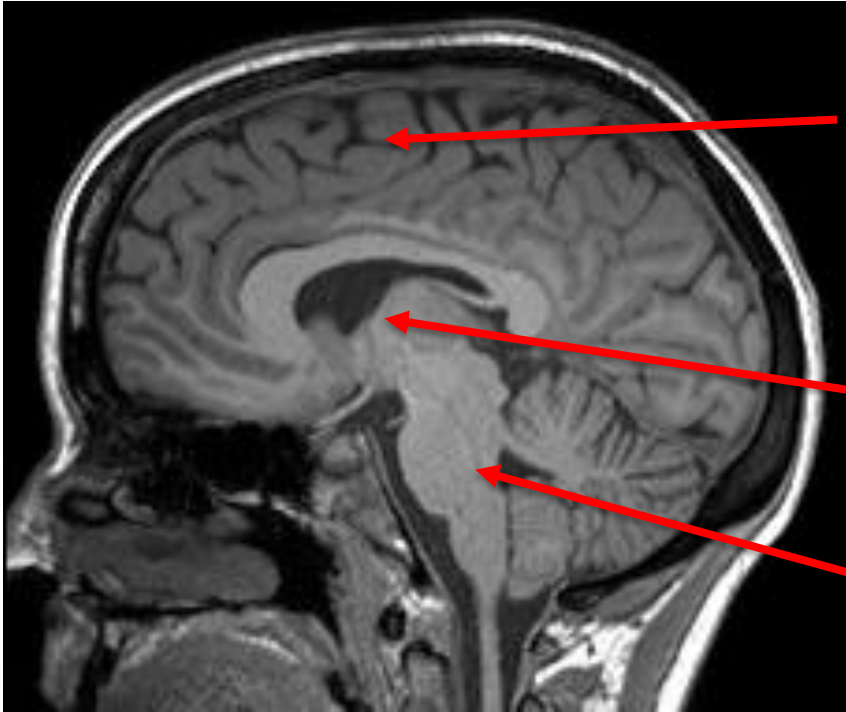
paling or flushing of the face

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Mouth dries up

Three part brain

[The Triune Brain \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



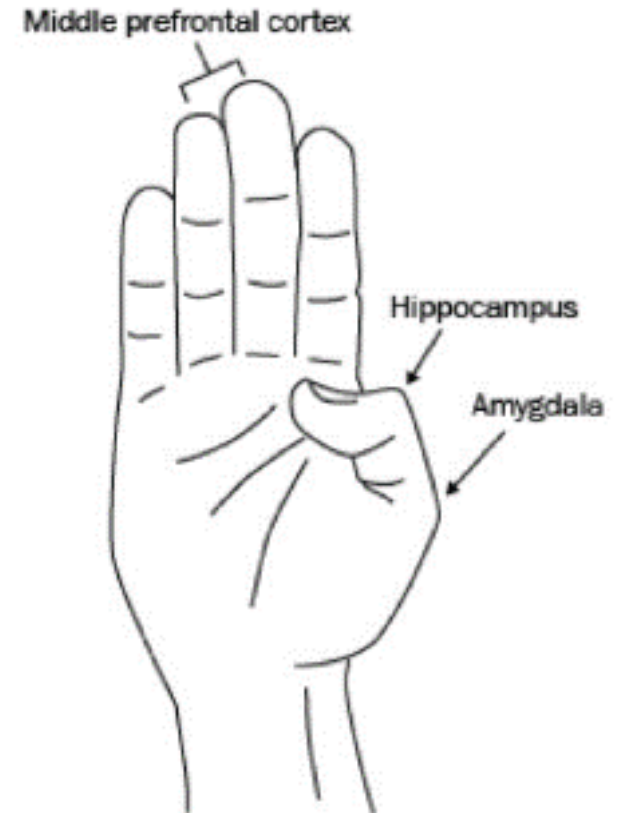
- **Cerebral cortex** – includes decision making & language skills
- **Limbic system** – emotions, impulses
- **Lower brain** – basic life-support

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Three part brain...

<https://drdansiegel.com/hand-model-of-the-brain/>

- *instantaneous response*
- **Fight**
 - Remove the threat
- **Flight**
 - Remove self!
- **Freeze**
 - Trigger support from adult



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Strategies for managing anxiety

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Helping your child... the first steps

1. Be accepting of your child's concerns
2. Listen to the their perceptions, gently correcting misinformation
3. Help them to learn strategies, and develop their own
4. Patiently encourage your child to approach a feared situation one step at a time until it is becomes familiar and manageable
5. Praise 'effort', not just 'achievements'
6. Manage your own anxieties

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Soothing fight, flight and freeze (Emotional Brain)

Begin to develop a 'tool-kit.'

- Square breathing
- Visualisation
- Mindfulness Practice
- Yoga – muscle relaxation
- Sport
- Youth club, extra-curricular activities



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BALLOON breathing



1. Think of your belly as a balloon.
2. Put your hand on your belly to feel it rise and fall.
3. Take a deep breath in through your nose to fill your balloon.
4. Hold your breath for 2 seconds.
5. Breathe out through your mouth slowly to deflate your balloon.
6. Repeat balloon breathing 5 times.

*Follow your own breathing rhythm.

BREATHE IN




Pretend you are smelling a flower.

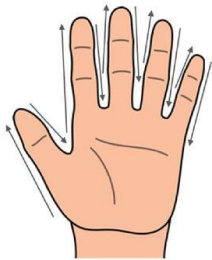
BREATHE OUT



Pretend you are blowing a leaf.




5-Finger Breathing

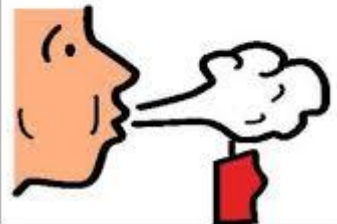
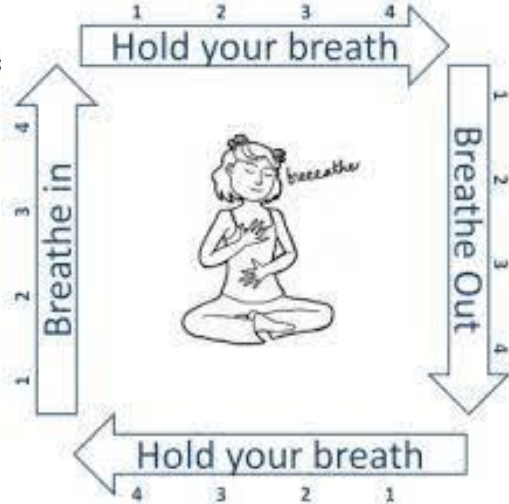


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breathe in through nose



blow out of mouth

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New Horizons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g69cyia-aKI>



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Supporting the Thinking Brain & building resilience

- Avoid avoidance
- Avoid over-reassurance
- Scaffolding and preparation, revisit successes
- Praise & reward

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Distract/ block worry thoughts

5-4-3-2-1 game

Describe 5 things you can see right now.

Describe 4 things you can feel with your sense of touch right now.

Describe 3 sounds you can hear, or your three favorite sounds.

Describe 2 things you can smell around you, or that you like to smell.

Describe 1 thing you can taste right now, or that you like to taste.

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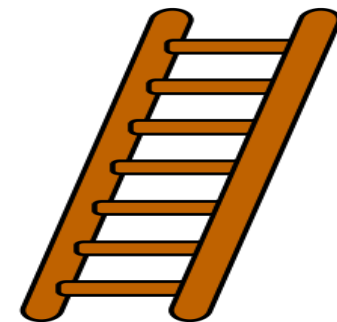
Break the worry down

- A worry that belongs to someone else
- A worry everyone has
- A worry to give to an adult to sort out
- A worry that disappears when you do it / talk about it
- A worry that might not ever happen

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Graded Exposure (small steps)

- Rate your child's level of worry/ fear 0-10, thermometers, ladders
- Start with the achievable
- When they can do first step, move to next



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Helping with school based anxiety

1. Listen to their worries
2. Speak with teachers, be consistent, align strategies
3. If a new school/transition - have a trial run of the route. Meet & greet
4. Activities to boost self-esteem. Praise & reward. Build your child's confidence.
5. Show that you feel positive about their school and "talk it up"

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In addition...

Helping with separation anxiety

1. make sure your child knows that you, or whoever is dropping them off, will come back
2. make sure you're early to pick up your child as it's upsetting for them to be the last
3. good Reception teachers are expert at looking after upset children
4. when your child gets home, let them have a rest and snuggle with you or their carer

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Helping with sleep

- Create a comfortable sleep environment
- Relax
- Have a snack
- Get physical - exercise
- Set a bedtime routine
- Establish a fixed awakening time
- Get some natural light

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Helping with sleep

- Don't worry about not sleeping!
- Start small. Making small changes can have a large impact on your sleep. Don't try to do everything all at once.
- Be consistent. Be patient. These strategies can take time to improve your sleep.
- Chart your progress.

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TRC How can you help us 6.15min

- [How Can You Help Us? \(youtube.com\)](#)

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Manage your own anxiety

- Recognise your triggers
- Avoid avoidance & over-reassurance
- Work as a team
- Be consistent
- Model coping and calmness
- Expect set-backs
- Keep going.....

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Other steps to consider

- Seeking support and advice through the School Nurse, SENCO, ELSA and /or BSS
- Barnardo's – Wiltshire Early Mental Health Counselling & Support (www.onyourmind.org.uk/parents-and-carers/)
- Wiltshire Mental Health School Teams (www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/wilts/mhst/schools/)
- CAMHS – Single Point of Access Team www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/wilts/
- Possibly opening a ESA (previously CAF), if there are other needs & services involved (www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1444/Accessing-children-s-services)

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Resources

- www.nhs.uk/conditions/anxiety-children
- www.youngminds.org.uk
- www.anxietycanada.com
- Taking Charge of Autism and Anxiety – online course for young people <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/wellbeing/autism-and-anxiety/>
- www.newhorizonholisticcentre.co.uk
- Wiltshire Right Choice Resources and EBSA <https://rightchoice.wiltshire.gov.uk/Page/9920>
- www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/physical-health/sleep/parents
- Self Help for Anxiety Management (SAM) App – University of SW England

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