

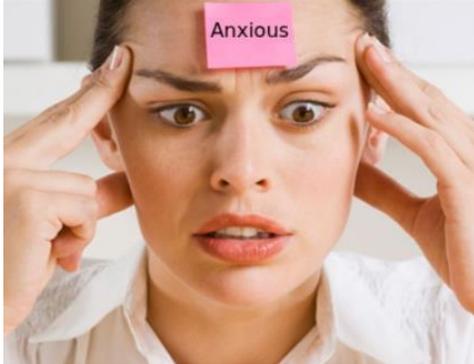
Supporting well-being and increasing resilience

Parent session

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Session overview

- Definitions of resilience and anxiety
- Anxiety and the adolescent brain
- The thought, feeling, behaviour link
- Creating a low pressure environment
- Questions

Educational Psychology

- The practice of applying psychological theories and ideas to the difficulties that can arise for pupils, teachers, families and schools
- Support young people's learning, development, and emotional wellbeing from age 0-25
- Consultation, assessment, training, intervention
- Traded service through Cognus with some core services provided by the London Borough of Sutton

bouncing back, bouncing up or
bouncing forward

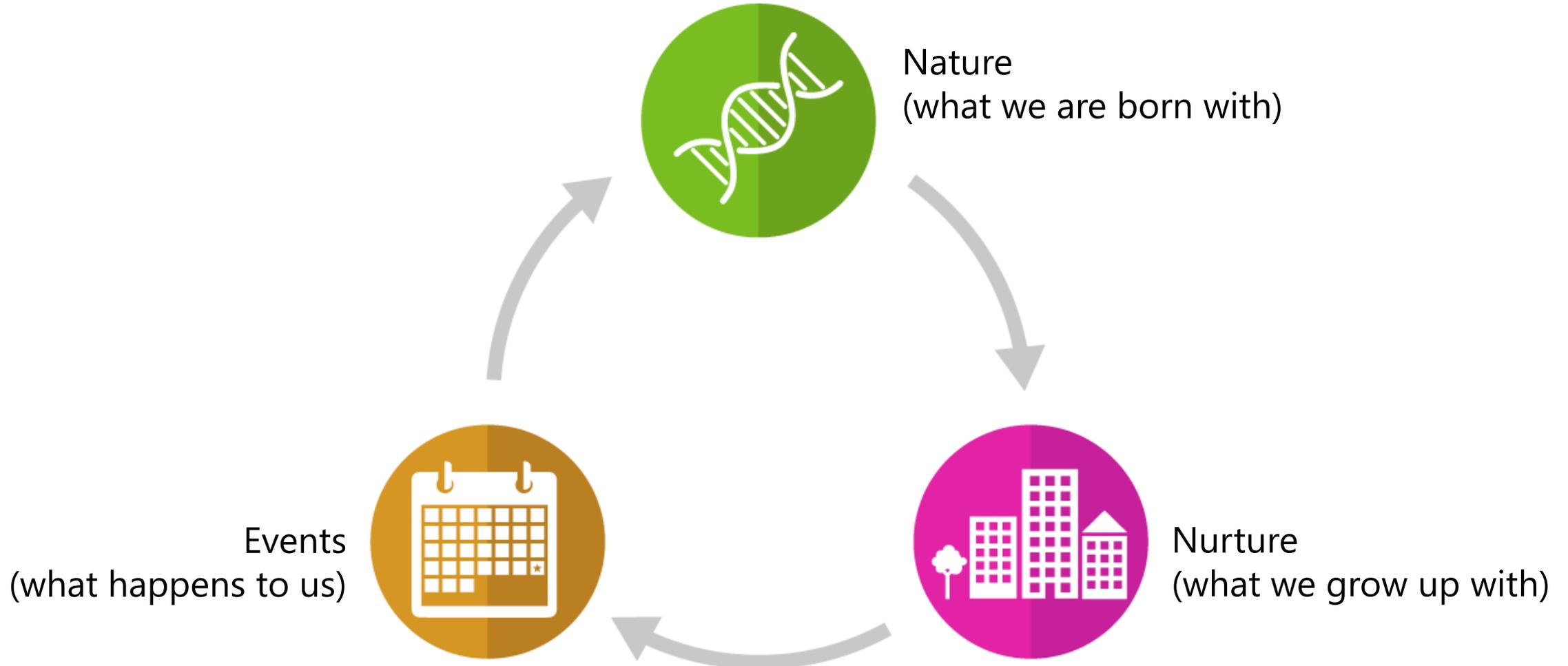
- The capacity to recover in the face of difficulties
- Coping strategies (social competence, problem solving, autonomy, and a sense of purpose.
- Support systems that enable us to adapt

Resilience

‘Resilience is made of ordinary rather than extraordinary processes.’

(Masten, 2001)

Resilience (or lack of it) comes as a result of a complicated interaction between:

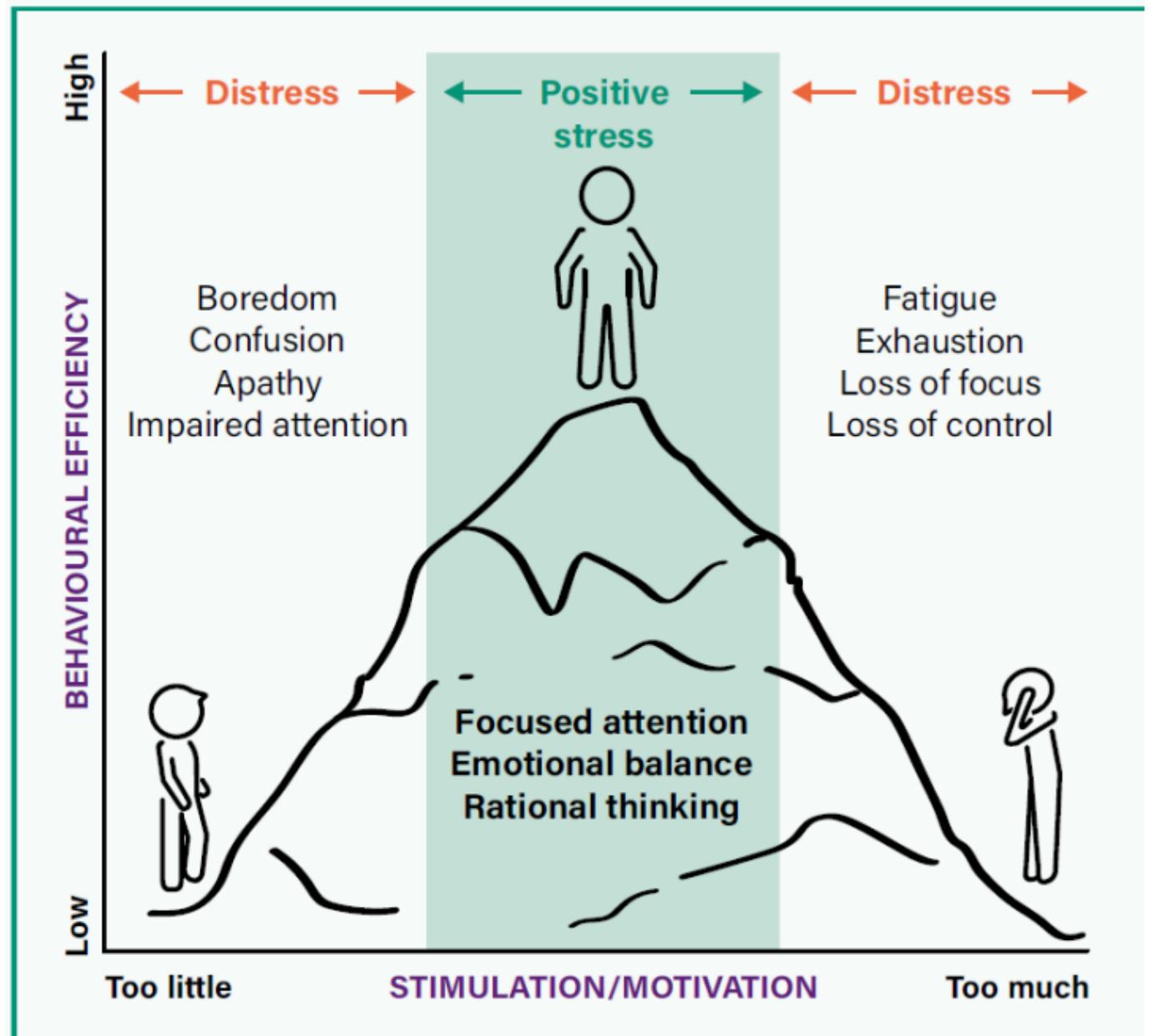


What is anxiety?

- Anxiety is an emotion; a normal emotion
- It is a physiological, biological and psychological response to perceived danger
- When we detect a threat, the primitive brain (i.e. limbic system) fires, telling our body to react and prepare us for action (e.g. flight, fight or freeze)
- This happens whether the threat is real or perceived
- Anxiety cannot keep rising



The Stress Curve

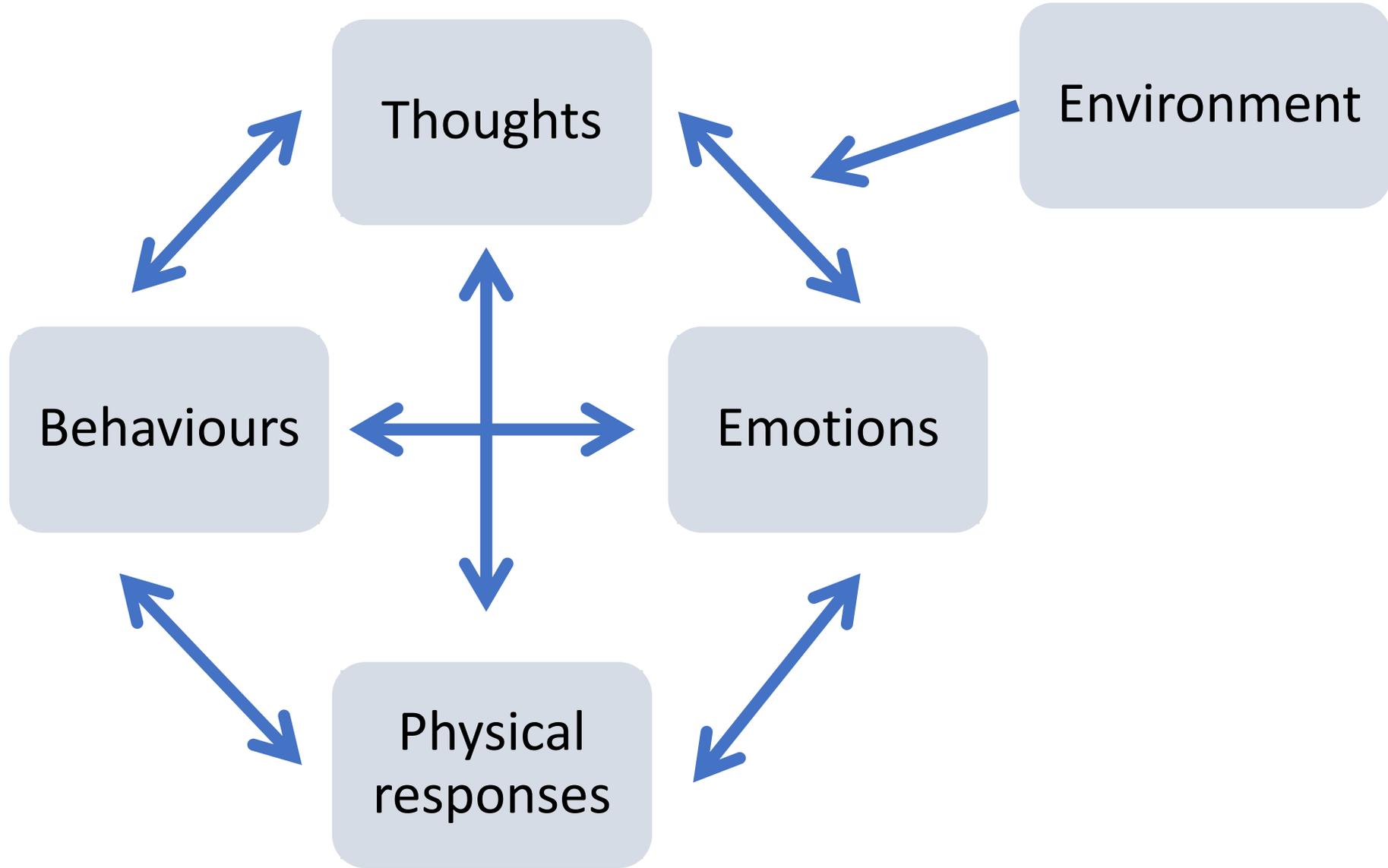


Anxiety and the adolescent brain

- Usual worries – relationships and social performance, academic results, appearance, peer rejection
- Adolescence is a time of emotional, physical and social change
- Occurring at the same time as structural changes to the brain
- Connections between the limbic system and prefrontal cortex continue developing until the early 20's
- Normal changes in neural activity are exacerbated by sleep disturbance
- [The Teenage Brain Explained - YouTube](#)

Signs and signals of worry

- Physical changes – e.g. headaches and dizziness, over breathing, difficulty swallowing, panic attack, excess sweating and blushing
- Recurring fears and worries about routine parts of everyday life
- Irritability
- Anger
- Tearfulness
- Trouble concentrating
- Extreme self-consciousness or sensitivity to criticism
- Withdrawal from social activity
- Avoidance of difficult or new situations
- Chronic complaints about stomach aches or headaches
- Drop in grades or school refusal
- Repeated reassurance-seeking
- Sleep problems
- Substance use



THOUGHTS – self talk

- We all have internal dialogue – ‘self-talk’ – saying things to ourselves about the things that we or others do
- Some are helpful thoughts – they make you feel confident and positive

GREEN THOUGHTS

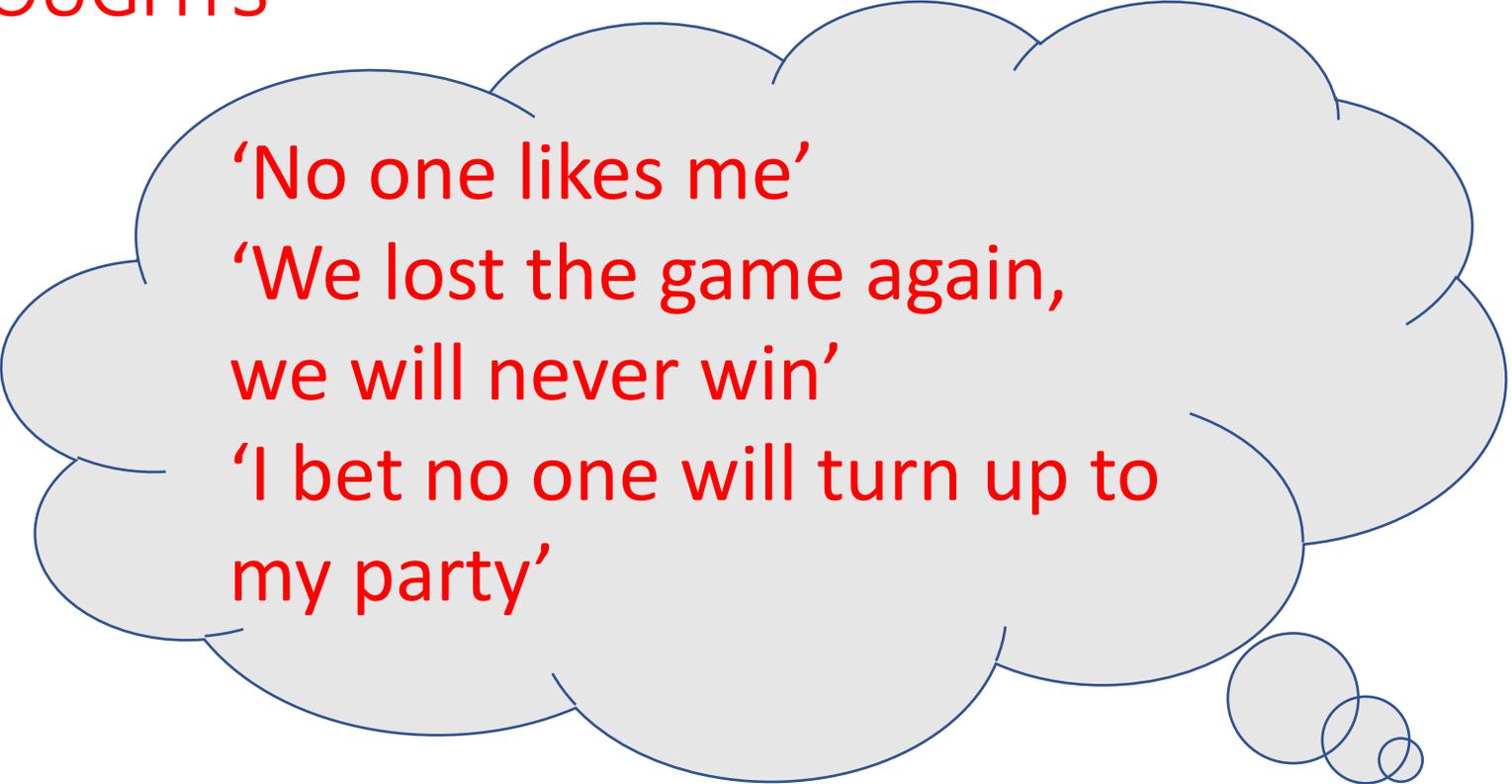


‘I’m really looking forward to that party’
‘Even though we lost the match, I think we played well’

THOUGHTS – self talk

- Other thoughts are not helpful and make us feel bad or worried

RED THOUGHTS



'No one likes me'
'We lost the game again,
we will never win'
'I bet no one will turn up to
my party'

Thinking errors/biases...

- Mental filter – focussing on the negative aspects of the situation and filtering out the positive
- Overgeneralisation – one negative event is translated into everything being negative
- Jumping to conclusions – assumptions without the evidence
- Catastrophising – amplifying the negative and minimising the positive
- Emotional reasoning – assuming that our feelings are facts
- All or nothing – situations/people/things are seen as either good or bad and there is no “grey area”

Balanced thinking

- Questioning is more effective than reassurance
 - How do you know this thought is true?
 - Is there another way of looking at things?
 - What would you say to your best friend if he or she had this thought?



Coping self-talk – repeating encouraging and positive coping messages to yourself



Positive self-talk – praising ourselves for being successful



Fact vs. opinion?



Throw them away – write down negative thoughts, scrunch them up and throw them in the bin



Thought stopping – immediately and loudly saying STOP!



Turn down the volume – lowering the intensity of the negative thoughts

What does listening and understanding 'look' or 'sound' like? - How would you feel?

I don't want to go to work today.

Well you're going in anyway! You'll get into trouble if you don't. Finish that coffee and get your shoes on!

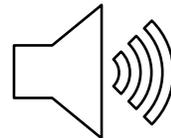
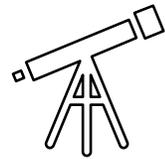


Instead ...



- Listening (actively)
- Paying attention to what your child is saying
- Show interest
- Empathise (don't sympathise)
- Label the emotion and don't minimise it

WINS
WONDER
IMAGINE
NOTICE
SOUNDS



I **WONDER** if you felt ignored or left out? Have I got that right? Tell me more about that.

I can **IMAGINE** that it was really upsetting for you, I would feel upset about that too.

I **NOTICED** that what he said made you really angry. Can you tell me more about that?

It **SOUNDS** as though you are feeling anxious about that, is that right? What else are you feeling?

You can also remind your child that it is okay to feel several emotions at once



A SPARKLE OR
A LIGHTBULB ONE

HELPFUL &
HEALING OR
HARMFUL

EXPANDING
OR
RESTRICTING

TRAUMA-INDUCING
OR
TRAUMA-REDUCING

A
TURN
AROUND
ONE

EVERY MOMENT & INTERACTION CAN BE AN INTERVENTION

A
SEED
PLANTED

AN
OPEN
OR
CLOSED
DOOR

A SNAKE
OR A
LADDER

A RIPPLE
OR
A TIDE

ENRICHING
OR
CONSTRICTING

DR. KAREN TREISMAN
SAFE HANDS AND
THINKING MINDS

'Doing to'

- Using a technique or approach that we've been trained in
- Comes from a well-meaning place and the best of intentions
- Is about 'fixing' a problem
- Locates a problem within the child or that a child has a problem we need to help fix
- Is usually a planned process or thought through interaction

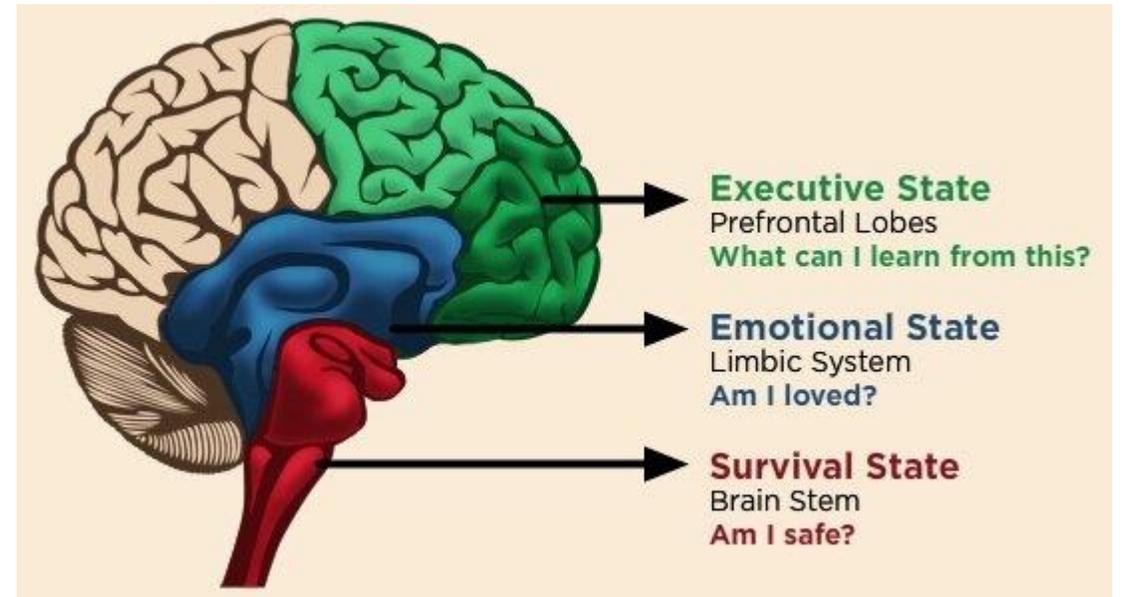
Motivated by:

- Wanting to help and wanting the best for children
- The sense that as an adult 'I know you [child], and I know what you need'
- A view that adults can 'fix'
- Effecting change and evidencing outcomes



'Being with'

- Connecting with a child and interacting with them on their terms
- Being in the moment, experiencing shared emotions
- Taps into the emotional brain and forms a sense of connection
- Links in with safety, security and attachment processes
- It's about being a person in the room, not an adult or someone who needs to come in and fix



Coping strategies

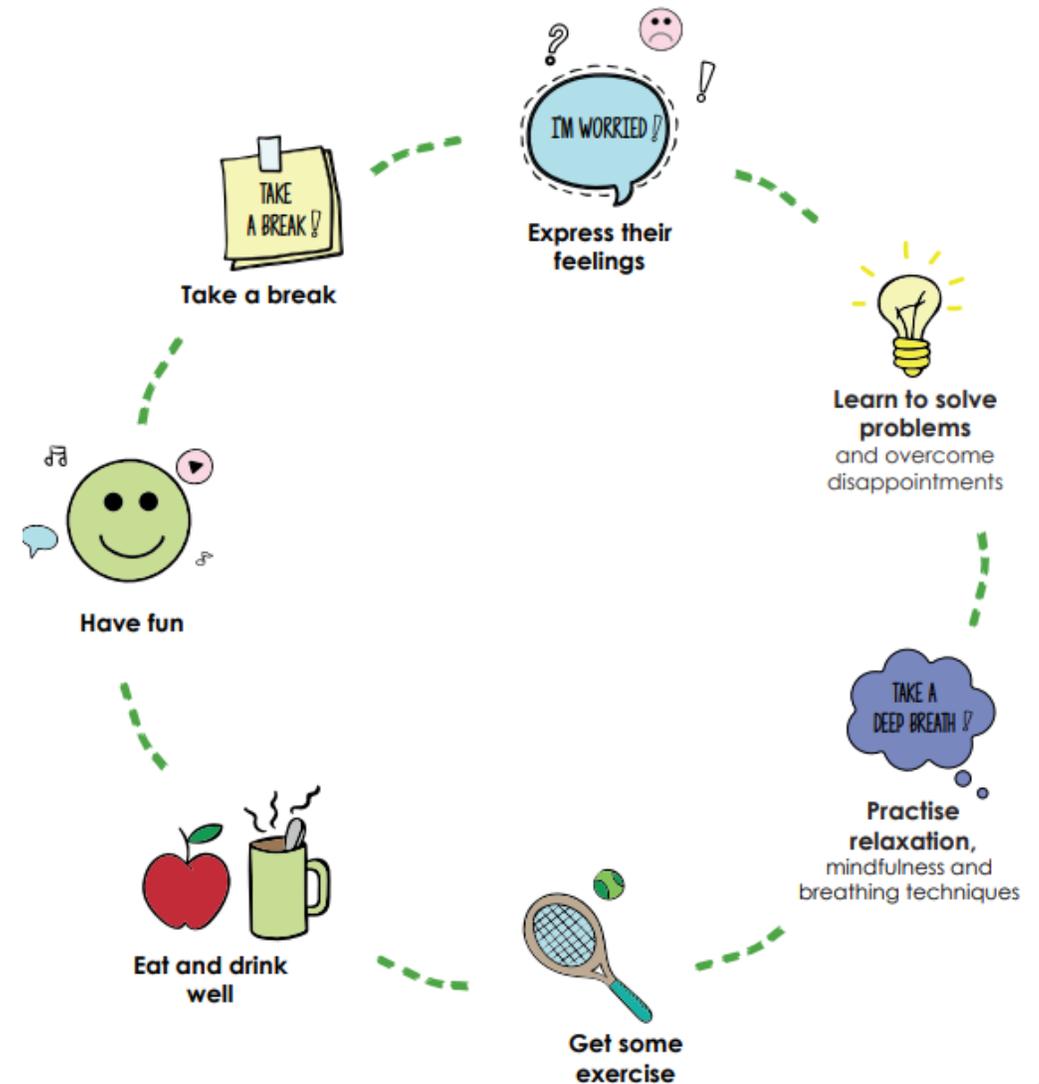
- Controlled breathing – 5, 5, 7, box breathing, colour breathing
- Diaphragmatic breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Grounding activities
- Visualisation
- Meditation
- Journalling
- Practicing gratitude
- Exercise



Supporting someone who is anxious

Help them to:

- ✓ Notice their feelings as anxiety/worry and encourage help-seeking
- ✓ Use strategies to calm their body
- ✓ Talk through thoughts which are unhelpful and/or irrational
- ✓ Make a plan for studying and self-care
- ✓ See constructive ways of managing with anxiety and worry
- ✓ Help them to reframe the feelings they have as potentially making them more productive (re-appraisal)
- ✓ Ask them to press fast forward and imagine how they will feel in a few years if they fail an exam now.. (temporal distancing)
- ✓ Be careful about the expectations you set ... emotions are contagious ... where could pressure be minimised?
- ✓ Take a break!



Final top tips

01

Encourage your child to make risky decisions in appropriate environments

02

Consult with your child

03

Encourage a consistent sleep schedule (and short naps)

04

Praise in the right way – input not output, not personality traits

05

Advocate for less social media time

06

Encourage exercise across a range of sports and teams

Services available

- In school – counsellor, school nurse, pastoral team
- Online parenting course ‘understanding the teenage brain’ (www.inourplace.co.uk and apply the **TREE** access code)
- Off the record [Sutton \(talkofftherecord.org\)](http://talkofftherecord.org)
- Young Minds [Parents Mental Health Support | Advice for Your Child | YoungMinds](#)
- Selection of useful videos [Wellbeing for Young People \(13yrs \) | \(riseuk.org.uk\)](http://riseuk.org.uk)



Questions?