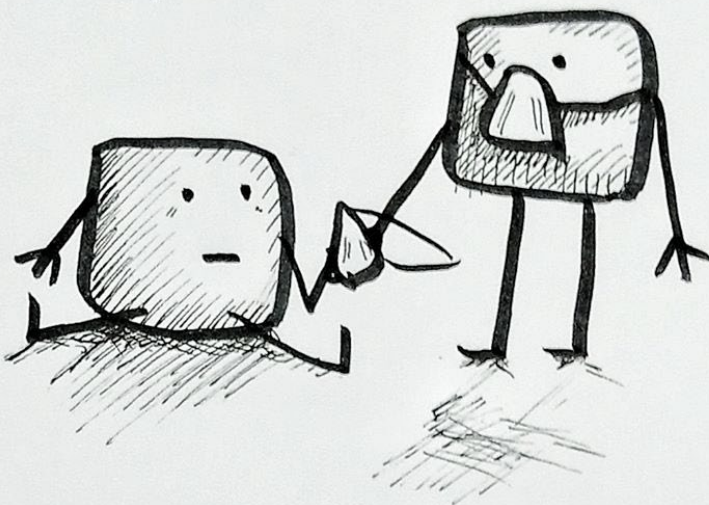






Life as a parent

put your own
oxygen mask
on first



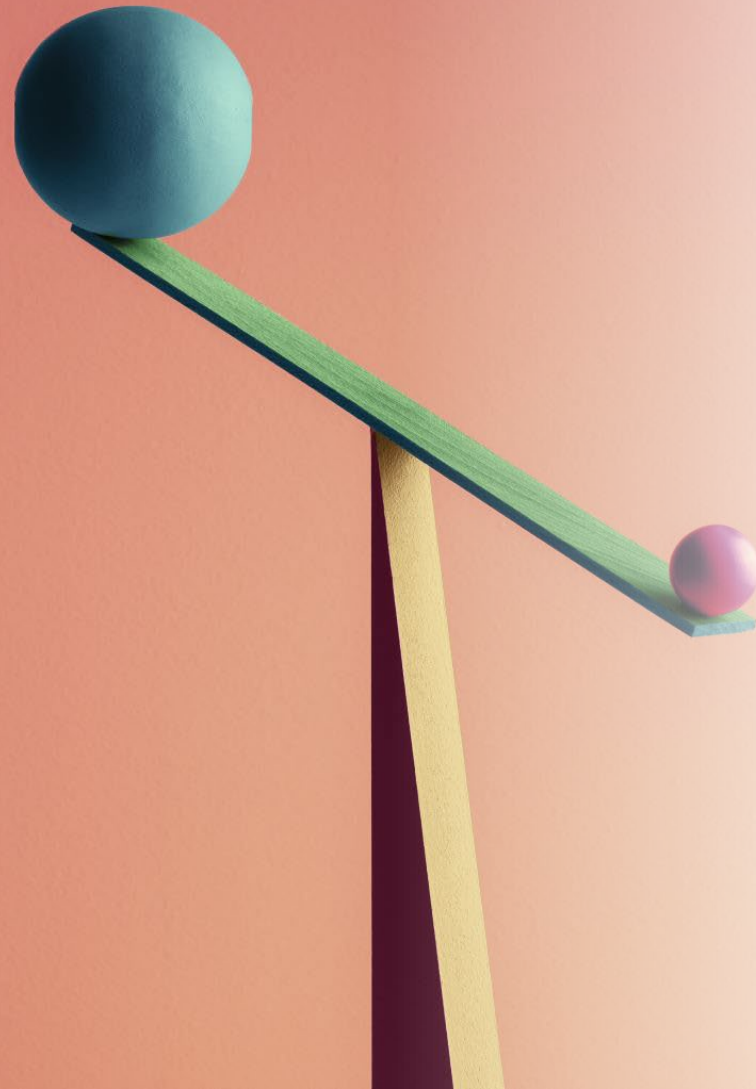
ANXIOUSLITTLEMONSTERS



And for our young people – this is their chance

But they need to accept the following things...

1. School isn't going to be easy
2. They are not going to get the grades they want without some hard work
3. Revision is often boring



It's
about
balance

What is stress?

- Stress is the body's normal response to a challenge, threat or excitement
- We all experience stress and we all experience anxiety
- There are several factors that can cause stress.
- We're all different and we've all learned to respond differently to situations that make us feel angry or worried or overloaded



Stress is normal

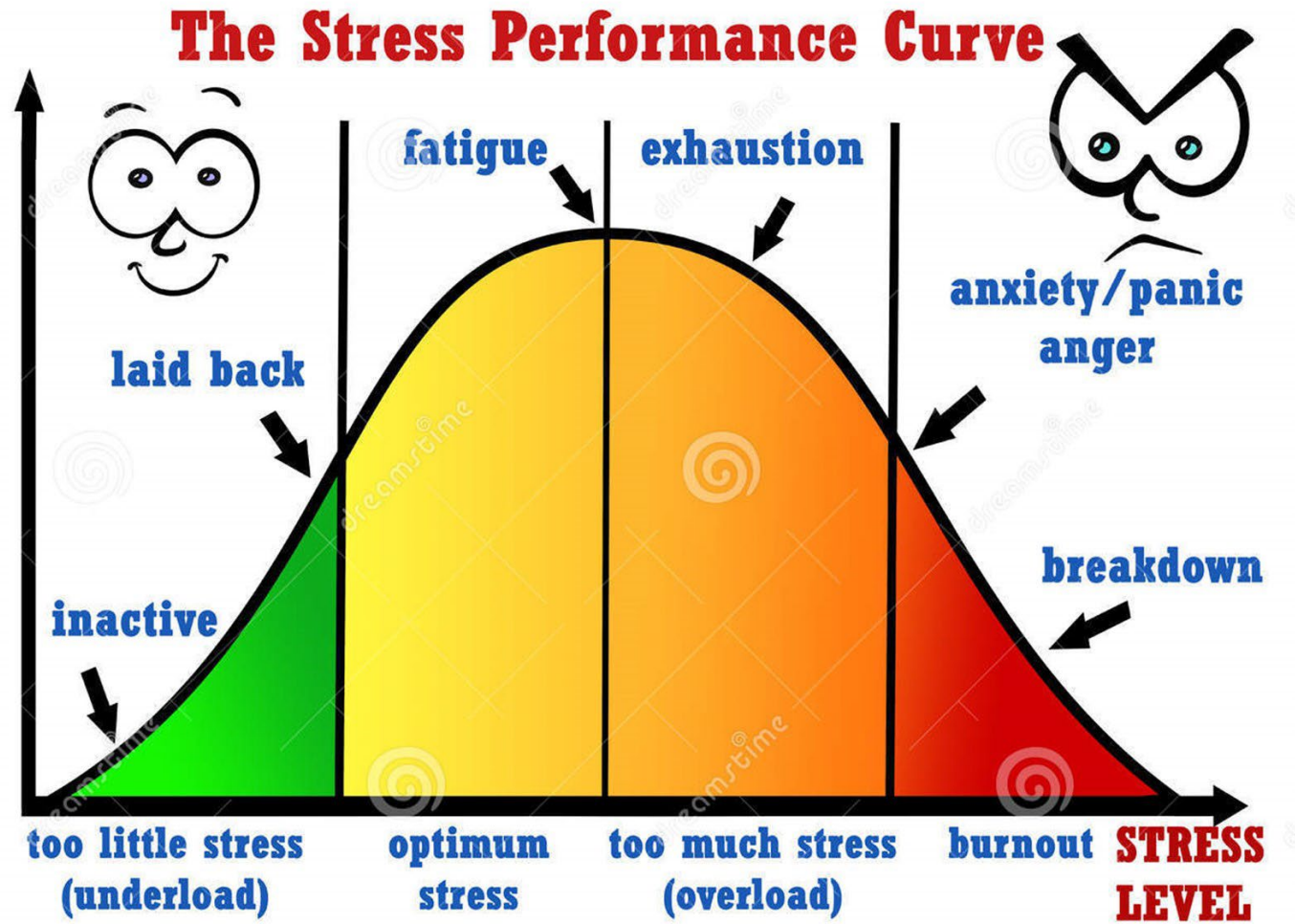
- First of all, we all have stress in our lives. It's normal.
- Stress is something we need to survive.
- With revision/exams an amount of stress and anxiety can provide valuable stimulus that gets us to study and prepare, otherwise we might not bother to put in our best effort.
- Anxiety is normal. But they don't need to become so anxious that they're crippled by fear.



Perfectionists

- It's great to succeed and reach for the stars. But keep things in balance. If your child thinks that "anything less than a 9 means I've failed" then they are creating mountains of unnecessary stress for themselves.
- Encourage them to aim to do their best but recognise that none of us can be perfect all of the time.
- Keep things in perspective. The exams might seem like the most crucial thing right now, but in the grander scheme of their whole life they are only a small part.

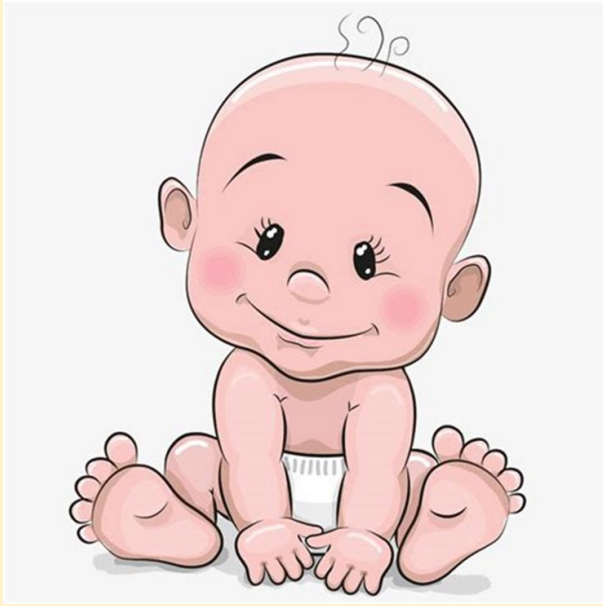
The Stress Performance cycle





All young people will
process things
differently from an
adult

Sometimes....CAN'T NOT WON'T

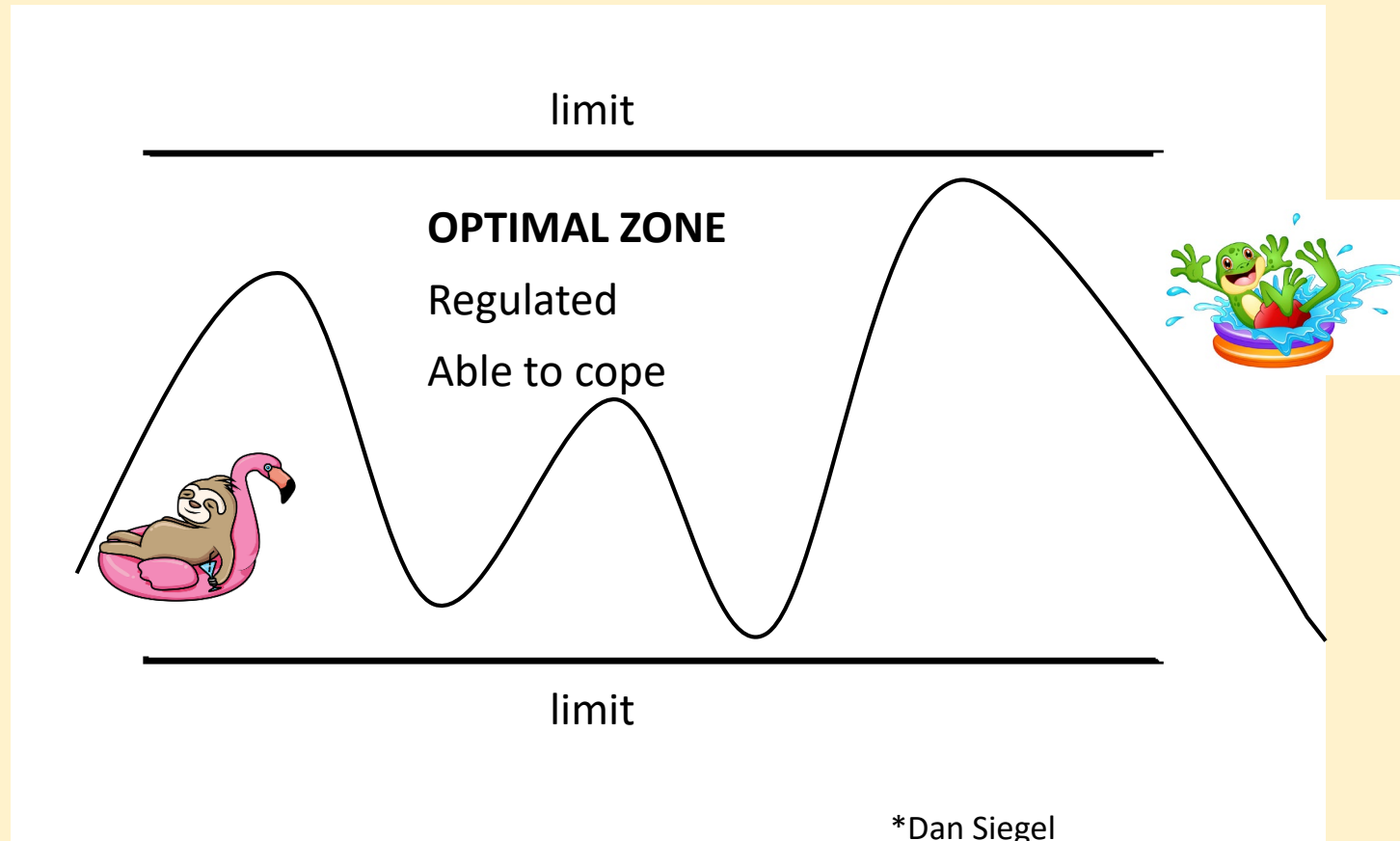


- ❖ The brain is the only organ that is unfinished when we are born - 25% of final brain size
- ❖ All brain cells are there but not connected

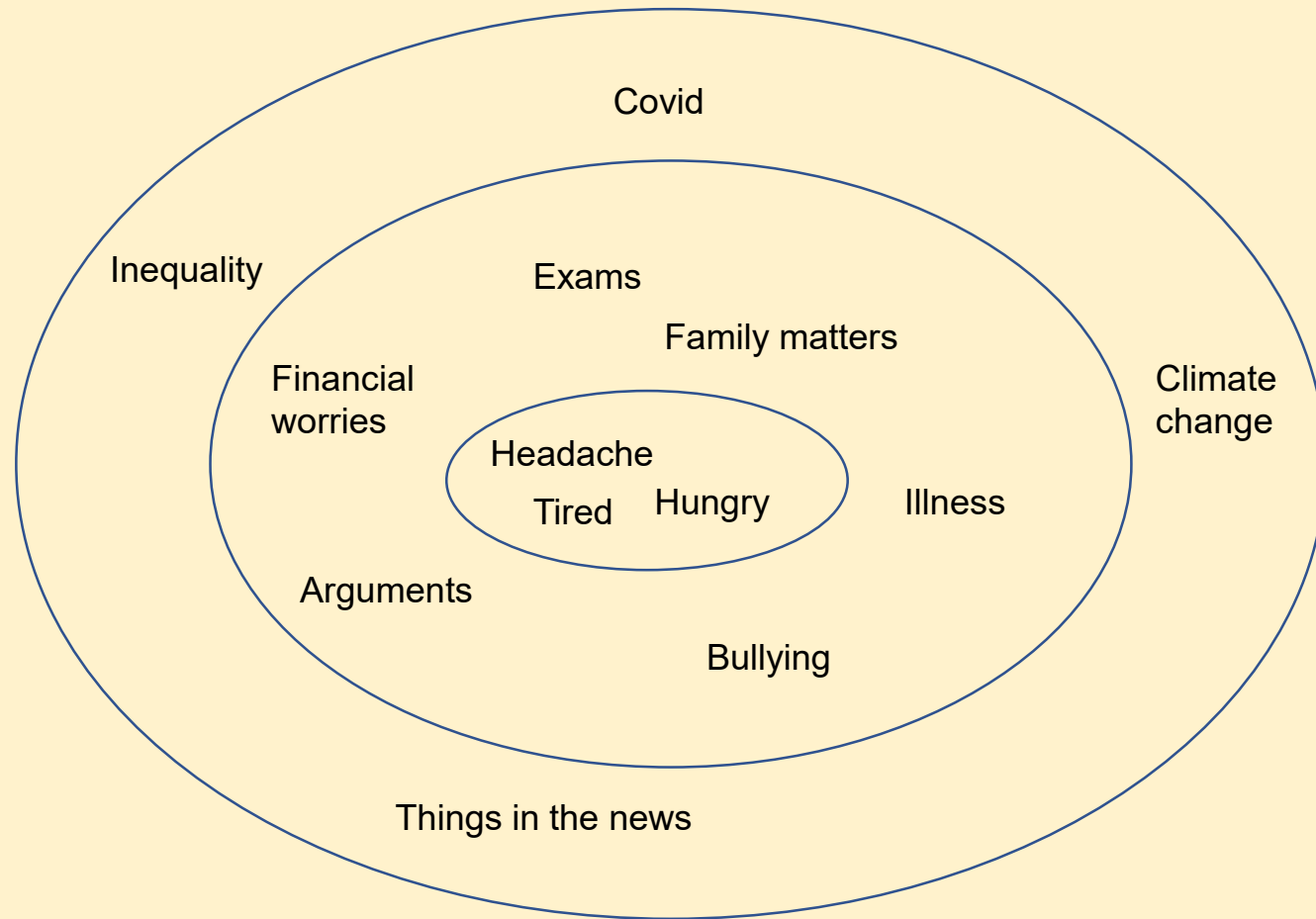


- ❖ Two big periods of growth and change– terrible twos and the adolescent years
- ❖ Different areas of the brain develop at different times

“WINDOW OF TOLERANCE”*



The more we are coping with, the smaller our window of tolerance



How might study/exam stress affect a young person?

EMOTIONS

BEHAVIOUR

THOUGHTS

PHYSICAL
FEELINGS

Key things to remember

The key things to remember are that:

- Most people experience some of these signs during an exam period
- You can learn to control your reactions to anxiety
- We can choose ways of dealing with things that can help us feel more positive about the events we are facing
- There are things that can help. It's about finding what is right for your child.

MAKE IT PERSONAL



Widening the Optimal Zone – 5 Ways to Wellbeing

Give

Learn

Take notice

Be Active

Connect

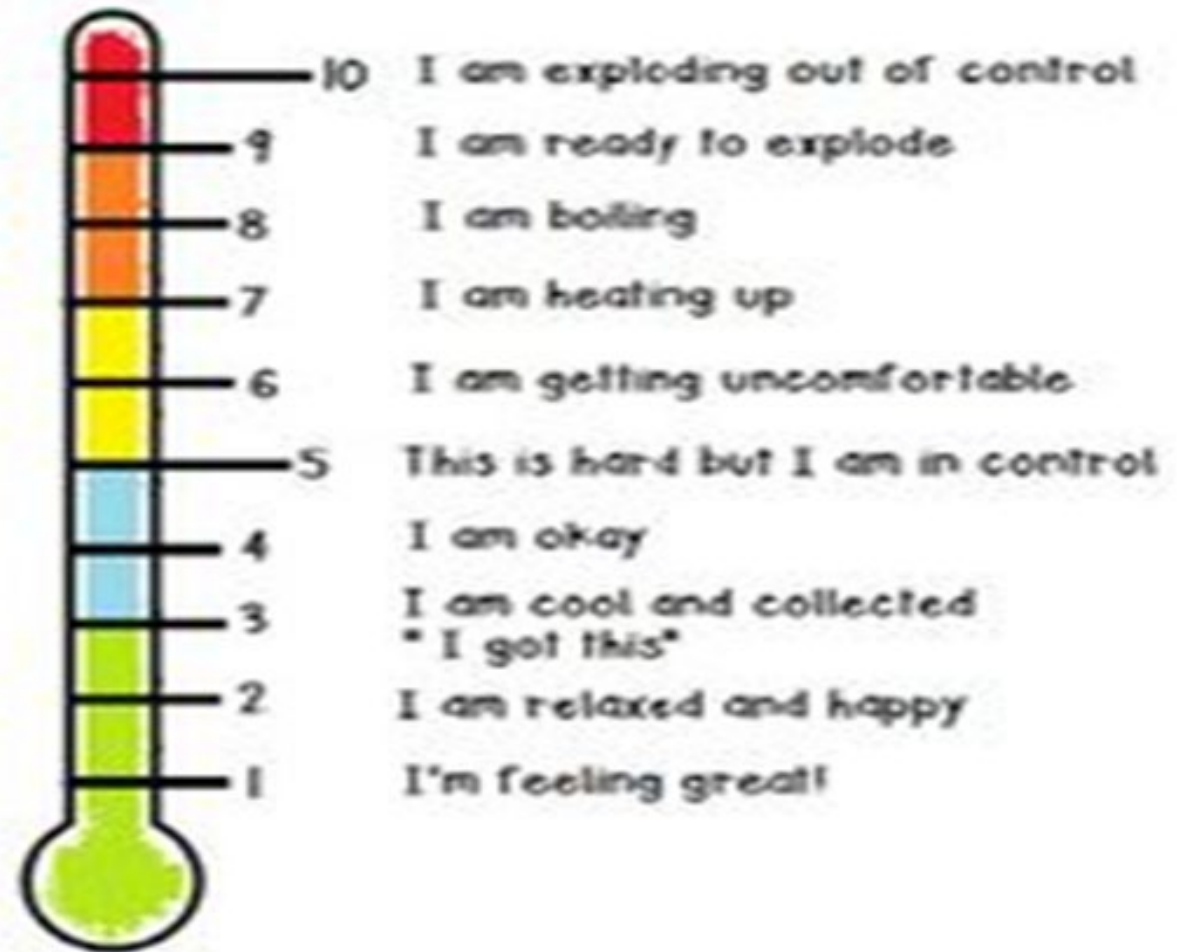
Supporting a young person

- ❖ Recognise
- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Regulate
- ❖ Respond/Reason

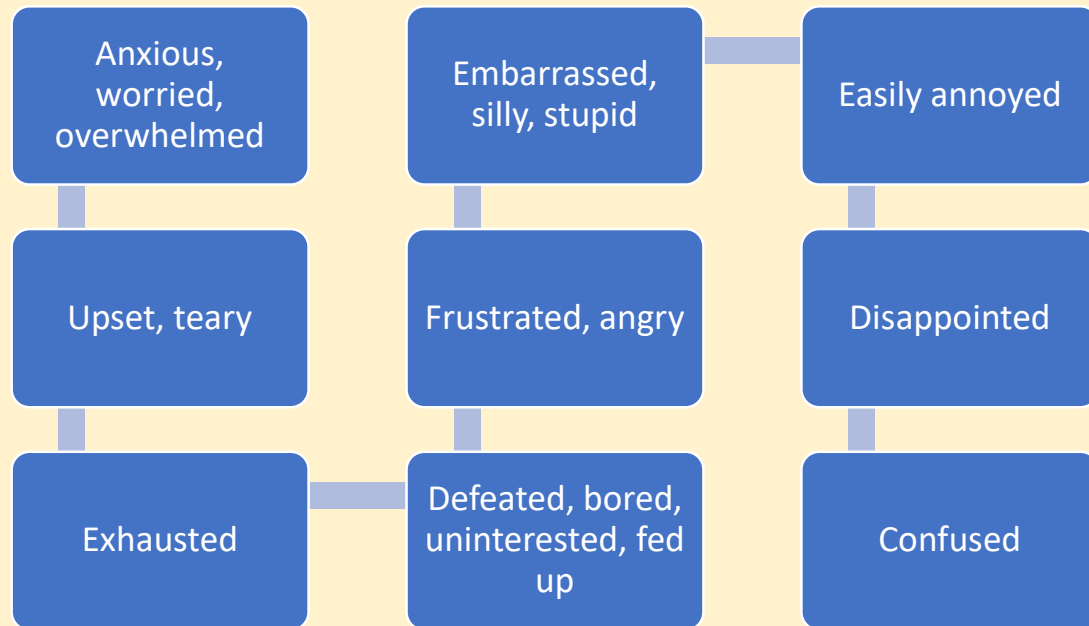


Recognise

Feelings Thermometer



Recognising the Signs



- Shaking
- Feeling sick
- Headaches and dizziness
- Stomach pain
- Changes in eating habits
- Crying
- Struggling to concentrate
- Forgetful
- Restless
- Feeling tense in your body
- Changes in breathing, breathing very quickly
- Sweating a lot
- Feeling tired

Respect

- The power of listening
- All feelings are valid and have worth

I'm usually done hearing people before they even finish talking because I am a fast listener.



RESPECT

INSTEAD OF....

You were doing so well, don't spoil it now

Big sighs/eye rolls

Why didn't you....?

That's what happens when....

You don't know you're born

It's just your hormones

If I'd had your chances

But you can do this so just get on with it

In my day.....

Don't worry, it will be fine...

Come on, don't cry...

TRY.....

You seem.....

I see

Mmmm...

Oh?

Go on....

That sounds.....

I'm hearing that.....

You wish that.....

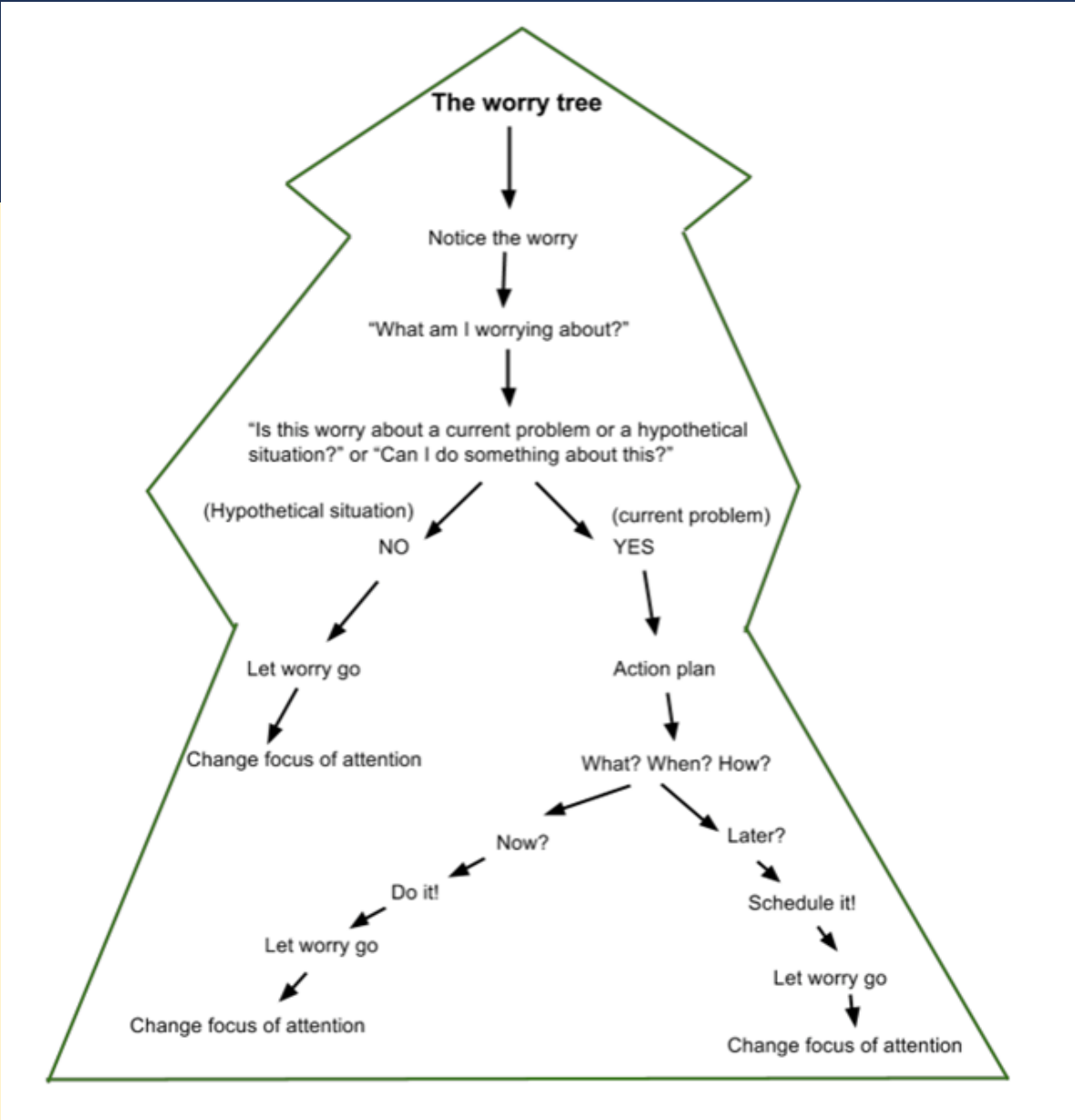
REGULATE

What do you need?
What can I do to help?



RESPOND/ REASON

THE WORRY TREE



RESPOND/ REASON

- ❖ Choose your battles
- ❖ Collaborative problem solving
- ❖ Encourage them to put together a Mental Health “first aid” box
- ❖ Practise when regulated
- ❖ Look at lifestyle & environment





Things that can help

Positive Self Talk-

Would you talk to your best friend like you talk to yourself?



- We let other people's words influence how we're feeling. Words are so powerful and can have huge impact on our emotions and actions.
- Our mind has 2 parts conscious and subconscious and the sub-conscious mind will do what the conscious mind tells us.
- Try 'having a word with yourself', say, 'I can'. You might not initially believe the positive things you're saying/thinking/writing but you ARE going to be in a better frame of mind to perform well than if you say nothing or listen to negative messages.
- Positive Self Talk helps you tap into your inner strengths. We all have inner strengths. It's about using your mind in the way you want to help yourself. It helps us to decide how we'll react to stress. When we do the opposite (negative thinking) we create more stress for ourselves.

Talking

- Don't keep things bottled up. Confiding in someone you trust and who will be supportive is a great way of alleviating stress and worry.
- Avenues of support
 - ✓ At home
 - ✓ In school



Friends

- Sometimes anxiety needs to be placed in quarantine when seriously anxious people get together, they can act as an amplifier and get jointly more frightened.
- Are some friends more helpful at some times than others? Encourage the child to recognise that themselves.



Relaxation

- What do our young people find relaxing?
- Is it dancing, art, meditation, fishing, going for a walk with friends, reading a book, listening to music, shopping, a gym work out, talking to a friend or playing sport?
- Think about things they can do that relax and find ways to build them into your weekly routine. This is a way both to prevent stress and to deal with stress.



Balanced lifestyle

It is important that our young people make time for:

- Themselves - rest, relaxation, thinking time, exercise, and healthy eating
- Their relationships
- Their social life
- Their spiritual needs (this could be religion, nature or whatever is right for you)

as well as work or study.

Healthy habits

- Get into good habits
 - ✓ Routines for study
 - ✓ Exercise and fresh air - keep active
 - ✓ Eat healthily
 - ✓ Drink lots of water – hydration
 - ✓ Time to relax – baking? colouring? watching a TV show? Football? a creative activity?

Tips - Deep breathing



- When you become anxious your breathing becomes shallow and fast.
- Breathing slowly and deeply will help you calm down and feel in control.
- Look up the alternate nostril breathing technique – it can really work!

Tips - breathing

- Deep breathing - breathe in through the nose and let the air fill the bottom of your lungs first, breathe right down to your stomach, then breathe out slowly, concentrating on letting the muscles of your body relax.
- Focus breathing - breathe in through the nose and as you breathe out say a positive statement to yourself like relax or calm down.
- Stretching - stretch out muscles, reach the arms above the head and stretch or just stretch whatever part of the body you feel needs it.
- Visualisation - this is where you picture a pleasant place and use slow breathing through the nose - you can make the place anywhere you want to and you can change anything in the picture to see, feel, sound or smell just as you wish.

REMEMBER
YOU

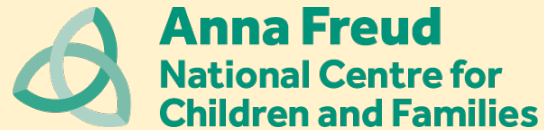


Remember to take
care of yourself.
You can't pour from
an empty cup.

Helpful resources for parents and carers



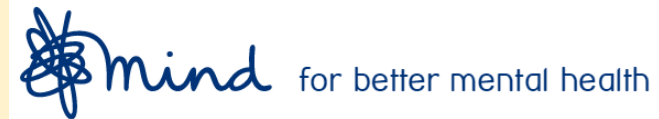
www.youngminds.org.uk



www.annafreud.org



www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk



www.mind.org.uk