

# WHAT IS ANXIETY?

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# ANXIETY IS.....

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- A term used to describe uncomfortable feelings of nervousness, worry and tension.
- The feeling of fear or panic.
- A feeling that we all get in a situation that we perceive as threatening or difficult such as sitting an exam, having a driving test, going for an interview, being in a crowded place.
- A perfectly normal response with as many as 1 in 6 young people experiencing an anxiety problem at some point in their lives.
- Helpful..... Psychologically, anxiety keeps us alert and give us the 'get up and go' to deal with situations/problems. Physically, anxiety makes our body ready for action – to run away from danger or to attack it (the 'fight or flight' response).

# HOW DOES ANXIETY AFFECT US?

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- Physical Effects



- Thoughts





# AND IT AFFECTS OUR....

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- Mood



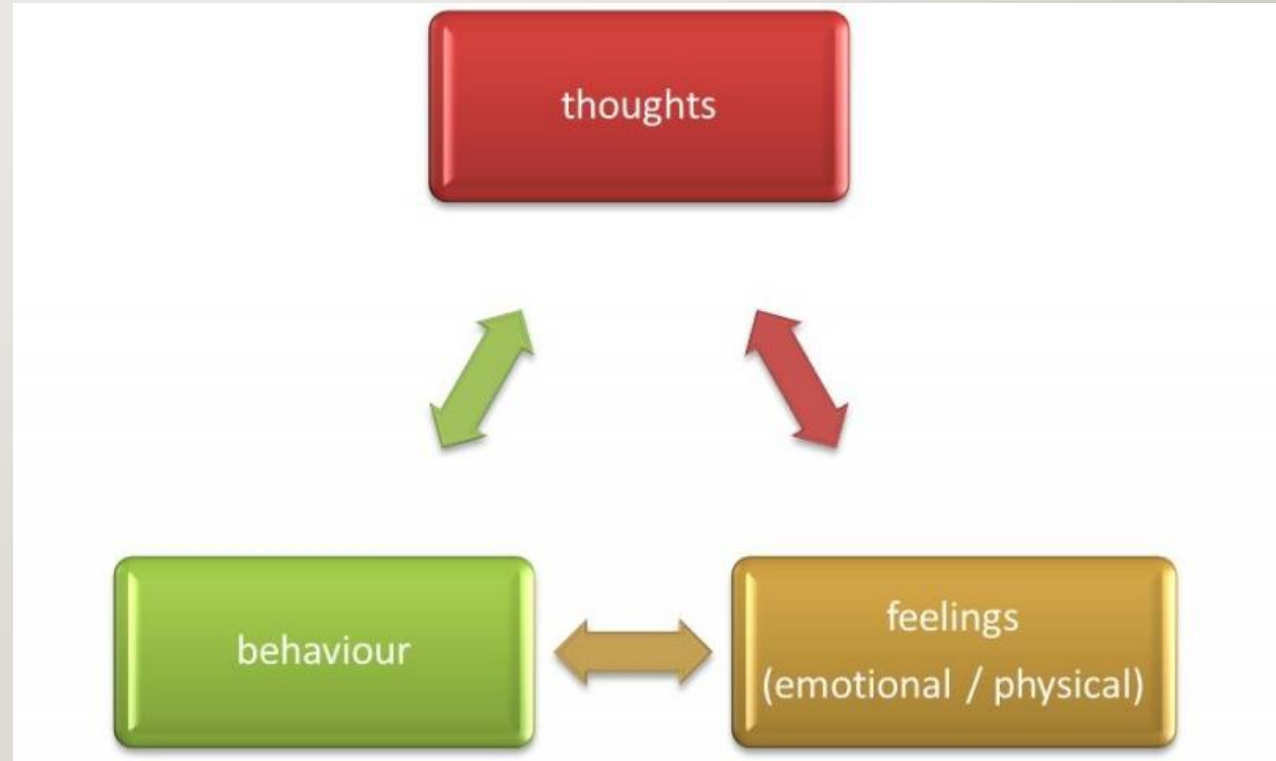
- Behaviour



**ANXIETY AFFECTS US  
IN FOUR MAIN WAYS.  
EACH OF THESE  
AFFECT ONE  
ANOTHER.....**

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Our thoughts about something affect our feelings and our feelings affect our behaviour and affect us physically.



# WHAT DOES ANXIETY FEEL LIKE?

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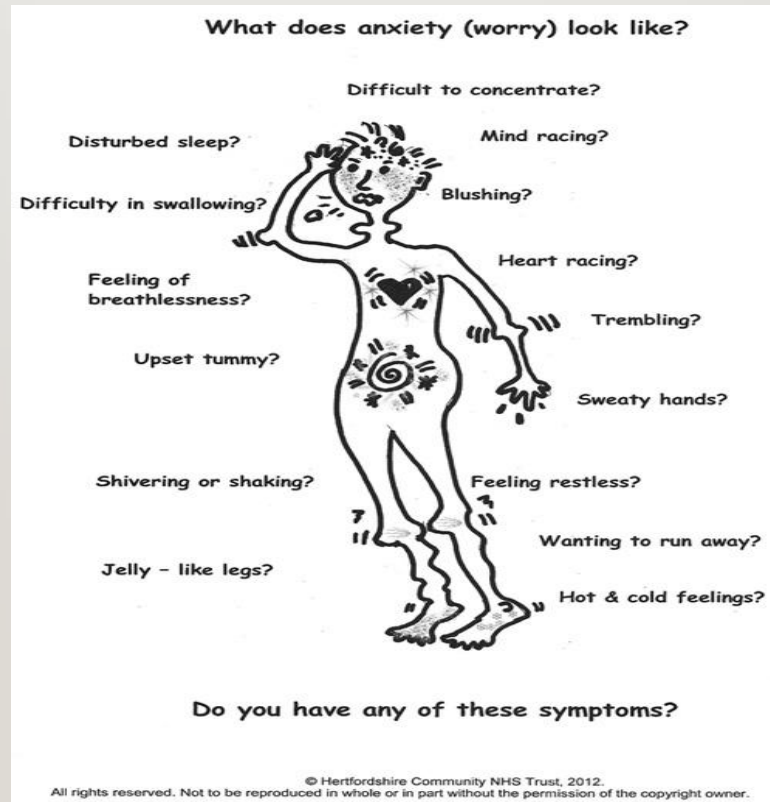
## **In the mind**

- Feeling worried all the time
- Feeling tired
- Unable to concentrate
- Feeling irritable
- Sleeping badly
- Feeling depressed

## **In the body**

- Fast or irregular heartbeats (palpitations)
- Sweating
- Face goes pale
- Dry mouth
- Muscle tension and pains
- Trembling
- Numbness or tingling in fingers, toes or lips
- Breathing fast
- Faintness, Indigestion, Passing water frequently,
- Nausea and stomach cramps, Diarrhoea

# WHAT DOES ANXIETY FEEL AND LOOK LIKE?





# UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY – FLIGHT OR FIGHT RESPONSE

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# FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE

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- The symptoms we experience when anxious are often referred to as the 'fight or flight' response.
- This comes from the idea that people primarily experience anxiety to help them either fight or run away from danger. Can you think of any examples?
- Nowadays, we do not face the same threats as early man but unfortunately, our bodies have not caught up with these changes.

## Symptoms of flight or flight:

- Our hearts would begin beating more quickly (supplying blood to our muscles).
- We would sweat (to cool us down).
- Our muscles would become tense (ready for action).
- We would take deeper breaths (to supply oxygen to our muscles).

**THESE SYMPTOMS ARE NOT DANGEROUS**




# SO, HOW CAN YOU MANAGE ANXIETY?

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- Adjust your thinking by deliberately assuming that things are going to be okay.
- Avoid extreme thinking – Remind yourself that few things are really not THAT dreadful.
- Have confidence in your ability – You’ve made it this far!
- Reassure yourself – anxiety is not dangerous and it will pass.
- Remind yourself that anxiety is hard to beat but NOT unbearable.
- Accept and tolerate your anxiety. This is the most effective way of making sure that your anxiety passes quickly.
- Defeating fear with FEAR – Face Everything and Recover. If you deliberately face your fears, your anxiety becomes less severe and reduces quickly with each exposure.

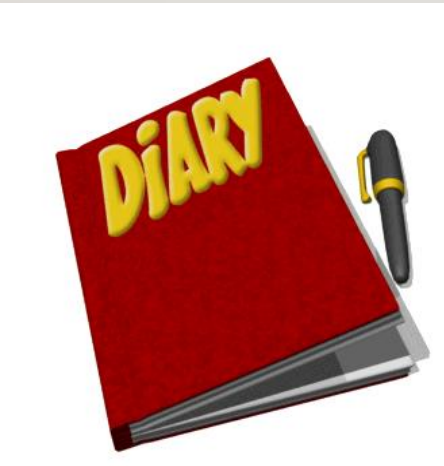
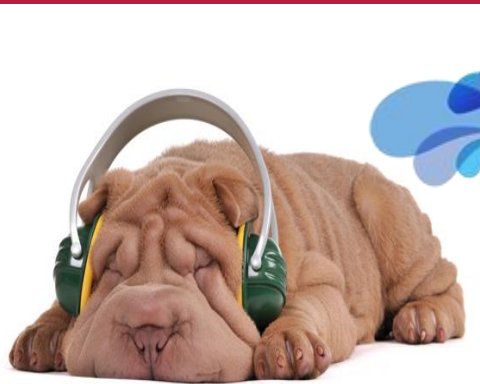
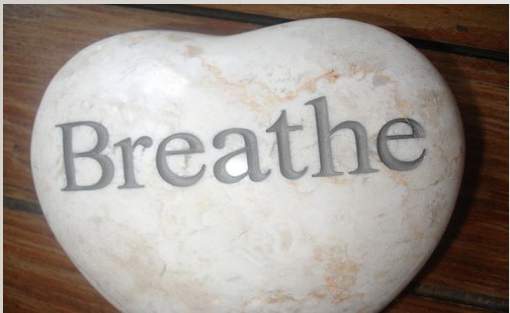
# AND....

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- Focus on your breathing.
  - Listen to music.
  - Picture yourself somewhere serene – use your imagination!
  - Try active relaxation – take a walk for a few minutes.
  - Get creative – getting in touch with your artistic side can help you feel calm and relaxed.
  - Try physical exercise.
  - Spend time outside.
  - Do a tech check – Turn your phone off for an hour (!!), step away from the TV.
  - Use relaxation techniques.
  - Use Mindfulness – look out of the window, what can you see? Notice any clouds in the sky, trees, plants? Focus on the shape, scent....
  - Body awareness – am I comfortable? Am I hot/cold?
  - Keep a diary.
  - Eat healthily and drink lots of water.
- 



AND....





# KEY POINTS:

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- Anxiety is a perfectly normal response to fear or threat.
- Anxiety affects us in four main ways – physically, our thoughts, mood and behaviour.
- Anxiety can help us and keep us alert.
- Anxiety can become a problem through unhelpful patterns of thinking and behaviour such as fear of fear, anticipation, hypersensitivity and avoidance.
- There are many possible causes of anxiety and these vary from person to person.
- Managing your anxiety and using relaxation techniques is important and can be done, with practice.

## WEBSITES AND USEFUL INFO

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<http://www.mind.org.uk/>

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

<http://www.nhs.uk/>

[http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for\\_children\\_young\\_people/whats\\_worrying\\_you/anxiety](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_children_young_people/whats_worrying_you/anxiety)



# ANY QUESTIONS?

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