



# Dealing with anxiety and stress workshop



# Workshop aims

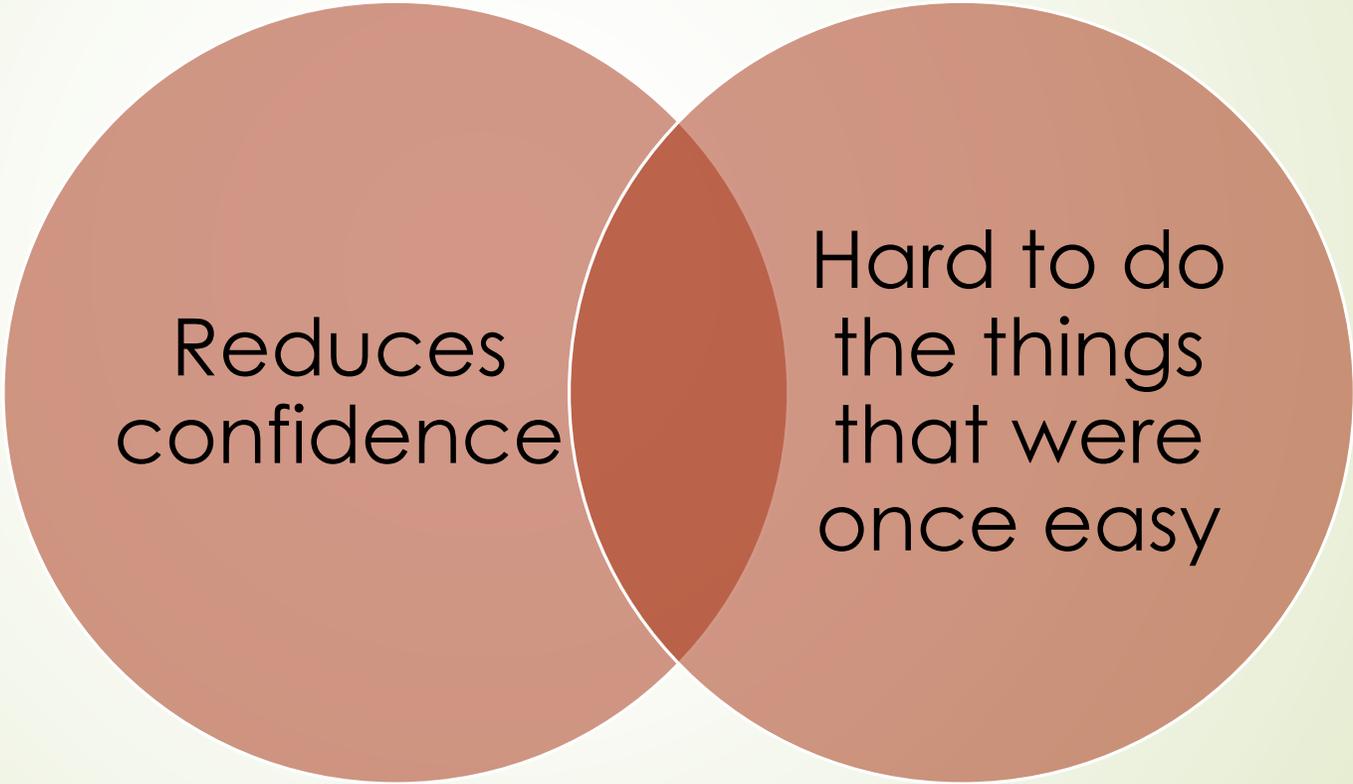
- Learn about anxiety and stress and the impact they can have on young people.
  - Learn about practical things you can do to deal with anxiety and stress.
  - Share experiences and what's worked for you.
  - Find out about further resources you can use.
- 



# What is anxiety?

- Type of fear or strong feeling about a situation
- Thoughts of a threat or something which may go wrong in the future
- Causes fright and uncertainty
- Lasts a short time or can be prolonged
- Can affect our ability to eat, sleep, concentrate, travel, leave the house, go to school and work
- Can interfere with our enjoyment and take over our lives  
and

# Anxiety and confidence



Reduces  
confidence

The diagram consists of two overlapping circles. The left circle is labeled 'Reduces confidence'. The right circle is labeled 'Hard to do the things that were once easy'. The overlapping area in the center is shaded a darker red, indicating the intersection of the two concepts.

Hard to do  
the things  
that were  
once easy



# Some causes of anxiety

- ▶ After something bad has happened
- ▶ Significant life events i.e. bereavement/illness/separation/bullying
- ▶ Fears: Dogs, spiders, snakes, flying, wasps
- ▶ Genetic predisposition – how we are made up
- ▶ Environment – those around tend to be anxious or worry a lot
- ▶ Uncertainty– A fear of having to do something new or out of our comfort zone



# What is stress?

- ▶ a struggle to cope with the demands of everyday life?
  - ▶ feeling like there is too much being demanded of you?
  - ▶ feeling overwhelmed and unable to manage everything required of you?
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## But how are they different?

- Everyone experiences stress and anxiety at one time or another. The difference between them is that stress is a response to a situation. Anxiety is a reaction to the stress - ADAA
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**Trigger - real or imagined danger**



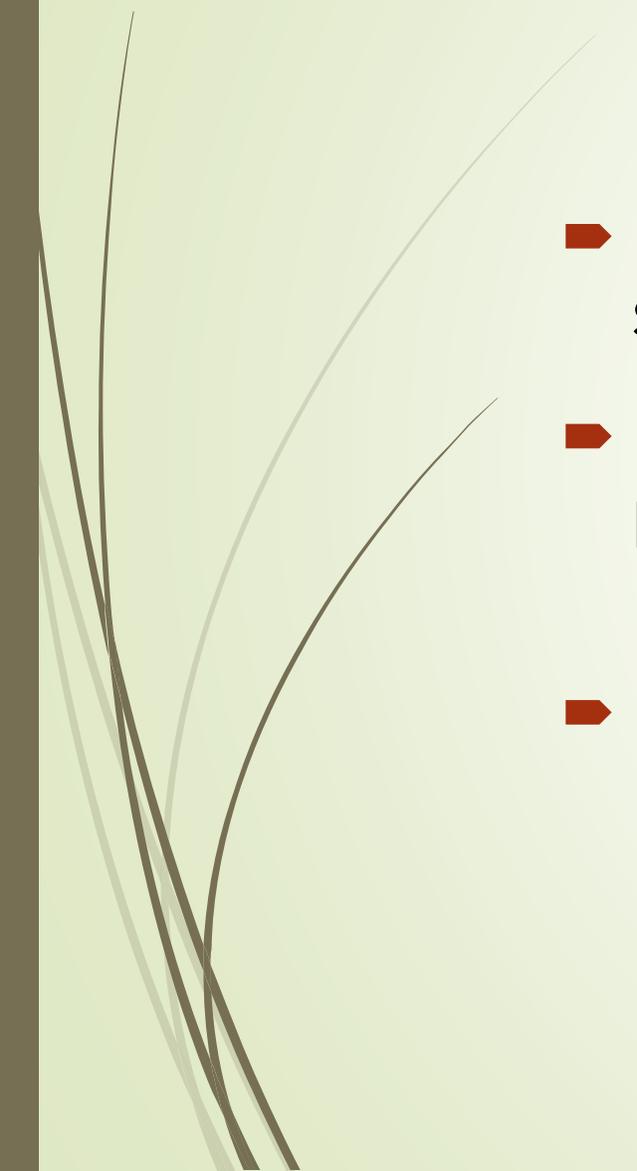


## Small group activity

- What are some triggers for stress and anxiety?
  - What can you do to help a young person deal with stress or anxiety?
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# Helping with anxiety and stress

- ▶ Help the young person to understand what anxiety and stress are?
  - ▶ Help them to understand why it persists “vicious cycle” physical symptoms, worrying thoughts and changes in behaviour
  - ▶ Learning new skills – MOODJUICE self help guides
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# Helping with anxiety and stress

- Physical symptoms can be reduced by learning relaxation, controlled breathing and mindfulness. Visualisation breathe in blue (calm) breathe out red.
- Worries/Beliefs can be addressed by a combination of identifying and challenging worrying thoughts and replacing them with a more balanced thought.
- Behavioural changes by going back into difficult situations in a gradual stepped way



# Controlled breathing

- ▶ When you feel worried; your breathing quickens and becomes shallow.
  - ▶ By taking slow, deep breaths, we can relax our body, our heart beats slower, and we feel less tense or worried.
  - ▶ Try taking in a slow deep breath, starting from the bottom of your stomach, in through the nose. Breathe out as slowly as you can through the nose or mouth.
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Replace unhelpful thoughts with helpful thoughts.

**“I’m dumb”**

**“I’m good at lots of things”**

**“I give up”**

**“If I try I’ll get better.”**

**“I hate my sister/ brother”**

**“I find my brother/ sister annoying sometimes,  
but other times they are fun to play with”**

**“I have no friends”**

**“I have 2 people I play with and my dog is my friend”**

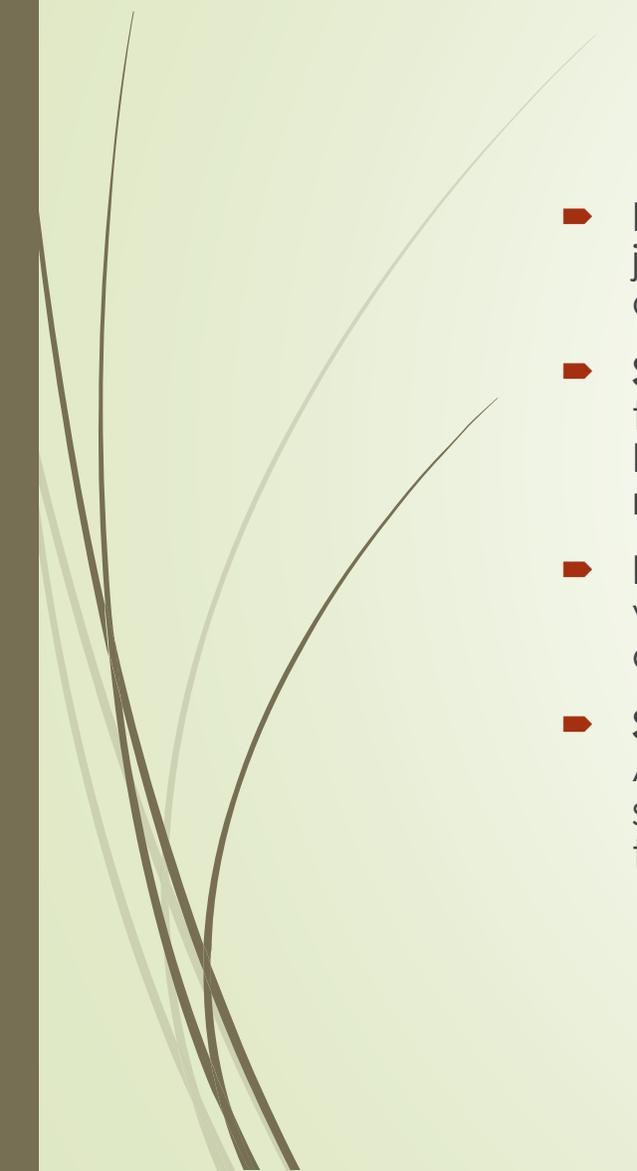


# Stress busters

- ▶ Exercise, food, sleep etc
- ▶ Regular breaks (tv, drink, hobby etc)
- ▶ Support networks... (friends, professionals, family, guidance teacher, CLD Worker)
- ▶ Room – safe space, prep night before school, space for doing homework.
- ▶ Communication. Don't pile on pressure. Information overload.
- ▶ Calendar, work plan, be clear.
- ▶ Stress relief toys
- ▶ Colouring in
- ▶ Stress relief apps



# Stress busting apps



- ▶ **Breathing Bubbles** This is an anxiety-fighting app that helps kids 5 and up learn to focus on joy and let go of worries. Manny the Manatee guides them through breathing exercises and visualization.
- ▶ **Stop, Breathe & Think** This app promises peace in five minutes with guided meditation for those aged 10 and up. Additionally, it donates 10 percent of net revenue to Tools for Peace. This non-profit helps “at-risk youth experience the benefits of mindfulness and meditation.”
- ▶ **Headspace** One of the original meditation apps, Headspace relies on engaging cartoon videos to teach meditation. This app features guided meditations best for older kids and adults. However, the short meditations are suitable for younger children.
- ▶ **Smiling Mind** Made by an Australian non-profit, Smiling Mind features guided meditations. A soothing Aussie accent leads mindfulness exercises for different age groups. It involves a series of short breathing and awareness exercises. Children (and adults) learn how to be in the moment and achieve a sense of calm.



# Optional scenario.

- ▶ Your child recently started at the academy and is becoming upset about school. They are worried about making friends, asking new teachers for help in class and the workload in new subjects.
- ▶ They are getting upset particularly on a Sunday evening before their return to school Monday morning and they say they feel too ill to go.
- ▶ What are the triggers causing these feelings in your child?
- ▶ What practical steps can you take to help your child with this problem?



# Sign-posting

- ▶ GP
- ▶ School nurse
- ▶ Guidance teacher
  
- ▶ **NHS – MOODJUICE**  
<https://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/Anxiety.asp>
- ▶ **SAMH** – Scottish Association for Mental Health  
<https://www.samh.org.uk/>
- ▶ **Breathing Space** – mental health support phone service  
<https://breathingspace.scot/>
- ▶ **Young Minds** – online resource for parents supporting children with mental health problems <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- ▶ **Young Scot** <https://young.scot/get-the-lowdown/articles/anxiety/>



➔ Evaluation and finish

