

# Worry Time

Worry time gives you time each day to address all of your worries. The more you use worry time, the less your worries will impact you throughout the day.

## 1 Plan your worry time

It's important to plan in your worry time for the same time each day. This should be a time when you can focus on the worries and not be distracted. Start with a maximum of half an hour each day. As you use worry time more and more, you may notice that you eventually need less than half an hour each day because you get better at dealing with your worries.



## 2 Catch the worries

As you notice worries during the day, catch them so that you can come back to them later at worry time. You can do this by writing them down, drawing a picture or making a sound recording. You could use a diary, sticky notes, your phone or any other way you can think of to catch the worries as they happen.



## 3 Refocus your attention

Once you have caught the worry, it's important to focus on something different. Pay attention to whatever it is you're doing at that moment OR do something totally different. You can also refocus by using calming/grounding techniques.



## 4 Worry time

Use worry time to go back and address all of the worries you have caught that day. For each worry decide whether it is a practical worry or hypothetical worry.

- For **practical worries**, use **problem solving**.
- For **hypothetical worries**, **let the worries go**. You can do this by ripping up, scribbling out, deleting or scrumpling up and throwing away the worry.



Some worries might not even be worries anymore! For these, you will learn that a lot of worries may seem big at the time but later they will seem much smaller and manageable.

## Let's Do It

My worry time will be at (time):

It will last for (number of minutes):

I will do it with (will anyone help?):

I will catch my worries by (what will you use?):

## Top Tip

To refocus your attention, try to take deep breaths and think: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Notice 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste. This gives you chance to calm down before focusing on a current or new task.



### Alternatives to reassurance

Encouragement	Validation	Normalising
I know you can do this!	I can see why you think that might happen.	I think I might feel like that too if it happened to me
Remember when you did x,	That sounds really difficult.	I'm sure lots of other children would worry about this.
Think about how proud you'll feel when you've managed to do x	That can be really scary.	This happened to me when...

### Asking questions not giving answers

- Why are you feeling worried?
- What is frightening you?
- What do you think will happen?
- What is the worst thing that might happen?
- What is it about [this situation] which is making you worried?



# What is Anxiety?

## The Fight, Flight or Freeze Response

Anxiety is a **normal** emotion that everyone feels at some point in their life. This is because of something in our brains called the **Fight, Flight or Freeze** response.

Humans developed this response as cave men because it was a much more dangerous time to live back then (think running away from saber tooth tigers and hunting for food).



The Fight, Flight or Freeze response meant that cave men's bodies went into survival mode whenever their brains sensed danger. This meant their heart rate and blood pressure would increase so they had a better chance of running away (flight), fighting the danger (fight) or hiding (freeze).

We all react in different ways when we feel anxious and our Fight, Flight or Freeze response kicks in, but it's important to remember that it is normal!



## Symptoms of Anxiety

When the Fight, Flight or Freeze response kicks in and our heart rate and blood pressure increases, we might notice some of the following symptoms.

dizziness

shaking

panicky

headache

shortness of breath

angry

noticeably fast heart beat

worried

stomach ache

frustrated

scared

upset

feeling sick

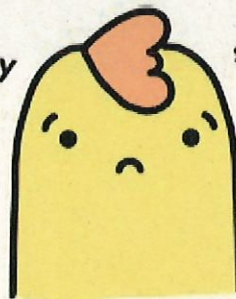
pins and needles

tense muscles

nervous

dry mouth

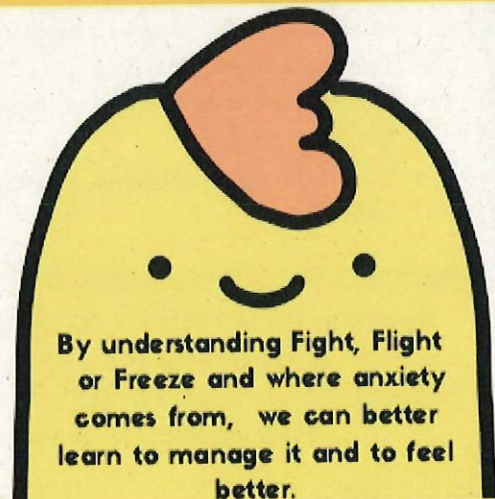
sweating



## It's like a Smoke Alarm



Imagine you have a smoke alarm that is overly sensitive and goes off all of the time, even when there isn't a real fire. When you have a problem with anxiety, your Fight, Flight or Freeze response is just like this - it goes off and causes the symptoms of anxiety, even if there isn't any real danger.



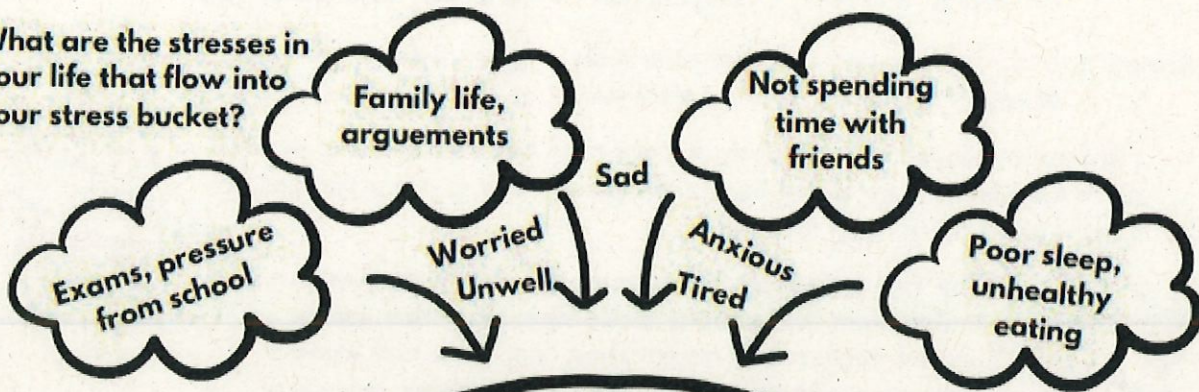
By understanding Fight, Flight or Freeze and where anxiety comes from, we can better learn to manage it and to feel better.



# Stress Bucket

We all experience stress in our lives but it can become difficult if we don't know how to manage this stress and that's when problems can start to happen.

What are the stresses in your life that flow into your stress bucket?



To help feel better, you can empty some stress from your bucket by turning on a tap. This helps reduce stress levels so that you feel more normal and relaxed.

If your stress bucket gets too full or overflows, it can lead to unhelpful thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

What are some of the ways you can turn on your taps to reduce your stress?

- Plan time for things I enjoy
- Talk to friends/family
- Download a mindfulness app
- Do a yoga class
- Use a diary to manage my time better
- Have a bubble bath
- Get a good night's sleep
- Watch a movie I enjoy
- Go for a walk or do some exercise
- Make some healthy snacks

By doing some of these things to help manage your stress levels, you will feel calmer, think clearer and feel more motivated to do things. Remember, we all feel stressed at times but it's about finding **balance** between feeling stressed and feeling calm. The more balance we have, the better we feel.



# Problem Solving

If you're struggling with a practical worry, use this step by step guide which helps to break the problem down and solve it in a more manageable way. Practical worries can feel overwhelming and it's easy to put them off. However, it's much better in the long run to solve the problem today rather than put it off until later.

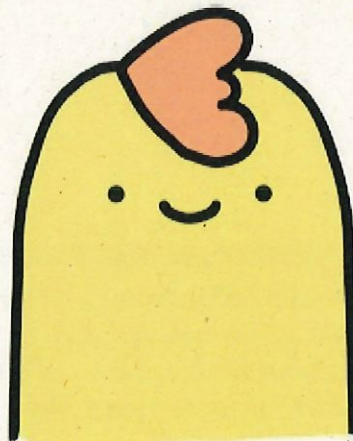
(You'll need some paper and pens/pencils)

- Step 1** Write down your problem in 1 or 2 sentences.
- Step 2** Write down all the ideas you can think of to solve the problem (no matter what they are!).
- Step 3** Make a table and write down ALL of the good things and ALL of the not so good things you can think of for each of your ideas.

	Good things	Not so good things
Idea 1		
Idea 2		

- Step 4** Choose one idea that looks like it could work (if you struggle, see which one has the most good things). Ask yourself, is my idea realistic? If it isn't, choose a different idea.
- Step 5** Make a plan! Write down the answers to these questions to create your plan of action!
- 1) What will you do?
  - 2) When will you do it?
  - 3) How will you do it?
  - 4) Who will you do it with?
  - 5) Could there be any difficulties? If so, what could you do to overcome these?

**Step 6 DO IT!**

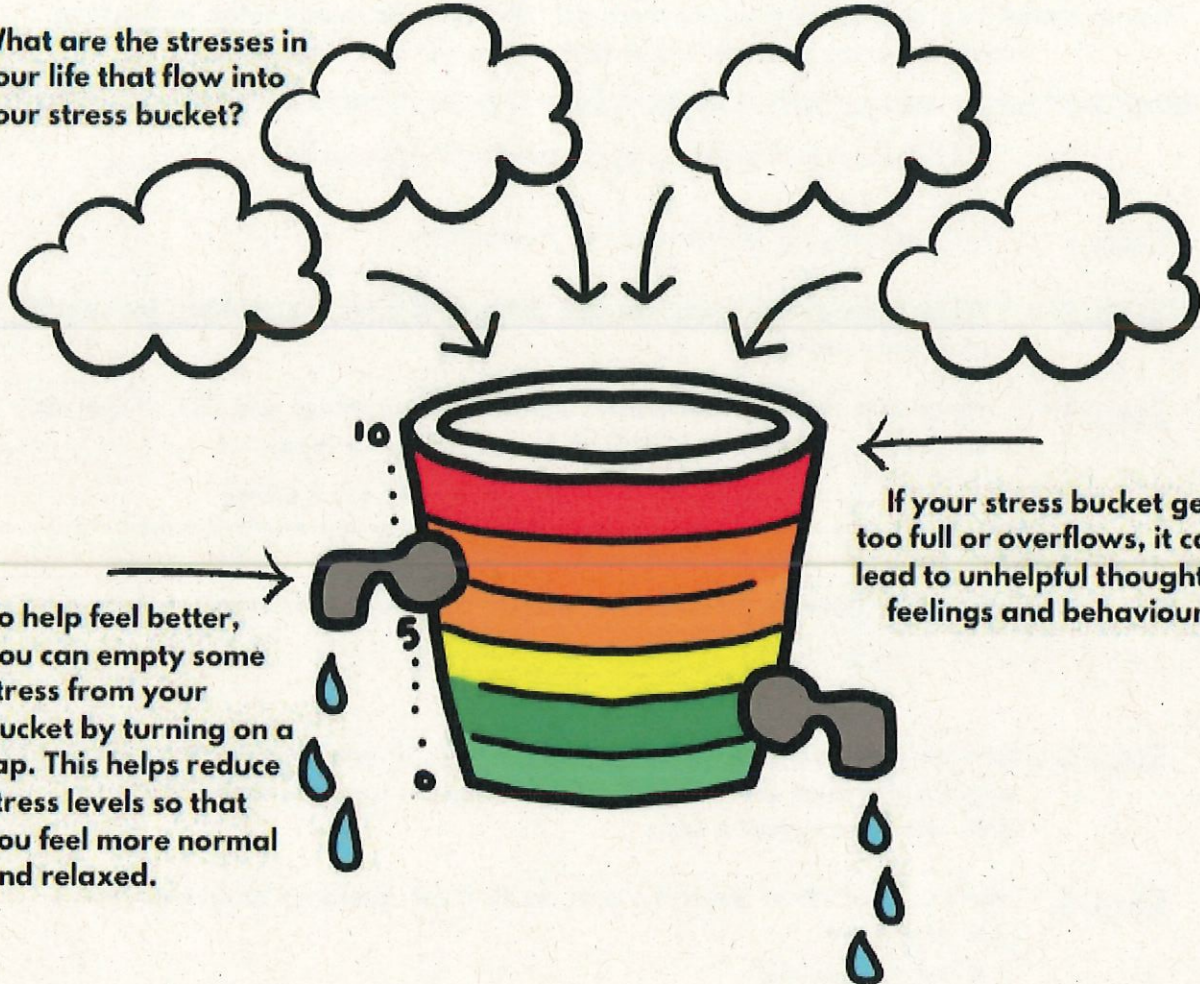




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## Helpful links

### Videos:



Understanding anxiety -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VQUOr-R3eA>

Graded exposure -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHfUdOM8QIQ&t=2s>

### Websites:



Sleep -

Action for children parent support -

<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/sleep/>

Peer Education Project (parents and carers guide) -

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/Sleep-Guide-for-Parents-and-Caregivers.pdf>

Sleep tool kit for 5-13 year olds:

<https://cchp.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/Sleep%20toolkit%20for%20ages%205-13.pdf>



School anxiety-

School anxiety Tips

<https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/school-life/resources-for-families/school-anxiety-tips/>

School anxiety and refusal

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/school-anxiety-and-refusal/>



Useful resources

Anna Freud Centre -

<https://www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers/>

Young Minds -

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

My Mind -

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

