



# Tips & Tricks for Tears and Tantrums: A Supportive Guide for Managing Behaviours that Challenge Us

A workshop for Parents/Carers

# Session Agenda



- Understanding behaviour & communication
  - Factor that impact behaviours
  - Maintenance
  - Attention v Reinforcement
- Strategies to support your child
- Onward support

# The Iceberg Analogy

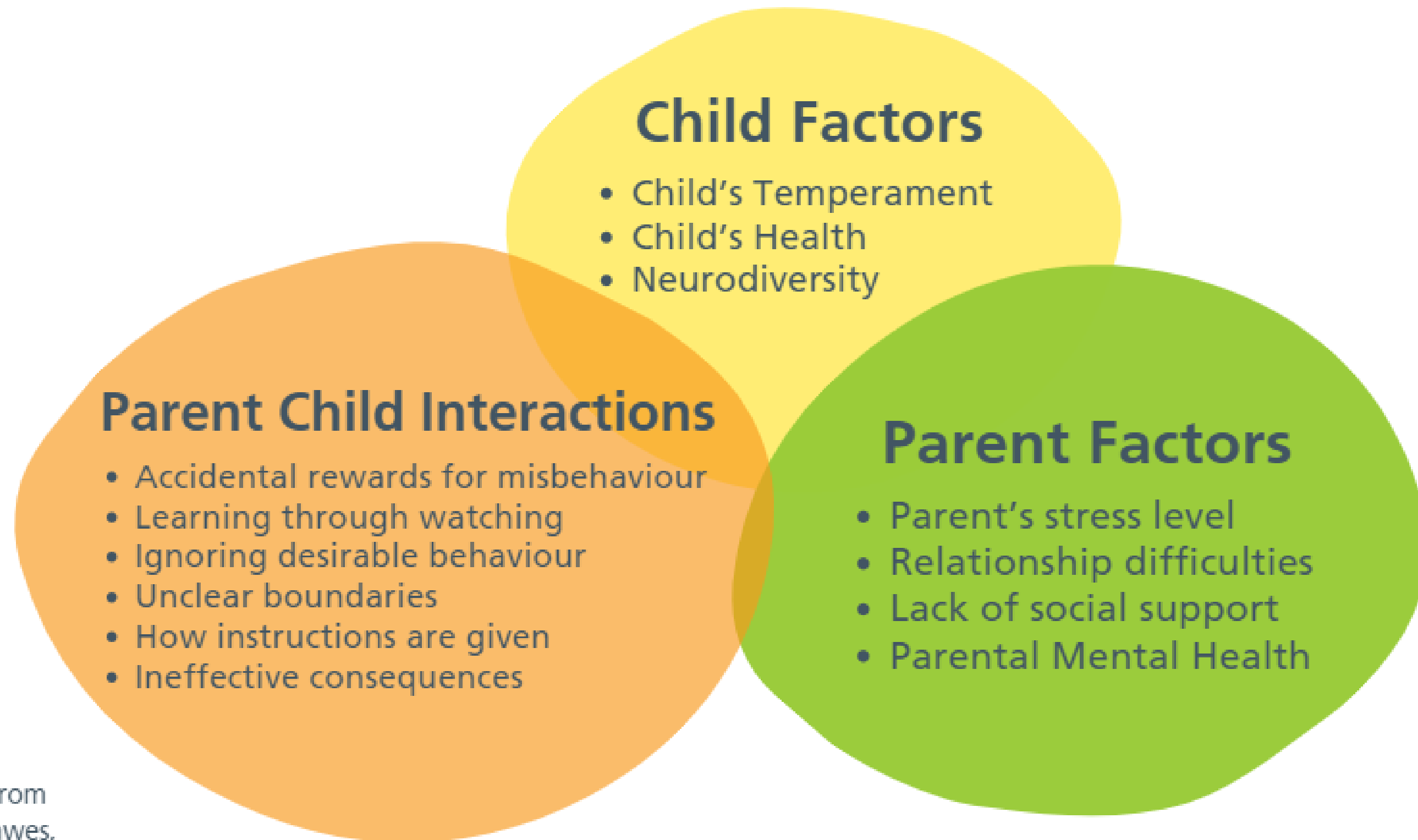
Behaviours that we see:

Tearful / Upset Seeking reassurance  
 Clingy **Anger** **Negativity**  
 Overplanning Refusal or Avoidance  
 Lack of Focus **Defiance** **Issues with Sleep**

Which feelings might be beneath the surface?

Embarrassed Anxious  
 Ashamed Helpless  
 Disgusted Hurt  
 Overwhelmed Insecure  
 Depressed / Regretful  
 Low Uncomfortable  
 Stuck Rejected  
 Jealous Sad  
 Disrespected Grief  
 Offended Lonely  
 Frustrated Tired  
 Confused

# Factors that may impact child behaviour

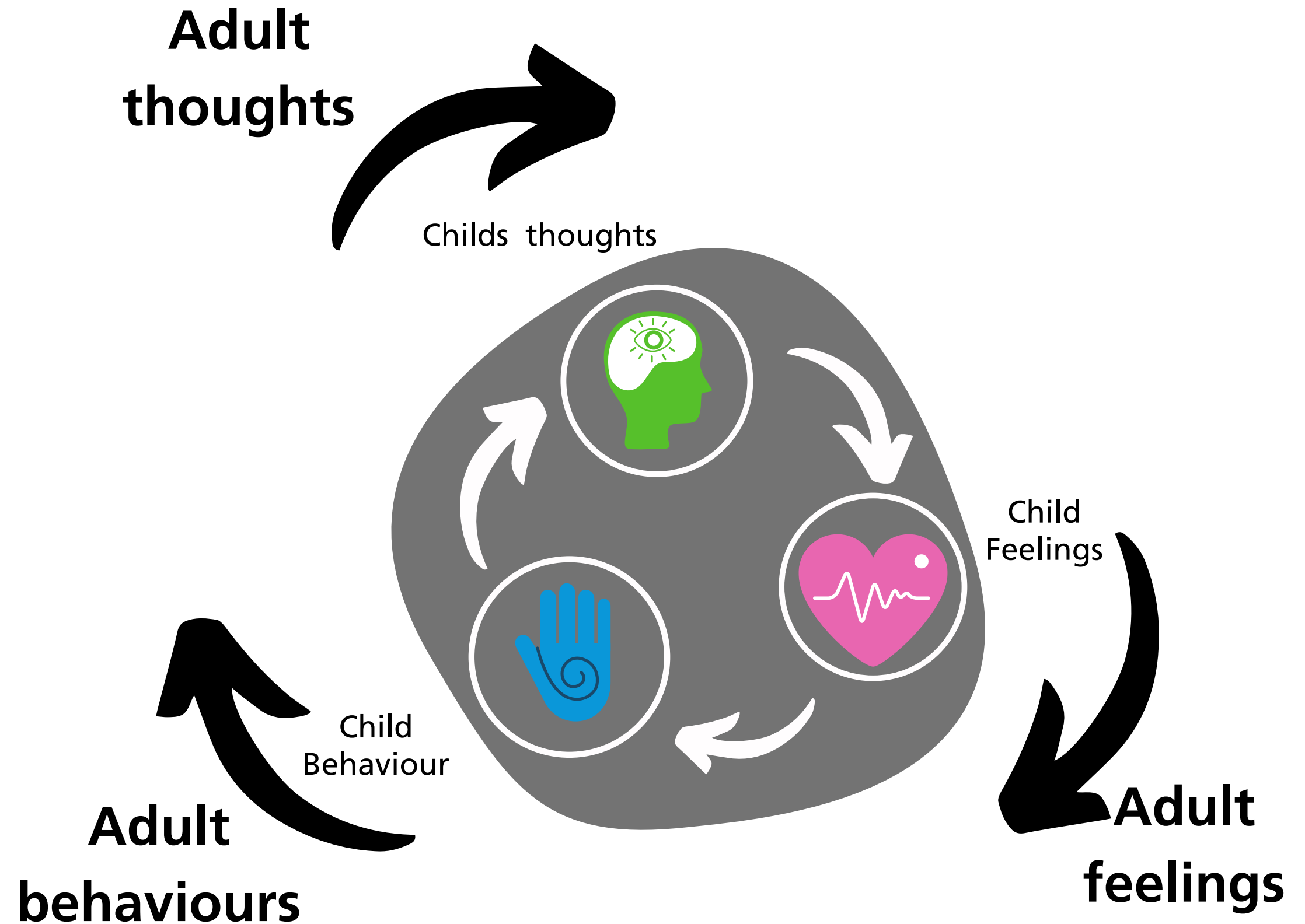


Adapted from  
Dadd & Hawes,  
2006

# Thoughts, feelings, behaviours

How we think can impact how we feel, and in turn how we behave or our actions.

The way we respond to our children will inform the way that we will respond to us.



# Social Learning theory

## The 'Attention' Rule

Children's behaviour is often oriented to gaining attention from others, especially parents.

## The 'Reinforcement' Rule

Behaviour that is reinforced immediately is more likely to occur.

	'OK' Child Behaviour	'Not OK' Child Behaviour
Carer Attention	PRAISE Positive behaviour increases	Negative behaviour increases
No Carer Attention	Positive behaviour decreases	IGNORE Negative behaviour decreases

Link to Big Bang Theory:  
Conditioning Scene  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch  
?v=LEJqowyuyi0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEJqowyuyi0)

# Your attention is enough!





# Quality 1:1 Time

Adult play strengthens the parent-child bond. This builds children's confidence and independence.

- Set aside a regular time where you can give your child your complete attention
- Communicate this with them (let them know this time is for them, when it will be and how long it will be)

- Do something your child wants to do
- Follow your child's lead (don't take over or show them how to do it properly)
- Avoid asking questions
- Be responsive and show interest in what they are doing
- Ignore minor misbehaviour

- Give warning when it's time to finish and what will happen after

Do's - Praise, Affection, Imitation, Prepare child for ending  
Don't - Criticise, Lead, Ask Questions, Give messages, Use your phone



# Praise should be...

- Specific
- Timely
- Behaviours and Traits
- Mastering Skills
- Avoid Criticism
- Avoid Perfectionism

## How would you improve this?

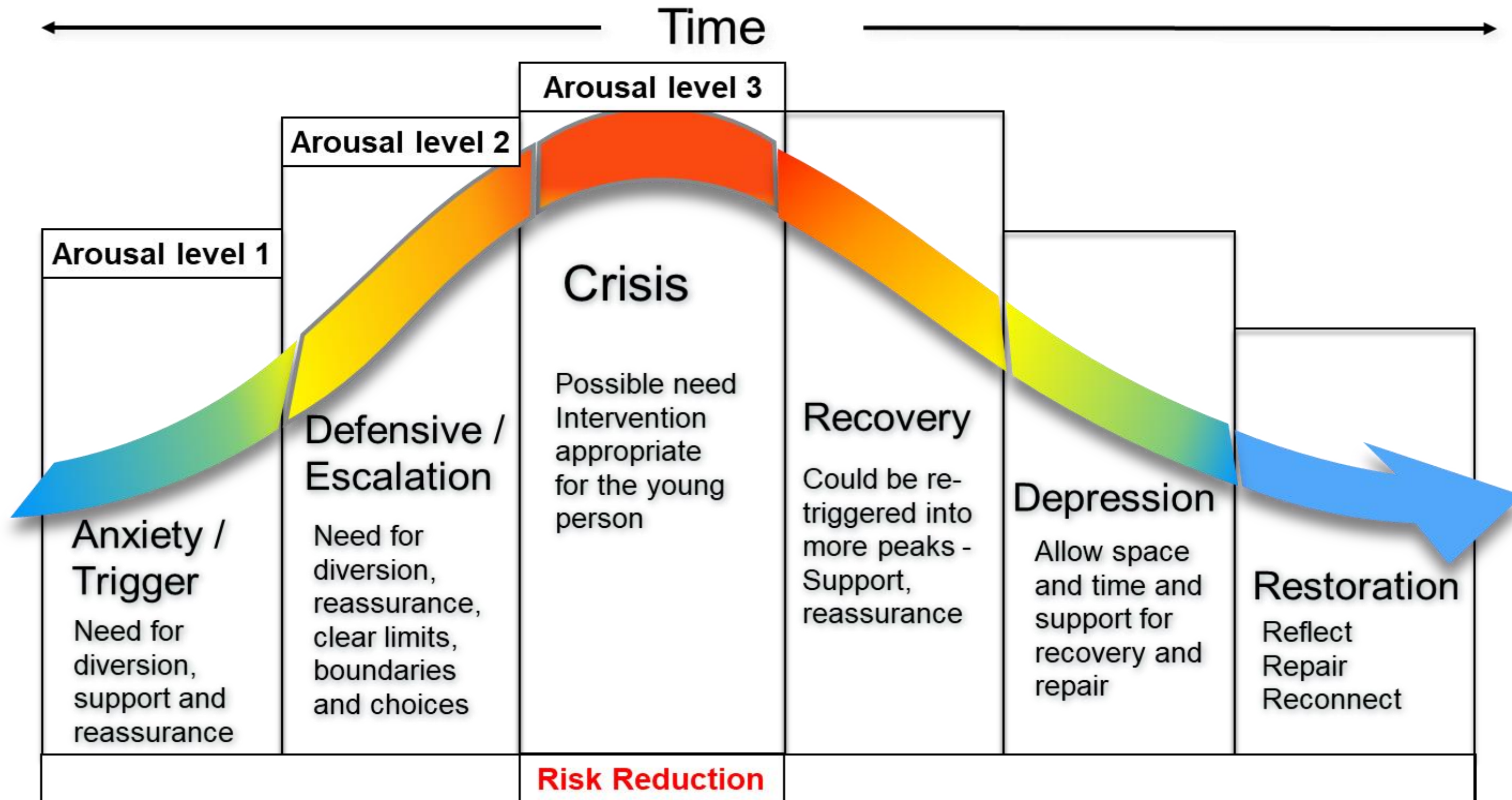
Well done you played with your brother really nicely! It is a shame you can't behave like this all the time.

That's not a bad effort, you have nearly finished tidying your room.

Well done for not making a fuss about brushing your teeth.

Good Job!

# Recovery and De-escalation



# Purposeful ignoring

## Behaviours that can be ignored

- Moaning
- Whinging
- Tantrums
- Swearing
- Nagging

## Borderline Behaviours

- Headbanging, Breath-Holding etc
- Worrying and Reassurance Seeking

## Behaviours that cannot be ignored

- Anything that is dangerous or poses a risk to the child or someone else.
- Anything that is damaging things
- Non-compliance, if a child refuses to comply with a parental command this cannot be ignored.

# ABC model

## Antecedents

What triggered the behaviour?

## Behaviour

What are you seeing - Mindful of own responses.

## Consequences

Ideally natural - linked to the behaviour  
Should be relatively immediate (unless the child's emotions are high or behaviour poses immediate danger).



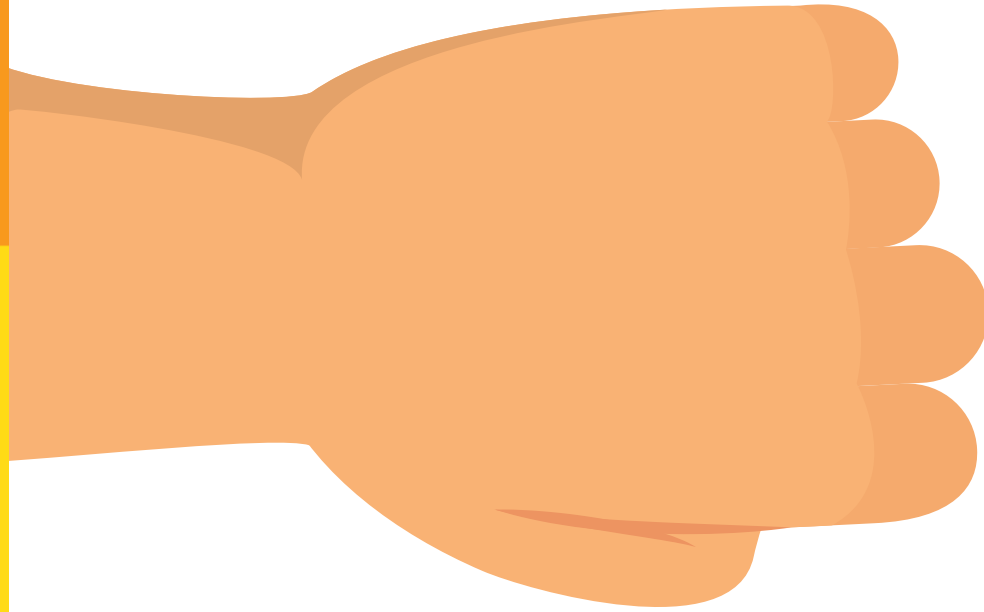
# Keep a log/ diary

Keep a note of the situations, antecedents, behaviours and consequences, as this will help you to notice any patterns in behaviour – also record your responses, how did you feel? What could you change or do differently?



# 'Flipping your lid'

Dr. Daniel Siegel



Think of your hand like your brain.

Your wrist represents the 'stem' of your brain.

The job of the brain stem is to remind us to do basic things, such as breathing and keeps our blood flowing.



Your thumb represents the 'amygdala'.

The job of the amygdala is to sense danger and to alert the brain and body.

Your fingers are your 'prefrontal cortex'.

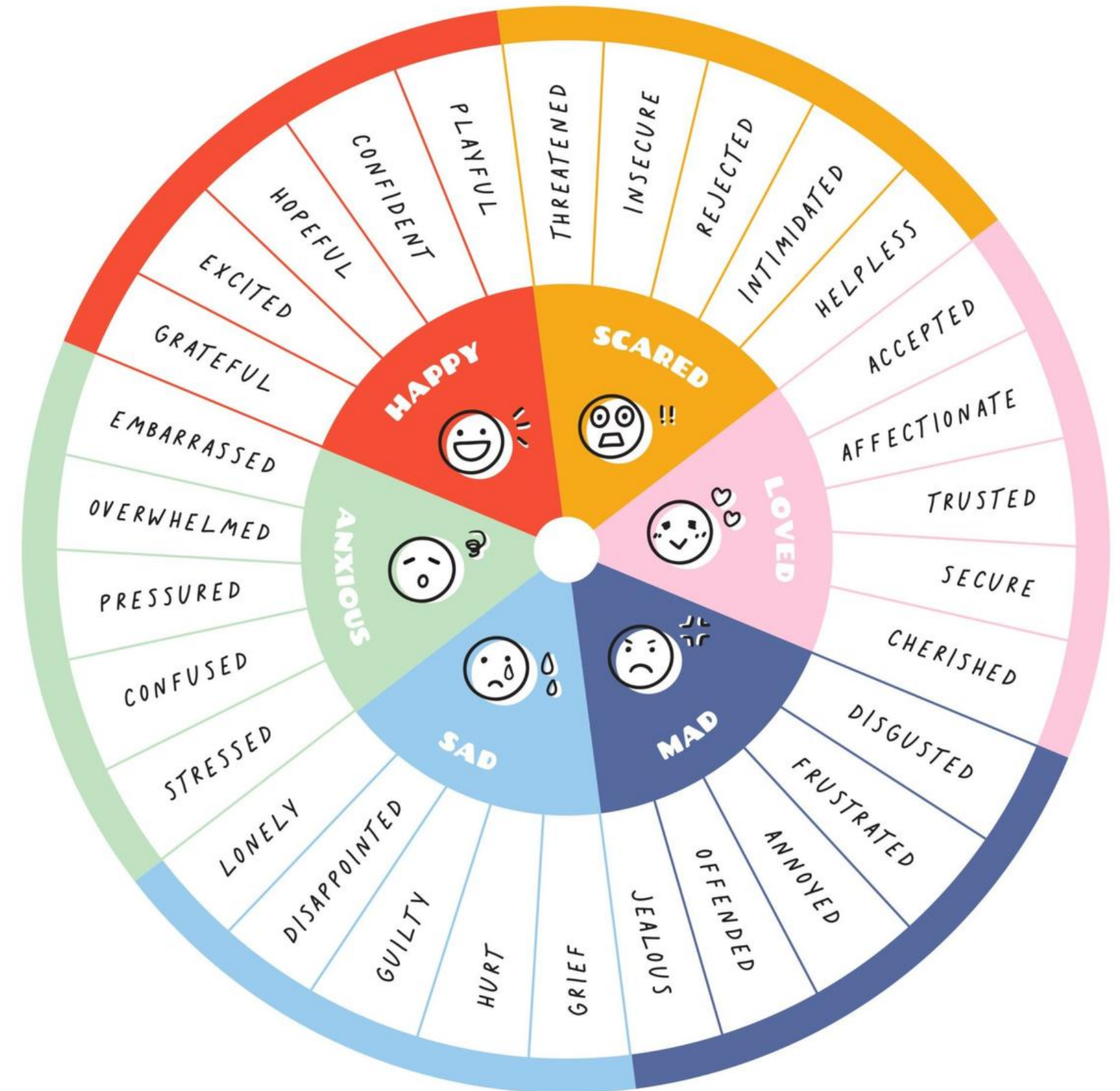
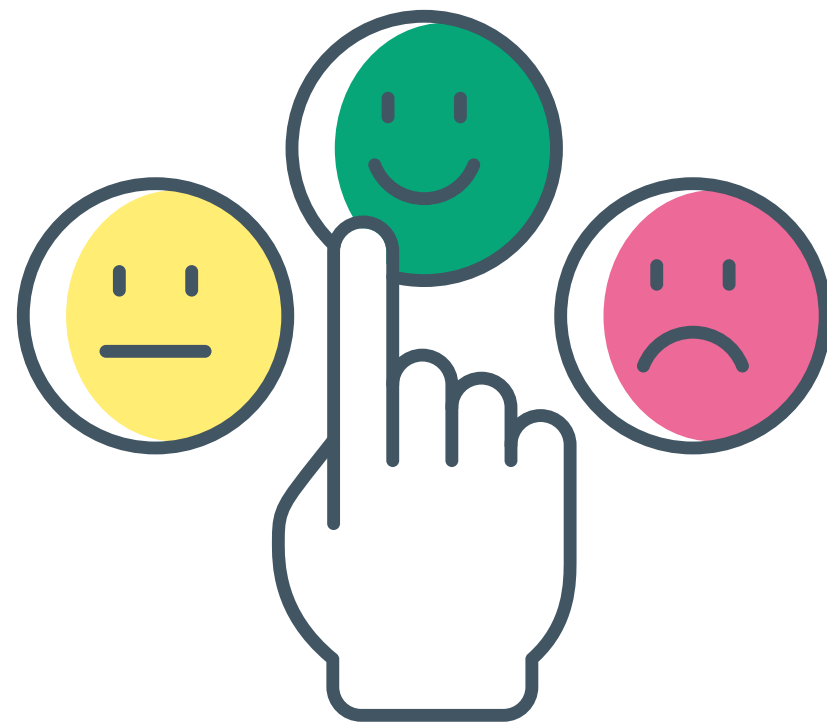
The job of the prefrontal cortex is to help us to manage difficult emotions.

When intense emotions overwhelm our amygdala, our prefrontal cortex goes 'offline' and we 'flip our lid'.

We need time to allow our lid to close before we can make sensible decisions.

# Recognising emotions

- Name and normalise your own emotions!
- Encourage use of emotional flashcards
- Films and clips such as 'Inside Out' can create good conversations around emotions.





# WINE

**W – Wonder**

**I – Imagine**

**N – Notice**

**E – Empathy**

I **wonder** if you are feeling sad today because Jimmy didn't play with you at school. I can **imagine** that make your heart hurt a little and because of that I am **noticing** that you are quite angry with me this evening. I am so sorry that your friends didn't play with you today that must be so painful (**Empathy**).

## **PACE – Dr. Dan Hughes**

**P – Play / Playfulness**

**A – Acceptance**

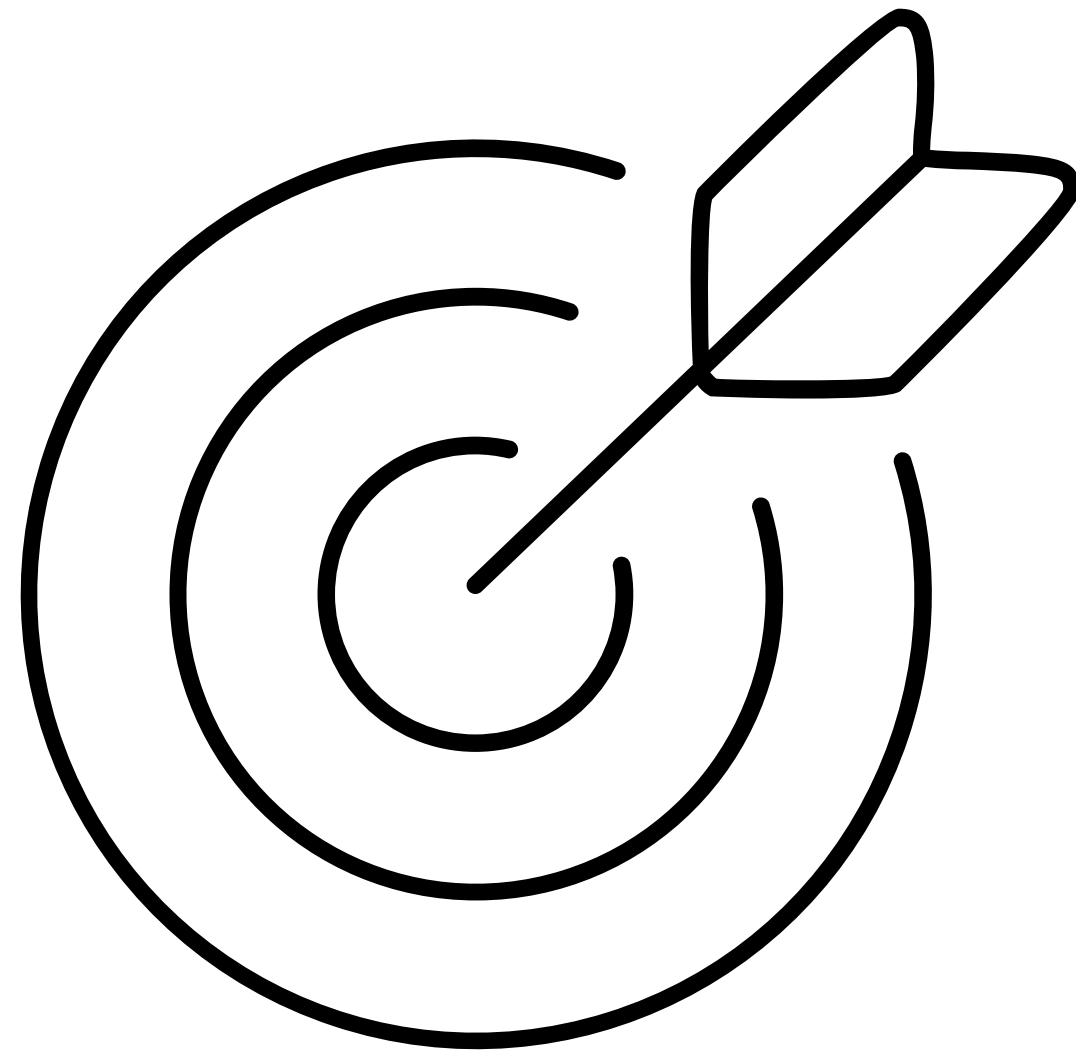
**C – Curiosity**

**E – Empathy**

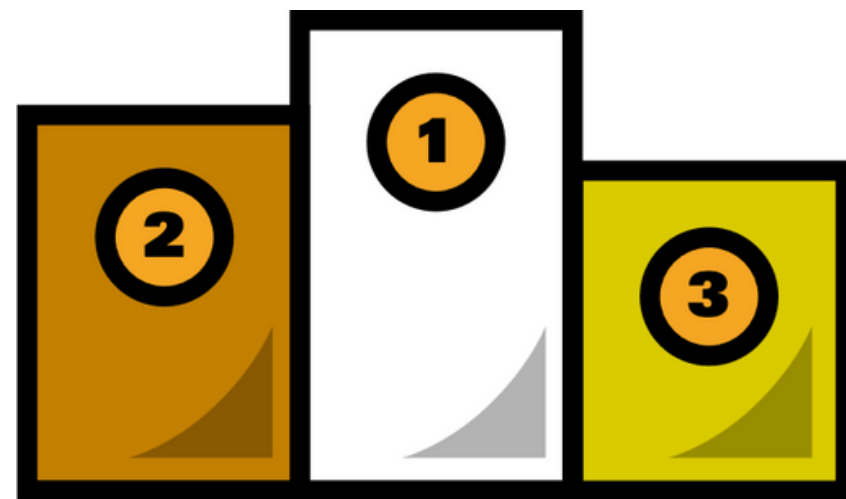
# Curious Open Questions

- What is making you feel worried/scared?
- 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?
- How does this make you feel?
- When does [this situation] this feeling become worse?
- What would you change?
- Take me thorough what happened.
- What is going in your mind?
- What are you feeling in your body?
- If there was one thing that would help, what would it be?
- What's the hardest part about that?
- Are you thinking about anything bad that might happen?
- Do you know why you feel upset about this, or do you just feel upset?
- On a scale from 1-10, how worried/upset/mad/scared/hurt are you about this?
- Okay, so how about compared to this other thing?
- When do you most think about this?
- Is there any times you feel better about this?
- What things trigger that off for you?
- If you could change anything about that, what would you change?
- Is there anything you can do to change that.
- What can I do to help?
- Why do you think that made you so mad/upset/worried?
- What are you thinking might go wrong here?
- What makes you feel a bit better about all of this?

# Strategies



# Problem-Solving



# Soothing Toolbox

A self-soothe box is a collection of items designed to help you feel more relaxed during anxiety by engaging your five senses.

- 01 Sight**  
Lighting, colours, pictures, colouring books, collages, videos.
- 02 Touch**  
Soft things: teddies, cuddly things, hot / cold things, different textures, squeezey items.
- 03 Sound**  
Calming noises, headphones, natures sounds, mediation, binaural beats, music playlists.
- 04 Smell**  
Aromatherapy, time outside, candles / incense, flowers, fresh air, a smell that reminds you of something.
- 05 Taste**  
Something yummy, eat slowly, strong flavours, warm drinks, nostalgic flavours, something healthy.

## 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Grounding involving the five senses.



**5** Things you can  
**SEE**



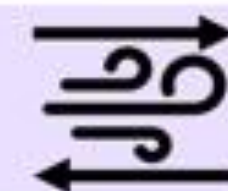
**4** Things you can  
**FEEL**



**3** Things you can  
**HEAR**

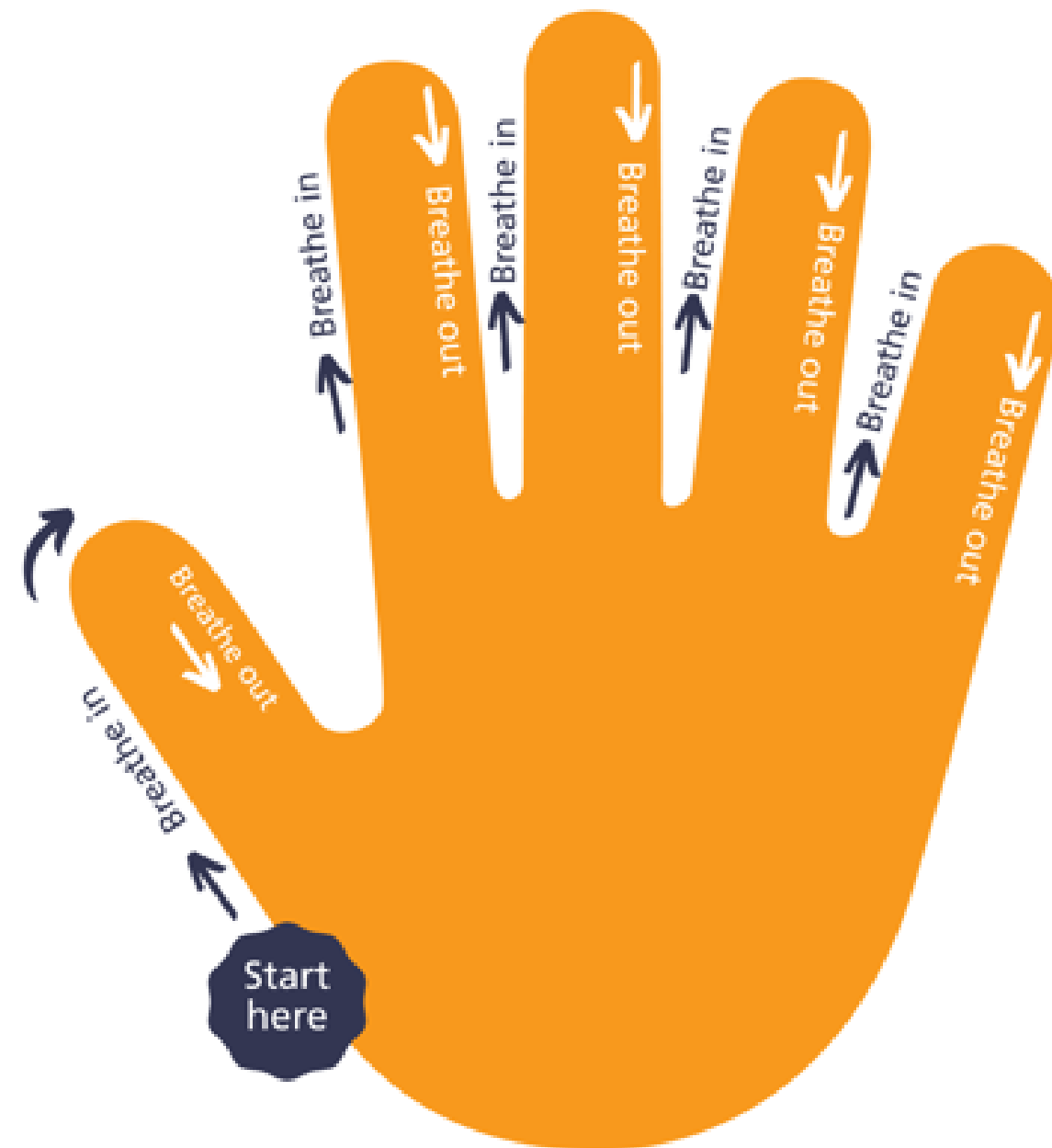


**2** Things you can  
**TASTE / SMELL**



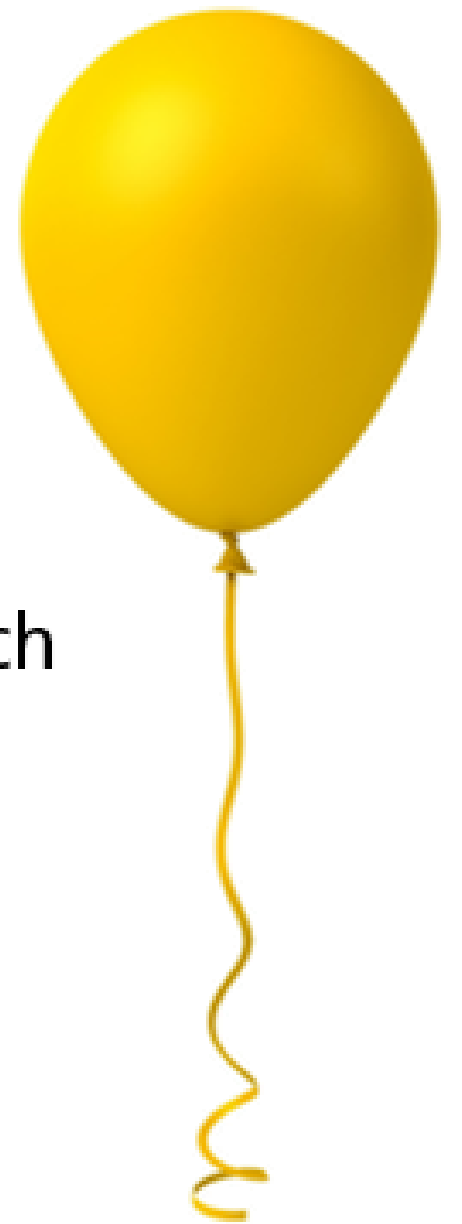
**1** **DEEP**  
Breath in and out

# Hand Breathing



# Balloon Breathing

- Sit back and relax. Close your eyes.
- When you breath in, imagine blowing up a balloon inside your belly. What colour is it?
- Hold your breath when you have taken as much oxygen as you can.
- As you blow out your breath imagine the balloon deflating. Imagine the squeaky sound and visualise the balloon whizzing around inside your belly.



# Turtle Technique



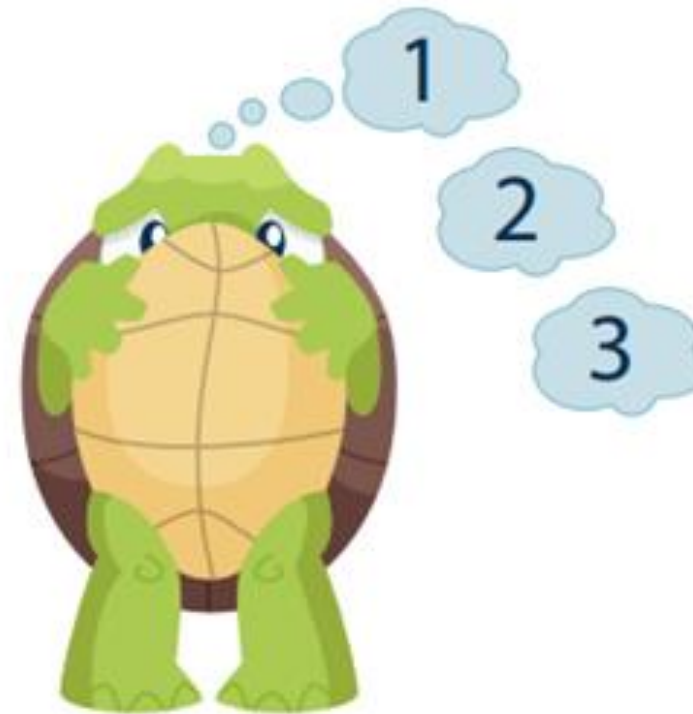
**Step 1**

Recognise your feelings.



**Step 2**

Stop your body.



**Step 3**

Tuck inside your shell and take three deep breaths.



**Step 4**

Come out when you are calm and think of a solution.



## Snake Breath

- Pretend you are a snake!
- Inhale (breathe in) through your nose with your mouth closed
- Exhale (breathe out) through your mouth with a soft low hissing sound.



## Bunny Breath

- Just like a bunny in the garden,
- Take three quick sniffs in through the nose
- One long exhale (breathe out) through the mouth.



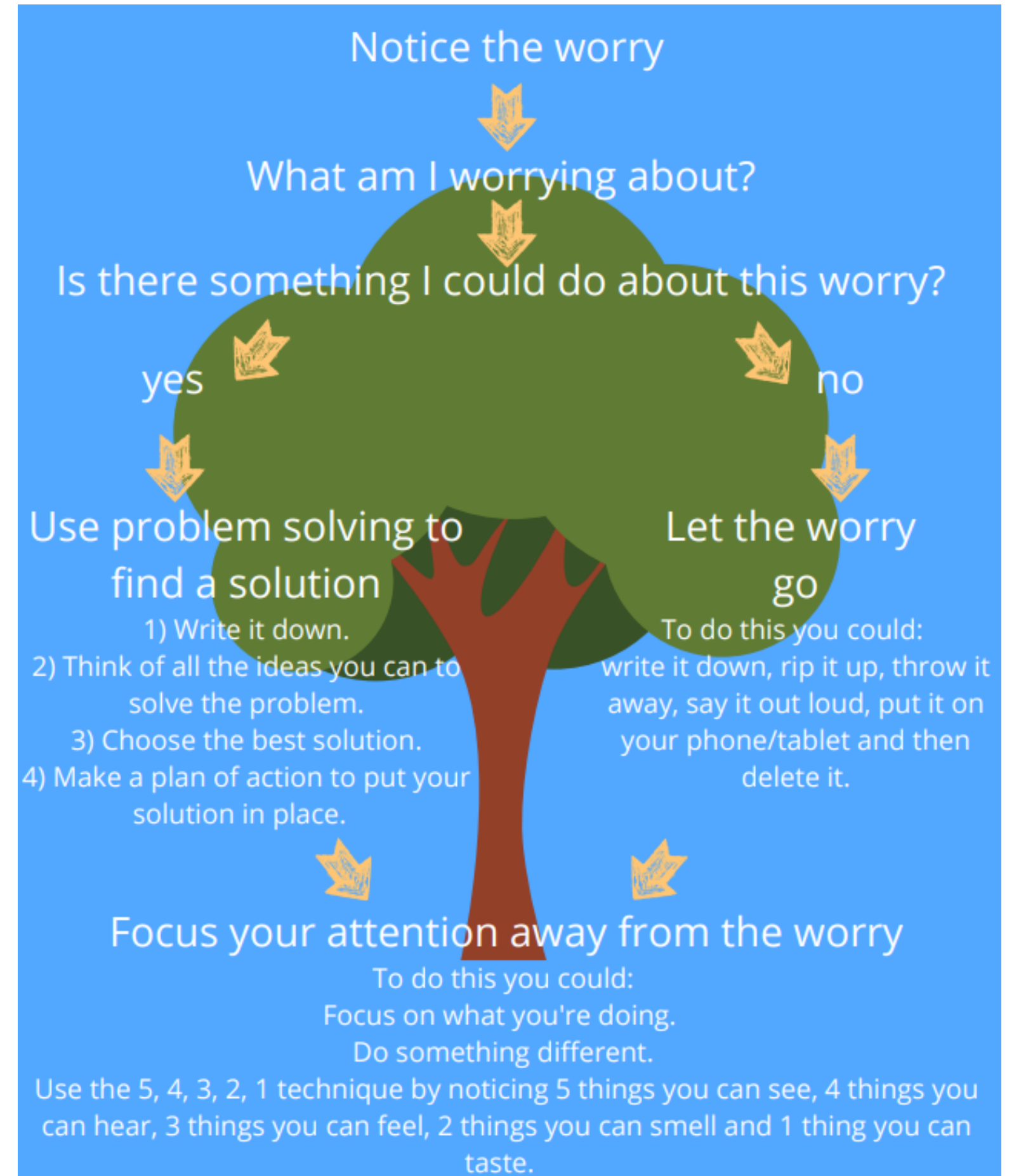
## Bumble bee Breathing

- Sit comfortably
- Inhale (breathe in through your nose with your mouth closed)
- Make a quiet humming noise (like a bumble bee) as you exhale (breathe out)
- You can cup your hands around your ears to amplify (increase) the buzzing sound.








# Worry Tree

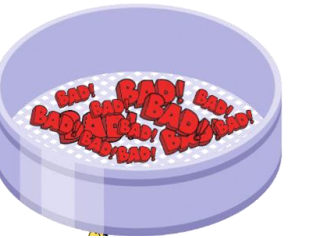
Why is it important to classify worries?



# Thinking Traps – What are they?

Exaggerated or irrational negative thought patterns that can lead us to believe things that aren't necessarily true.

 <p><b>Overgeneralising bad memories:</b> Thinking that because something happened once it will happen again.</p>	<p><b>Catastrophising</b> Thinking that the worst thing is going to happen.</p>
 <p><b>Jumping to Conclusions</b> Thinking something is true without stopping to try it or check the facts.</p>	<p><b>Black &amp; White Thinking</b> Defining situations in extremes, as either best or worst (no middle ground).</p>
 <p><b>Mind Reading</b> Assuming we know what people think about you (usually negative).</p>	<p><b>Filtering</b> Focusing on unhelpful parts of a situation and filtering/discounting out all the positive.</p>
 <p><b>Tunnel Vision</b> Focusing on one detail out of context.</p>	<p><b>Perfectionism</b> Putting lots of pressure on yourself to do well, with unrealistically high expectations.</p>
 <p><b>Personalisation</b> Blaming yourself for anything bad.</p>	<p><b>Fortune Telling</b> Trying to predict the future.</p>



# Other Grounding Techniques/Ideas

Meditate



Gaming



Go somewhere you enjoy



Take a shower/bath

Be with a pet

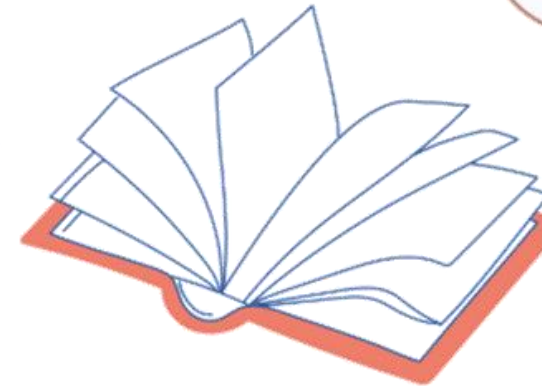


Find something funny



Talk with someone you trust

Listen to music



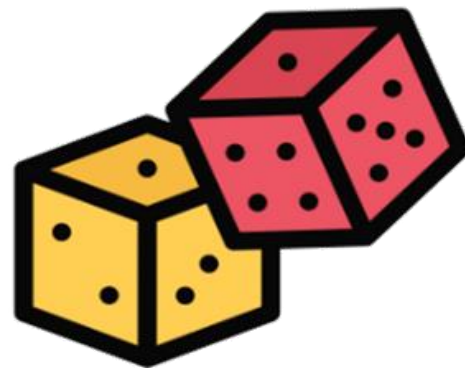
Read something you enjoy



Enjoy a food drink or smell



Imagine a safe place



Play a board game with others



Bake or make something you like

THIS  
WILL  
PASS



List items in a category / or recite something in order



Hold some ice

# Stress bucket

Imagine there's a bucket you carry with you which slowly fills up when you experience different types of stress.

Sometimes you feel strong enough to carry a lot of stress, but it's important to find activities which help you lighten the load.

**What helps you reduce stress?**

**How can you keep those activities going when other pressures build up?**





# Thank you

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**Mental Health Support Teams in Schools**  
**Norfolk and Waveney**

**Contact:**                    [ccs.mhstlowestoft@nhs.net](mailto:ccs.mhstlowestoft@nhs.net)



# Children & Young People's Health Services

JustoneNorfolk.nhs.uk

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Norfolk & Waveney

# YOUNG MINDS

The voice for young people's mental health and wellbeing



In a mental health crisis?



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