

WORRY NINJA - PARENT'S WORKSHOP



EMOTIONAL WELLBEING SERVICE



Respectful



Open



Collaborative



Compassionate



Consistent



OVERVIEW OF Y6 SESSIONS:

SESSION 1:

WHAT ARE WORRIES?

WHY DO WE HAVE WORRIES? (FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE)

HOMEWORK: BODY MAP

SESSION 2:

WHO CAN HELP US TO MANAGE WORRIES? (NINJA SQUAD)

ANXIOUS THOUGHTS VERSUS HELPFUL THOUGHTS

‘NINJA SQUAD’

SESSION 3:

SELF-CARE AND COPING STRATEGIES

AFTER EASTER:

REVIEW OF COPING STRATEGIES

FACING YOUR FEARS – STEP BY STEP PLAN (SECONDARY TRANSITION)



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'BECOMING A WORRY NINJA'



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COMMON WORRIES

EVERYONE EXPERIENCES WORRY. THE CHALLENGE IS HOW YOU
MANAGE THE WORRY SO IT DOESN'T BECOME A PROBLEM!



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DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES



Age	Developmental stage	Fears and worries
0-6 months	Sensory	Strong sensory stimuli (e.g. loud noises); loss of support
6-12 months	Sensori-motor: cause and effect; object-constancy	Strangers; separation from care givers
2-4 years	Pre-operational thinking: imagination, but limited distinction between fantasy and reality	Imaginary creatures; potential burglars; the dark
5-7 years	Concrete operational thinking: Concrete, logical thinking	Natural disasters; injury/illness/death; animals; media-based fears
8-11 years	Self esteem based on academic and athletic abilities	Poor academic and athletic performance
12-18 years	Formal operational thinking: meta-thinking and anticipation of future dangers. Self esteem based on peer relationships	Peer rejection; world issues



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ANXIETY



HAS THREE CHARACTERISTICS:

BODILY SENSATIONS

- ❖ Associated with
adrenalin -
preparing the
body for action

E.g. sweating, heart
beating faster,
trembling

ANXIOUS THOUGHTS

- ❖ Over-estimate
“danger”
- ❖ Underestimate
ability to cope



ANXIOUS BEHAVIOUR

- ❖ Avoid worrying
situations , so you
don't get the chance
to learn if it's as bad
as you think it will
be or cope
- ❖ Seeking reassurance

FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE RESPONSE



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BODY MAP

Thoughts racing

Quicker thinking helps us to evaluate danger and make rapid decisions. It can be very difficult to concentrate on anything apart from the danger (or escape routes) when the fight or flight response is active

Changes to vision

Vision can become acute so that more attention can be paid to danger. You might notice 'tunnel vision', or vision becoming 'sharper'

Dry mouth

The mouth is part of the digestive system. Digestion shuts down during dangerous situations as energy is diverted towards the muscles

Heart beats faster

A faster heart beat feeds more blood to the muscles and enhances your ability to run away or fight

Nausea and 'butterflies' in the stomach

Blood is diverted away from the digestive system which can lead to feelings of nausea or 'butterflies'

Hands get cold

Blood vessels in the skin contract to force blood towards major muscle groups

Muscles tense

Muscles all over the body tense in order to get you ready to run away or fight. Muscles may also shake or tremble, particularly if you stay still, as a way of staying 'ready for action'

If we don't exercise (e.g. run away or fight) to use up the extra oxygen then we can quickly start to feel dizzy or lightheaded

Breathing becomes quicker and shallower

Quicker breathing takes in more oxygen to power the muscles. This makes the body more able to fight or run away

Adrenal glands release adrenaline

The adrenaline quickly signals other parts of the body to get ready to respond to danger

Bladder urgency

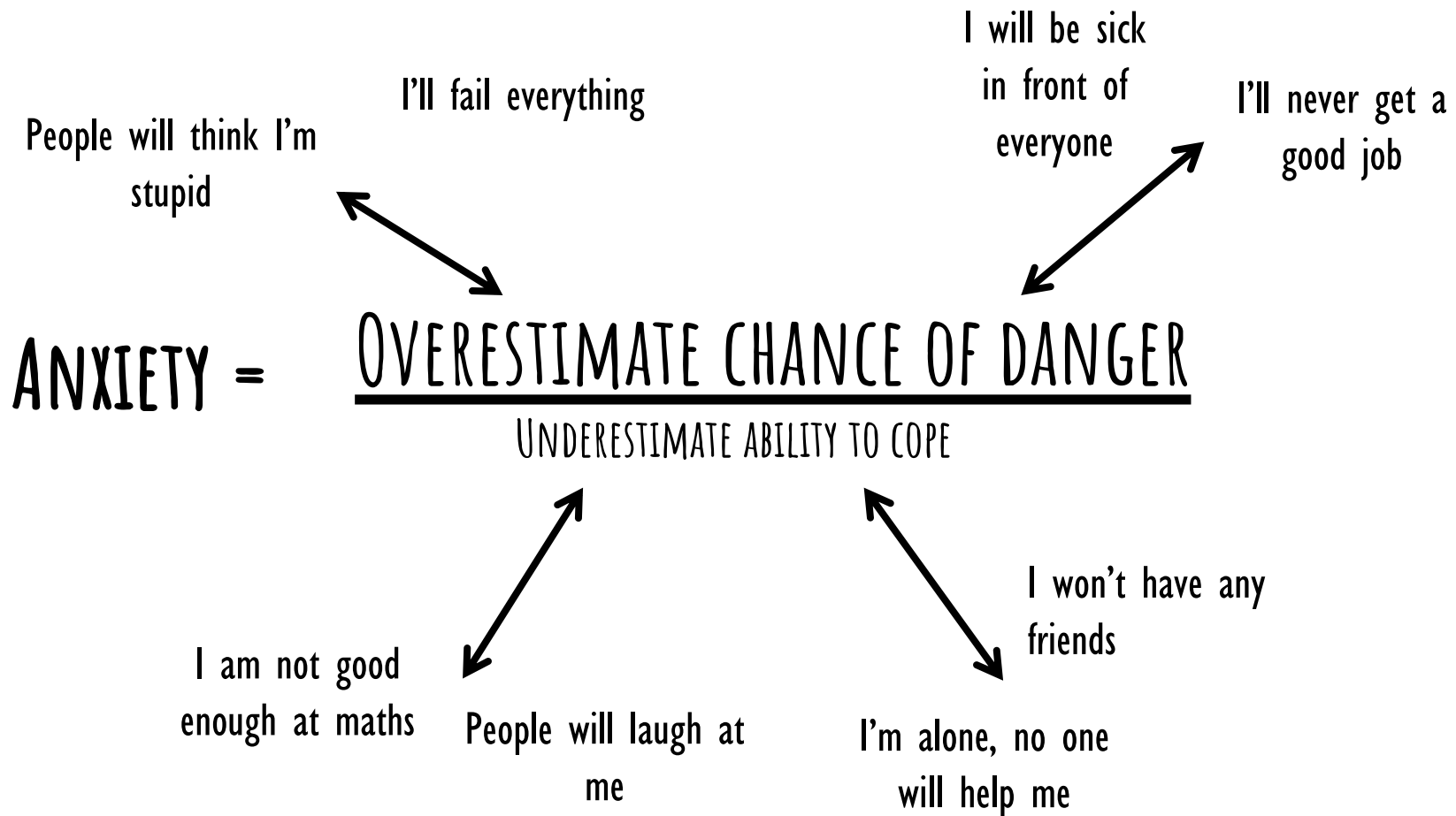
Muscles in the bladder sometimes relax in response to extreme stress

Palms become sweaty

When in danger the body sweats to keep cool. A cool machine is an efficient machine, so sweating makes the body more likely to survive a dangerous event



ANXIOUS THINKING



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ANXIOUS BEHAVIOUR



Ask lots of
questions

Tantrum

Cling to
others

Avoidance

Say difficult
statements

Cry

Hit others



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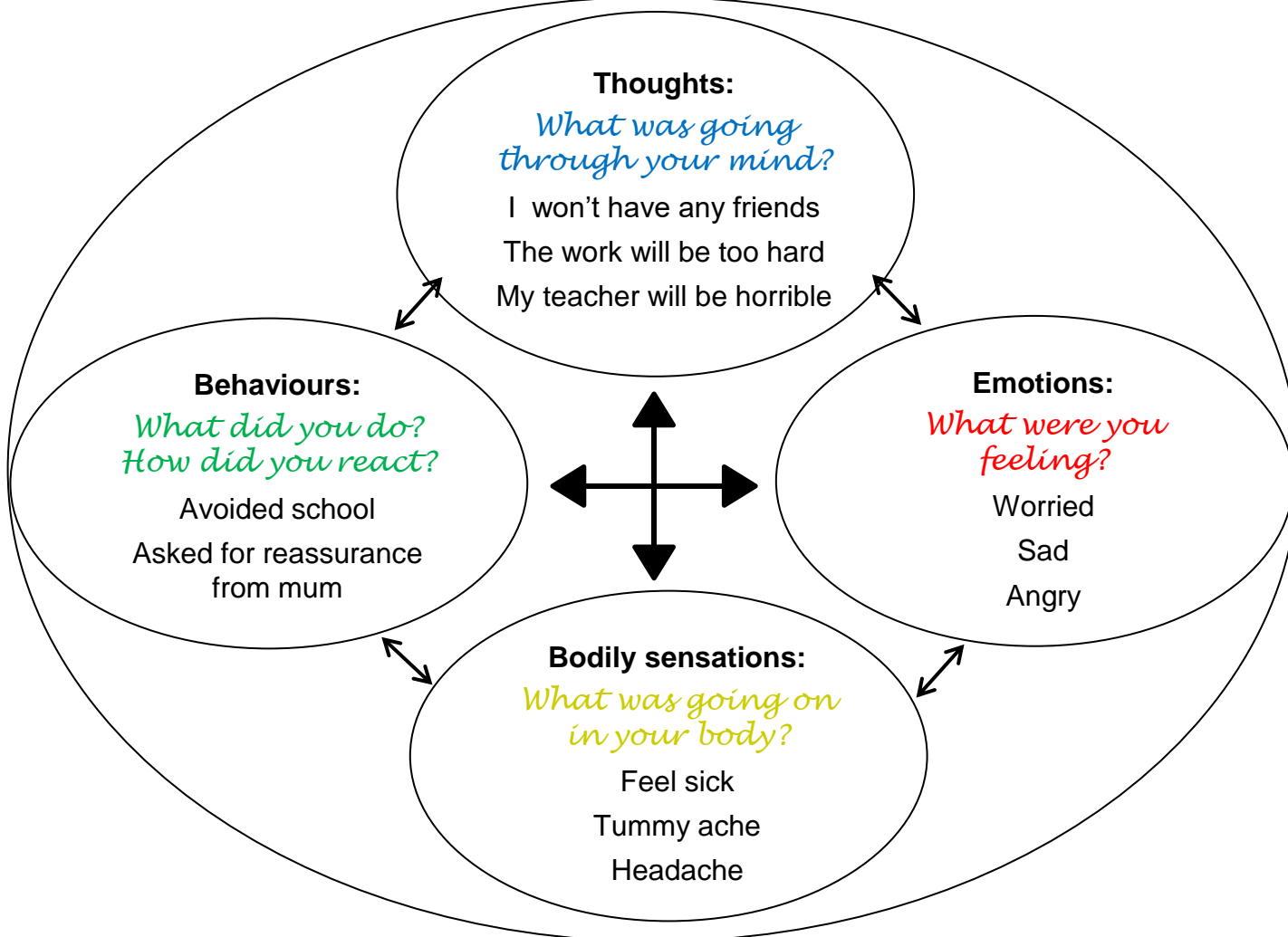
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WHAT DOES ANXIETY LOOK LIKE?

Situation: starting secondary school



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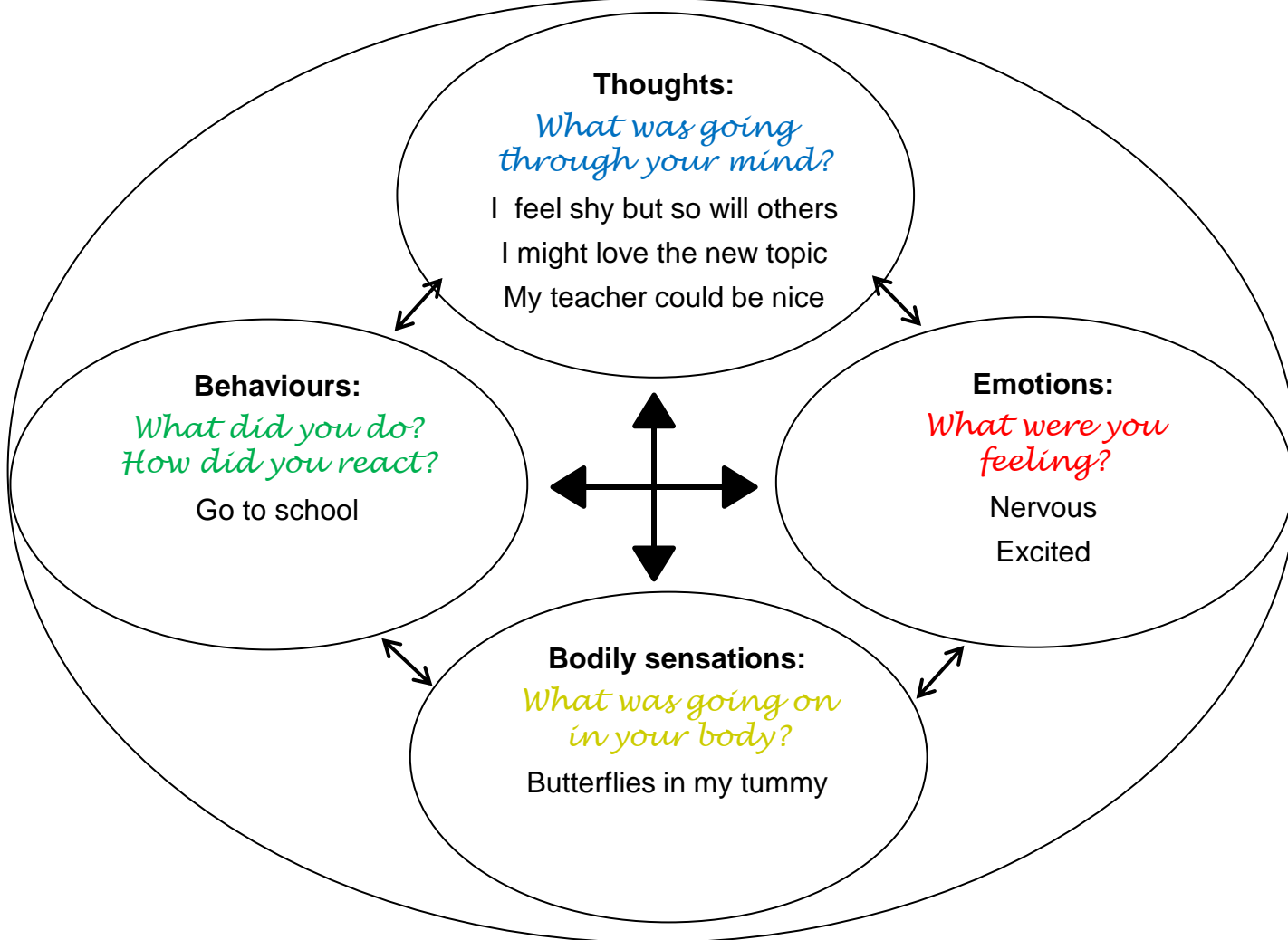
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WHAT DOES A LESS ANXIOUS CHILD LOOK LIKE?

Situation: starting secondary school



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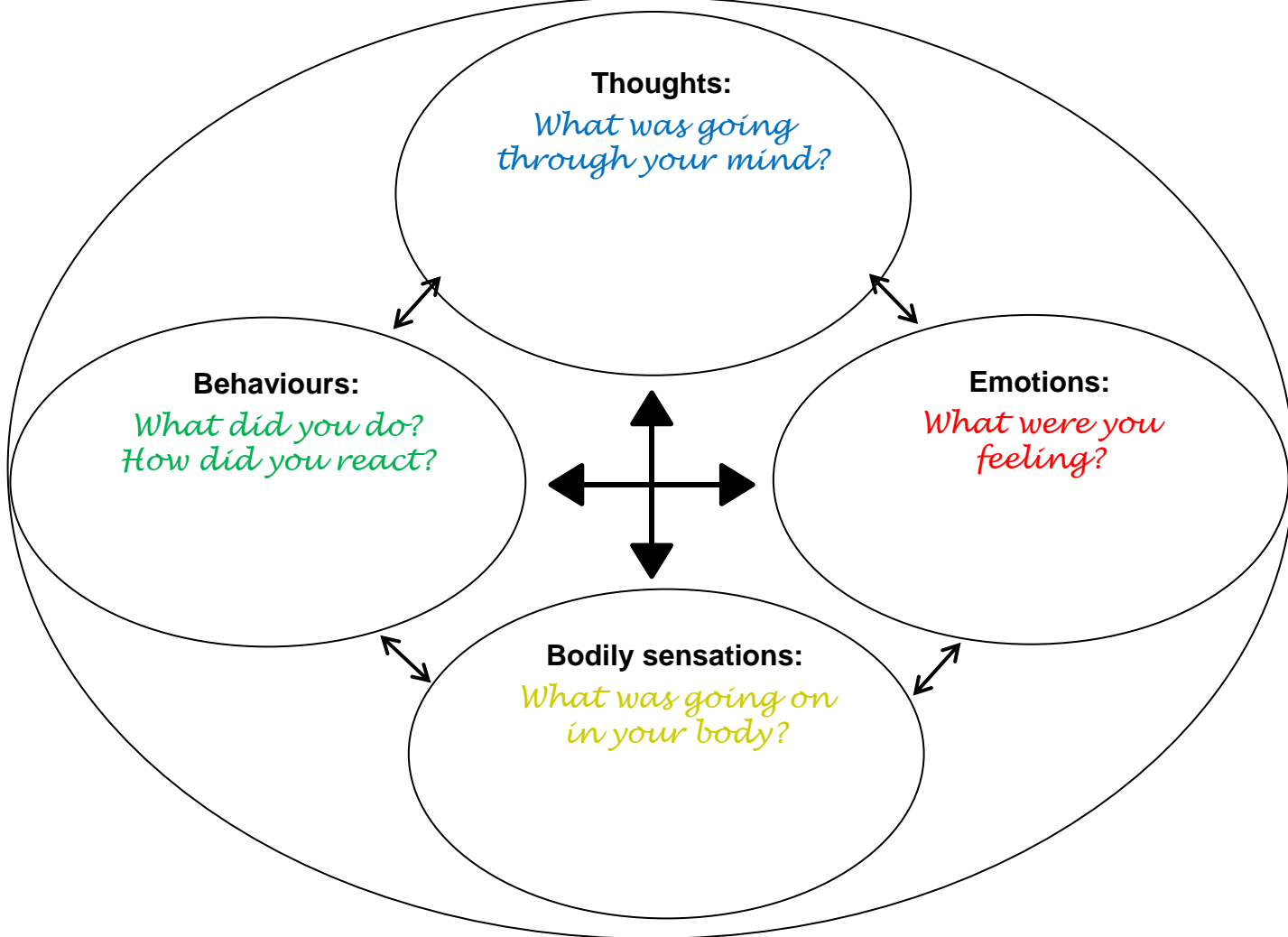
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WHAT DOES ANXIETY LOOK LIKE?

Situation: SATS



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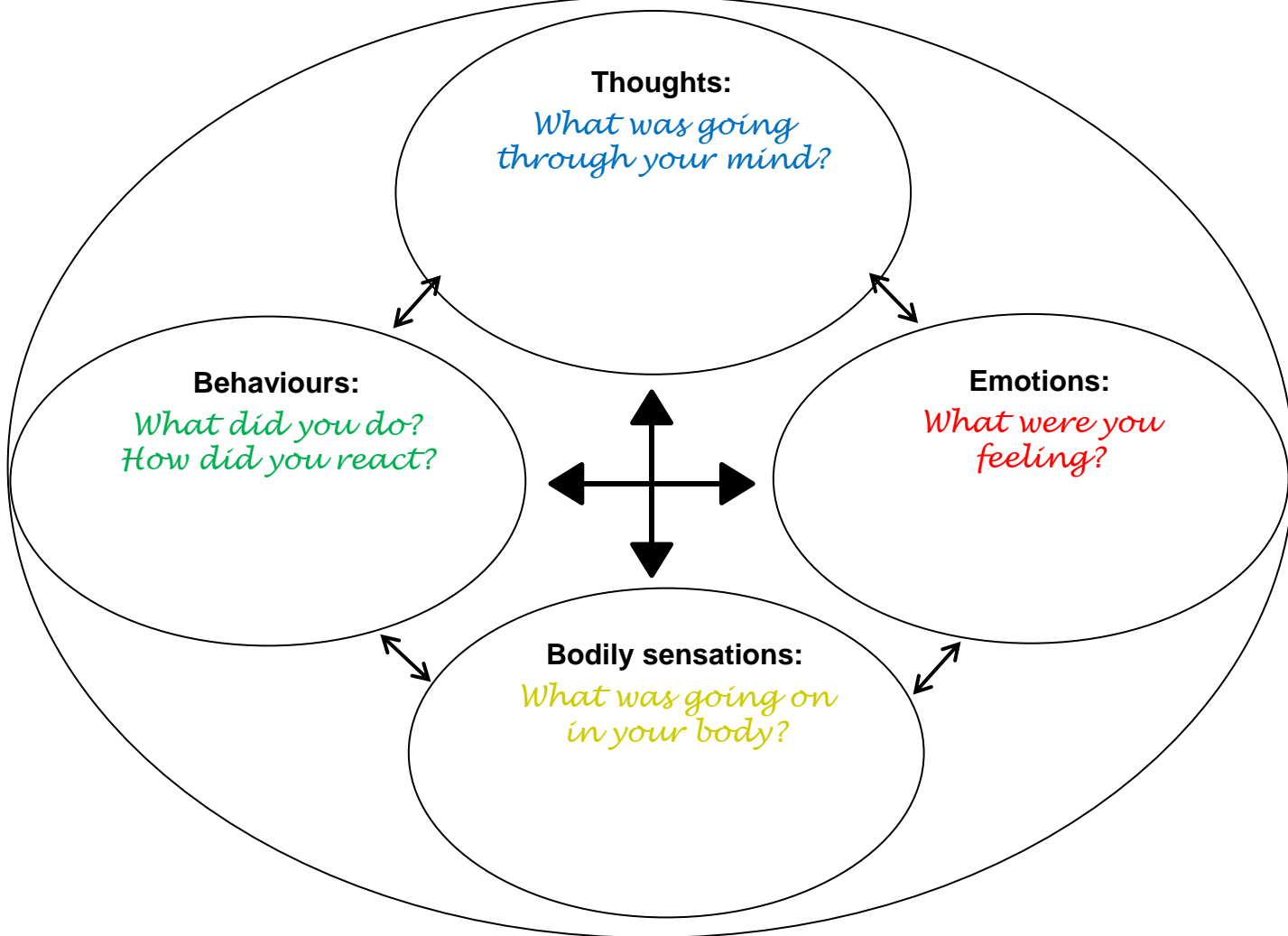
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WHAT DOES A LESS ANXIOUS CHILD LOOK LIKE?

Situation: SATS



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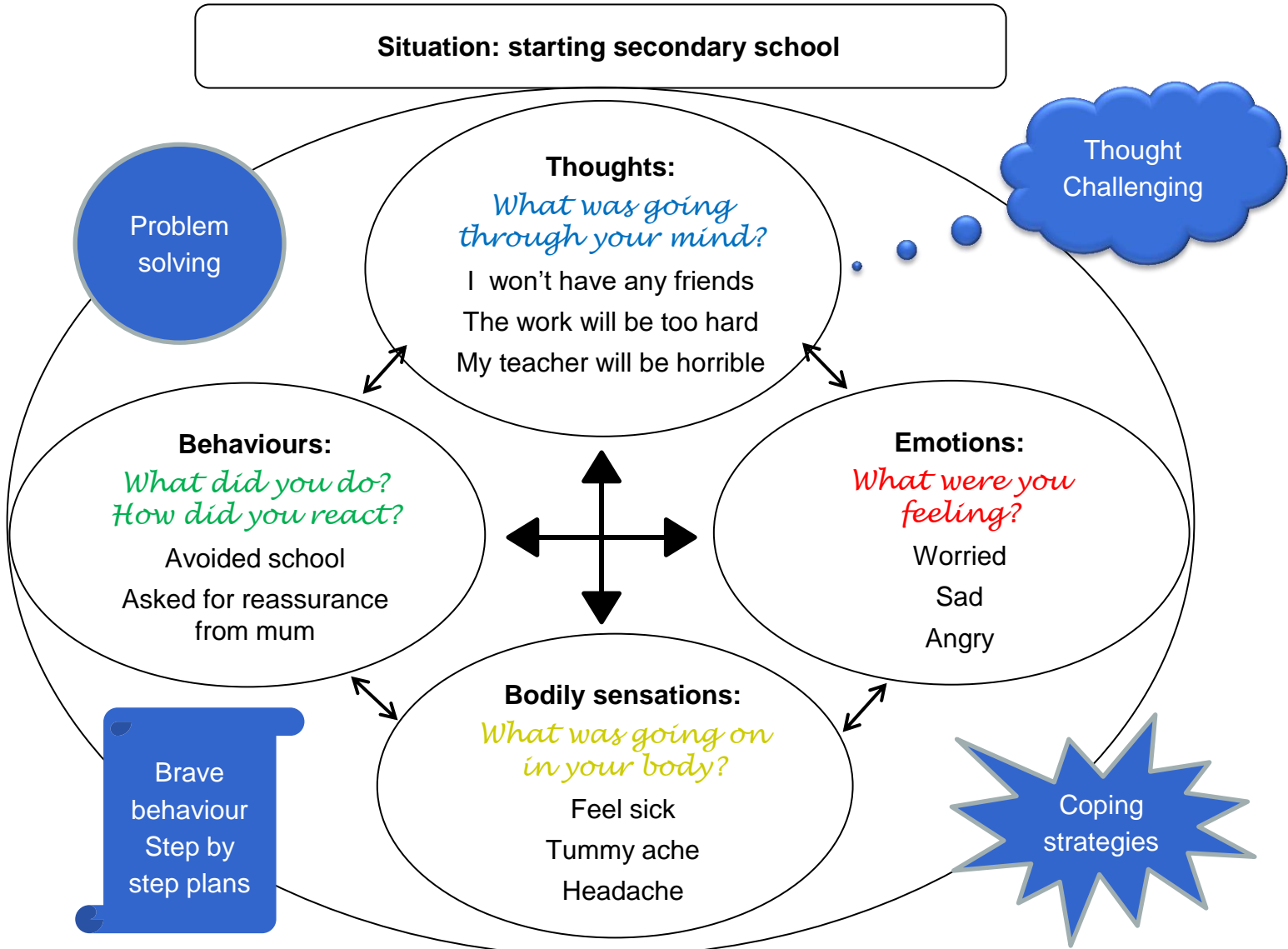


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WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?



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HOW TO FIND OUT WHAT MY CHILD IS WORRIED ABOUT?

Explore their worries by asking questions such as:

- ❖ “I notice you are worried...”
- ❖ “What worries you about this situation?”
- ❖ “What do you think will happen?”
- ❖ “What is it about this situation that is making you worried?”



Give your best guess: share what you might be scared about.

- ❖ “If I was starting a new topic I might be scared about getting it wrong, is that something you are worried about?”

Use active and reflective listening.

- ❖ Attend to the emotion behind the child's action
- ❖ Validate their emotions e.g. “I can see why that would be frightening if you think that..”



WHAT CAN WE DO DIFFERENTLY: REASSURANCE?

**REASSURANCE IS TELLING YOUR CHILD EVERYTHING WILL
BE FINE.**

WE ALL DO IT!

BUT try not to do it too much because:

- ❖ It can lead to children thinking that there is something to worry about
- ❖ Children can become reliant on it – e.g. they won't try unless mum says it's ok
- ❖ They might not learn to manage their worries on their own.



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INSTEAD OF REASSURANCE TRY....

CHALLENGE YOUR CHILD'S UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS

SITUATION: PACKING MY BAG FOR SCHOOL

**WORST CASE
SCENARIO**

I will bring all of
my things for the
wrong day, get
shouted at by the
teachers and get a
detention.

**BEST CASE
SCENARIO**

I will remember
everything I could
possibly need for
school and the
teachers will give
me a prize.

**SOMETHING IN
THE MIDDLE**

I might feel
worried that I will
forget something
for school but I
have a checklist to
help me and I will
be honest with the
teachers.



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BALANCED THINKING.. WHAT WOULD A NINJA DO?

SITUATION: PREPARING FOR SATS



ANXIOUS THOUGHT

I'M GOING TO
FAIL. IT WILL BE A
DISASTER.
EVERYONE WILL
THINK I'M
STUPID AND I'LL
NEVER BE ABLE
TO PASS A TEST.

WHAT WOULD THE
NINJA SAY TO MAKE
YOU FEEL LESS
WORRIED?



BALANCED THOUGHT

I CAN TRY MY
BEST. I CAN LET
AN ADULT KNOW
IF I'M WORRIED
AND IF I'M
STRUGGLING



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CHALLENGING UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS

WHAT IS HAPPENING	WHAT IS HE OR SHE THINKING	EVIDENCE AND ALTERNATIVES	WHAT HAPPENED IN THE END
	<p>Why are you worried?</p> <p>What do you think will happen? What is it about [this situation] that is making you worried?</p>	<p>What makes you think that [this situation] will happen?</p> <p>Has that ever happened to you before? Have you ever seen that happen to someone else?</p> <p>How likely is it that [this situation] will happen?</p> <p>From what has happened before or to other people, what do you think will happen?</p> <p>What would you think was happening if someone else was in the same boat?</p> <p>What would [another child] think if they were in this situation?</p> <p>How could you test out this thought?</p>	<p>What did your child think? What did your child do?</p> <p>How did your child feel?</p>



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WHAT CAN WE DO DIFFERENTLY: AVOIDANCE?

IF YOUR CHILD IS WORRIED IT CAN BE TEMPTING TO LET THEM
AVOID IT BUT:

They won't learn that it would have been fine

They won't learn that they can cope with challenges

They will miss out on things (now and in the future)



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WHAT CAN WE INSTEAD OF LETTING THEM AVOID?

- ✓ Step back and let them have a go - encourage independence.
- ✓ Notice and praise brave behaviour.
- ✓ Model brave behaviour.
- ✓ Encourage your child to face their fears in small manageable steps.



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ENCOURAGING BRAVE BEHAVIOUR

- 
1. Think of a situation that your child finds worrying
 2. Encourage your child to face their fears in small manageable steps
 3. Put these steps in order from the least anxiety provoking to the most
 4. Begin the first step on the ladder
 5. Repeat each step as many times as needed until you feel comfortable with it



IS IT LOWER THAN
YOUR ORIGINAL
RATING?



WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED
FROM CARRYING OUT
THIS STEP?



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BRAVE BEHAVIOUR



ANXIOUS BEHAVIOUR: Avoid going to the park due to fear of being bit by a dog



STEP 7: STROKE A FRIEND'S DOG

STEP 6: GO TO THE PARK WHEN THERE IS A DOG AROUND

STEP 5: WALK PAST A HOUSE WITH A DOG IN THE GARDEN

STEP 4: WATCH A CLIP OF A DOG

STEP 3: LOOK AT PICTURES OF DOGS

STEP 2: TALK ABOUT DOGS TO A FRIEND

STEP 1: TALK ABOUT DOGS TO MUM



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PRAISE AND REWARDS



STEP 3: PRACTICE WALK TO NEW SCHOOL WITH FRIEND

- ★ I GET TO GO FOR A HOT CHOCOLATE WITH MUM AFTERWARDS

STEP 2: PRACTICE WALKING TO NEW SCHOOL WITH SIBLING

- ★ I GET TO CHOOSE MY SNACKS FOR SCHOOL

STEP 1: PRACTICE WALKING WITH MUM TO NEW SCHOOL.

- ★ I GET PRAISE AND A DINNER OF MY CHOICE



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OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO THE STEP-BY-STEP PLAN

SOMETIMES FAMILIES FIND THEY GET STUCK ON A STEP HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO
OVERCOME THIS:

- ❖ REPEAT THE PREVIOUS STEP
- ❖ BREAK DOWN THE STEP
- ❖ CHANGE THE REWARD

PRAISE THE BRAVE BEHAVIOUR, EFFORT AND
PROGRESS SO FAR!



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How can you support? – ‘Ninja squad’

Emotional

Practical



Companionship

Motivational



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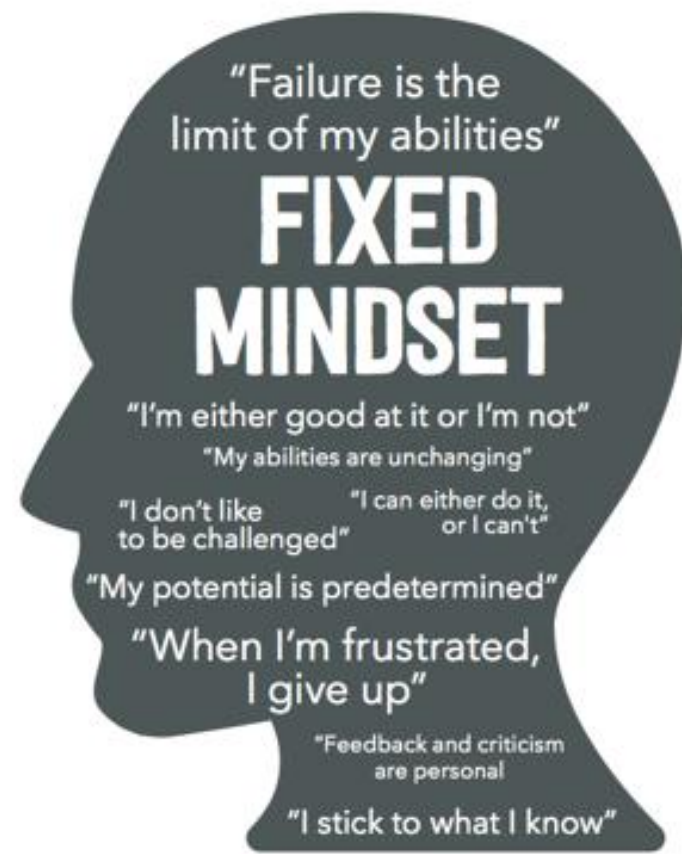


NHS
South West London and
St George's Mental Health
NHS Trust

MINDSET



Abilities can be **developed**
through effort and practice



Abilities are **static** and
cannot be changed



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GROWTH MINDSET PARENTING



✓ PRAISING KIDS FOR WORKING HARD

Say this: "I can see you worked so hard on this!"

Instead of: "You are so smart"

✓ TALK ABOUT THE BRAIN

Teaching your child that they actually have control over growing their brains through effort is empowering!

✓ ACCEPT MISTAKES AS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Speak positively about your mistakes and struggles, and this will show your children that taking risks and making mistakes are a natural part of the learning process.

✓ UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS IN LEARNING

Our brains are designed to protect us when we feel threatened, and when we feel worried it's normal for our minds to go blank. Use relaxation strategies!



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OTHER IDEAS...

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION



SQUEEZE A LEMON!

Imagine you have a lemon in your hand. Squeeze it really really tight. Think about how your hands and arms feel. Count to 5... and relax. How does your hand feel now it's relaxed?

STRETCH LIKE A GIRAFFE!

Imagine you are as tall as a giraffe.
Stretch your neck, your arms and your legs as far as you can.
Think about how they feel.
Count to 5..... and relax. How do your neck, arms and legs feel now they're relaxed?



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CONTROLLED BREATHING



- ❖ Put one hand on your tummy.
- ❖ Imagine you are sniffing some flowers; breathe them in slowly while you count to 4. You will feel your hand rising.
- ❖ Hold the breath and count to 2.
- ❖ Release your breath slowly and count to 4.
- ❖ Practise!



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MANAGING TRICKY BEHAVIOUR AROUND ANXIETY.

- ❖ Use reflective listening.
- ❖ Motivate using attention, praise and small rewards.
- ❖ Teach them relaxation strategies they can use to manage their emotions...



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MANAGING YOUR OWN EMOTIONS

- ❖ Children are sensitive to how their parents feel and take their cues from you.
- ❖ Bear in mind that your own experiences inform what you do with your children. Be aware of preventing your children from having coping experiences.
- ❖ Try to manage your own emotions and where possible project an air of confidence. When appropriate discuss managing your emotions with your children.
- ❖ Access support for yourself too.



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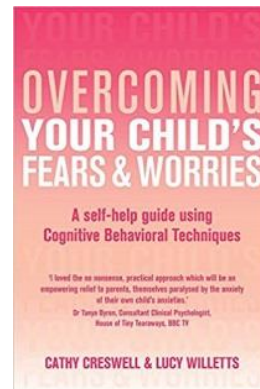
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NEXT STEPS:

- 
1. Try out the strategies you learnt today. Don't expect an immediate result- the more you use the strategies with your child the bigger the impact they will have.
 2. Buy Creswell, C. and Willetts, L (2010). *'Overcoming your child's fears and worries: A guide for parents using cognitive behavioural techniques.'*



3. Talk to the mental health lead in school or the GP if you would like further support. .



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GOALS

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF TODAY?

DID YOU GET WHAT YOU HOPED TO OUT OF TODAY'S SESSION?

PLEASE COULD YOU RATE THE GOAL YOU SET AT THE START OF THIS SESSION AGAIN.

(0=NOT AT ALL REACHED, 10=TOTALLY REACHED)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

WE WOULD BE REALLY GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD COMPLETE THE FEEDBACK FORM.

THANK YOU!



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ANY QUESTIONS?



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A large, light blue arrow pointing to the right, positioned on the left edge of the slide.

THANK YOU FOR COMING!

PRACTICE
makes
PROGRESS

YOU
CAN
DO
IT



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