

Understanding your Emotions

By Enza Borgia



Understanding your emotions



Emotions are what help us make sense of what is going on around us. They are affected by what we see, hear, taste, touch, smell; our memories and past experiences.

Whether we are happy, sad; angry or scared, we share our emotions with other people by what we say and do. They affect our thoughts and help us understand the world around us.

They help us know what is important for us, when we are in danger, when we are having fun, when we are loved, when we are sad at losing someone we love.

You know that you are experiencing an emotion because you can feel it in your body. Each emotion makes you feel different. Some emotions feel nice and others feel scary.

They act as signals and move us into action. Some tell you when something is going well and others when you are in danger.

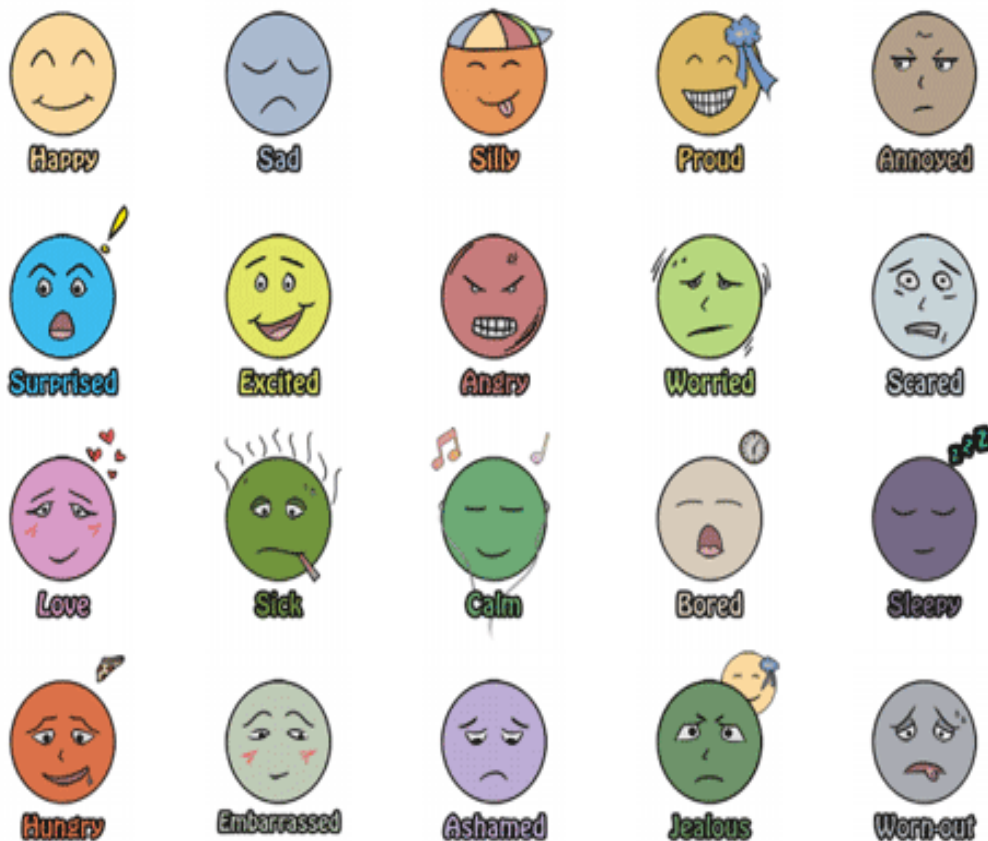
We have lots and lots of emotions every day. That's what makes each day different and special.

Most of the time emotions stop once they have delivered their message but sometimes we develop unhelpful patterns of behaviour

to deal with difficult emotions. The behaviours can cause problems for us and keep us stuck in the emotion.

This handout aims to show you how to recognise your emotions and give you some ideas of how to cope with difficult emotions in the future.

How many emotions can you name?



Draw a picture of how you think you look when you are feeling these emotions:

I am.....



sad



happy



tired



angry






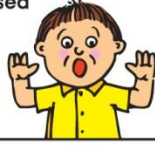






afraid



surprised

Emotions

Happy 	Sad 
Angry 	Frightened 
Sneaky 	Surprised 
Shy 	Upset 
Cheeky 	Sleepy 



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Every day use your diary to write down how you feel.



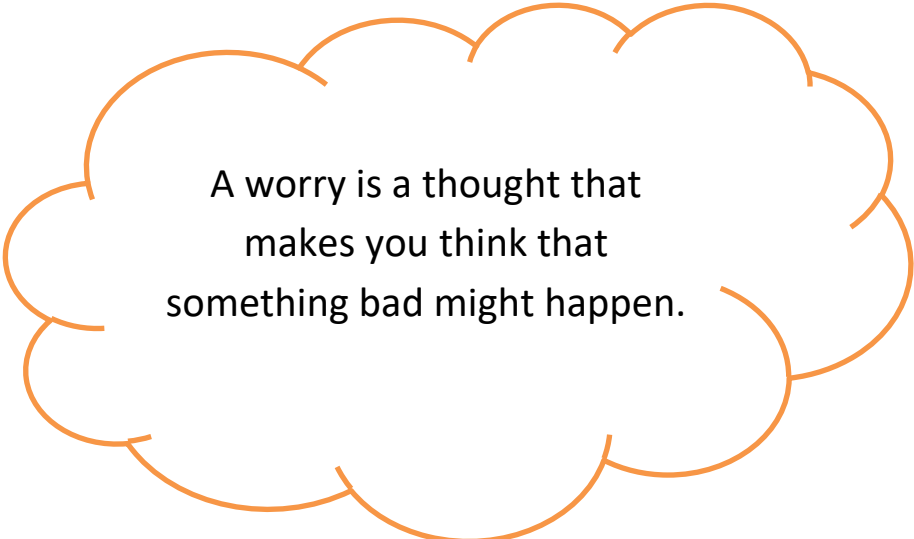
FEELINGS IN THE CLASSROOM

ATTENDING SCHOOL MIGHT MAKE YOU FEEL...

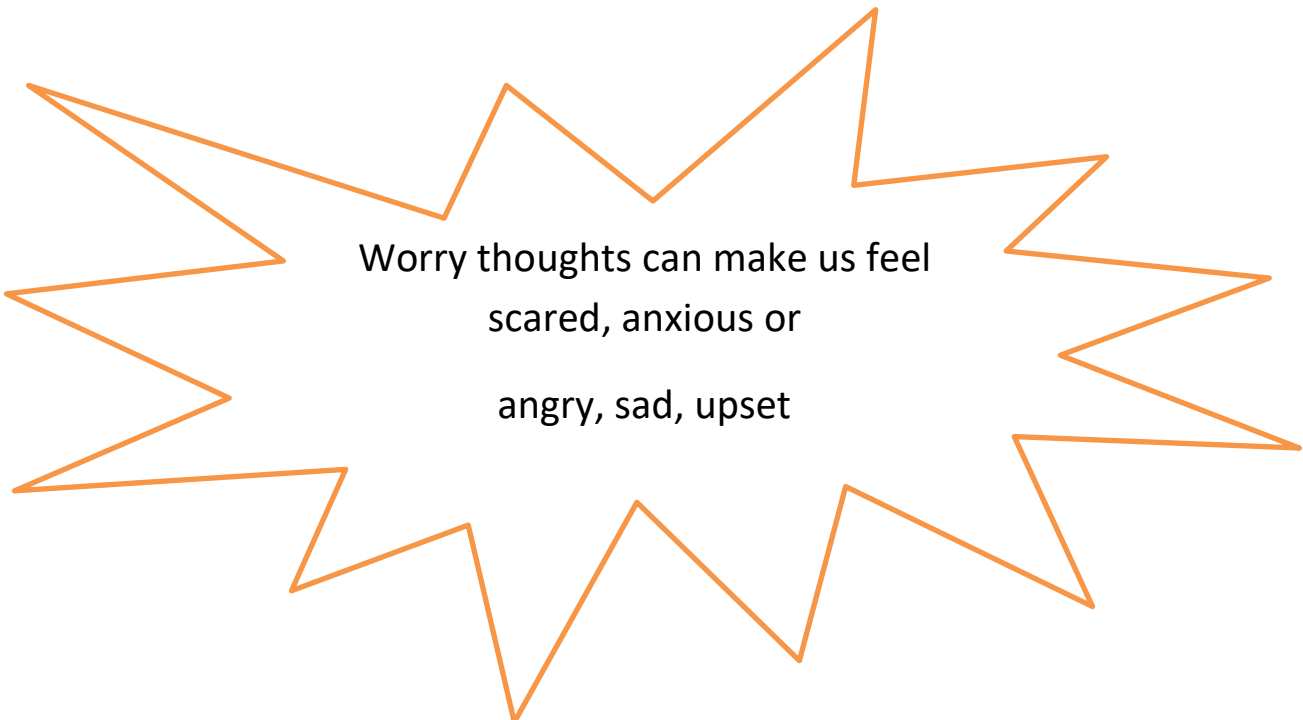
<p>EXCITED</p>  <p>YOU'RE MEETING OLD FRIENDS AND LOTS OF NEW PEOPLE... CAN'T WAIT!</p>	<p>BORED</p>  <p>BECAUSE YOU DON'T LIKE THE LESSON MUCH...</p>	<p>SLEEPY</p>  <p>BECAUSE YOU WENT TO BED LATE LAST NIGHT...</p>	<p>SHY</p>  <p>BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW ANYBODY...YET</p>	<p>SAD</p>  <p>BECAUSE YOU'VE CHANGED SCHOOL AND LEFT YOUR FRIENDS BEHIND...</p>
<p>CONFUSED</p>  <p>BECAUSE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE TEACHER AT ALL...</p>	<p>ANGRY</p>  <p>BECAUSE YOU'D RATHER BE SOMEWHERE ELSE...</p>	<p>EAGER</p>  <p>TO LEARN NEW THINGS. (YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN CURIOUS)...</p>	<p>TIRED AND SWEATY</p>  <p>AFTER YOU P.E. CLASS...</p>	<p>ABSENT MINDED</p>  <p>YOU REALLY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CONCENTRATE...</p>
<p>TALKATIVE</p>  <p>YOU HAVE MANY THINGS TO TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND CAN'T WAIT...</p>	<p>ANXIOUS</p>  <p>BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT FROM SCHOOL...</p>	<p>ASHAMED</p>  <p>BEACUSE YOU'VE DONE WRONG AND YOU KNOW IT...</p>	<p>IRRITABLE</p>  <p>WHY IS THAT EVERYTHING UPSETS YOU...?</p>	<p>FRUSTRATED</p>  <p>YOU ARE NOT REALLY GETTING WHAT YOU WANTED...</p>
<p>GLOOMY</p>  <p>YOU DON'T LIKE THE PLACE, YOU</p>	<p>STROPPY</p>  <p>YOU ARE REALLY IN A BAD TEMPER</p>	<p>LAZY</p>  <p>YOU FEEL LIKE DOING NOTHING TODAY...MAYBE</p>	<p>NAUGHTY</p>  <p>BEACUSE UPSETING YOUR CLASS MATES IS YOUR</p>	<p>APATHETIC</p>  <p>YOU NO LONGER WANT TO BE AT SCHOOL...</p>



What is a Worry?

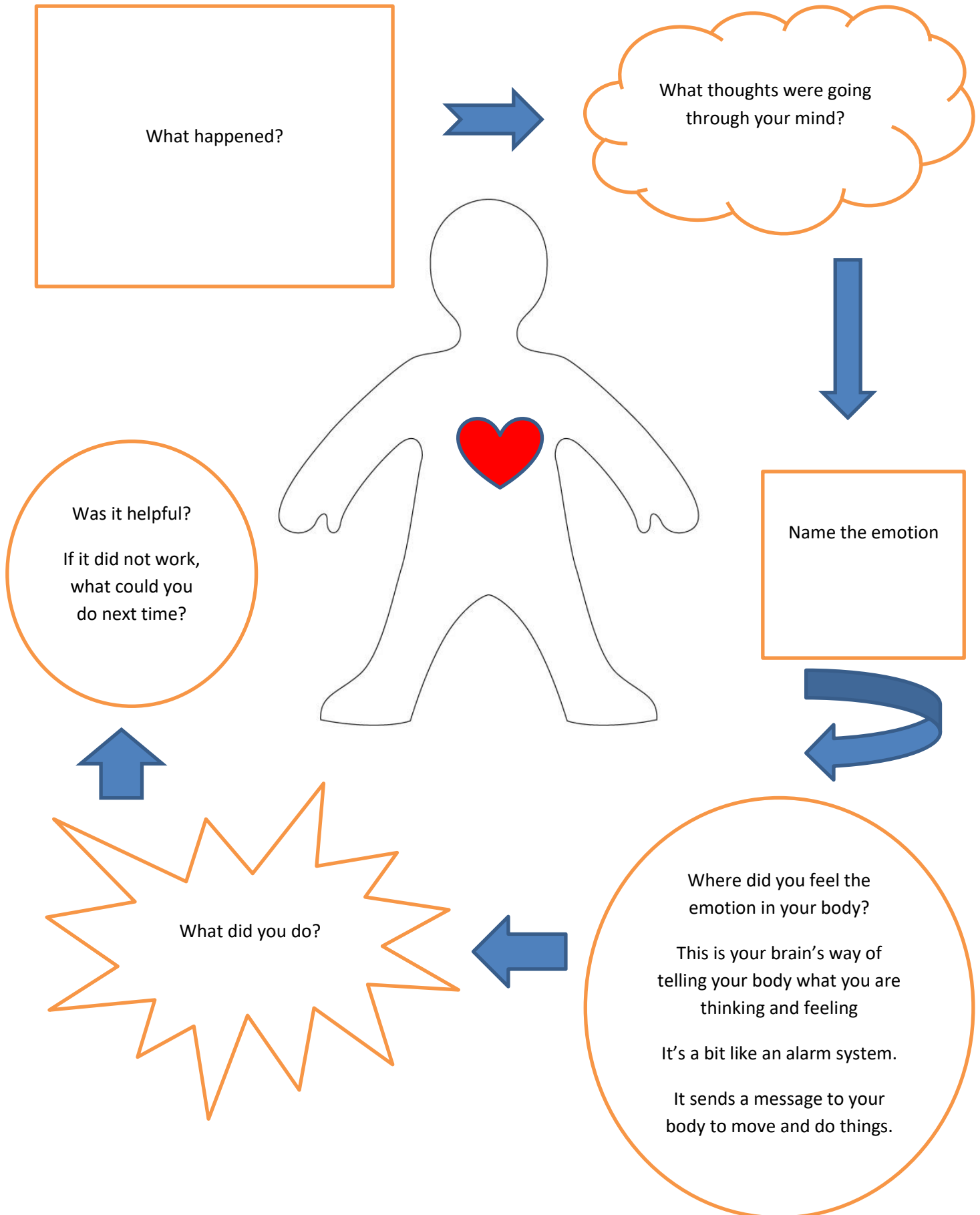


A worry is a thought that makes you think that something bad might happen.



Worry thoughts can make us feel scared, anxious or angry, sad, upset

How do you think noticing your big emotions when they begin might help you?



Having a Calm Plan

Keeping our brains busy doing other things helps us to beat our worry monsters.

By focusing our attention on doing something else our brains have time to turn off our alarm system and calm down. The more we practice doing the things that help us the easier and faster it will become for us to calm down.

Once we are calm we are able to think clearly. We can talk to someone about our worries and look for things we can do to make the worries go away.

Make a list of things that you can **do** to help you calm down next time you **feel** a BIG emotion and **think** BIG worry thoughts:

Focus on one of your senses	Ideas
seeing	
hearing	
smelling	
touching	
doing	



Draw on Color



Use a Breathing Board



Try Wave Breathing



Tell Myself a Positive Affirmation or Mantra.



Think of 3 Things I Am Grateful For



Read a Book



Stretch or Do Yoga

Look at Feel-Good Pictures



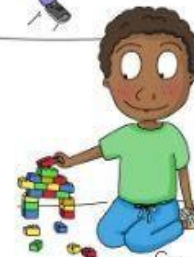
Ask Permission to Quietly Exercise for a Minute or Two



When I Feel Mad, Sad, Worried or Unfocused at School I Can...



Ask a for Help



Build Something or Do a Puzzle



Treat Myself with Kindness and Just Breathe



Help Someone or Ask to Do a Classroom Chore



Give Myself or a Stuffed Animal a Hug



Journal or Write a Letter



Squeeze Then Relax My Muscles



Get a Drink of Water



Try 5 Finger Breathing

Use a Tool from the Calm Box



Push Against the Wall and Then Relax



Some ideas for your calm plan

We can keep worries away by looking after ourselves:

....by eating and sleeping well

....by learning to relax

....by exercising

....by talking

....by focusing on all the things we are good at

....by giving and receiving hugs from people we love



Here is a little exercise you can do to help yourself calm down

Hugs are really nice. Would you like a hug right now? Close your eyes and wrap your arms around your body. Imagine yourself being hugged really tight. Feel how the hug warms you up and makes all the worries melt away. Hold the hug and breathe in the hugs and breathe out your worries until you feel calm and relaxed.

Relaxation exercise

Please make sure your eyes are closed softly, as if you were getting ready to fall asleep. But please do not fall asleep. Keep your eyes closed, but do not go to sleep. Stay awake and listen to my voice.

Make sure not to move. Feel your body remaining still and calm.

Feel your body becoming light, so light it begins to float up off the ground.

Begin to soar into the sky where it is warm and beautiful. The sky is blue and full of white, puffy clouds. Birds are singing, and the sunshine is warm and golden.

Now imagine your favourite place. Take a moment to imagine that place.

Imagine what it **looks** like. Imagine what it **smells** like. Are there any other people there or are you by yourself? Continue soaring through the beautiful, blue sky to your favourite place. Fly overhead and see this place from the sky. Look down upon it. Enjoy seeing it from so high above.

Now fly past your favourite place and see a rainbow in the distance. Begin to soar through the sky toward the rainbow. The rainbow is beautiful, full of so many colours, so bright and playful. Fly straight into the rainbow and grab your favourite colours in your hand.

Continue to soar through the sky, finding a colourful kite flying nearby. Chase the kite and follow it as it travels on its own path through the sky. Allow the kite to continue on its way, as you continue on your way.

Find a large, leafy tree and begin to descend from the sky to land safely and softly on the tree branches. The tree is strong and supports you. Enjoy swinging from the trees branches and climbing down its trunk.

The grass at the base of the tree is green and soft. It is a restful place. The tree offers shade, and the grass offers comfort. There are beautiful flowers all around you. Lie down on the grass and relax under the shade of the tree.

Feel completely relaxed and still.

Listen to the birds singing overhead. Feel the warm breeze on your cheeks.

Now begin to slowly move your fingers and toes, making small movements in small places.

Begin making larger movements, even stretching.

Mindfulness Scavenger Hunt

Relax and Focus on The Moment

1



Smile



Breathe In



Breathe Out



Count The Lines On Your Hand

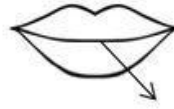
2



Smile



Breathe In



Breathe Out



Count The Curves On Your Ears

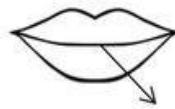
3



Smile



Breathe In



Breathe Out



Count The Bumps On Your Lips

Switching off our alarm system

By learning to notice the signals our bodies give us that tell us when we are beginning to feel anxious/sad/angry, we can learn to turn off our alarm system and stop ourselves before we behave in an unhelpful way.

As soon as you notice that you are feeling one of the signals in your body:

- **STOP**
- **Name your emotion (I am feeling.....)**
- **Remind yourself that the emotion will go away**
- **Catch the Worry thought: Write your worry down.**
- **Focus on one of your helpful strategies (Give your brain and body time to calm down by practicing one of your calming strategies: I am going to do....)**
- **Talk to someone and look for solutions in your talk time.**

When this happened....

I thought...

I felt...

I noticed...

I did...

Was it helpful/ unhelpful? What could I do next time?

How Big is My Problem?

5

Emergency

You definitely need help from a grownup (fire, someone is hurt and needs to go to the hospital, a car accident, danger).



4

Gigantic problem

You can change with a lot of help (getting lost, hitting, kicking, or punching a friend, throwing or breaking things, bullying).



3

Big problem

You can change with some help (someone is mean to you or takes something that is yours, a minor accident, needing help calming down).



2

Medium problem

You can change with a little help (feeling sick, tired, or hungry, someone bothering you, being afraid, needing help).



1

Little problem

You can change with a little reminder (not being line leader, not winning a game, not taking turns, making a mess).



0

Glitch

You can fix yourself (changing clothes, cleaning up toys, forgetting favorite toy or blankie).



	Looks like	Feels like	What I can do to calm down
5 I am ready to explode			
4 I am angry/scared			
3 I am starting to feel angry/scared			
2 I am doing Ok			
1 I am happy			

Make a plan of what to do at different stages of the emotion so that you and the people around you know what helps you to calm back down

Sometimes situations may happen that make us feel angry, sad, scared.

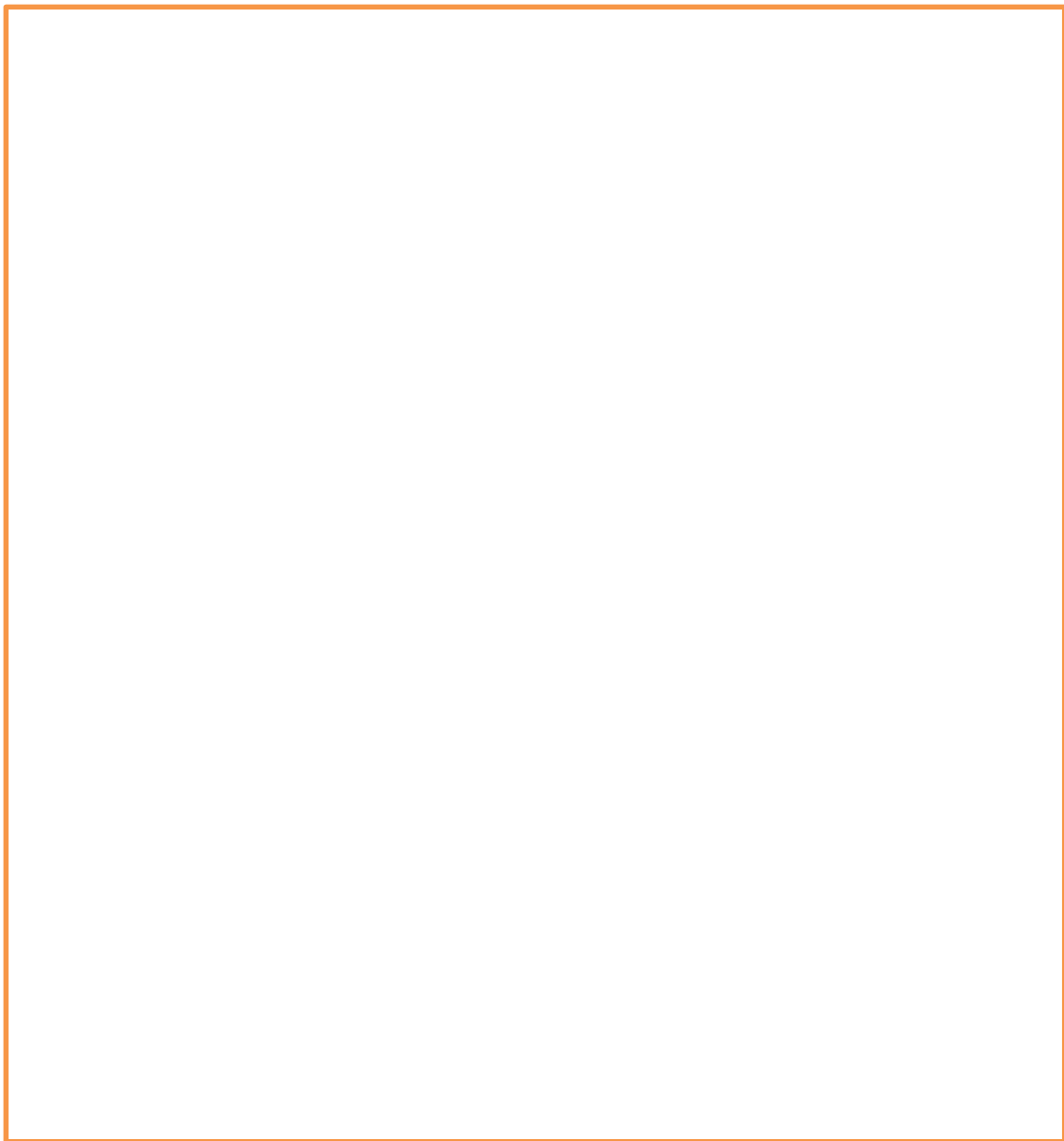
We can use these experiences to learn how to be brave.

Who is your favourite super hero?

Imagine what they would do if they had to face your biggest worry?

Draw a picture of your super hero being brave.

Remember you can be brave too!



Worry Time

It is really helpful to have time to talk your worries through with someone who cares about you.

Allow **15 minutes** per day talking about your worries with someone who cares about you- your mum or dad or a teacher at school. This is your time together so really make the most of talking and listening to each other.

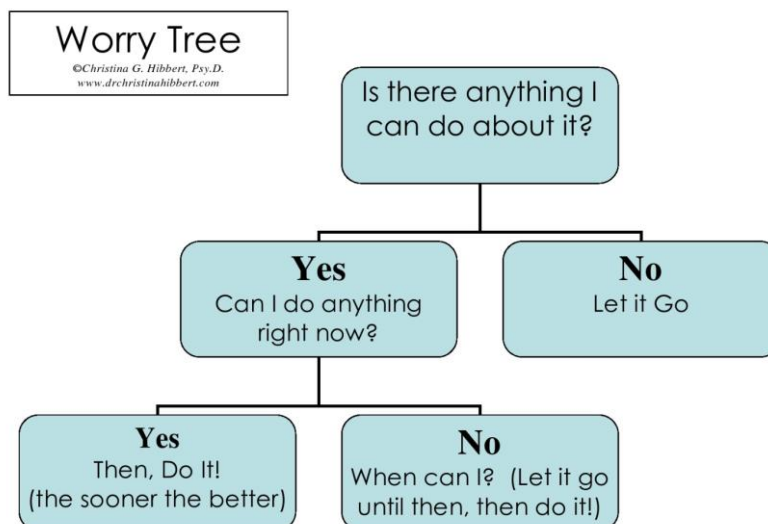
At other times when you feel that your head is full of worries, write them all down and pop them into a WORRY BOX or BOOK.

Then move on and do something you like doing such as reading, listening to music, having a bath, going for a walk or playing a game. If the worries pop into your head, tell yourself to 'wait until worry time' and keep your mind busy by doing something else.

After a while, you will begin to notice that the worries change with time. The little worries will disappear if you stop paying them attention.

After a while, worry time will change too. You will find that you and parent are spending time just chatting about your day and then you will have to re-name it 'talk time' instead. And the worry box/book will have less and less in it each day!

Here is a [Worry Tree](#) that you can use to help you let go of your worries:



Imagine that this Venus fly trap has grown out of your worries. The more you think about what is making you feel scared, angry, sad... the bigger it gets.

Write down the things that you worry about the most.



Look at the worries you have been feeding the worry plant.

Are they 'what if...' thoughts?

Are any of them 100% true or are they what you believe might happen?

Write down all the things you can do or think to change what you are feeding the plant to stop it growing any bigger



A large, empty rectangular box with an orange border, intended for writing down thoughts and actions to address the 'worry plant'.

Some of the worries that we have are about things that are definitely going to happen like a test or doing something new for the first time. But other worries can be about things that may never happen.

Think about your worries and see if you can put them into these two lists:

Worries that might
happen

Worries that will
probably never happen

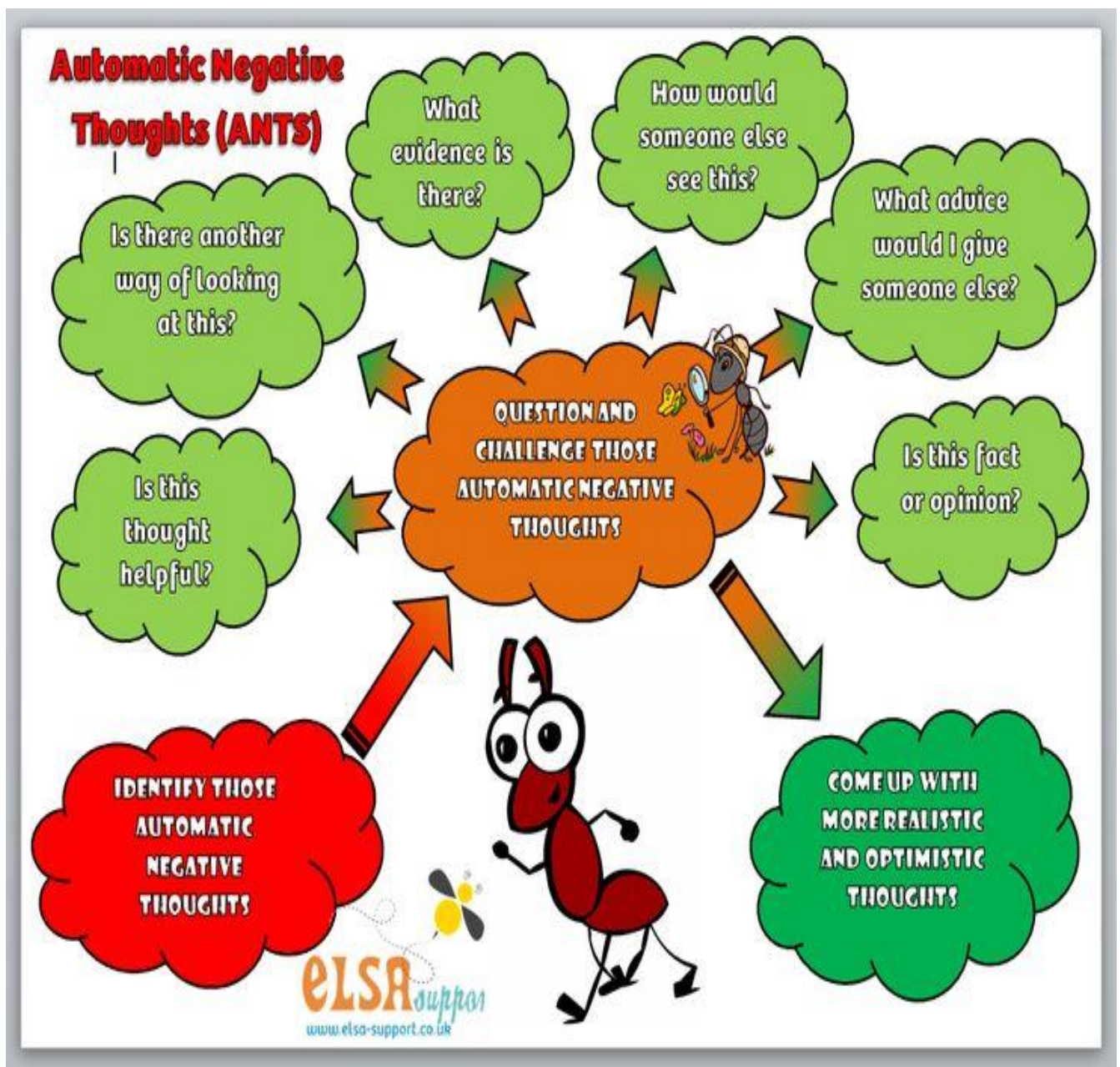
You can make a plan by
looking for solutions to
beat these worries

Remind yourself that
these worries may
never happen. Think
of things you can say
that can make them
go away

Catch your worry thoughts...

Challenge them...

And then Change them....



Making a Worry Jar



Fill the jar with your worries. The lid is on it to stop the worries being able to get out until you feel ready to share it in worry talk time when you can start looking for solutions.

Facing your worry monster

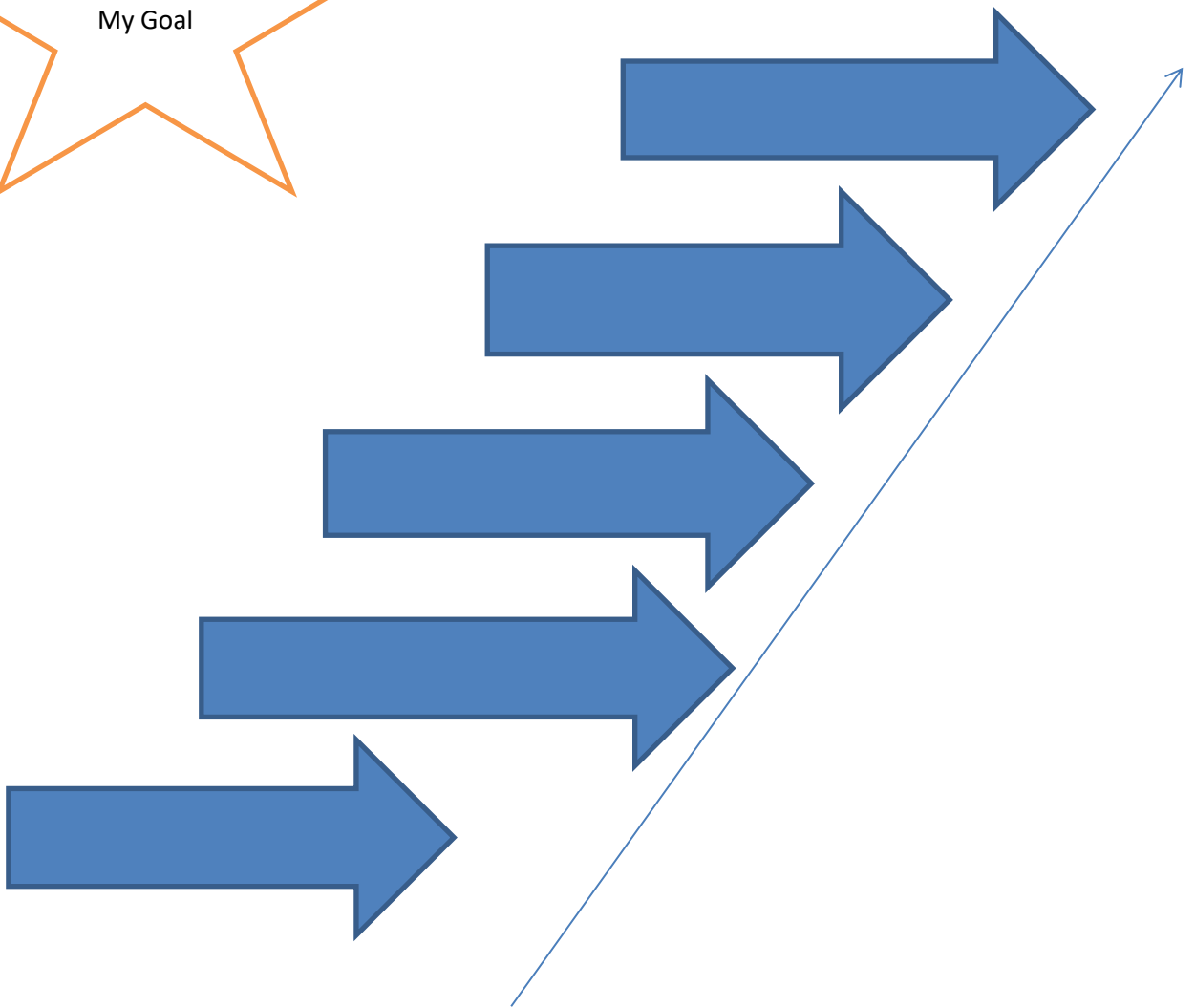
Here is an example of Jasmine's ladder to success.

How would you face your worries?

Jasmine's ladder to success!

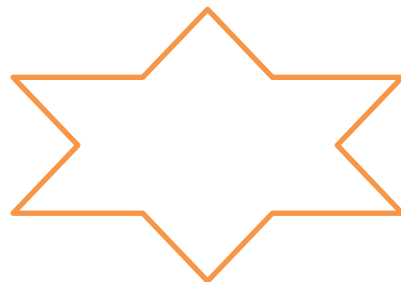
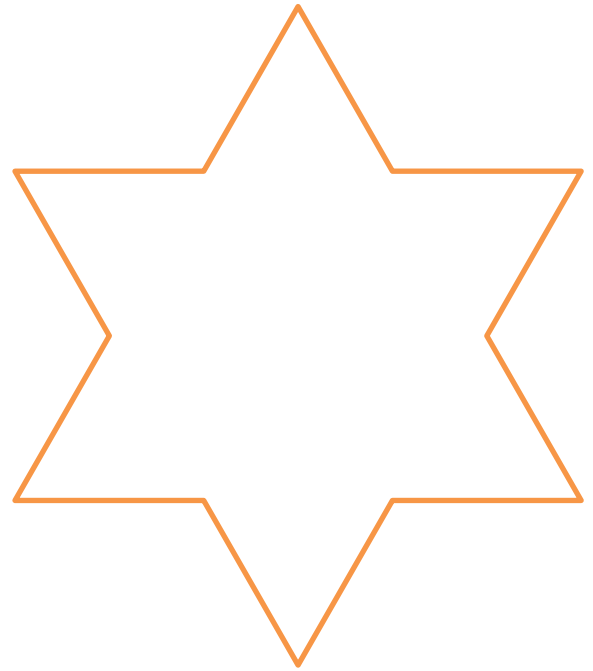
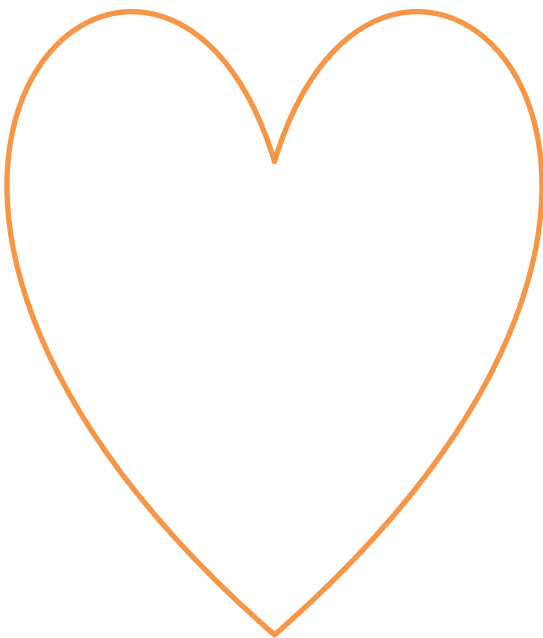
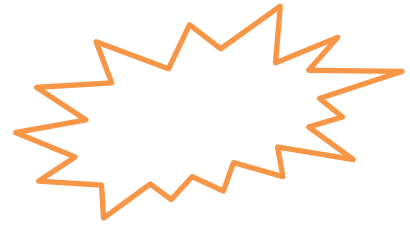
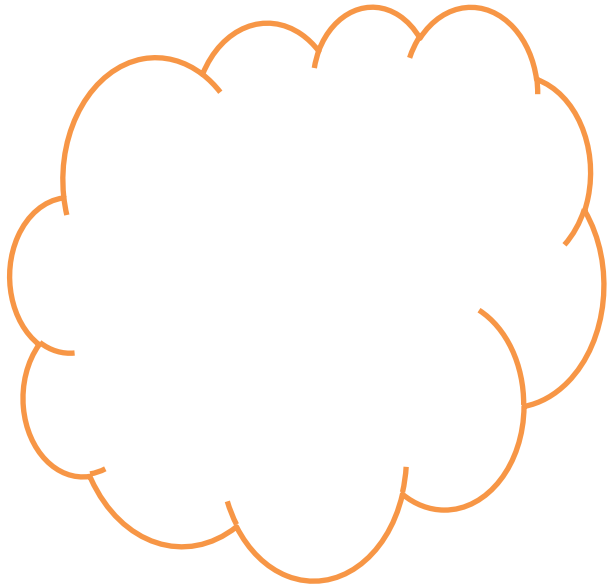


Your ladder to success



A large, empty rectangular box with an orange border, intended for writing or drawing.

Who can you ask for help if you get stuck with your worry?



Book References

- Helping Your anxious Child by Rapee, Spence, Cobham and Wignall
- What To do When You Worry Too Much – A Kids Guide To Overcoming Anxiety
By Dawn Huebner
- What To Do When You Grumble Too Much – a Kids Guide to Overcoming Negativity
By Dawn Huebner
- 1,2,3 Magic by Thomas Phelan book/DVD resource which can help remind everyone of useful age appropriate strategies when trying to encourage young people to make wise choices in their behaviour especially useful for parents of children aged 2 to 12; learning to manage troublesome behaviour, encourage good behaviour, and strengthen the parent-child relationship
- Overcoming Your Child's Fears and Worries a self-help guide to using CBT Techniques by Cathy Creswell and Lucy Willetts
- Overcoming Your Childs Shyness and Social Anxiety a self-help guide to CBT techniques by Cathy Creswell and Lucy Willetts
- Relax Kids Aladdin's Magic Carpet by Marneta Viegas
- The Whole Brain Child by Dr Daniel Siegel
- The Brain by David Eagleman
- Frazzled By Ruby Wax
- The Chimp Paradox by Steve Peters
- The Huge bag of worries by Virginia Ironside
- [The Kids' Guide to Staying Awesome and In Control: Simple Stuff to Help Children Regulate their Emotions and Senses](#) by Lauren Brukner

Useful Websites:

Useful parenting strategies and details of online parenting course:

<https://familylinks.org.uk/parents#free-downloads-for-parents>

National Autistic Society:

<http://www.nassurreybranch.org/>