

The Exchange

Supporting psychological wellbeing and emotional resilience in children, young people and families.

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ANXIETY



For Parents & Carers



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WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Fear is a normal response to danger. The feeling of Anxiety is similar but there is no real danger, the person thinks that there is danger but there isn't.

How we respond to anxiety can be affected by:

Temperament (some people are more relaxed by nature and some people are more tightly wired)

Experience (if it's the first time it is different if it has been done 100 times before)

The implications (it's not a big deal if it goes wrong or it is a big deal if it goes wrong)

Social cues, especially for children and young people, they are affected by the anxiety of others

SCALE OF ANXIETY

It is important to remember that we each have our own scale of what makes us feel anxious.

This could mean that what seems "normal" for one person could be extremely anxiety-inducing for someone else. Simple tasks can have a negative impact on some people whilst others take them for granted.

A moment of complete freedom from anxiety.

A situation of overwhelming anxiety



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NEGATIVE THINKING CYCLES

THOUGHTS

Everyone will stare at me and make fun of me.
I'll make a fool of myself so why bother?
Everyone will see that I am a total mess.

BEHAVIOURS

Avoiding situations - But If I do go...
Fidgeting, avoiding eye contact, planning escape, not talking, hiding, covering up.

FEELINGS

Anxiety, Fear,
Self-consciousness

Physical sensations –
shaking, sweating, breathing
changes, sore stomach
Fight – Flight - Freeze

REFRAMING OUR THOUGHTS

Our thoughts can be irrational and unhelpful. It can be helpful to not believe them straight away but question them instead.

Bring them back to reality.

What is the likelihood of the worst case scenario happening?
What is more likely to happen?
Is there a different way of looking at this?
What would somebody else say about this?

SUPPORT NETWORK

People around us can help when we feel anxious, although sometimes it might feel like we don't know who to turn to.

Encourage them to list the people they have around them in their support network.

