



30<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Hello everyone!

I hope you are all well and you and your family have settled in to a good routine? As we are now into a further period of lockdown (in what can only be described as a unique time for us all) I thought it would be good to keep in touch and offer some support and advice on anxiety

There may be times when anxiety washes over both you and your children. Anxiety can take many forms both physically and psychologically ranging between rapid heartbeats, headaches, aches and pains, fear, anger, worry and panic to name but a few.

### **Ideas to help with Anxiety**

If your child shows signs of anxiety, it is important to talk about it together, listen to their problem (no matter how small it may seem), give them your full attention and acknowledge their worry.

If your child has trouble verbally telling you, try asking them to draw or write down the worry. Sometimes making a “Worry Eater” can help and can be fun to make too. This can be made from a box. Cover or paint the box. On one side draw a face and cut the mouth out. On the other side of the box cut a small door, so worries can be removed. Your child can post their worry through the mouth. You will then be able to read it at a later time and give them reassurance. Sometimes physically writing/drawing the “worry” and posting it away will help to alleviate your child’s anxiety. Worry Monsters/Worry Eaters can also be purchased via the internet, at a range of prices if you prefer.



## **Breathing activities**

Mindfulness can be helpful to calm anxiety. It is good to practise this in the morning and bedtime if possible.

### **1. Controlled Breathing.**

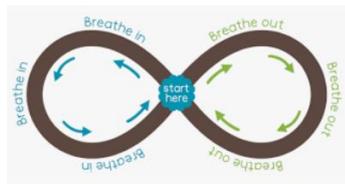
Sit or lie comfortably, preferably in a quiet, calm environment. Close your eyes. Focus on breathing, in and out, rising and falling. Breathe naturally, your breath flowing in and out. If your mind begins to wander, make a conscious effort to come back to your breathing pattern. If you sit/lie with your child whilst doing this they will be more focused and find it easier.

### **2. Controlled Breathing.**

Ask your child to draw a square on a piece paper. Ask them to breathe in counting to 5 following along the top of the square, then breathe out counting to 5 following down the side of the square. Then in counting to 5 along the bottom and out back up the other side.

**3.** Draw a figure of eight, inhale slowly around the top loop of the number and exhale slowly around the bottom loop.

**4.** Ask your child to hold up their hand. With the finger on their other hand, trace up their thumb breathing in, out travelling down the thumb, in tracing up the next finger and so on...

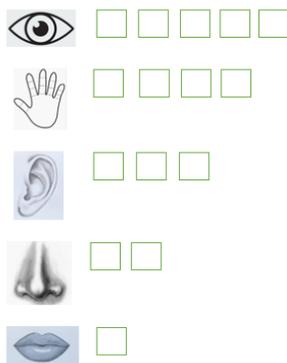


## **Mindfulness activities**

**1.** Either inside or outside, sit or lay comfortably in a quiet environment and ask yourself to think of:

5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.

5 4 3 2 1 | Grounding Exercise



**2.** Ask your child to draw a picture of somewhere they would like to be for example: the beach, park, space etc. Looking at the finished picture ask them to imagine they are flying through the sky, through a beautiful rainbow and arriving at the destination in the picture. What is it like to be there? How are they feeling?

Maybe if at the beach, Ask how it feels to dip their toes into the water, feel the sand in their toes? After this, talk them through flying back home again, through the rainbow and sky etc. to arrive back where they started. Display the picture so that if your child begins to feel anxious again, they can use it to help them go back to their happy place again.



3. Do some mindful Colouring – Twinkl have lots of choice and are currently free to print. [www.twinkl.co.uk](http://www.twinkl.co.uk)

Remember that talking and reassurance is a really powerful tool to help reduce anxiety. Remind Children that doctors and scientists are working hard to find a vaccine to stop the Coronavirus, but in the meanwhile how very important it is to practice a good hygiene regime and keep washing your hands for 20 seconds regularly and soap and water.

**Some helpful Mindfulness Websites:**

3 Minutes body scan meditation. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihwcw\\_ofuME](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihwcw_ofuME)

Mindfulness for kids. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk\\_qU7l-fcU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk_qU7l-fcU)

Calming Music. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFZKK7K52uQ>

Stop, Breath, Think. (App) or

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkB9zEEqnP9kMI5VChd99Q>

Breathe Kids App. <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/stop-breathe-think-kids/id1215758068>

Deep Breathing Exercises.

<https://copingskillsforkids.com/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids>

I hope all of these resources help. Please feel free to email me for any further support.

Take care of each other!

Mrs Mann

Family Link Worker for The Manor CE Primary School