

AUTISM AND ANXIETY

What is Anxiety?

Sasha Miles
School-Based Psychologist



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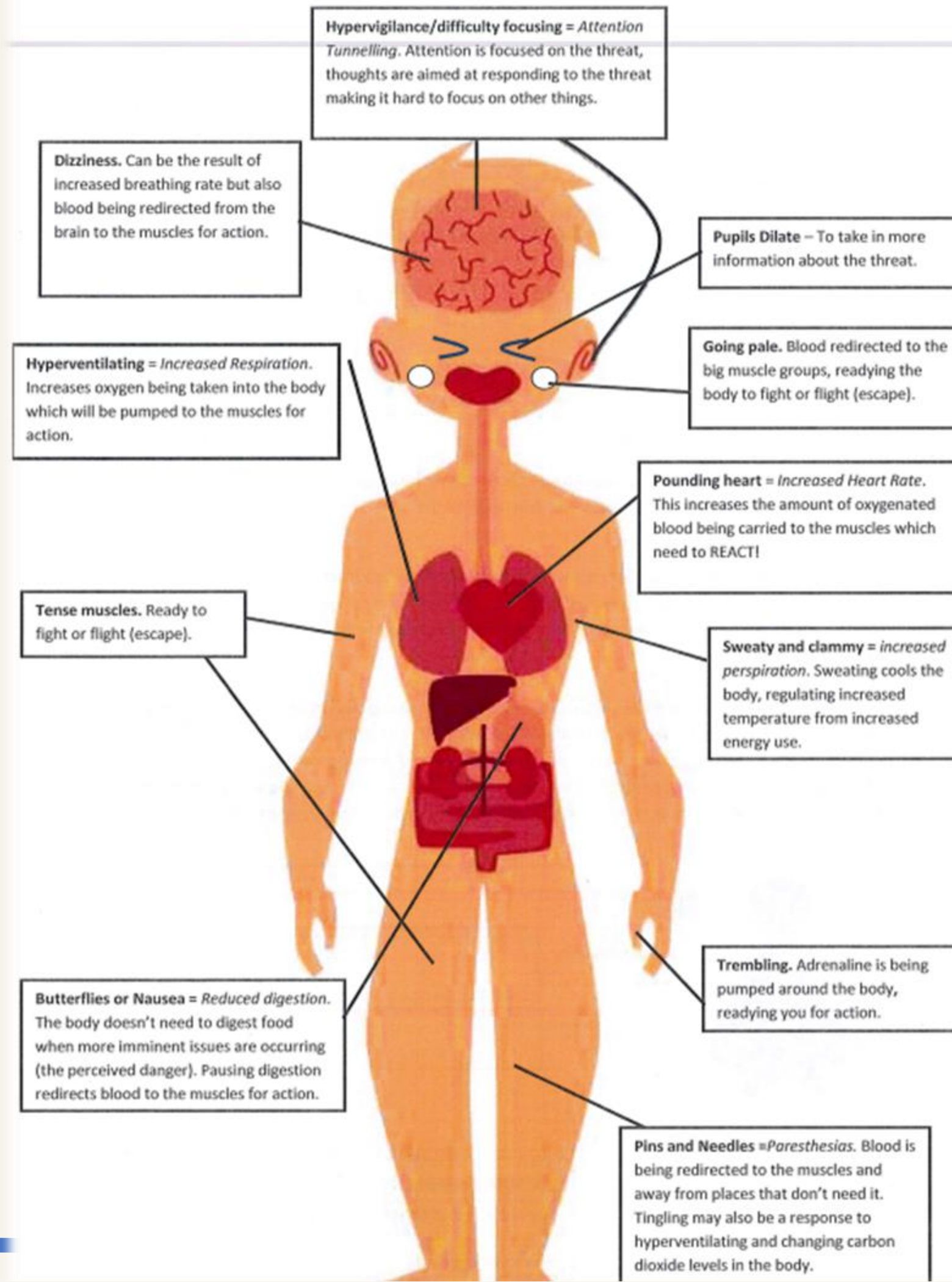
**What is
anxiety
anyway?**



The Happiness Trap: Evolution of the Human Mind

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kV6HkipQcfA>

But why does my body go into panic mode?!



Anxiety Disorders

- x An anxiety *disorder* develops when the physiological response is beginning to create difficulty and suffering in a person's life.
- x Anxiety is the most common mental health condition in Australia, affecting 1 in 7 children, 14% of the youth population, in a given year (Beyond Blue, 2022).
- x Anxiety is also the mental health disorder with the highest comorbidity rates with other mental health conditions. This means that it often develops alongside other conditions, in particular depression and panic disorder (Noyes, 2001).

There is more than one type of anxiety....

Each anxiety disorder is based on 1) the feared object and 2) the avoidance mechanism.

Anxiety Disorder	Feared Object	Avoidance pattern
Selective Mutism	Speaking	Speaking in social situations
Separation Anxiety	Parent harm and/or harm to self without parent present	Situations away from parent
Specific Phobia	Heights, needles etc.	Situations with feared object
Social Anxiety	Judgement, embarrassment, looking silly.	Situations where judgement may arise (handing in work, attending class, leaving the home etc).
Panic Disorder	Panic attack (body symptoms)	Anxiety
Agoraphobia	Situations in which a panic attack will occur and you can't escape or get help	Leaving safe spaces
Generalized Anxiety	Multiple anxieties	Multiple avoidance patterns
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	Multiple	Compulsions

2

**What can
we do about
anxiety?**

The crux of anxiety treatments...

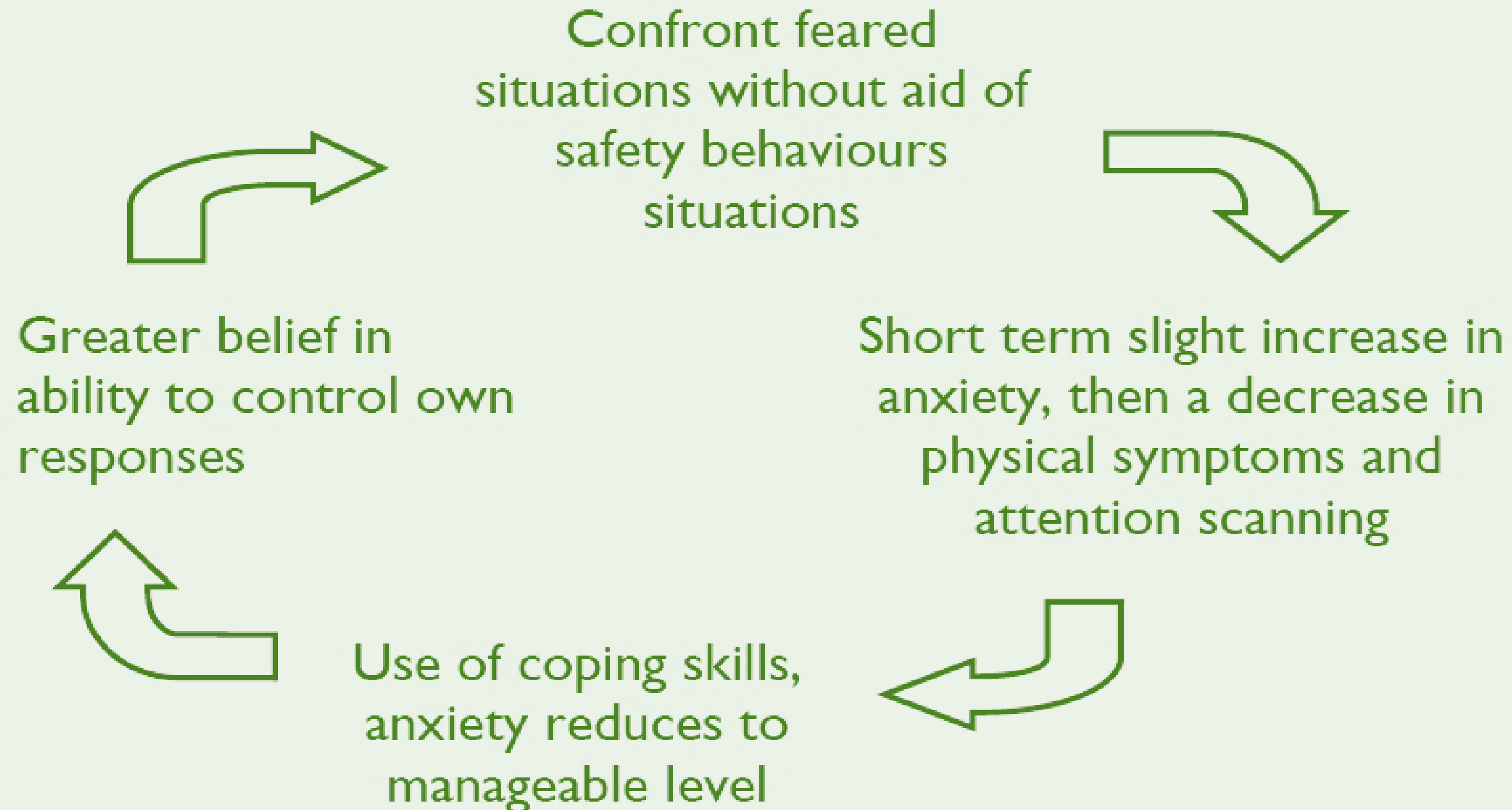
- X Be BRAVE!! If you can notice what scares you and face up to it then you're working on anxiety! Even if its small steps like asking a shopkeeper a question or sending your teacher an email, these activities build up your bravery to face anxiety head on!
- X Sit with painful emotions. Most mental health conditions become a problem from behaviours that come with avoiding uncomfortable feelings. Anything that helps you sit with and not avoid emotions (i.e., taking a walk, a bath, watching tv) is useful.
- X Challenge your thoughts. Thoughts are not facts!!! Is there an alternative way of thinking about the situation? What would you say to a friend? Are there facts that disprove your thoughts that you haven't considered?
- X Remember, body symptoms can't last forever! Panic symptoms aren't fun, but they serve a purpose and don't last forever. Just reminding yourself of this can help slow them down. Relaxation strategies do work too (i.e., deep breathing, grounding).

The Vicious Cycle of Anxiety



When the anxiety cycle is broken, it will look like this:

Reversing the Vicious Cycle of Anxiety



But why are you calling them bravery clues?

Isn't this just anxiety???

You remind me of my favourite quote...

*“Anxiety is your body’s way of telling you, **this is important to me!**”* — Something Sasha read sometime

So our anxiety symptoms are clues we are doing something brave!

EXPOSURE THERAPY

Exposure Hierarchy for a 7-year-old with separation anxiety

This child has separation anxiety. They're afraid of leaving their mother, even for a short time. At the start of the hierarchy, this child can't sleep alone and sleeps in their parents' bed.



Exposure Hierarchy

Create a list of anxiety-producing situations, beginning with the *most* distressing, and ending with the *least* distressing. Rank how distressing each item is on a scale of 1 to 10.

	Anxiety, Obsession, or Compulsion Trigger	Distress Level (1 – 10)
1	Stay inside and play while Mum puts the washing on the line.	1
2	Stay at home while mum visits the neighbour for 10 mins	3
3	Sleep on a mattress next to mums bed	3
4	They stay at home with Dad while Mum goes shopping for half an hour.	4
5	Sleep on the mattress on the floor in the doorway of parents room	5
6	Stay at home with Dad while Mum goes out for lunch	6
7	Stay at home with Dad while Mum goes out for evening meal	7
8	Stay at home with another trusted adult while Mum and Dad go out for 30 mins.	8
9	Stay at home with another trusted adult while Mum and Dad go out for the evening	9
10	Sleep in own bedroom	10



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**My BEST
Anxiety
reduction
activities!**

Grounding



5 Things You Can See 👁️

4 Things You Can Feel ✋

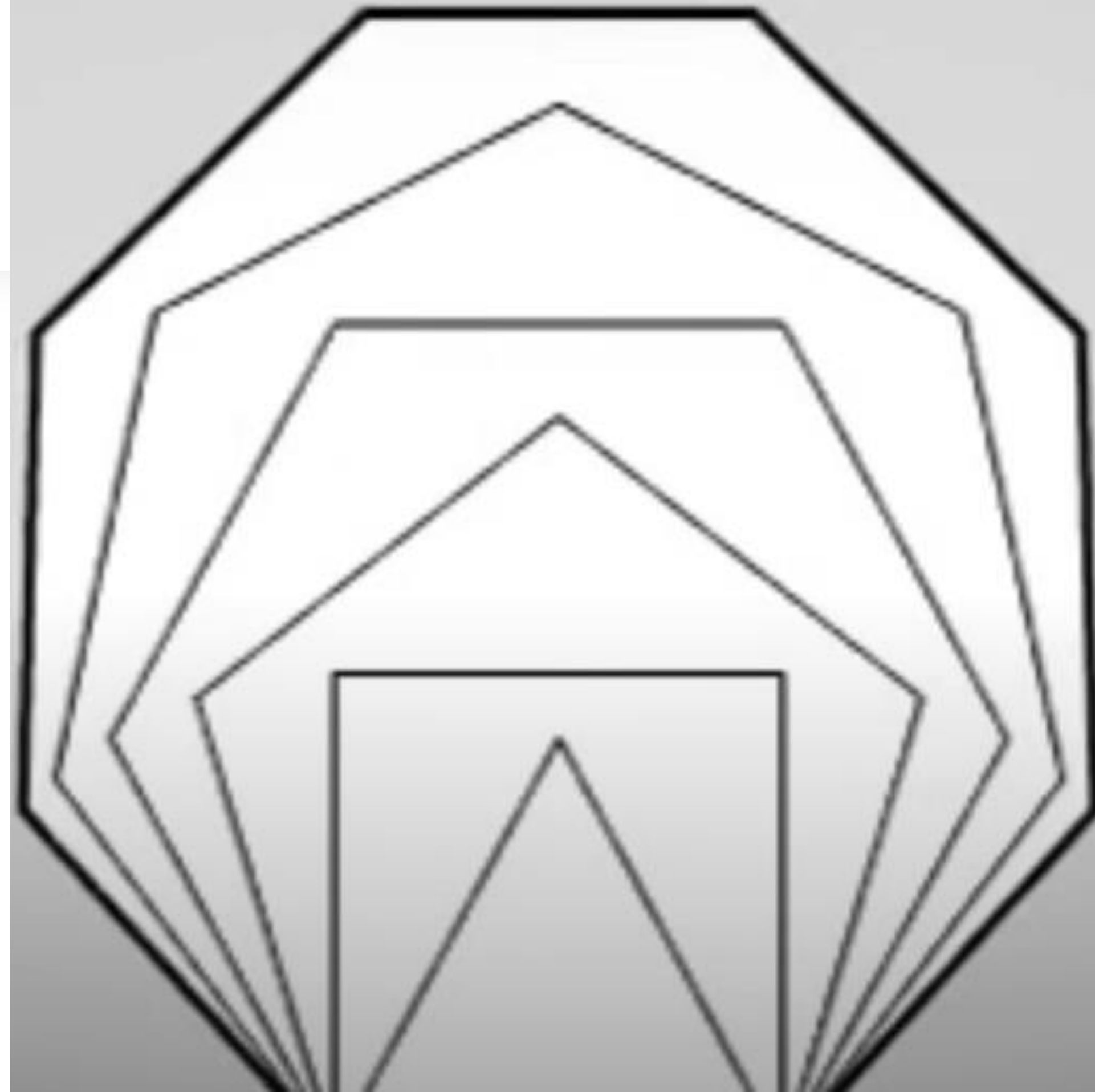
3 Things You Can Hear 👂

2 Things You Can Smell 👃

1 Thing You Can Taste 🗑️

**RELAX AND BREATHE: Do Nothing for 10
Minutes**

**[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXIt
OY0sLRY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXItOY0sLRY)**



Be Your own Lawyer

- What is the evidence that your thought might not be true?
- Is there a more balanced way of thinking about this anxious thought. A way that incorporates both sides of the argument?



Helpful coping statements

“I know you can cope no matter what happens”

“Anxiety is your body’s way of telling you this is important! I’m proud of you for being brave!”

“I’ll be here for you no matter what happens today.”

“This feeling is uncomfortable, but it won’t last forever.”

“Anxiety is not the boss of you!”

“You’ve been brave before [insert example], I know you can be brave again!”

“Just do your best”

things to say
WHEN OUR KIDS FEEL ANXIOUS & SCARED
(and we are uncertain, too)

We don't know what
will happen or when
this will end.
But this won't
last forever.

What questions do you have?
What are you wondering about?

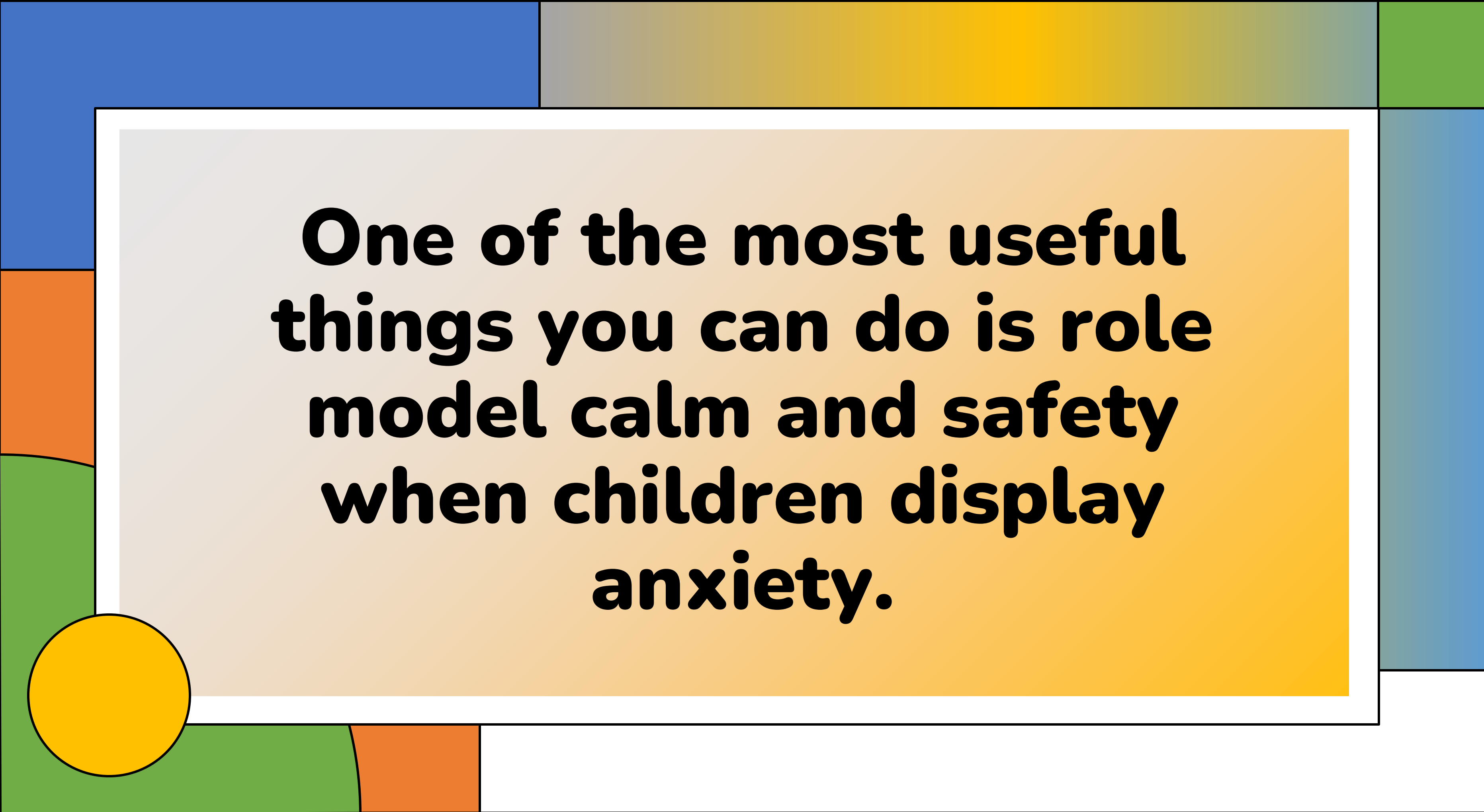
This is really
hard right now.
But I also know
that we can deal
with this and get
through this
together.

I am here and I've
got your back,
sweetheart.

It's totally normal to
feel worried, sad,
disappointed, or even
angry in situations
like this. Let's see
how we can take
good, kind care of
your feelings.

Even though we don't have all
the answers right now,
when we know more,
I will let you know, too.

We will take it one step at a time and focus on what we do
have control over, like doing things that help us to stay
safe, taking care of ourselves, and being gentle, forgiving,
and kind with each other.



**One of the most useful
things you can do is role
model calm and safety
when children display
anxiety.**

Anxiety and Autism

Melinda Gamtcheff
Autism Inclusion Teacher



WHAT CAUSES ANXIETY IN AUTISM?

Research indicates that children with autism are more likely to experience anxiety disorders than their neurotypical peers.

Reasons for increased vulnerability:

Sensory Sensitivities: Overwhelming sensory experiences (e.g., loud noises and bright lights) can trigger anxiety.

Difficulty with Change: Children with autism often prefer routine and predictability; unexpected changes can cause significant anxiety.

Social Challenges: Difficulties understanding social cues and interacting with peers can lead to social anxiety.

Communication Barriers: Challenges expressing needs and feelings can result in frustration and anxiety.



WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?



PROVIDE A SAFE AND CALM ENVIRONMENT

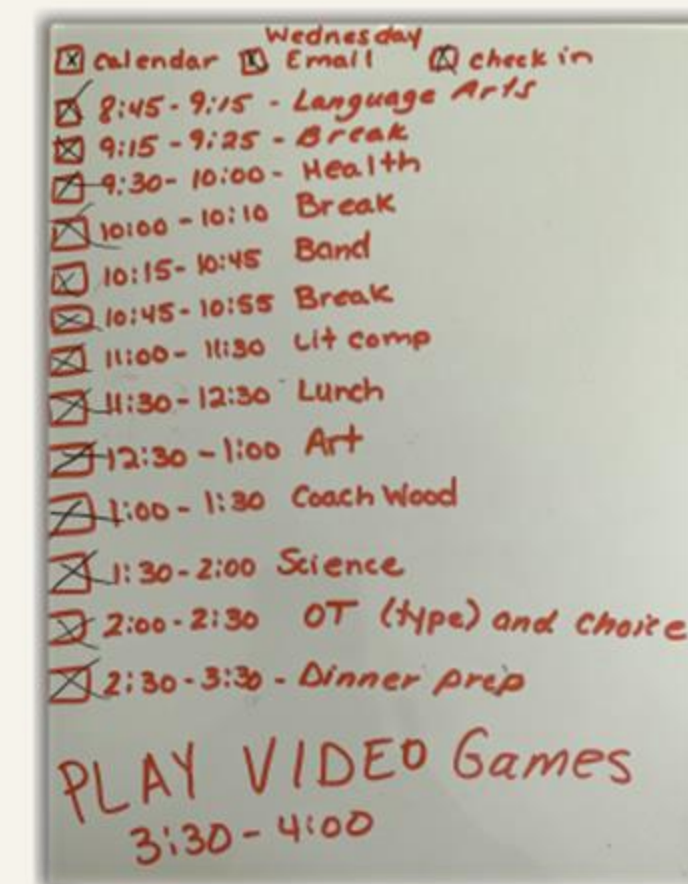
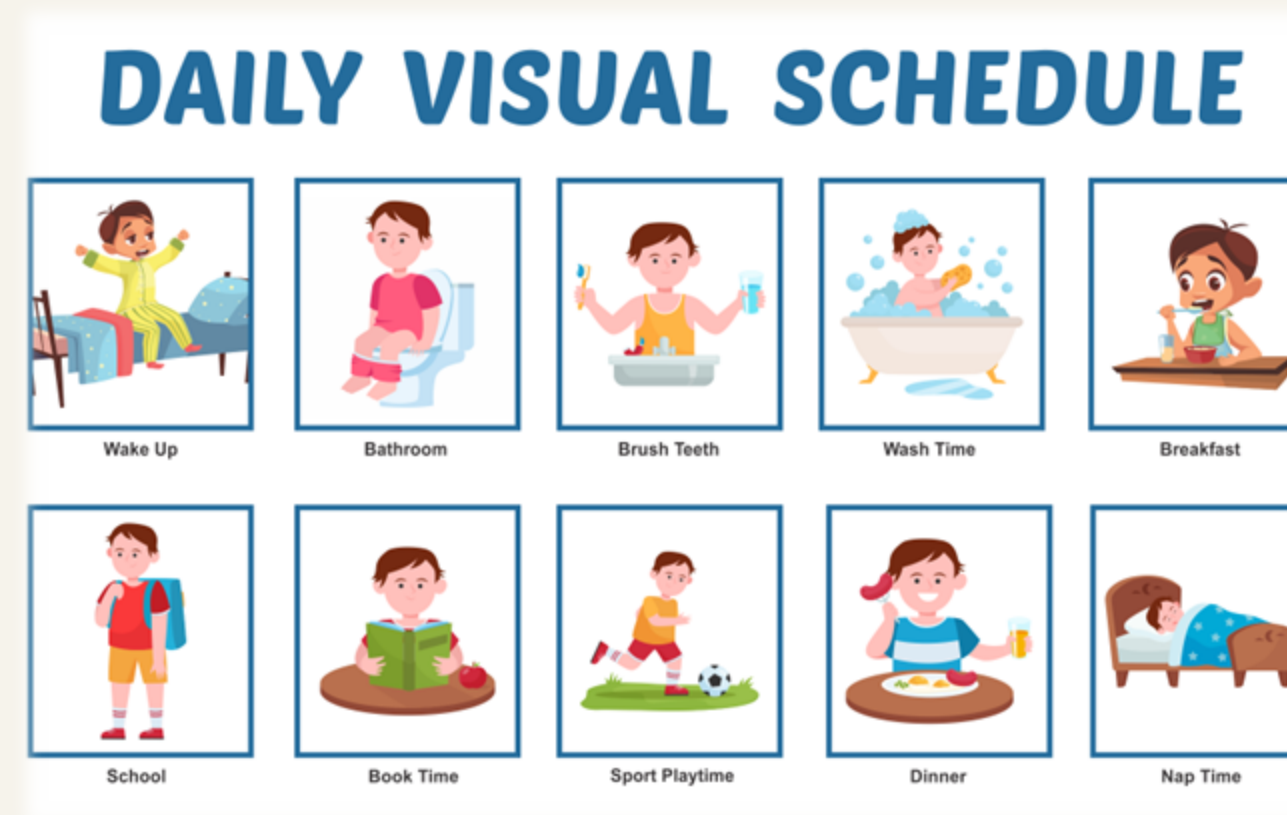
- **Sensory-Friendly Space:** Create a calming space at home where your child can retreat when feeling overwhelmed.
- **Limit Sensory Overload:** Reduce exposure to loud noises, bright lights, and other sensory triggers.
- **Calming Activities:** Encourage activities that promote relaxation, such as reading, drawing, or listening to soothing music.



CREATE A PREDICTABLE ROUTINE

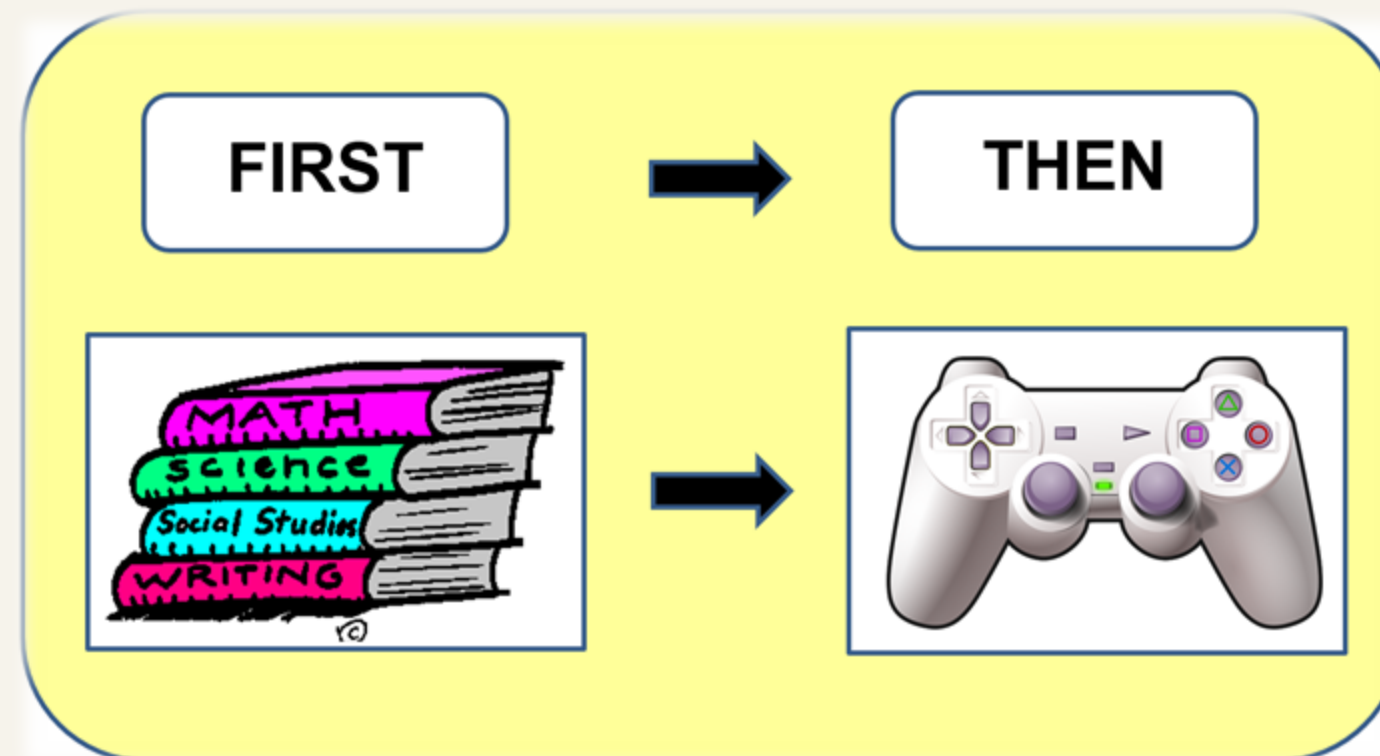
- **Consistency**: Maintain a regular daily schedule to provide a sense of stability and predictability.
- **Visual Schedules**: Use visual schedules to outline daily activities and prepare for transitions.
- **Preparation**: Inform your child of any changes in advance to reduce anxiety about the unknown.

✓ TYCE'S Daily SCHEDULE		
8:00	Morning Routine	✓
8:30	Free Play	✓
9:00	Learning Activities	✓
10:30	Snack & Germ Busters	✓
11:00	Crafts or Journal	●
11:30	Movement Activities	●
12:00	Lunch	●
12:30	Outdoor Activities	●
1:30	Read	●
2:00	Learning Activities	●
3:00	Optional Choice	●
4:00	Games and Puzzle	●
4:30	Free Play	●



USE CLEAR AND CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION

- **Simple Language**: Use clear, simple language to explain situations and expectations.
- **Visual Aids**: Utilise visual aids, such as social stories or picture cards, to help your child understand and anticipate events.
- **Encouragement**: Encourage your child to express their feelings and reassure them that it's okay to feel anxious.



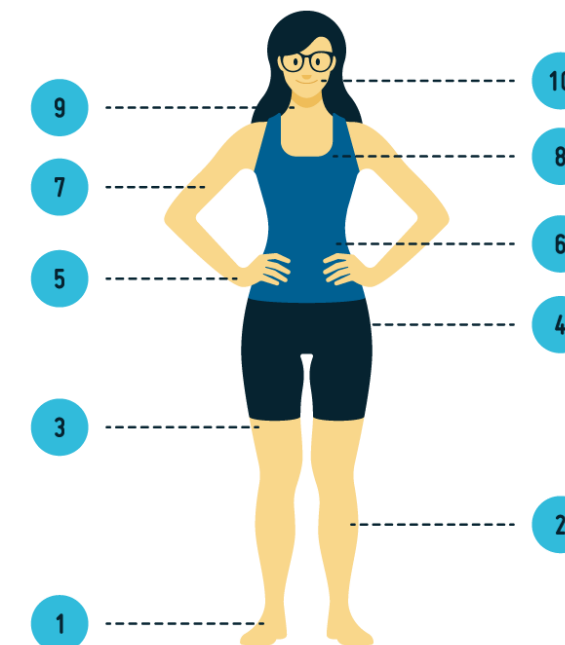
TEACH COPING SKILLS

- **Deep Breathing**: Practice deep breathing exercises together to help manage stress.
- **Mindfulness**: Introduce mindfulness techniques, such as meditation or guided imagery, to help your child stay grounded.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation**: Teach your child to tense and then relax different muscle groups to reduce physical tension.



RELAX YOUR MUSCLES TO RELIEVE STRESS

Ease tension one muscle group at a time.



GRADUAL EXPOSURE TO ANXIETY PROVOKING SITUATIONS

- **Step-by-Step Approach**: Gradually introduce your child to situations that cause anxiety in a controlled and supportive manner.
- **Positive Reinforcement**: Praise and reward your child for facing their fears, even in small steps.
- **Model Calm Behaviour**: Demonstrate calm and confident behaviour in anxiety-provoking situations to set an example.



PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

- **Therapists and Counsellors**: Seek help from professionals specialising in autism and anxiety, such as cognitive-behavioural therapists.
- **Occupational Therapy**: Consider occupational therapy to address sensory processing issues.
- **Medication**: Discuss with a healthcare provider if medication might be appropriate for managing severe anxiety.



What is Pathological Demand Avoidance?

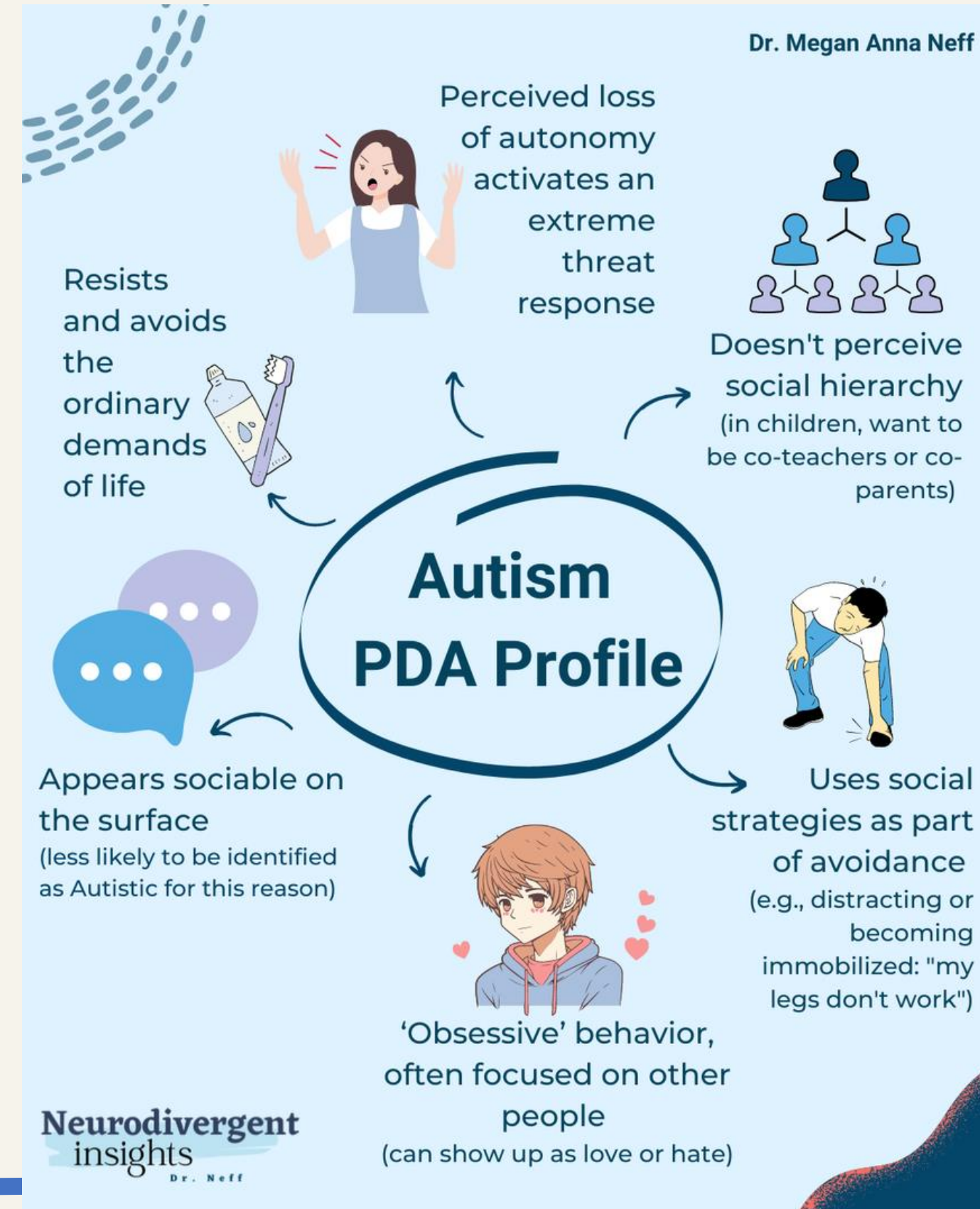
Coined in the 1980s by British psychologist Elizabeth Ann Newsom, PDA isn't a formal diagnosis in the DSM-5, but a subtype of autism that is gaining more recognition. All PDA individuals are autistic and can share common traits with members of the autistic population, including differences in communication, social interaction, sensory needs, and special interests or stimming; however, PDA also presents with more subtle social differences.



PDA PROFILE

The key differences between young people with autism and with autism and a PDA profile are that they:

- resist and avoid the ordinary demands of life.
- use social strategies as part of the avoidance, like distraction, giving excuses, delaying, withdrawing into fantasy or drowning out the request with noise.
- appear sociable but demonstrate some gaps in social understanding.
- experience excessive mood swings and impulsivity.
- display fascinations, which can be either positive or negative, and can focus intently on other people.



ESCALATION

Individuals with PDA may refuse, withdraw, shut down or escape to avoid things. More often, though, other 'social' approaches are tried first.

Research from Newcastle University found that there is usually a 'hierarchy' of avoidance approaches (although escalation can be very rapid, especially if pushed, and not all the 'stages' in this diagram may be seen (i.e. someone may go straight from the green zone to the red zone)).





Pick battles

- Minimise rules
- Enable some choice & control
- Explain reasons
- Accept that some things can't be done

Adaptation

- Try humour, distraction, novelty & roleplay
- Be flexible
- Have a Plan B
- Allow plenty of time
- Try to balance the amount of "give and take"

Disguise & manage demands

- Phrase any requests indirectly
- Constantly monitor tolerance for demands & match demands accordingly
- Doing things together helps

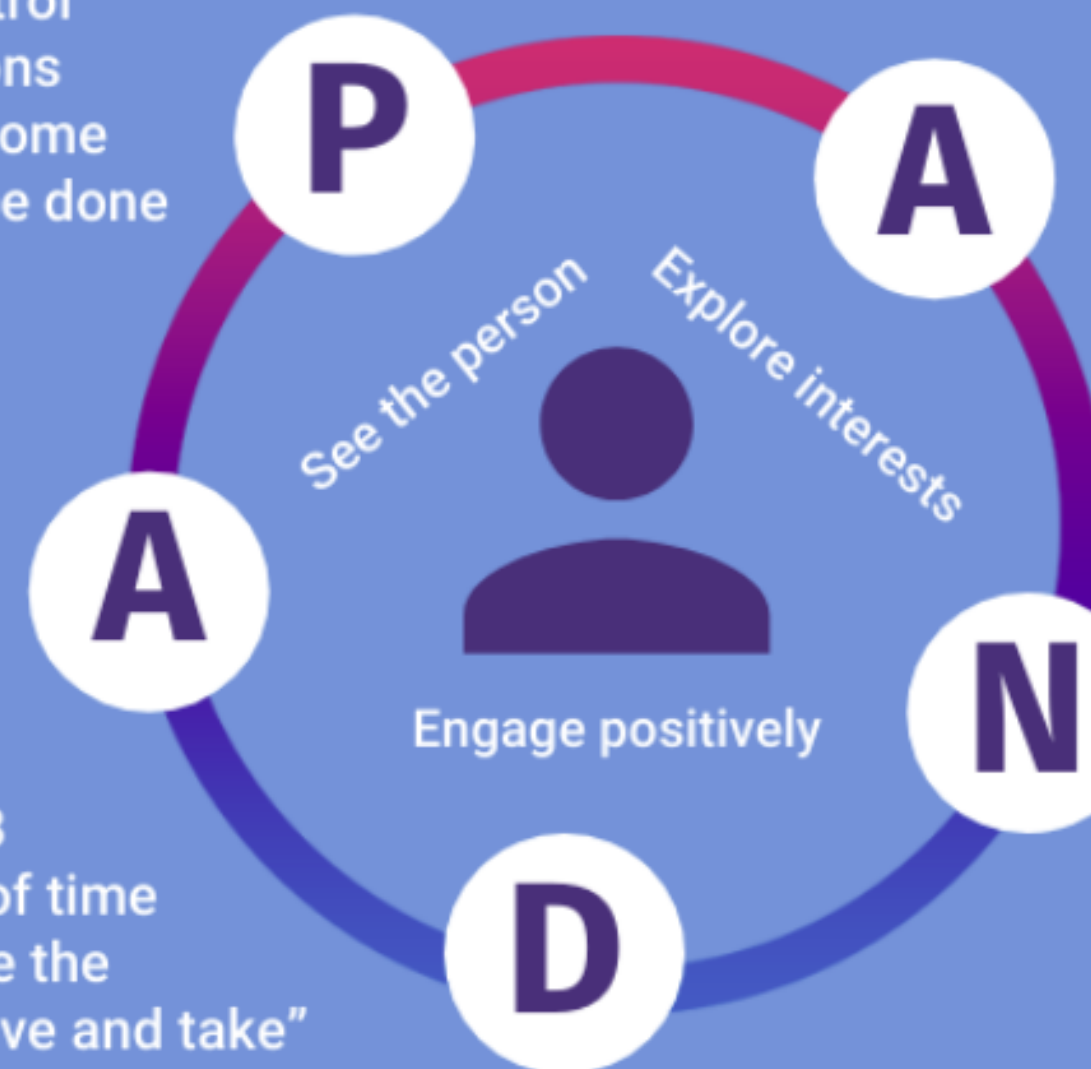
Pick battles
Anxiety management
Negotiation & collaboration
Disguise & manage demands
Adaptation

Anxiety management

- Use low arousal approach
- Reduce uncertainty
- Recognise underlying anxiety & social/sensory challenges
- Think ahead
- Treat distressed behaviours as panic attacks: support throughout & move on

Negotiation & collaboration

- Keep calm
- Proactively collaborate & negotiate to solve challenges
- Fairness & trust are central



CREATE A LOW DEMAND ENVIRONMENT

Flexible Routines: Allow for flexibility within routines to accommodate the child's need for control.

Reduce Pressure: Minimise unnecessary demands and avoid putting pressure on the child to comply immediately.

Safe Space: Provide a safe space where the child can retreat if they feel overwhelmed.



AVOID POWER STRUGGLES

Non-Confrontational Approach: Use a calm and non-confrontational approach when addressing demands.

Choice and Control: Offer choices and give the child some control over their activities to reduce feeling overwhelmed.

Avoid Direct Demands: Phrase requests indirectly to make them less threatening (e.g., “I wonder if...” instead of “You need to...”).



USE DECLARATIVE LANGUAGE

Definition: Shares observations; no immediate response is required, which promotes curiosity.

Examples:

"I see your room could use some tidying up."

"I notice it's getting close to dinner time, and your homework is still on the table."

"I hear a lot of noise coming from the living room."

Benefits of Declarative Language

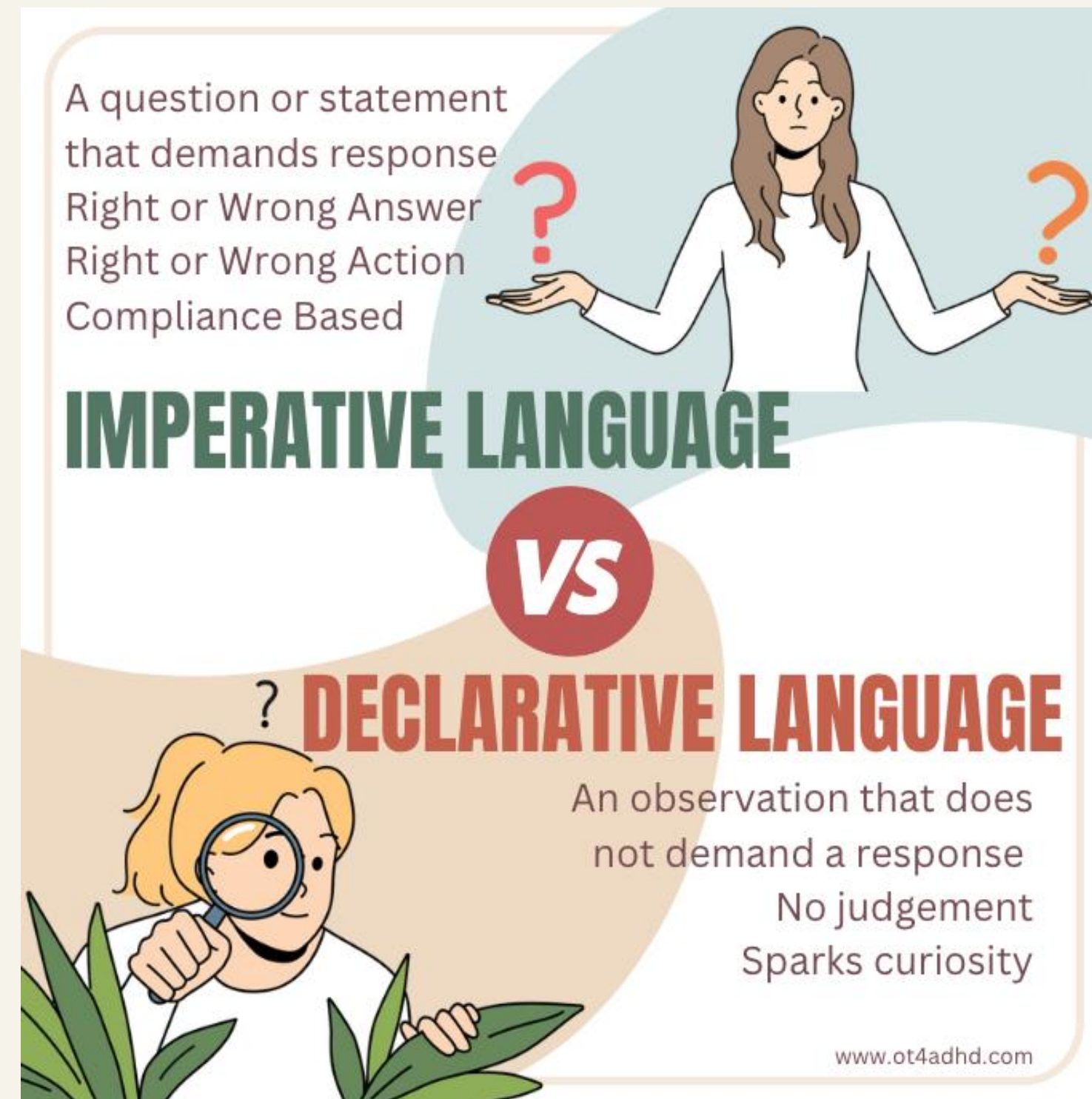
- Reduces Pressure: Lessens anxiety from demands.
- Promotes Autonomy: Encourages independent thinking.
- Builds Trust: Fosters positive relationships.

Practical Tips

Observation First: Start with observations.

Open-Ended Statements: Encourage thinking without immediate action.

Be Patient: Allow time for the child to respond.



Carer Support and Self Care

Simone Williams
School-Based Social Worker



Who are Carers?

Carers are individuals who offer unpaid assistance and support to family members and friends dealing with disabilities, mental illnesses, chronic conditions, terminal illnesses, substance abuse issues, or age-related frailty. They play a crucial role in Australia's healthcare system, forming the backbone of our aged care, disability care, palliative care, and community care services.



What does a Carer do?

Caring can involve assisting with any daily living activities of the person being cared for.

This may include physical and personal care tasks such as dressing, lifting, bathing, toileting, feeding, or providing transport.

Carers often manage medications and offer emotional and social support.

Additionally, caring can include helping to organise and attend appointments, managing finances, and handling emergencies.

Carer Statistics

Australia has over 2.65 million Carers, which equals 11% of the Australian population.



7 out of 10 primary carers are women.



More than half of primary carers provide care for at least 20 hours per week.



Accessing Carer Support

Carers SA is a state-wide organisation, with skilled and professional staff working across country and metropolitan South Australia. Carers SA also provides a number of services to young people (aged 5-25) in a caring role.

Carers SA is the lead Carer Gateway provider in South Australia and also provides a range of supports for Carers including Carer Breaks and one on one support, while continuing to play a strong advocacy role on behalf of Carers to ensure the Carer voice is heard and represented.

Carers SA offer the following services:

- Coaching
- Peer Groups
- Emergency Respite
- Carer Breaks
- Counselling
- Tailored Support Packages
- Carer Support Planning
- Community Connections Programs

Carers SA
Here For You



Introducing Carers SA

If you provide assistance to a family member or friend who is frail due to age, has a disability, a drug or alcohol related problem, dementia, experiencing mental illness or a long term medical condition,

Carers SA is here to support you

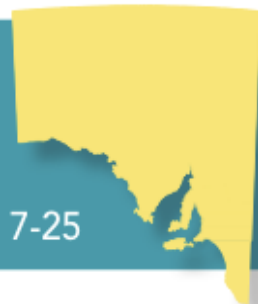


**1 in 9
Australians
are Carers**

- 11% of the Australian population are Carers
- Over 235,000 Carers are under the age of 25
- Nationally in 2020, unpaid Carers provided 2.2 billion hours of care, saving the Australian government \$77.9 billion annually

**In South Australia there are
245,000 unpaid Carers**

This includes up to 30,000 young Carers aged between 7-25



Who are Carers SA?

Carers SA has over 30 years of experience providing support, services and information to unpaid Carers.

In April 2020 Carers SA became the lead agency for supporting Carers in South Australia and is the Carer Gateway provider in South Australia.

The Carer Gateway is a large part of what we do at Carers SA, and in addition to this service we also advocate for Carers and provide other local services available to Carers in SA.

Carers SA is a statewide organisation and employs staff who are based across metropolitan Adelaide and rural and remote South Australia.

Carers SA has partnered with Skylight Mental Health, Life Without Barriers and NPY Women's Council, to provide essential Carer support and services.



Connecting carers ●●●● to support services

What is the Carer Gateway?

A long consultation process with Carers and the sector resulted in the new Australian Government **Carer Gateway**, launched April 2020.

Carers SA is the Carer Gateway provider in South Australia, and provides these Carer Gateway Services:



Connect with other Carers

Meet with people in similar caring situations and share your stories, knowledge and experience.

- **In-person** – meet local Carers, share advice and learn from each other in a safe space.
- **Workshops** – Workshops are available on different topics aimed at connecting, supporting and empowering Carers.



Financial support

Get financial support to assist you in your Caring role.

Financial support packages:

- one-off practical support in the form of equipment or an item to assist you in your caring role.
- a range of ongoing practical supports, such as planned respite or transport, provided over a twelve-month period.



Coaching

Coaching can be up to 6 x 1 hr sessions and discussions can be around anything the Carer wants to focus on including:

- Health and wellbeing.
- Understanding inclusion and advocacy.
- Exploring the emotions of caring.
- Exploring how the caring role can change over time.
- Navigating the day to day challenges of the caring role.
- Exploring how to build and maintain mutually supportive relationships.
- Work, study and volunteering.
- Exploring the financial implications of the caring role.



Counselling

If you're feeling stressed, anxious, sad or frustrated, a professional counsellor can talk with you about your worries and offer help.

- **In-person** – speak one-on-one with a professional counsellor in your local area.
- **Online counselling** – speak with a counsellor online in the comfort of your own home.



Emergency Respite

Get assistance in looking after the person you care for if an unplanned event stops you from being able to provide care. For example if you are ill or injured.

To find out how
Carers SA can help you
call **1800 422 737**



Connecting carers ●●●● to support services

Accessing Carer Support

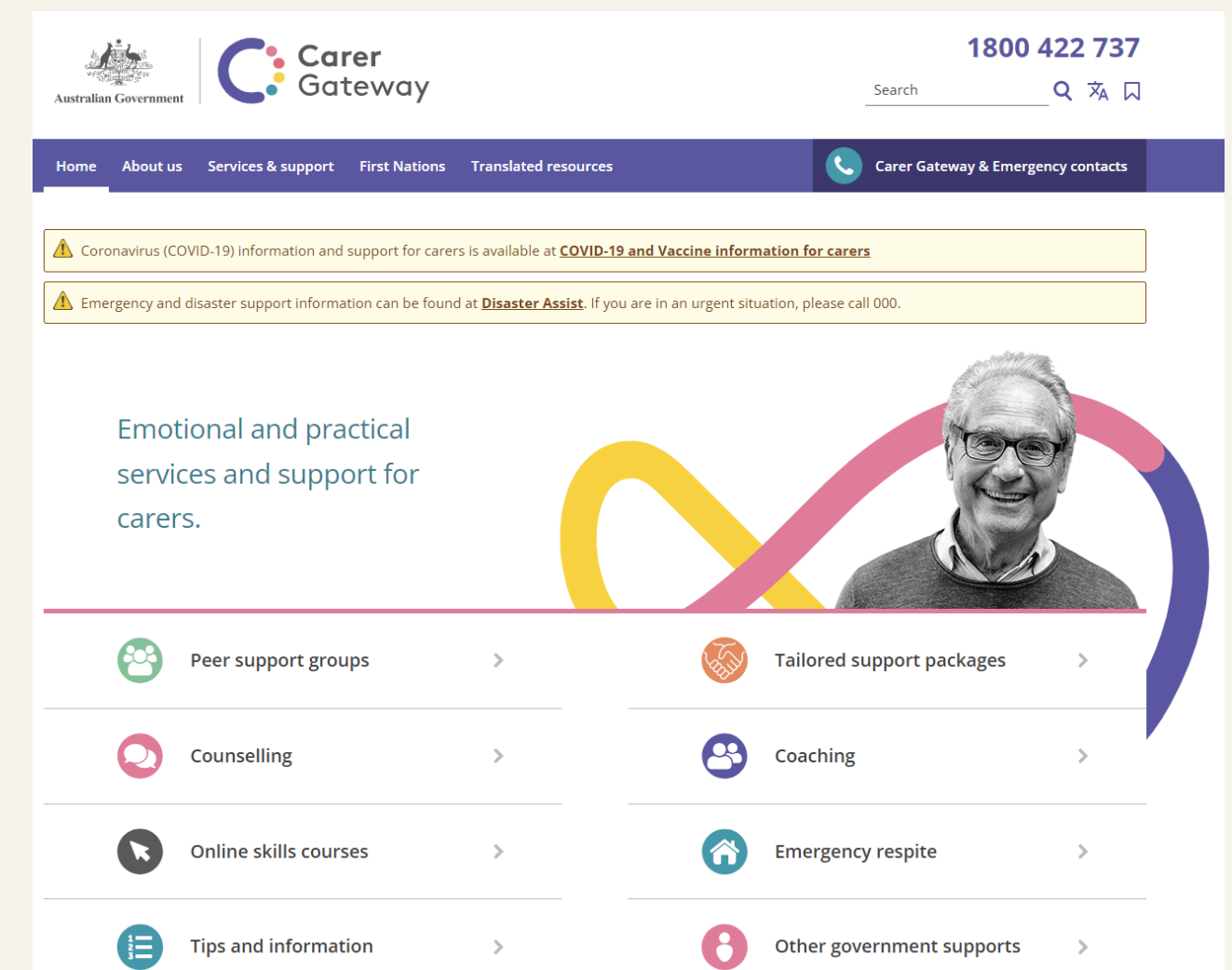
Carer Gateway is an Australian Government program providing free services and support for carers.

If you care for a family member or friend with disability, a medical condition, mental illness, or who is frail due to age, then Carer Gateway can help you.

The Australian Government works with a range of health and carer organisations across Australia, known as Carer Gateway service Providers, to deliver services to carers no matter where they live in Australia.

Carer Gateway provides services to support carers, including:

- In-person and online peer support groups.
- Tailored support packages..
- In-Person and phone counselling.
- In-person and online self guided coaching.
- Online skills courses.
- Access to emergency respite.



Support Groups

There are a variety of support groups available in South Australia.

Autism SA maintains a register of Support Groups.

These groups are supportive, informative, and fun, giving you the opportunity for networking, emotional support and a safe place you can talk or listen. They can promote hope, empowerment, and strive to break down the barriers.

METRO EASTERN ADELAIDE

Parents Timeout Campbelltown



For parents of younger children with a disability or mental illness who live in the eastern suburbs. Morning tea is provided and a range of fun activities, information sharing and peer support. A crèche can be organised on site if required; please contact the coordinator. The support group includes information sessions, guest speakers and general support.



ADELAIDE HILLS

MYTIME Mt Barker



MyTime is for parents and carers of children with a disability, developmental delay or chronic medical condition. It's a world away from appointments and therapy. It's support for you. And while you attend your group led by a trained facilitator and a play helper engages your non-school aged child in play.



METRO SOUTHERN ADELAIDE

Parents Evening Group



A support group for parents of children with a disability. A chance for peer support and a break from your caring role. Currently meeting at the Avoca Hotel for a \$12 schnitzel menu and fun trivia game. Carer Support will also buy you a drink.



METRO NORTHERN ADELAIDE

A.S.D Family Support Group

Provides support to carers who care for a family member on the autism spectrum. Carers come along, share their stories, enjoy good company, as well as guest speakers. Respite can be provided for the person you care for. Contact Chris prior to group session if you need support with respite.



METRO WESTERN ADELAIDE

MYTIME Taperoo



MyTime is for parents and carers of children with a disability, developmental delay or chronic medical condition. It's a world away from appointments and therapy. It's support for you. And while you attend your group led by a trained facilitator and a play helper engages your non-school aged child in play.



Practical Support for Autism

Centrelink Carer's Payments

Centrelink payments are available for carers who provide additional daily care and attention to someone with a disability.

You may be eligible for payments if the person you care for requires ongoing daily care for at least 12 months.

To be eligible for this payment, both you and the person you are caring for must meet certain criteria.

Accessing Centrelink support begins with a visit to your GP.

It's important to find a GP who understands Autism and is knowledgeable about the various Medicare rebates available.

NDIS funding

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides funding to eligible people with disability to gain more time with family and friends, greater independence, access to new skills, jobs, or volunteering in their community, and an improved quality of life.

The NDIS understands that the support needs, goals, and circumstances of individuals with Autism are unique. While many people with autism might experience similar challenges, their overall experiences will be unique to them.

Check through the NDIS website for eligibility and support for applying for NDIS support.

Stress and Stress Management

Stress is a common part of life, especially for families with autistic children and teenagers.

Managing stress can involve self-talk, enjoyable family activities, organisation, relaxation exercises, and self-compassion.

If stress becomes overwhelming, consult a health professional like your GP.

Parents and carers must invest in their mental and physical well-being to effectively advocate for their children.

Seek advice from families and professionals on how to take care of yourself.





Importance of Self-Care

Parenting a child with autism involves unique challenges that significantly impact parents' well-being.

The constant demands, stress, and emotional toll can easily lead to burnout and neglect of personal needs, making self-care essential rather than a luxury.

Parents must often advocate for their child's needs in various settings, attend therapy appointments, and navigate challenging behaviours, all of which require a high level of energy and patience. These taxing demands can increase stress levels and lead to potential burnout.

"Self-care is about daily activities that help to look after your mental health and promote a sense of wellbeing within yourself. Taking the time to check in with your mind and body isn't a bad thing. In fact, the pursuit of health and happiness is far from selfish – it is about surviving and being resilient in times of stress."

— Jessica Degrassi, PBS, Safeguarding & Active Support Manager, Individual and Community Services



Importance of Self-Care

Why Self-Care is Essential for Autism Parents?

Self-care is not selfish; it is a necessary act of self-preservation for parents of children with autism. Here are a few reasons why self-care is essential:

Physical and Mental Well-being

Prioritising self-care helps maintain overall well-being, enabling parents to handle the challenges of raising a child with autism more effectively.

Emotional Resilience

Self-care activities help parents recharge emotionally, reduce stress, and build resilience, allowing them to face daily challenges with a positive mindset.

Modelling Healthy Behaviour

By practising self-care, parents set a positive example, teaching their children the importance of looking after themselves and imparting valuable lifelong skills.



Importance of Self-Care

Enhanced Parent-Child Relationship

When parents are well-rested and emotionally balanced, they can better engage with their children, providing the energy and patience needed to support their child's development.

Prevention of Burnout

Constantly prioritising a child's needs without self-care can lead to burnout. Taking time for self-care helps prevent burnout, ensuring parents can sustain caregiving demands over the long term.





Importance of Self-Care

Helpful self-talk

Helpful self-talk boosts positive feelings and enhances your ability to cope with stress. For instance, if you think, "People probably think I'm a bad parent," challenge it by asking, "How do I know that?" Replace it with helpful thoughts like, "Other people's opinions about my parenting don't matter," "I can do this," or "I will stay calm." The more you practice helpful self-talk, the more automatic it becomes. Start with one stressful situation and gradually apply it to others.

Relaxation and breathing strategies

Practice breathing exercises and muscle relaxation techniques to manage stress. Using these techniques when you notice stress signs or before stressful situations can help calm you down. Dedicate daily time for relaxation, meditation, or mindfulness to improve sleep, enhance awareness of thoughts and emotions, and foster positivity throughout the day. Experiment with different methods to find what suits you best; even just 10 minutes daily can make a difference.

Reducing and Managing Stress

Self-compassion

Self-compassion in parenting means being kind to yourself despite challenges. It involves acknowledging your feelings and treating yourself with the same care and understanding you would offer a loved one. Embracing self-compassion acknowledges that life includes struggles and challenges, benefiting you and your child.

Gratitude

Practising daily gratitude reduces stress and enhances well-being. For instance, when picking up your coffee, take a moment to appreciate the barista's effort before thanking them, or jot down a few things you're grateful for each day.



Reducing and Managing Stress

Organisation

Organising your tasks effectively can significantly reduce stress by giving you a sense of control. For instance, creating and working through a list of tasks allows you to focus on one thing at a time and feel accomplished as you complete each item. Implementing family routines also helps streamline activities, freeing up time for more enjoyable pursuits and can be adapted to accommodate children with additional needs.



Reducing and Managing Stress

Time for enjoyable activities

Encouraging each family member to create a list of enjoyable activities can reduce overall stress. Plan to regularly incorporate these activities into your routine, ensuring a mix of options that vary in cost and time commitment. Include activities that the whole family can enjoy together.

Family traditions and rituals

Family traditions and rituals foster a sense of belonging and strengthen relationships, aiding in navigating stressful times together. Adapting traditions to accommodate the needs of an autistic child, such as planning local weekend camping trips to minimise travel stress, ensures everyone can participate comfortably.



Reducing and Managing Stress

Support from family and friends

Family and friends offer valuable practical support. Don't hesitate to ask for help, whether it's having a family member babysit or having an older niece or nephew take your children to the park. This gives you time for yourself or other tasks and creates enjoyable experiences for your child and family members.

Respite

Respite care provides a much-needed break from caregiving and can help manage stress. If you're concerned about leaving your child with someone unfamiliar, take time for respite carers to become acquainted with your child beforehand.





Getting Help with Stress

If you or any family members are feeling very stressed daily, talking to a health professional might be helpful. You could start by seeing your GP, who can help you create a plan for managing stress. This might include referring you or other family members to another health professional for specialised support.

Some options available include:

Emotional and practical services and supports – contact Carer Gateway to find a range of support options and services available for parents. Call 1800 422 737 to talk to someone about what you need and find local services and support.

Respite care – contact Carer Gateway or a Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre. Find your local centre by calling 1800 052 222 during business hours or call 1800 059 059 for emergency respite support at other times.

NDIS support – contact the National Disability Insurance Scheme to find out about support to help your child reach their individual goals and live the life they want.

Support groups – contact local or online groups to connect with others in similar situations.

Financial support – contact Centrelink about Carer Allowance. Carer Allowance, Carer Payment, and other financial support are available to you.



Online Resources



Adults Supporting Kids (ASK)

<https://adultssupportingkids.com.au/>

Autism Awareness

<https://www.autismawareness.com.au/>

Autism SA

<https://autismsa.org.au/national-support-groups/>

Carer Gateway

<https://www.carergateway.gov.au/>

Carers SA

<https://www.carerssa.com.au/>

Head to Health

<https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/>

Health Direct

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/>

Kids In Adelaide

<https://kidsinadelaide.com.au/>

MyTime

<https://www.mytime.net.au/>

NDIS

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/>

Parent Helpline

<https://www.cafhs.sa.gov.au/services/parent-helpline>

Parenting SA

<https://parenting.sa.gov.au/>

Positive Partnerships

<https://www.positivepartnerships.com.au/>

Raising Children

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/>