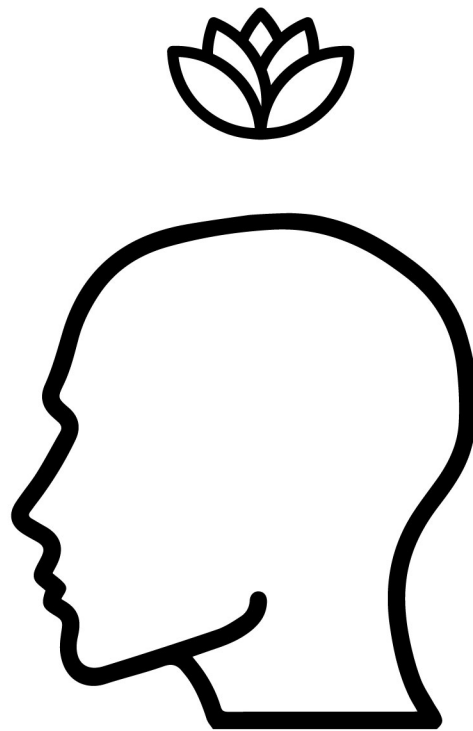


Facing fears and challenges

A Guided Self-Help Workbook



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Compiled and edited by:

King's College London CYP-IAPT teaching team including;

Helen Barker, CWP Co-Lead
Susanna Payne, CYP-MH Programmes Co-Lead
Sadie Williams, Co-developer, CWP Programme
Laura Bowyer, Co-developer, CWP Programme
Lisa Shostak, EMHP Co-Lead

With thanks to:

Jessica Richardson

University College London/Anna Freud Centre teaching team including;

Vicki Curry,
Lili Ly,
Peter Fuggle

Richmond CWP Team

Annika Clark,
Leah Bannister,
Fiona Blyth,
Rebecca Donne,
Angelica Mclarty

Lambeth CWP Team

Annette Allen,
Hannah Allcott-Watson,
Jonathan Balbes,
Nicole Gluckman,
Aphsana Haque

Graphic design

Jelena Crnokrak



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What is Guided Self-Help?

It's normal to have difficult times in your life, and times when you don't feel OK. Finding things difficult or overwhelming is not a sign there is anything wrong with you. Guided self help is about supporting people to know best how to help themselves. Everyone feels low, afraid, angry or hurt at different times in their lives, often with very good reason. Often you, or those around you can make things easier, but there's times when you or your family might want to get help. Guided self help can be a good way to get ideas from people trained to help with managing day to day difficulties in a way that fits in with your life, and what you want.

Guided self help can support you to grow in confidence about your own skills in life and ability to cope with problems. It builds on your expert knowledge of yourself, and what helps you at times of challenge or difficulty, and what doesn't. It gives you time to think about what might help in a dedicated space, and also might give you ideas about what else to try out, that are based on what's worked for other people. Your practitioner will also help you think about who you have around you who can support you and with what. Not everyone around us knows the best way to help, and it's useful to think about who can help and when – or if there are other people around who you or your practitioner and family can ask for support.

Guided self help is only a few weeks – usually between 5 and 8 sessions over the same amount of weeks. You may meet your practitioner face to face at somewhere convenient and easy for you – or you can talk online or over the phone. Usually you have choices about how best you want to meet your practitioner. If you don't prefer what's offered, do ask them if there are any other options.

There can be helpful challenges. The sessions will focus on understanding the difficulties your asking for support with, but they also focus on the things that you value and want from life, and also understanding the strengths you have that you may not have realised. You will think about your understanding of what's behind the problems you're experiencing – but mostly about what you would like to be different and how this might happen. You will set goals with your practitioner about what you'd like to achieve now but also in the future. You don't have to know what this is when you start out, your practitioner will have some experience in helping you think about what they are. There's no pressure to achieve anything while you're working with them. There's no need to know this quickly, and your ideas about what you want might change over time. That's fine.

A lot of what you do during guided self help is between sessions. When you have goals about what you want to be different, and ideas to try out with your practitioner, you'll probably want to try these out between sessions and see how it goes. Your practitioners do this with their goals too – so they'll understand when you don't do it or when it doesn't go well. But they also know how powerful it can be when you learn something new. It's best to come into guided self help with an open mind thinking – if it sounds OK enough, then I'll try it out and see how it goes. Nothing ever works out perfectly, but your practitioner can really help you think about how to try different things each time to test out new ways of doing things (however small – and they are usually small!) that can really help with a sense of wellbeing.

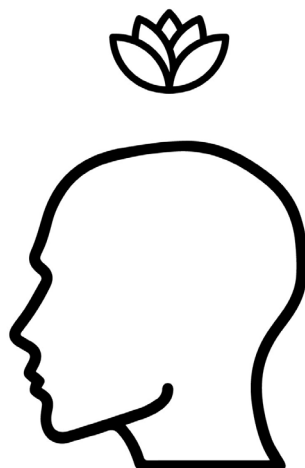
Your practitioner will ask you how things are going ALL THE TIME. Your practitioner is trained to make sure this is working for you. They won't be offended if it isn't working – they want to know what is working and what isn't as it will support them with the suggestions they offer you. Being as open and honest as you can will help with this. It makes sense that you can't always trust people straight away and they understand this, but as much as you can, letting them know how it's going when they ask will help you to get the best supports possible. It's really important you tell them if or when things get really difficult, or your feeling worried or hopeless about things changing.

When do you get offered guided self help?

Usually when worries, irritability or fear is stopping you from doing things you want or need to do, or if your mood has become noticeably lower and you don't want to do the things you used to enjoy anymore, or if you often find yourself behaving the way you don't want to with people you care about, or feeling out of control. It might be that you're struggling with friendships or school or family. If you've got stuck trying to improve these things yourself, then you might want to consider guided self help with your teacher, family, doctor, or other people in your life who support you.

Does it work?

The guided self help in these manual are based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) that has been shown to be effective for the problems you might be experiencing. The children and families using our service who stay receiving the help for 2 or more sessions mostly experience large positive benefits in achieving their goals.



Navigating the manual

— Session 0: Identifying the problem.

In this session you'll discuss what difficulties you have come for support with and think about how they are impacting on your life. You may also discuss things that have happened in your life that have contributed to these problems. You'll start to think about any ideas you have about what might be keeping these problems going and ways that you can overcome them. You'll also complete some routine outcome measures (ROMS) to help understand the problem in more detail.

— Session 1: Understanding Anxiety and how it affects you

In this session you will find out more about anxiety; how it affects the body and what can lead to anxiety becoming a problem. You'll discuss your ideas about what may have led you to developing problematic anxiety and what might be keeping it going, focusing on your own thoughts and behaviour, other's behaviour and the environment. You'll also learn about helpful coping behaviours v's unhelpful habits.

You'll discuss and agree some goals you'd like to work on in sessions and who can support you in overcoming the anxiety.

— Session 2: Trying out new things

In this session you'll learn about one of the key things that keeps anxiety going; avoidance. You'll begin to think about ways of helping to reduce avoidance and develop a step by step plan to facing your fears.

— Session 3: Facing your fears

In this session you'll either review your first step on your step by step plan having completed it between sessions or complete the first step in session with the support of your practitioner.

— Session 4 to 6: Reviewing step by step plan *(brief sessions; over phone if preferred)*

In these sessions you'll review your progress on your step by step plan with your practitioner, problem solving any difficulties and planning for the next step.

— Session 7: Progress review *(brief sessions; over phone if preferred)*

In this session you'll check your overall progress with your practitioner and discuss any additional problems that are concerning you. You'll learn about a helpful problem-solving strategy that can be useful in resolving future difficulties.

— Session 8: Staying well plan

In the final session you'll review your progress over sessions and discuss what you have learnt, making a staying well plan. You'll set some goals for the future and discuss whether or not you need further support.

Session 0

Identifying what you are going to work on

What is the main reason that you came today? Are you looking for help/advice with a particular problem? Is there anything that is difficult to do at the moment that you would like to be easier? Or is there anything that is getting in the way of your wellbeing?




Do you feel like you are treated differently or unfairly, because of something about you, or that other people think about you? Don't worry if there is something but you don't feel OK to say so now. It might take you a while to feel comfortable with your practitioner. They will want to support you with this and it's always OK to tell them about it, at any point. Remember you can always talk to someone who is supportive around you – your teacher, family member or someone you trust – and ask them to let other people know.

What are your hopes for today? What would you like to have achieved when the session has finished? What are your hopes for the sessions overall?

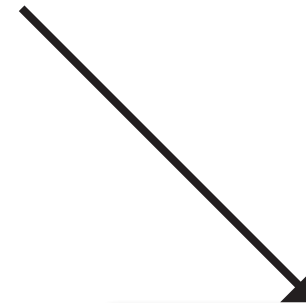


Thinking about a recent example where you were bothered by the difficulty you are seeking support for can be a useful way to begin to work out what is going on, and how best to change things. Your practitioner can help you chose a recent situation where the difficulty affected you, it may have been a time when you felt very upset or anxious. Describe the situation and your experience below.

The example
Where were you, who were you with, what was happening?
Was it something that often happens that you find hard to fix?



Thoughts
What things went through your mind that felt bad?



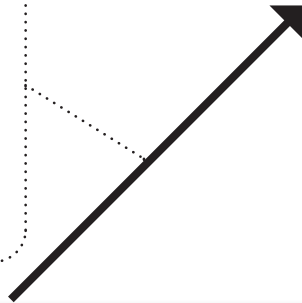
Feelings/mood
How did you feel? Did you feel it in your body and where?



My responses

What happened in my mind What happened in my mind to try and fix it (worry/planning etc)	What I did/avoided doing? What did I do? What did I avoid doing?
--	---


What helped/didn't help
Was there anything you did, or thought about, to try and help at the time? It may have made sense and helped make you feel better at that moment, but thinking about it now, was there anything not so good about doing this? Has it helped with fears overall or is it keeping them going?



Understanding how what we do and how we see situations can help us develop new ways of breaking out of old cycles. The way we interpret a situation impacts on how we feel and what we do. Consider the example below.

The example: Aya missed a bus on her way to school

The example
Where were you, who were you with, what was happening?
Was it something that often happens that you find hard to fix?



I woke up late. I ran but I missed the bus



Thoughts
If I'm late I'll get detention. I will get excluded and my teachers will think I'm bad



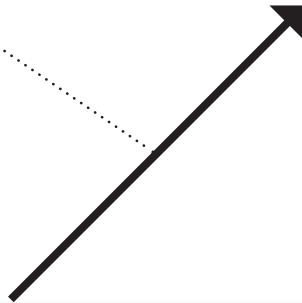
Feelings/mood
Scared, angry. Body tight, heart racing. Felt unhappy and useless



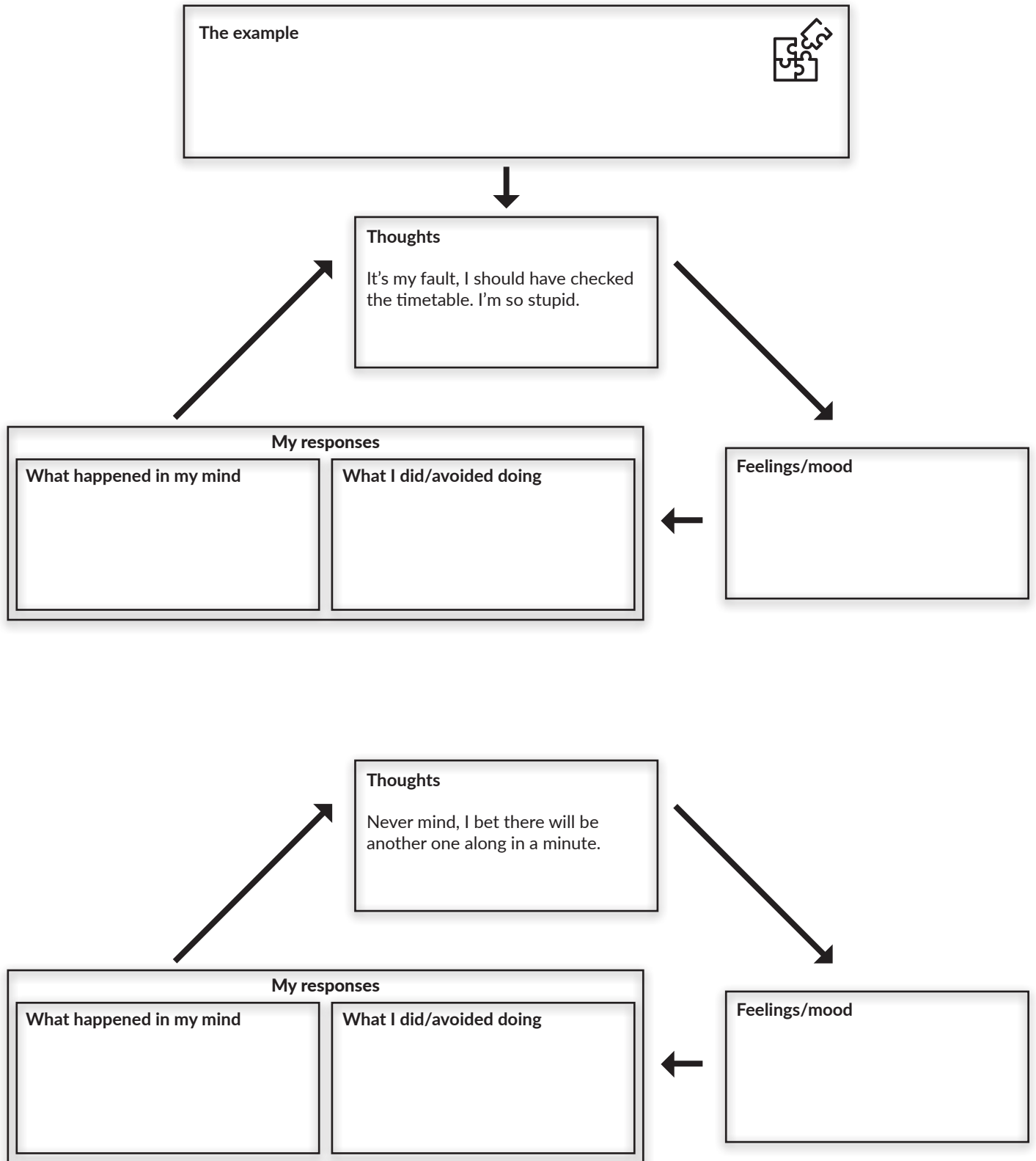
My responses

What happened in my mind <i>On the bus all the way - worried about what would happen and what everyone would think of me. Didn't want to tell anyone what I was thinking.</i>	What I did/avoided doing? <i>Kept quiet when I got to school - didn't explain, didn't tell my parents. Got detention. Argued with the teacher and got into more trouble.</i>
---	--

What helped/didn't help
Was there anything you did, or thought about, to try and help at the time? It may have made sense and helped make you feel better at that moment, but thinking about it now, was there anything not so good about doing this? Has it helped with fears overall or is it keeping them going?
Maybe arguing with the teacher? Maybe not saying how I felt? Being quiet was ok



Have a think with your practitioner about different responses or ways of thinking that might impact on how Aya felt about the annoying situation. Think about the different experiences in life that might affect how Aya feels when things go wrong. Who might be around to help Aya, or not help?



When we experience difficulties or problems in our lives they can impact on different areas of our lives in different ways. Some areas of your life may not be affected at all, or the problem may be causing difficulties for you in lots of areas. With the support of your practitioner think about whether the problem is impacting on the following areas of your life?

At home/your family relationships?

At school?

Socially/Friendships?

Hobbies and activities?

When we experience problems or difficulties in our life which affect our emotional well-being there are often a number of different things that have contributed to them. These might be; particular events in our life, either in the past or currently, the environment we're living in (e.g. at home, in school, our community), different relationships in our lives (e.g. friends or family) or factors to do with our development or personality (e.g. genetics, temperament, physical and intellectual development).

With your practitioner discuss any factors that you think may have contributed to your current difficulties and write them below.

Sometimes there are things going on in life that can make you feel unsafe. This may be thoughts or urges to harm yourself, or feeling in danger from other people. It might be that dangerous things are happening around you or you are caught up in situations you can't control.

We can all do things that put ourselves at risk, and we can all get caught up in complicated or risky situations. Sometimes people around us do not care about our safety or put us in danger either deliberately or by accident.

Please talk to your practitioner about any worries you have about your safety, and agree a plan of how to keep you safe, as that is an important part of their job, and they are trained to think carefully about this with you. Your practitioner will regularly check in with you about this. You might not have any of these problems, but we know it's really important for them to ask.

Routine Outcome Measures (ROMS)

What are ROMS?

Routine outcome measures are another way of helping us to understand what is going on. ROMS are usually questionnaires that ask you about how you are thinking or feeling at a particular time and the impact this is having on your life. They are sometimes given to young people to fill in and sometimes to parents/carers or both. There are different questionnaires for different ages of children and young people and some that are more helpful for particular concerns or problems than others. Examples are the RCADS (Revised Child Anxiety and Depression Scale) and the SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire).

Why do we use them?

We use ROMS to help us understand how you are feeling at the beginning of your sessions with your practitioner. They can help us to identify any particular difficulties or problems you want support with, but also areas that are going well. They also help us understand what others think, such as your parents or carers.

The ROMS are not used to diagnose mental health disorders and are just one source of information. Your practitioner will also talk to you about what is going on in your life and whether you think the ROMS provide an accurate view of any problems you may be experiencing.

Your practitioner will ask you to complete the appropriate ROMS at the start of your sessions and then repeat them fully at the end of your sessions. This is to help see if things have changed or improved over time. Your practitioner will also ask you to fill in shorter versions of the ROMS regularly over the course of the sessions to make sure things are progressing in the way you hope and you are working towards achieving your goals. You will decide these goals with your practitioner at the beginning, focusing on what you would like to achieve from the sessions. You'll rate these each week to check that you are making progress in the areas you want.

What you can expect from your practitioner?

Your practitioner will explain the appropriate ROMS to you before asking you to complete them and you can ask any questions you want. You don't have to complete them if you don't want to, but they can be really helpful in understanding what you would like support with and keeping track of progress. Once you have completed them your practitioner will feedback to you what the scores mean and help you to keep track of any change.

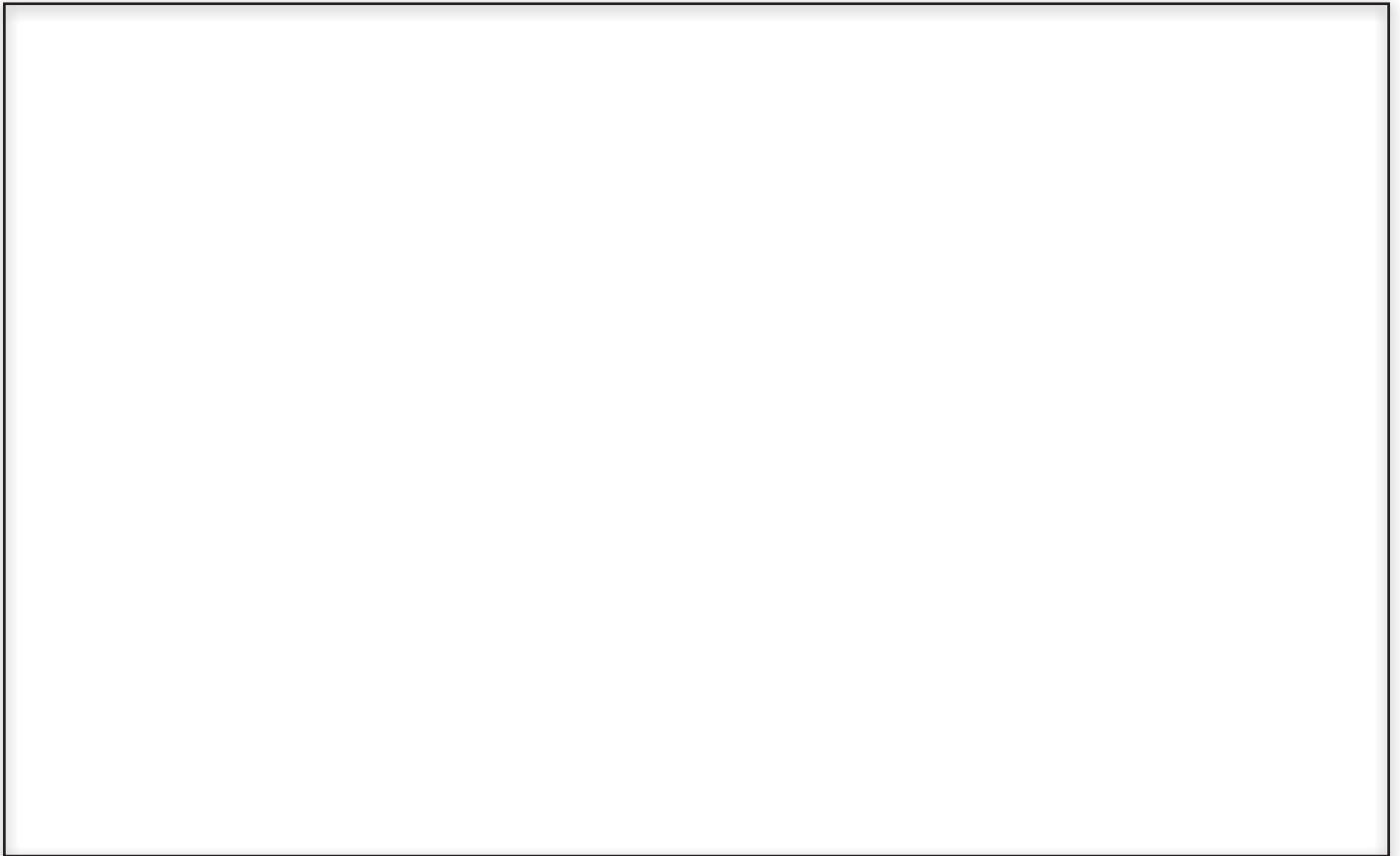
What is your understanding of the ROM's you have completed for your first session?



Are there any areas where the problem/difficulties aren't affecting your life? What is going well?
What are your strengths/achievements/skills?



There are often things going on that prevent us from feeling OK. These may be things we are doing ourselves, things others are doing or things happening around us. Think with your practitioner about anything that you can think of that may be keeping your difficulties going at the moment.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write down their thoughts or observations.

Do you have any ideas on what could help? Things you have tried? Things that already help? Things you would like to try? Think about what you have 'control' over and what you don't, and how and where you can get help if it's not something you can change.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write down their ideas and thoughts regarding help and control.

Session summary

What do you want to remember from today's session?

Write below any decisions you make with your practitioner about what further support you will be offered.

Any questions/concerns after session to bring back next time or discuss with your practitioner.

Optional thought diary for homework

Before we see each other again, if other typical examples of your worry or fear come up over the week, take a moment to note down some details in the diary provided below. You could set aside a few minutes, e.g. before dinner, to think if anything has come up during the day and note it down. Bring it to our next session


Event What was happening?	Thoughts/images /Memories What went through my head? Was it a problem or a fear or a bit of both?	Feelings How did I feel? (my emotions and feelings in my body)	What I did What did I do to make myself feel better? Did it make things better or worse...?

Session 1

Understanding anxiety and how it affects me


What do we need to talk about today? Are there any questions/concerns or particular things you want to discuss in today's session?

Review of things you did to help achieve goals between sessions? What helped/didn't help? What have you learnt?

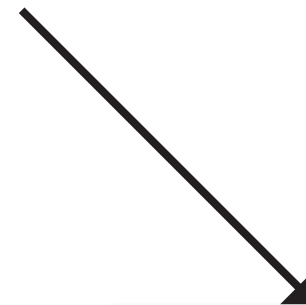


Thinking about a recent example where you were bothered by the difficulty you are seeking support for can be a useful way to begin to work out what is going on, and how best to change things. Your practitioner can help you chose a recent situation where the difficulty affected you, it may have been a time when you felt very upset or anxious. Describe the situation and your experience below.

The example
Where were you, who were you with, what was happening?
Was it something that often happens that you find hard to fix?



Thoughts
What things went through your mind that felt bad?



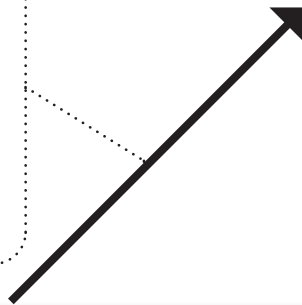
Feelings/mood
How did you feel? Did you feel it in your body and where?



My responses

What happened in my mind What happened in my mind to try and fix it (worry/planning etc)	What I did/avoided doing? What did I do? What did I avoid doing?
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What helped/didn't help
Was there anything you did, or thought about, to try and help at the time? It may have made sense and helped make you feel better at that moment, but thinking about it now, was there anything not so good about doing this? Has it helped with fears overall or is it keeping them going?



What is anxiety?

Anxiety is our bodies response to threat or 'danger'. While it can feel horrible and uncomfortable, it isn't harmful. It is a normal response and can be very helpful and appropriate when we are really under threat.

When we think we are in danger our brain releases certain hormones to trigger the Fight/Flight/Freeze response. This response is evolutionarily programmed to help us to avoid or escape from danger and keep us safe. A number of changes happen in our body when the fight/flight/freeze response is triggered.

Heart: Starts beating faster in order to pump more blood to the muscles and enhance your ability to fight or run away.

Lungs: Your breathing becomes quicker and shallower to take in more oxygen to power the muscles. If we don't fight or run away to use this oxygen we can start to feel dizzy and lightheaded.

Mouth: Digestion shuts down during dangerous situations so that energy can be diverted to the muscles. This causes a dry mouth.

Stomach: Blood is directed away from the digestive system which can lead to nausea and feelings of "butterflies".

Bladder: Bladder and bowel muscles sometimes relax in response to extreme stress creating the urge to go to the toilet.

Hands: Hands can become cold as blood is directed towards major muscle groups. Palms become sweaty as the body sweats to keep cool.

Muscles: Muscles all over the body tense in order to get you ready to fight or run away. They may also shake or tremble if you stay still.

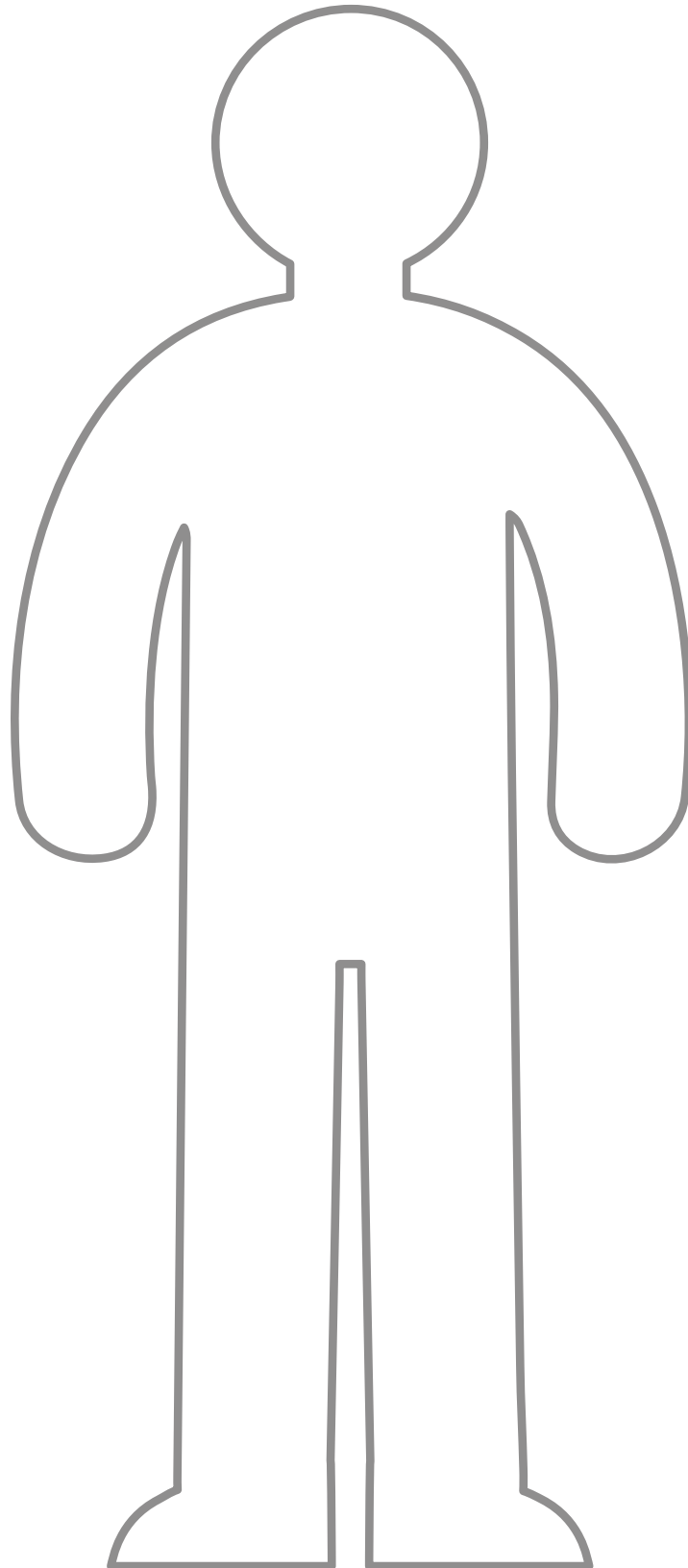
Vision: Vision can become acute in order to focus on danger and you may notice 'tunnel vision' or vision becoming sharper.

Thoughts: Fast thinking helps us to evaluate the danger and make quick decisions. It can be very difficult to concentrate on anything apart from the danger when the fight/flight response is active.



How do I experience the fight/flight/freeze response?

We all experience the fight/flight/freeze response when our brains think or become aware that we are in danger or under threat. How we experience this can feel different for different people. Write on the body below what physical sensations you experience when you are anxious or frightened.



What causes anxiety and what keeps it going?

We want our brains to trigger the fight/flight/freeze response when we are really in danger as it helps us to run away or protect ourselves. However, sometimes we think we are under threat or in danger when this is not really the case.

This is a bit like a smoke alarm going off when you've burnt the toast, rather than when there is a real fire. Our brain will trigger the fight/flight/freeze response even if we think we might be in danger, for example; if we're going to a party and we think no one will talk to us or going on a train and we think it might crash.

This happens to all of us sometimes, however if the faulty smoke alarm goes off a lot and starts getting in the way of you doing things in your life, this is when anxiety can become problematic.

Causes of problematic anxiety

Anxiety difficulties or disorders rarely have one cause or trigger. More often, there are multiple factors that contribute to a person developing problematic anxiety. Some common factors are described below;

Biological factors

We are all born with a particular genetic make up and temperament/personality. Some of us are naturally more sensitive to anxiety or have a shy temperament and this can make you more vulnerable to experiencing problematic anxiety. There is also some research that shows that anxiety disorders are more likely in children whose parents also have an anxiety or other mental health problem.

Traumatic/stressful life events

Problematic anxiety can sometimes be triggered after a traumatic event, such as an accident or witnessing or experiencing an assault. Prolonged stress in someone's environment, such as living in a family where there is a lot of conflict or financial stress can also increase the risk of someone experiencing anxiety difficulties.

Learning from others

We learn how to respond and behave in different situations from those around us. Therefore, if someone close to us also experiences problematic anxiety and either talks a lot about the things they fear or behaves in an anxious way in certain situations then we may learn these responses and fears from them.

Social Environment

We are also influenced by our peers and wider community. If we experience bullying, discrimination or difficulties at school this can sometimes lead to the development of problematic anxiety. We are also influenced by what we hear and see on the television and through the internet and social media. If we are exposed to information that is not appropriate or upsetting this can cause anxiety.



What keeps problematic anxiety going?

There are also a number of things that can keep problematic anxiety going and they often work in combination with each other. Here are a few of them.

Our behaviour

Anxiety isn't pleasant and can make us feel really uncomfortable. We are therefore driven to act in ways that help to reduce or escape anxiety. This means it's very common for us to try to avoid situations that make us feel anxious. While this makes sense, it can sometimes keep anxiety going as it means we never test out whether the things we fear happen or not. This prevents us from finding out how likely our fears are and also stops us from being able to learn to cope in situations where we feel anxious. Avoiding certain situations or places can also stop us from being able to do enjoyable and positive things.

We also sometimes fall into the trap of becoming dependant on certain behaviours or habits to help us reduce our anxiety, such as asking other people for reassurance or always avoiding eye contact with other people when we walk down the road because we think others will be laughing at us. These are called safety behaviours or unhelpful habits and while they can make us feel better, they can also keep anxiety problems going.

Our thoughts

The way we think about a situation or what we think is going to happen impacts on how we feel. For example, if you are going to a party and you think "I'm going to have a great time, it's a chance to make some new friends", you're likely to feel happy and excited. However, if you think "I don't know anyone, no one will talk to me", you're likely to feel nervous or scared. If we are thinking in an anxious way, we tend to overestimate the likelihood of danger and underestimate our ability to cope with it.

The environment

Ongoing stress or problems in someone's life and environment can keep problematic anxiety going. If someone is unable to overcome or find solutions to these problems or if they have little or no control over them (e.g. parental conflict, bullying) then the anxiety and stress associated with the problems may continue.

Others behaviour

Sometimes what others do can also keep anxiety going. If those close to you get frustrated or upset when you are anxious, this can make you feel more anxious. Sometimes others can fall into the trap of helping you avoid things or overly reassuring you and this can also keep anxiety going.

The really good news is once you understand the things that have impacted on your difficulties with anxiety developing and what is keeping the problematic anxiety going you're in a great position to be able to change things to help overcome it!



Coping behaviours vs unhelpful habits

We find lots of different ways of coping with difficult emotions and feelings, some of these strategies or behaviours are really helpful, but others are less so. While some behaviours provide short term relief, they can actually cause more problems in the long term by keeping anxiety going or causing other forms of distress. It might be helpful to think of these behaviours as unhelpful habits.

Below are some examples of unhelpful habits.

- Rehearsing what to say before speaking to someone
- Only going shopping at quiet times of day
- Covering mouth when talking
- Not making eye contact when walking down street
- Asking someone again and again if they think you will be OK
- Texting a parent/carer to check
- Checking for signs of danger
- Rituals or superstitions designed to prevent bad things from happening

All of these behaviours develop because they make us feel less anxious or worried, and because they work in the short term we keep doing them. **However**, this is a trap that we all fall into sometimes. While they do tend to make us feel better they also prevent us from overcoming our anxiety in the long term and can sometimes even make it worse.

Consider the below example:

Aya doesn't go to parties with her friends because her find it difficult being in crowds of people. She's worried about looking stupid, or saying something stupid in front of people. Aya only goes out with small groups of friends but prefers to stay at home. When she has to go out she looks down so she doesn't have to make eye contact with people, and speak softly so as not to draw attention.

These habits make complete sense as Aya feels bad about how she comes across to other people. However, she can also keep the fears going. Aya would never get a chance to find out that if she talked more with people, her worst fears about looking stupid, and people not liking her, are not true. People sometimes pay her more attention than she'd like because she is so quiet.

Coping techniques

What ways have you found to help you cope with or manage your anxiety?



Do you think any of the things you've identified above are actually unhelpful habits? If so you will need to think with your practitioner about how you can begin to reduce these and replace them with helpful coping behaviours.

Are there any other things you've heard of or read about that you would like to try to help you cope with your anxiety?

At the end of this workbook there are some ideas/strategies that others have found helpful and you may want to try.

The difference between problems and fears

When a situation makes us feel bad, worried, anxious or irritable, sometimes it's because it seems worse in our minds than in reality, but sometimes it's because it's a difficult problem – something that would be difficult for anyone to manage.

Telling the difference between problems and fears in life is a useful skill and it's not as easy as it sounds. Discuss the difference between problems and fears with your practitioner, and start to think about how you might tell them apart. There's some examples below, and you can have a think with your practitioner about examples in your own life, if it would be helpful. There is space to note them below.

“What is a “problem” and what is a “fear” will be different for different people and will depend on the context, or what is going on for you in the rest of your life. Getting told off in class could be a fear if it has only happened once and it's with a particularly strict teacher. But if you're often told off in different lessons for not concentrating this could be a problem. Your practitioner would give different advice about what's best to try in these different circumstances.

If you and your practitioner identify a problem, it's helpful to be curious about why this might be a problem for you. For example, you might be struggling to concentrate in lessons because you have a particular learning need that's not being addressed in the right way (dyslexia or ADHD for example). Or perhaps a relative is unwell and you find it hard to concentrate in lessons because you know they going into hospital.

Another example of a fear might be getting worried about what other people think of you if you make a mistake in the classroom. However, if you are facing discrimination or racism, this is an example of a problem that anyone would find difficult and for which you need help from others around you (it makes total sense you will be anxious and worrying about this if it's happening to you).

We all experience both fears and problems, and it's important to think about the differences as they often have different solutions. Your practitioner can help you with both.

When you have a problem you may need help from people in your life to solve it – or think through a plan with your practitioner to solve it. When you have a fear, it's something you'll be working on in the next part of the manual.

If you're not always sure about the answer – that's OK – you and your practitioner can make a plan to try something out and see how it goes. Guided self help is all about trying out new things in a safe way and seeing how you go with someone who's trained to support you.

PROBLEMS

It is possible, or likely to happen

You have to find a solution to move forwards

It would be difficult for anyone to solve

You might need help from someone to help you fix it

You might not be able to think of a solution now, but you might be able to think about some steps to begin to solve it

FEARS

It's not likely to happen anytime soon, however frightening it is

You can move forward in your life without dealing with it right now

Fears are different for everybody because they come from our own experiences. Yours might seem odd, but everyone has different fears, and no one should be made to feel ashamed of theirs

They are often general ideas about dangers in life or from other people

If you would like to, have a think on your own, or with your practitioner about some examples from your own life.

PROBLEMS

Being bullied at school

Not getting the right support for my learning difficulties

Not knowing the way around my new school

Experiencing discrimination at school

The area I walk home through is not safe, there are a lot of muggings

FEARS

I will never have a good relationship

Everyone thinks I am stupid

I will get lost and no-one will help me

Everyone hates me

I am likely to get kidnapped

If you would like to, have a think on your own, or with your practitioner about some examples from your own life.

PROBLEMS

FEARS

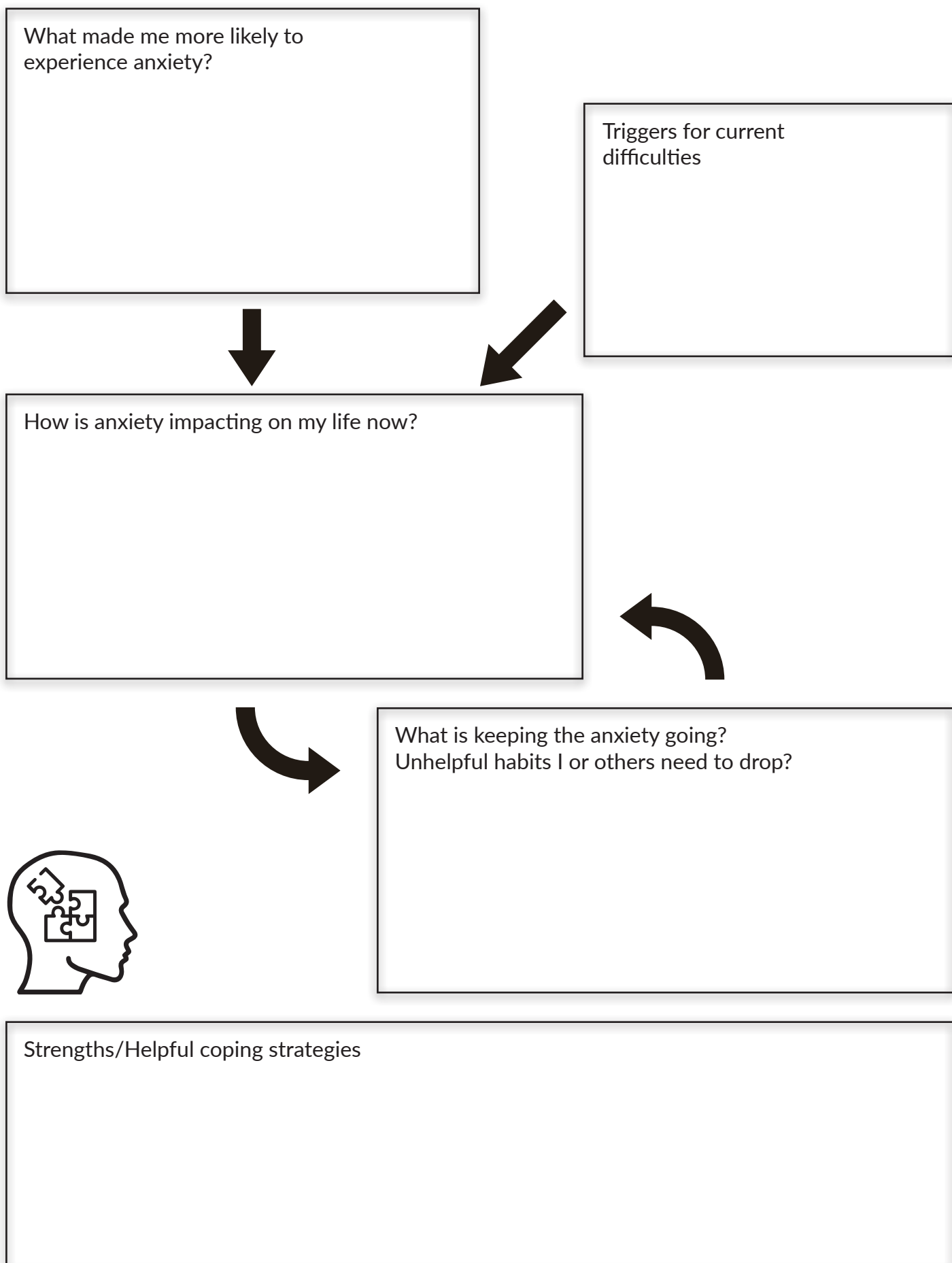
The next section of the manual helps with some ideas about how to face fears that are getting in the way of things that you need or want to do.

With problems you have some control over, think about problem solving with your practitioner (see p.70 of this manual)

With problems you don't have so much control over, talk with your practitioner about who in your back up team can support you and have a think about good ways of managing emotions and stress (see p. 78 of the manual)

Making sense of the things

Now let's try and put it all together. With the support of your practitioner, fill in the diagram below.



Goal Setting

It's really helpful to set some goals around what you would like to achieve in sessions. You might want to think about whether there is anything that the problems you have been experiencing have been stopping you doing? Or is there something you used to do that you are no longer able to do because of the difficulties? There might be specific things that you would like to learn or practice in sessions related to coping with your feelings.

Discuss the ideas you have with your practitioner and write them down below.

Possible goal 1:

Possible goal 2:

Possible goal 3:



Making your goals SMART can help to ensure that you are able to achieve them. Have a look at the SMART goal rules on the next page and try talk with your practitioner about how you can make your goals SMART. Write these goals down below. Rate where you are today in relation to achieving this goal with 0/10 meaning not achieved at all and 10/10 completely achieved.

Possible goal 1:

Rating:

Possible goal 2:

Rating:

Possible goal 3:

Rating:



SMART Goal Rules

Specific

- Be very clear on what you want to achieve.
- Consider breaking bigger goals into smaller ones.

Measurable

- How will you know when you have achieved your goal? What will be different?
- What will you be doing at that time?
- What will others notice you doing?
- What will you have started or be doing regularly?
- What will you have stopped or be doing less of?

Achievable

- Ensure your goals are not too high.
- Don't set yourself up to fail!
- Consider setting smaller goals on your way to the big one. Celebrate your successes.

Realistic

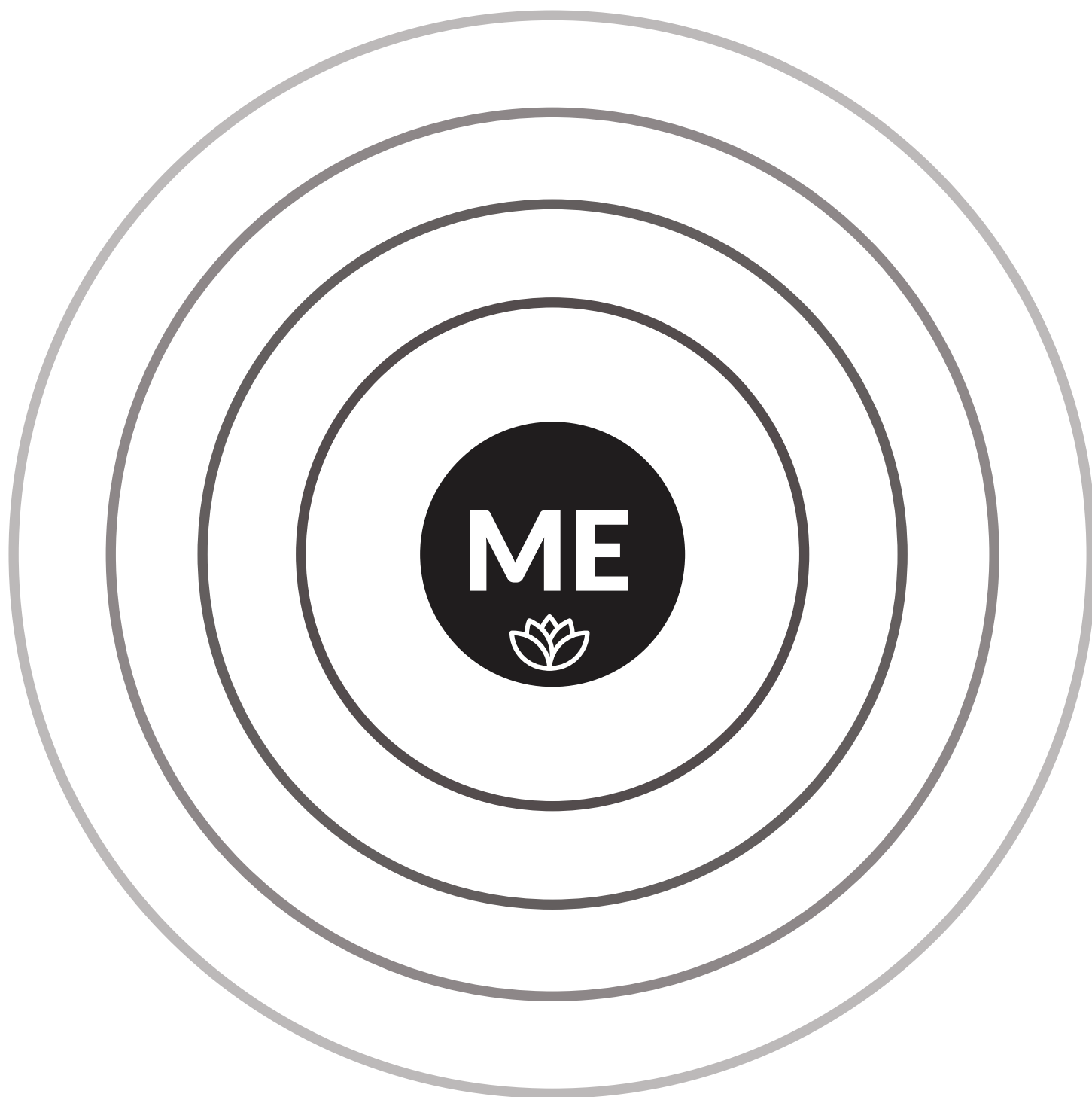
- Can you achieve these goals? Is it doable?

Time-limited

- Set a reasonable time limit to achieve your goal.
1 week, 1 month, 6 months, 1 year, 5 years?
Consider different (smaller) time limits for smaller steps.

Back-up Team

It's also really important to think about who is going to be on your back-up team to support you and help you achieve your goals in sessions. Help and support can come in many different forms, such as motivational support, practical help and comfort or companionship. Think about the people around you, this may be family, friends, people at school/work or at clubs/activities you attend. Plot them on the diagram below (most involved in the middle/ least involved on the outside) and write down what kind of support they can offer you.



Session summary

What do you want to share from today's session with your back-up team?

Progress check – complete your ROMS and session ratings with your practitioner.

What are you going to do between sessions to help you achieve your goals?




Any questions/concerns after session to bring back next time

Session 2 - Trying out new things

What do we need to talk about today? Are there any questions/concerns or particular things you want to discuss in today's session?

Review of things did to help achieve goals between sessions? What helped/didn't help? What have you learnt?



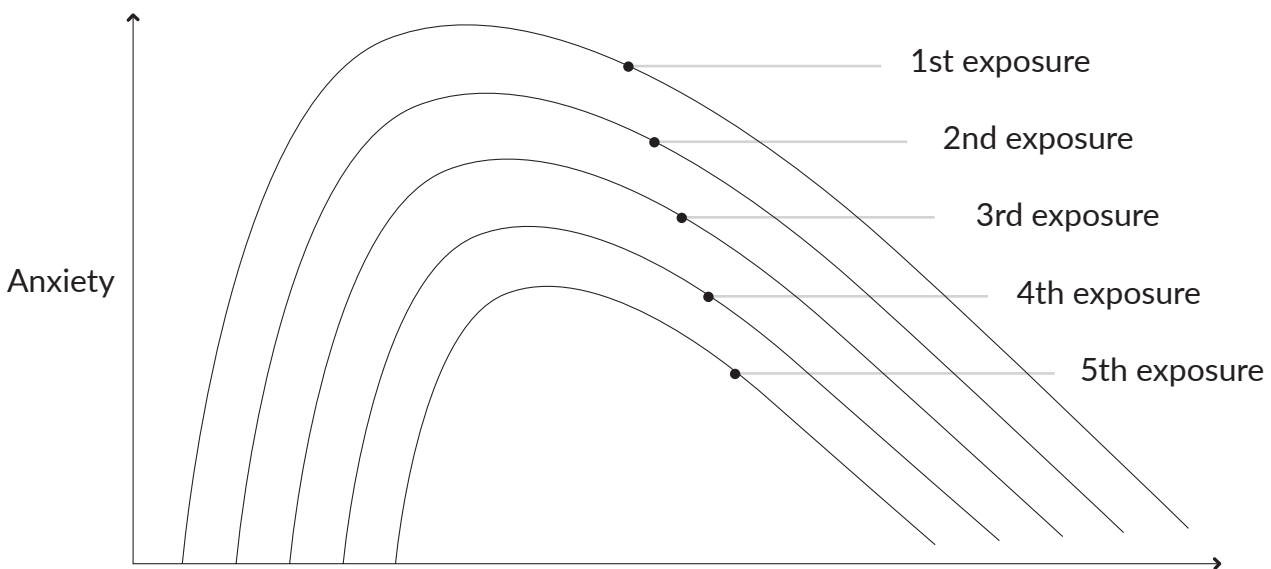
Facing your Fears

Facing your fears, otherwise known as exposure, is the most effective way to overcome problematic anxiety. By breaking things down into small steps and gradually facing the situations you fear, without using unhelpful habits, you can overcome your avoidance and learn to cope with anxiety.

The vicious cycle of avoidance

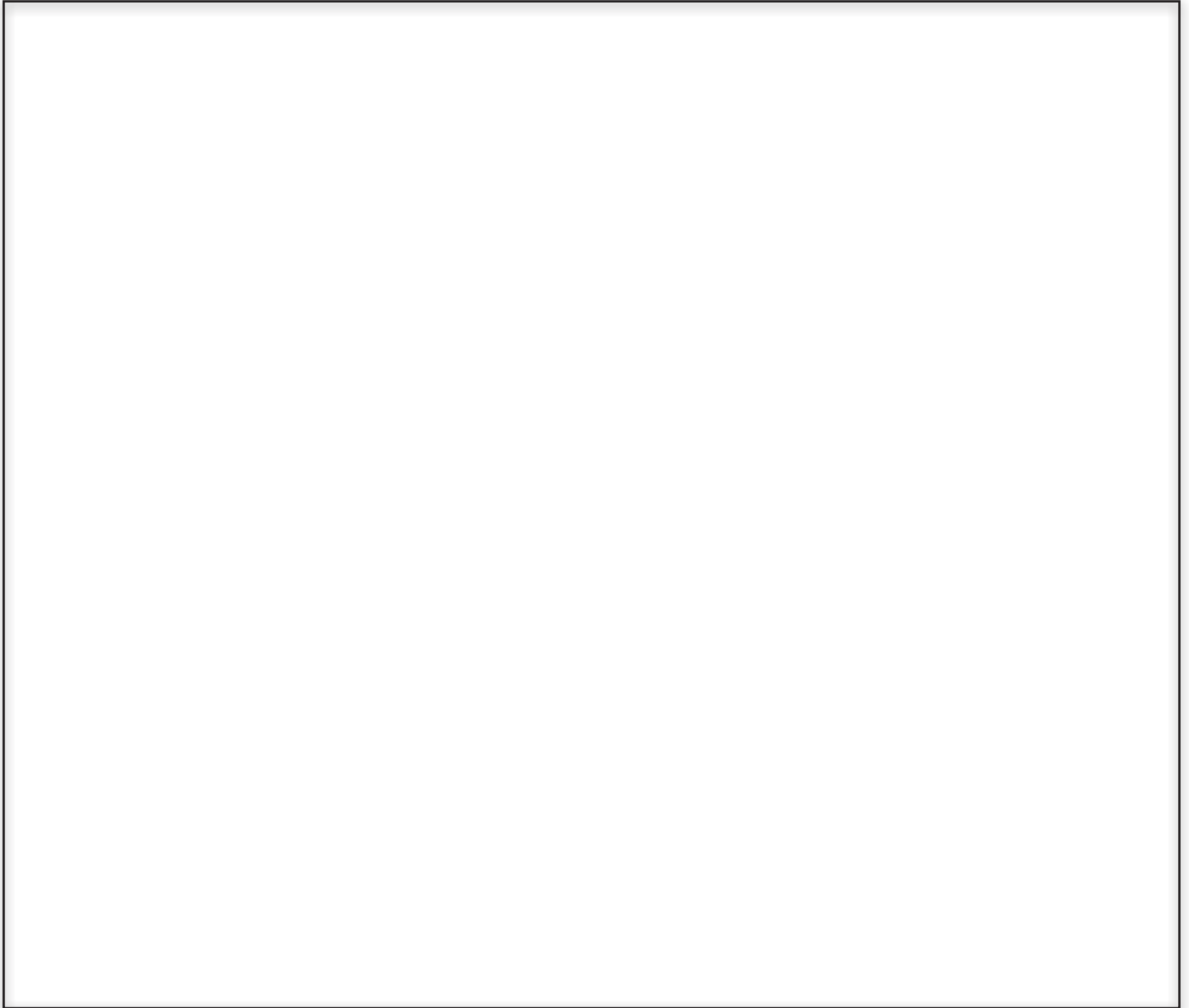
When we are faced with or think we are faced with a threatening or dangerous situation the fight/flight response is triggered and we feel scared or anxious. Usually our anxiety increases quickly as soon as the threat is detected. If we then escape / avoid the threat, and / or use unhelpful habits, our anxiety reduces quickly. However, if we are faced with the same threat again we will once again feel very anxious. Sometimes our anxiety even increases over time. Avoidance and unhelpful habits can very quickly lead to a vicious cycle as we assume the only way to reduce our anxiety is to avoid or escape from the situations which we perceive to be threatening or dangerous.

Overcoming avoidance by facing your fears



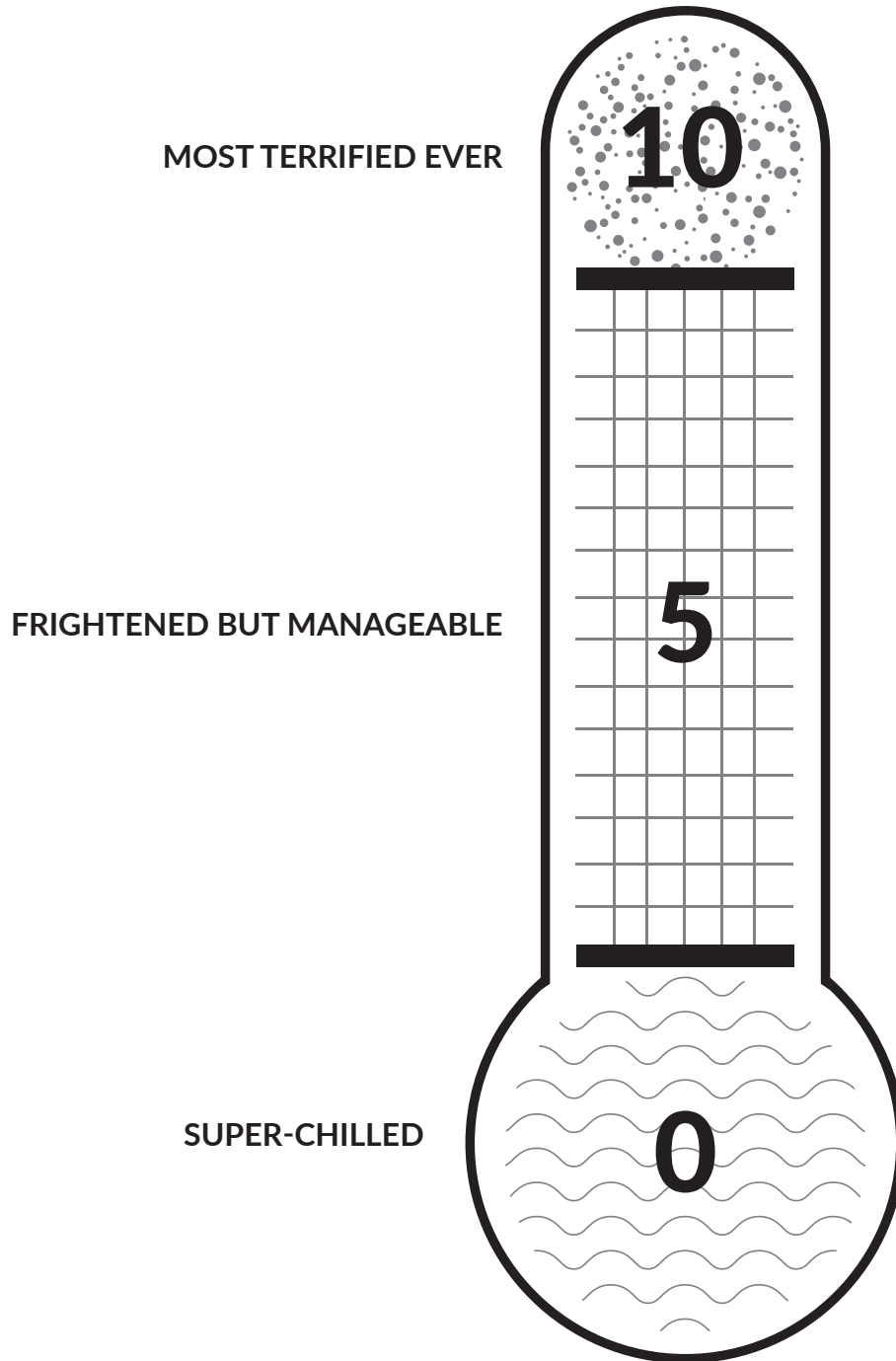
What we know from science and research is that anxiety actually comes down naturally over time without the need to escape / avoid the situation, or, the need to use unhelpful habits. It is not possible to stay physiologically anxious for a long period of time, therefore if we stay in the situation and no threat occurs our anxiety will naturally reduce. We also learn whether what we feared would happen, actually does or not, and how we coped and managed in the situation. The more we face our fears and expose ourselves to situations that we think may be threatening, the more useful things we can learn and the more our anxiety reduces.

Think of all the situations/things you try to avoid or escape from because of anxiety as well as any unhelpful habits you are currently using. List them below.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to list situations or habits they want to avoid or change.

Rate the amount of anxiety you would feel if you had to face each of these things/situations or couldn't use your unhelpful habits. Use the feelings gauge on the next page to help you.

Fear Thermometer



Step by step plan for facing fears

Breaking things down into smaller steps can be a really helpful way to begin to face your fears. Let's look at an example.

Example step by step plan

Aya tries to avoid spending time in groups of people from school. She thinks people won't like her, and will judge her negatively, thinking she's ugly or stupid. She would like more people to be friends with, and would like to find it easy in groups or at parties like other people do.

Aya's practitioner helps her make a list of places and things she avoids, or where she has to use unhelpful habits to cope because she has to go (like lessons at school or the table at lunchtime). They rate how uncomfortable Aya would feel facing the situations, not using unhelpful habits that they know can make the anxiety worse in the long run.

They try and break down difficult situations into smaller steps so Aya can think about how she might approach testing out her fears.

Situations/things I avoid because of my fears	How uncomfortable I would feel doing this without using unhelpful habits	Reward for doing it
Going to a friend's party where I don't know a lot of people, and making eye contact and speaking to people	9	Friend over for sleepover (if they agree)
Shopping with a group of people, some I don't know as well and speak	8	Buy something when out
Ask a question in big group of people at lunch	6	Extra time on computer (ask mum)
Say how I feel about an issue in a group chat and not delete even if no one replies	6	Extra computer time
Ask Ruby to come over to do homework	4	Chocolate bar
Put hand up in maths class to ask a question	5	Extra computer time



Think about the list you made of the situations/activities you are avoiding because of your fears. Also consider any unhelpful habits you might need to stop using.

Rate the amount of anxiety you would experience facing each one and place them on the step by step ladder below in order.

Situations/things I avoid because of my fears	How uncomfortable I would feel doing this without using unhelpful habits	Reward for achieving step

Facing your Fear Plan

Let's make a plan to support you with the first step on your step by step ladder. You can complete this in the next session with your practitioner, or if you feel confident, at home between sessions.


What is the first step?

What do you need to do to achieve this step? Think about when/where, what are you going to do and who will be with you? What do you predict/fear will happen? With your practitioner make sure your planned step really tests out whether your fear will happen or not. You may plan this first step to be completed in your next session with your practitioner or at home between sessions.

Are there any unhelpful habits you need to drop/throw away when facing your fear? Are there any helpful coping strategies/tools that can support you?

Unhelpful habits to drop	Helpful coping to use

What problems might you encounter? Is there anything that will stop you from facing your fear? How could you overcome this?



Session summary

What do you want to share from today's session with your back-up team?

Progress check – complete your ROMS and session ratings with your practitioner.

What are you going to do between sessions to help you achieve your goals?


Any questions/concerns after session to bring back next time

Session 3

Facing your Fears

What do we need to talk about today? Are there any questions/concerns or particular things you want to discuss in today's session?

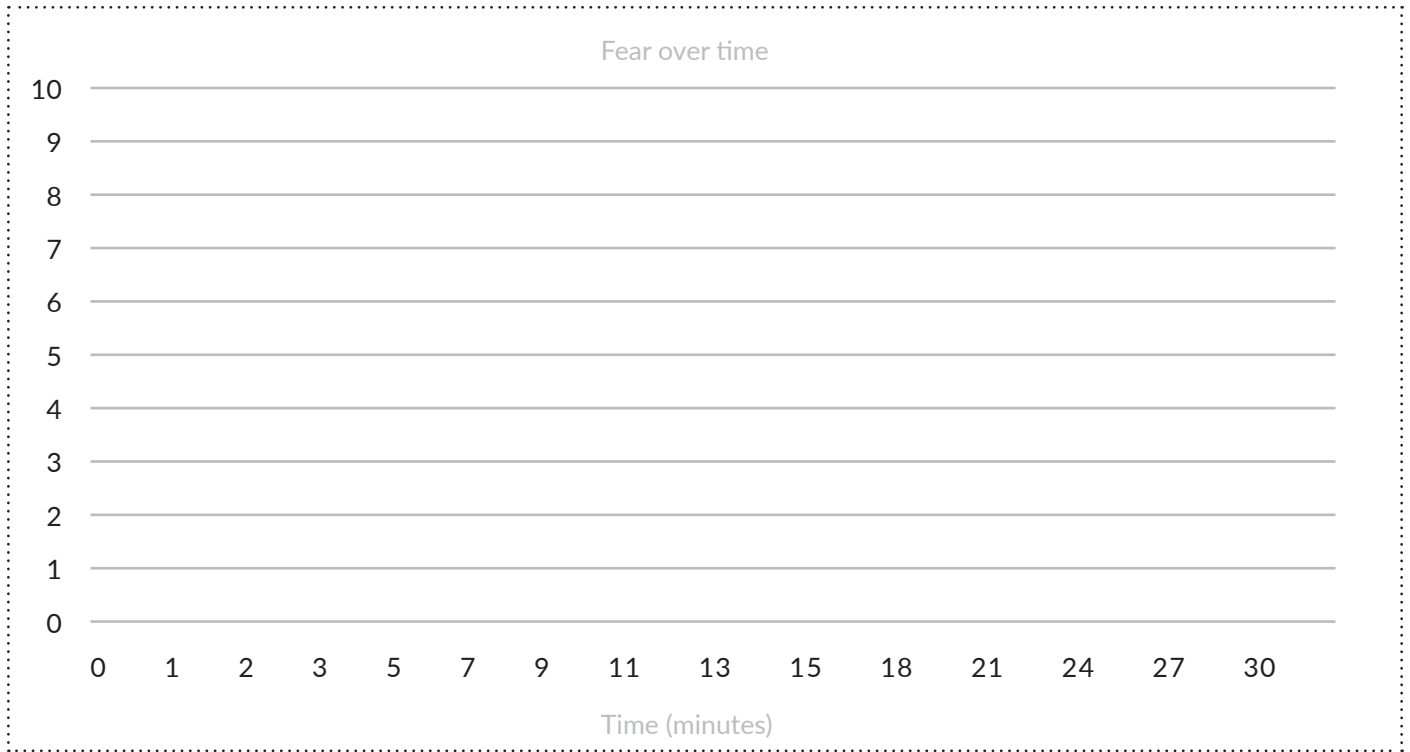
Review of things you did to help achieve goals between sessions? What helped/didn't help? What have you learnt?



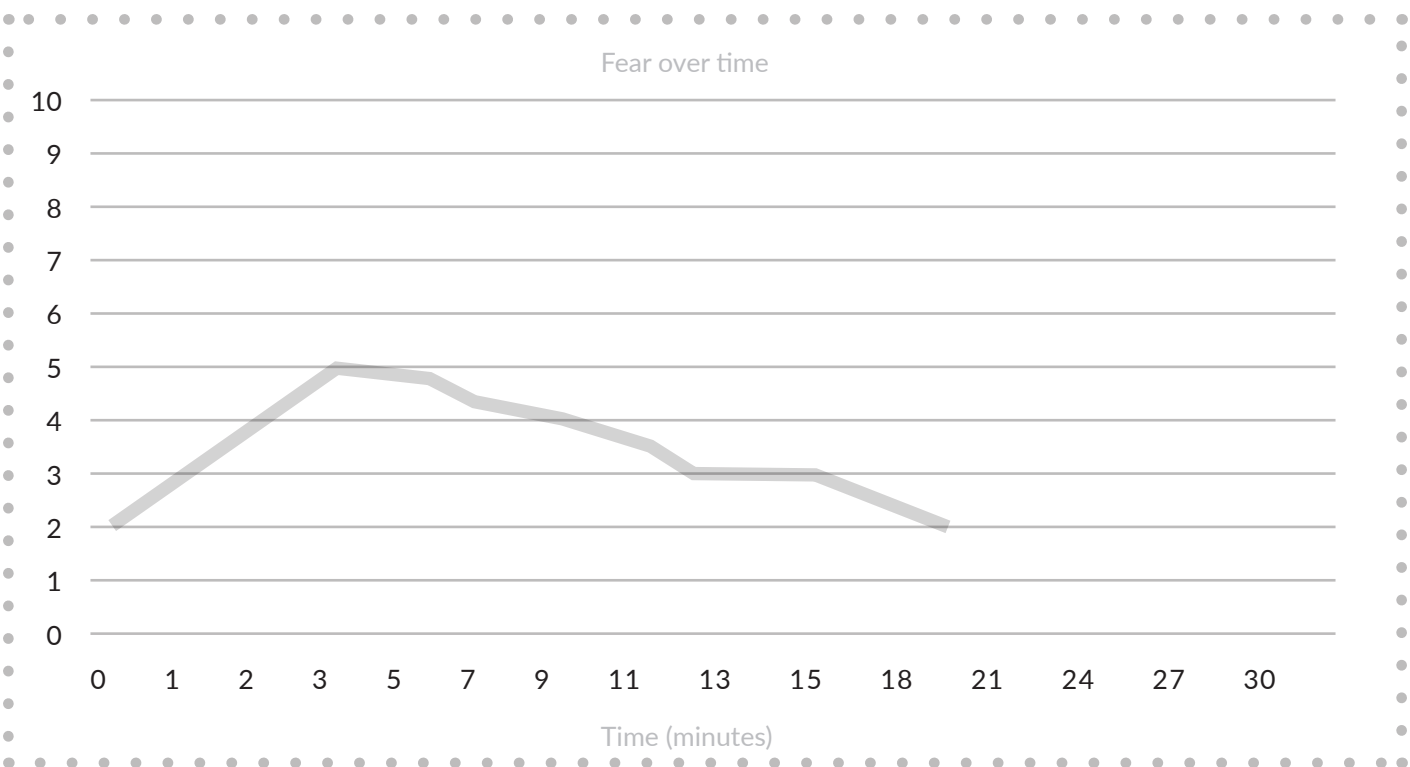
Facing your Fears

With the support of your practitioner carry out the first step on your facing fear step by step plan if you haven't already completed at home. Review your progress below.

It might be helpful for you and your practitioner to check in with how anxious you feel when doing the exposure. If it is, you might choose to plot this out on the graph below:



For example:



What happened? Did what you feared would happen, happen? What have you learnt from completing this step on your ladder? What have you found out about anxiety? What does this mean about the feared situation? How will you take this forward in your life?

Now keep repeating this step and even practice it in different places, or at different times of the day until you feel more and more confident and less and less anxious about that situation. If this isn't happening, don't worry, talk to your practitioner! Use the exposure rating sheet to help monitor your progress if that is helpful. Keep a log of your learning after each exposure task. Once you have done this make a plan for the next step on your ladder/step by step plan.



Facing your Fear Plan

Let's make a plan to support you to keep facing your fears over the next week.


What is the next step? Or how can you repeat the current step?

What do you need to do to achieve this step? Think about when/where, what are you going to do and who will be with you? What do you predict/fear will happen? With your practitioner make sure your planned step really tests out whether your fear will happen or not. You may plan this first step to be completed in your next session with your practitioner or at home between sessions.

Are there any unhelpful habits you need to drop/throw away when facing your fear? Are there any helpful coping strategies/tools that can support you?

Unhelpful habits to drop	Helpful coping to use

What problems might you encounter? Is there anything that will stop you from facing your fear? How could you overcome this?



How did it go?

Empty rectangular box for writing the response to "How did it go?"

What did I learn?

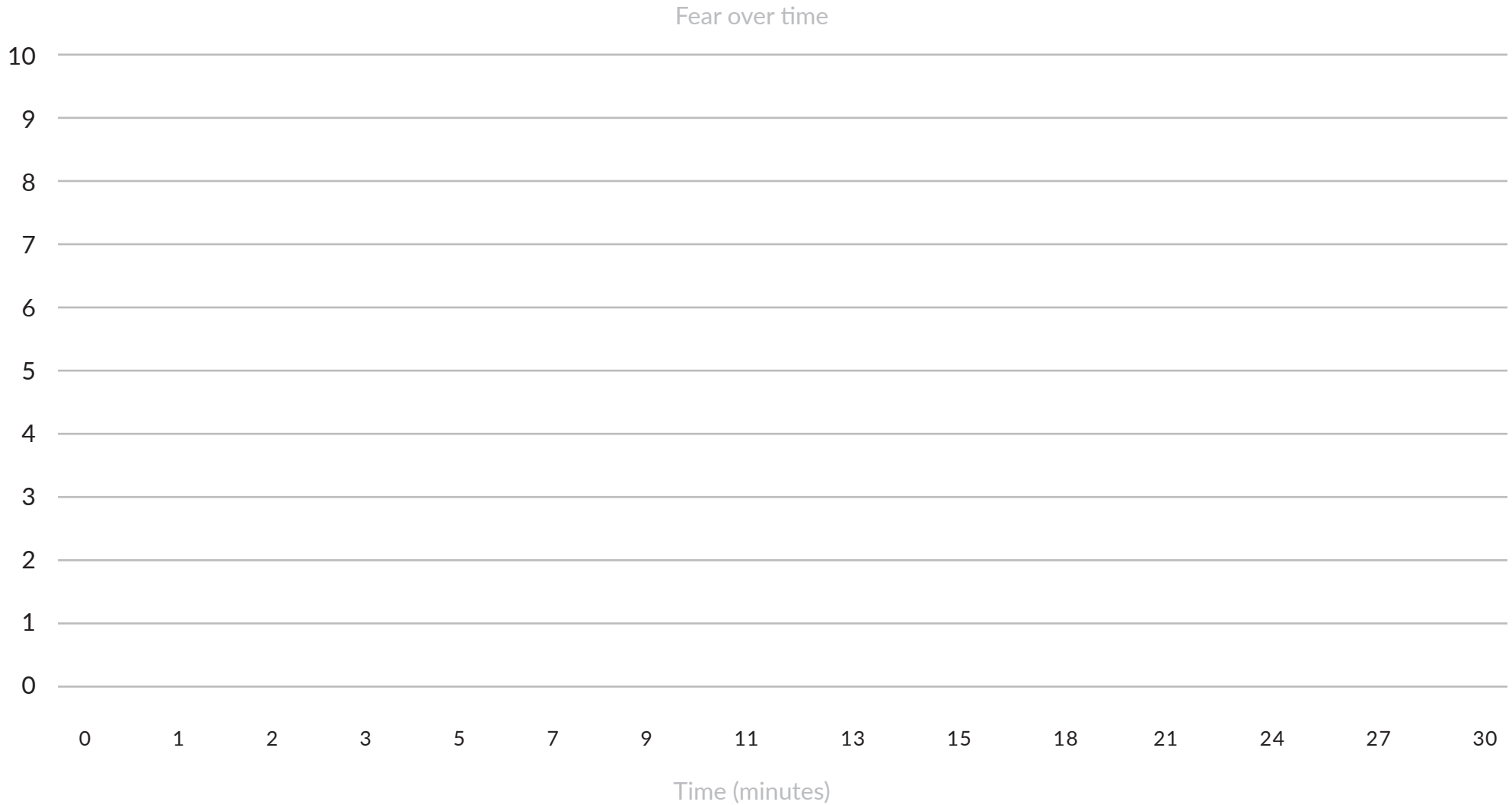
What happened? Did what you feared would happen, happen? What have you learnt from completing this step on your ladder? What have you found out about anxiety? What does this mean about the feared situation? How will you take this forward in your life?



Exposure rating sheet

Track your anxiety over time. You can use the same graph to plot each time you do it, or use different sheets each time.

Date and time: _____ Situation/Step on fear ladder _____



Session summary

What do you want to share from today's session with your back-up team?

Progress check – complete your ROMS and session ratings with your practitioner.

What are you going to do between sessions to help you achieve your goals?


Any questions/concerns after session to bring back next time

Session 4

Facing Fears Review

What do we need to talk about today? Are there any questions/concerns or particular things you want to discuss in today's session?

Review of things you did to help achieve goals between sessions? What helped/didn't help? What have you learnt?

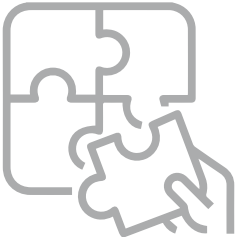


Facing Fears Review Sheet

With the support of your practitioner review the last facing your fears step you completed at home.

What happened? What have you learnt from completing this step on your ladder? What have you found out about anxiety?

Were there any problems? How can you overcome these?



Facing your Fear Plan

Let's make a plan to support you with the next step on your step by step ladder. Keep using the exposure review record to monitor your progress.


What is the next step?

What do you need to do to achieve this step? Think about when/where, what are you going to do and who will be with you? What do you predict/fear will happen? With your practitioner make sure your planned step really tests out whether your fear will happen or not. You may plan this first step to be completed in your next session with your practitioner or at home between sessions.

Are there any unhelpful habits you need to drop/throw away when facing your fear? Are there any helpful coping strategies/tools that can support you?

Unhelpful habits to drop	Helpful coping to use

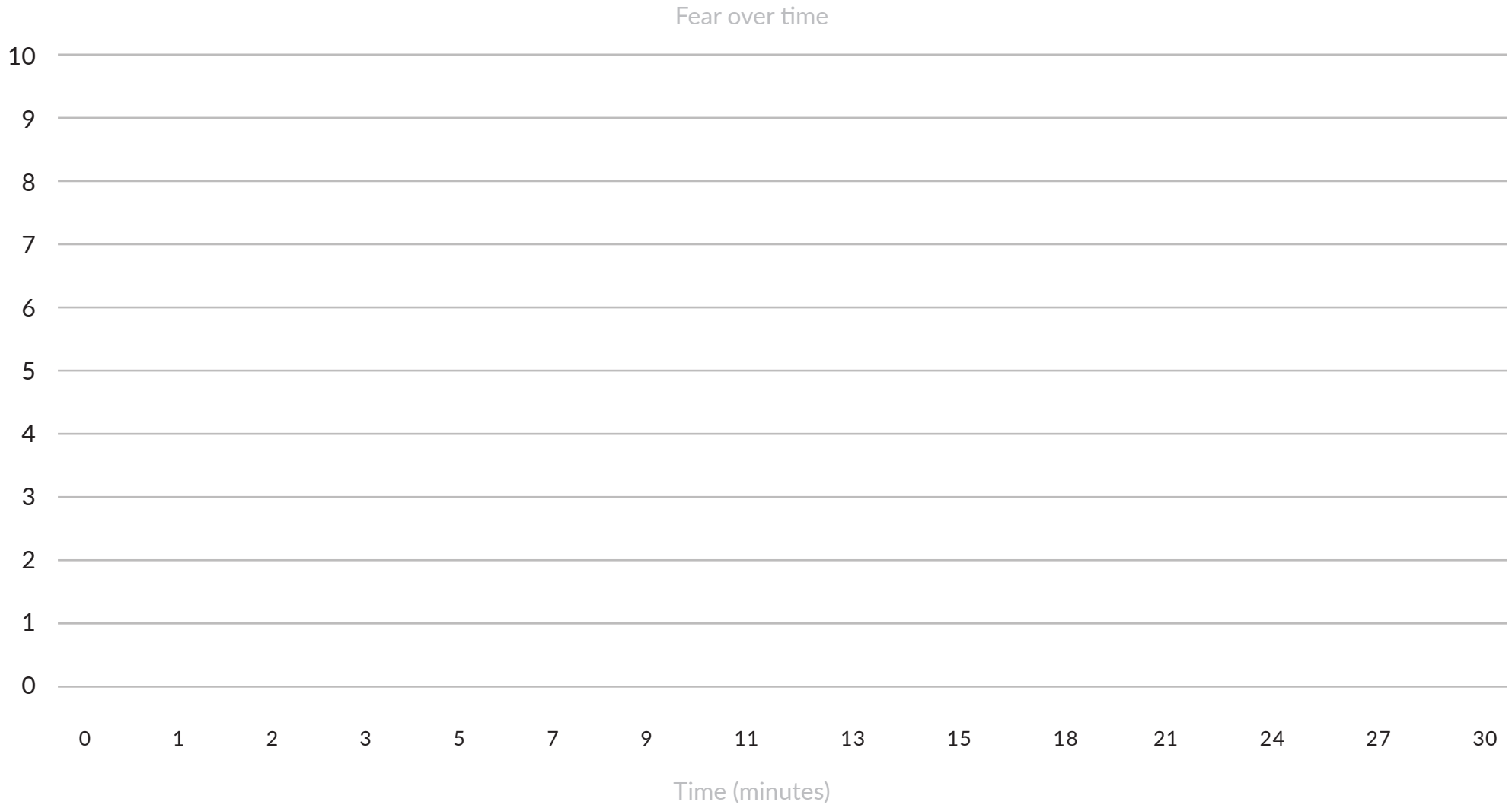
What problems might you encounter? Is there anything that will stop you from facing your fear? How could you overcome this?



Exposure rating sheet

Track your anxiety over time. You can use the same graph to plot each time you do it, or use different sheets each time.

Date and time: _____ Situation/Step on fear ladder _____



How did it go?

What did I learn?

What happened? Did what you feared would happen, happen? What have you learnt from completing this step on your ladder? What have you found out about anxiety? What does this mean about the feared situation? How will you take this forward in your life?



Session summary

What do you want to share from today's session with your back-up team?

Progress check – complete your ROMS and session ratings with your practitioner.

What are you going to do between sessions to help you achieve your goals?


Any questions/concerns after session to bring back next time

Session 5

Facing Fears Review

What do we need to talk about today? Are there any questions/concerns or particular things you want to discuss in today's session?

Review of things you did to help achieve goals between sessions? What helped/didn't help? What have you learnt?

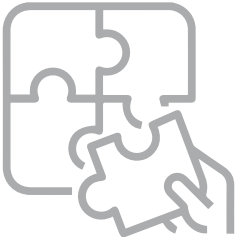


Facing your Fear Review Sheet

With the support of your practitioner review the last facing your fears step you completed at home.

What happened? What have you learnt from completing this step on your ladder? What have you found out about anxiety?

Were there any problems? How can you overcome these?



Facing your Fear Plan

Let's make a plan to support you with the next step on your step by step ladder. Keep using the exposure review record to monitor your progress.

What is the next step?

What do you need to do to achieve this step? Think about when/where, what are you going to do and who will be with you? What do you predict/fear will happen? With your practitioner make sure your planned step really tests out whether your fear will happen or not. You may plan this first step to be completed in your next session with your practitioner or at home between sessions.

Are there any unhelpful habits you need to drop/throw away when facing your fear? Are there any helpful coping strategies/tools that can support you?

Unhelpful habits to drop	Helpful coping to use

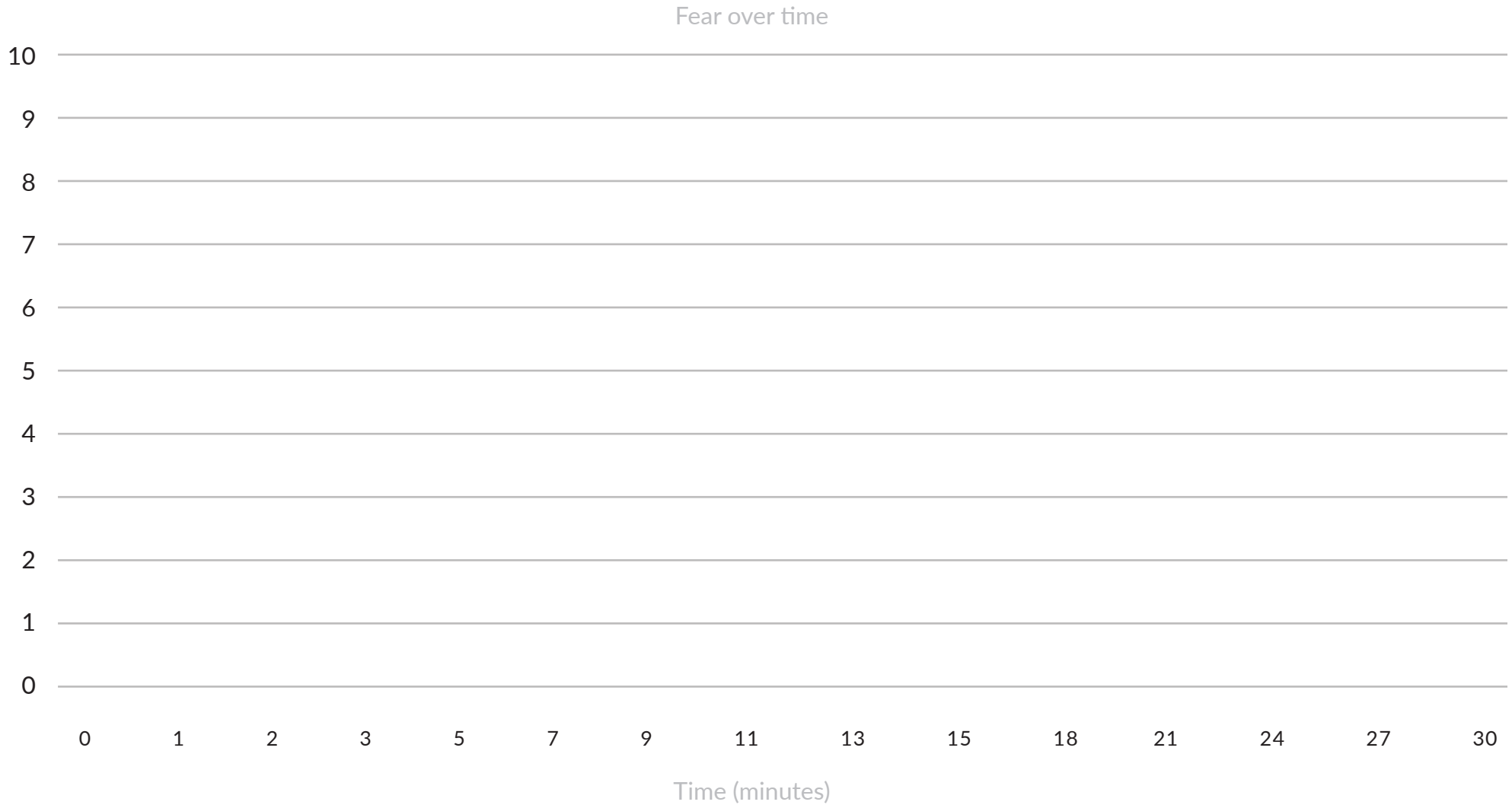
What problems might you encounter? Is there anything that will stop you from facing your fear? How could you overcome this?



Exposure rating sheet

Track your anxiety over time. You can use the same graph to plot each time you do it, or use different sheets each time.

Date and time: _____ Situation/Step on fear ladder _____



How did it go?

What did I learn?

What happened? Did what you feared would happen, happen? What have you learnt from completing this step on your ladder? What have you found out about anxiety? What does this mean about the feared situation? How will you take this forward in your life?

Session summary

What do you want to share from today's session with your back-up team?

Progress check – complete your ROMS and session ratings with your practitioner.

What are you going to do between sessions to help you achieve your goals?


Any questions/concerns after session to bring back next time

Session 6

Facing Fears Review

What do we need to talk about today? Are there any questions/concerns or particular things you want to discuss in today's session?

Review of things you did to help achieve goals between sessions? What helped/didn't help? What have you learnt?



Facing your Fear Review Sheet

With the support of your practitioner review the last facing your fears step you completed at home.

What happened? What have you learnt from completing this step on your ladder? What have you found out about anxiety?

Were there any problems? How can you overcome these?



Facing your Fear Plan

Let's make a plan to support you with the next step on your step by step ladder. Keep using the exposure review record to monitor your progress.

What is the next step?

What do you need to do to achieve this step? Think about when/where, what are you going to do and who will be with you? What do you predict/fear will happen? With your practitioner make sure your planned step really tests out whether your fear will happen or not. You may plan this first step to be completed in your next session with your practitioner or at home between sessions.

Are there any unhelpful habits you need to drop/throw away when facing your fear? Are there any helpful coping strategies/tools that can support you?

Unhelpful habits to drop	Helpful coping to use

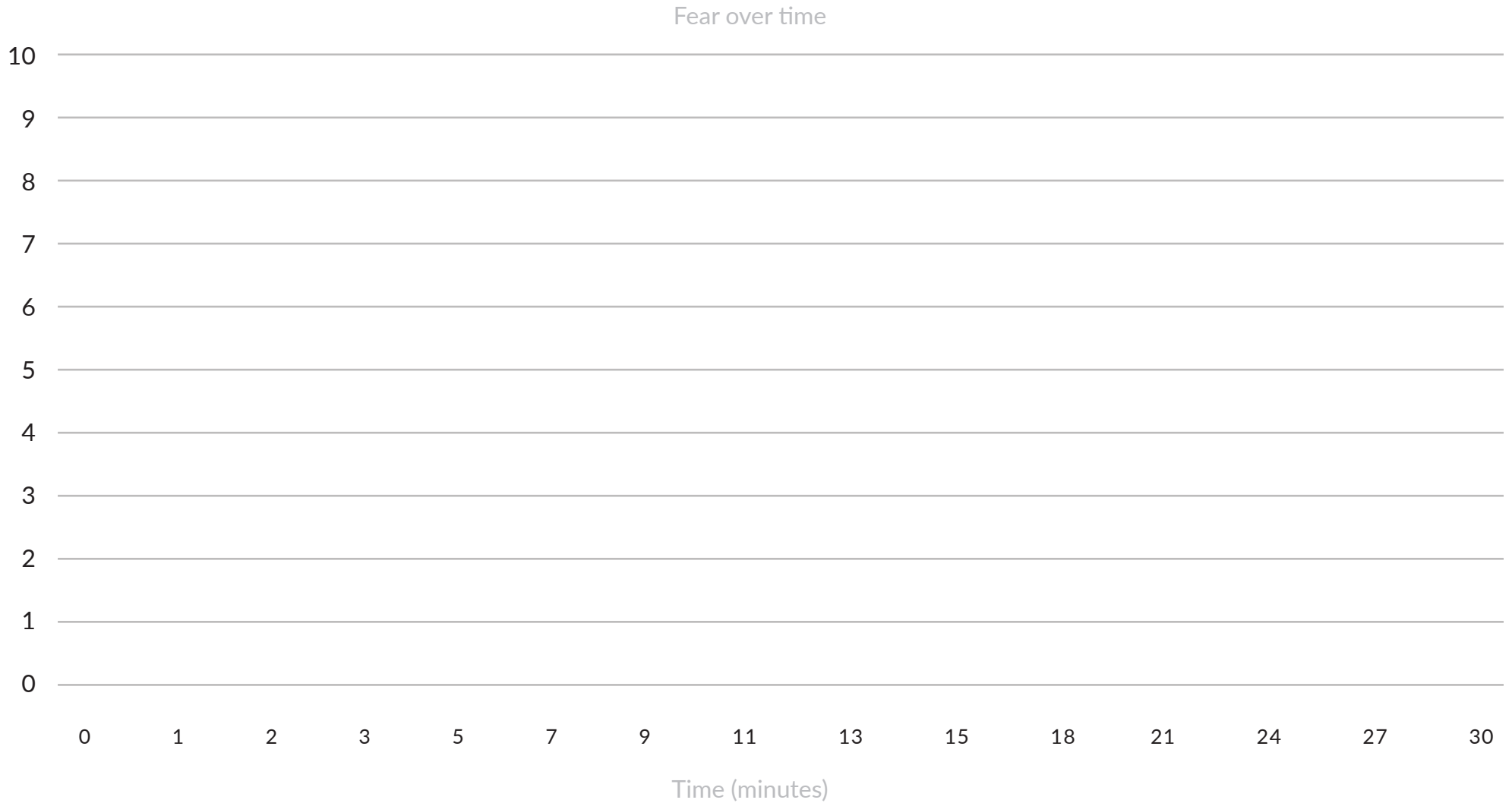
What problems might you encounter? Is there anything that will stop you from facing your fear? How could you overcome this?



Exposure rating sheet

Track your anxiety over time. You can use the same graph to plot each time you do it, or use different sheets each time.

Date and time: _____ Situation/Step on fear ladder _____



How did it go?

What did I learn?

What happened? Did what you feared would happen, happen? What have you learnt from completing this step on your ladder? What have you found out about anxiety? What does this mean about the feared situation? How will you take this forward in your life?

Session summary

What do you want to share from today's session with your back-up team?

Progress check – complete your ROMS and session ratings with your practitioner.

What are you going to do between sessions to help you achieve your goals?


Any questions/concerns after session to bring back next time

Session 7

Progress review

What do we need to talk about today? Are there any questions/concerns or particular things you want to discuss in today's session?

Review of things you did to help achieve goals between sessions? What helped/didn't help? What have you learnt?



How are we doing?

How are we doing in relation to the goals you set at the beginning of sessions? Use your scores on ROMs and goal ratings to help review this.

Are there any areas that we still need to think about/discuss in relation to your goals? Do we need to review and plan further facing fear steps? Are there additional things that you would like support with or to discuss before our sessions end? Any particular problems that we need to think about?



Problem solving

We all experience different problems at various times in our lives. The nature of these problems varies, as well as the impact they have on us, but they often cause us stress and anxiety. Learning how to break problems down and resolve them can be an incredibly helpful skill to develop in order to help reduce worry and stress.

Think with your practitioner about a problem that you have currently and would like to try to resolve. This might be in relation to something that is getting in the way of you being able to complete your exposure tasks or may be not having enough time to study or not having enough money to do the things that you want to do.

When you have agreed on a problem to try and resolve, write it below and follow the steps to come up with a plan to try out.

What is the problem? Try to be as clear as possible and think about what you would like to achieve by resolving the problem.

Example

Problem: I can't complete the final step on my facing fear plan (going to the cinema) as I don't have enough money

Problem: _____

Step 1: Think about all the possible solutions to this problem and write them below. It doesn't matter how unusual or realistic the solution is, write all possibilities down.

Solution	For	Against

Step 2: Chose a solution to try. It can be helpful to think about all the reasons “for” and “against” each possible solution to help you decide which is the best option to try out. Write down your chosen solution below.

Solution:

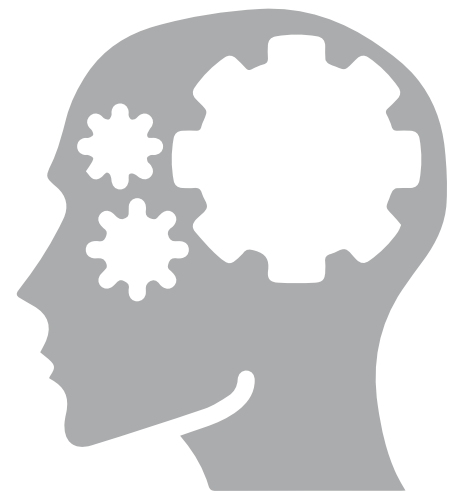
Step 3: Break down the solution into steps. Breaking down your solution into smaller steps can help to make it more manageable and achievable, in a similar way to your step by step plan for facing fears.

For example:

Solution: *Get a part time job to earn money so I can go to the cinema*

This could be broken down into the following steps.

1. Look in local newspapers/websites for job adverts
2. Speak to my friend who already has a part-time job
3. Identify suitable jobs to apply for
4. Apply for jobs
5. Prepare for and attend interviews



Write down the steps for your solution below.

Solution:
Step 1
Step 2
Step 3
Step 4
Step 5

Step 4: Try out your solution and review the outcome. Put your plan to resolve the problem into action and once complete review the outcome. If you have resolved the problem this is fantastic, but if not then think about whether there are alternative solutions or changes that can be made to your original solution.

What was the outcome? Is there anything else you need to do to resolve the problem?

Summary of what discussed in progress review session and plan.



Session summary

What do you want to share from today's session with your back-up team?

Progress check – complete your ROMS and session ratings with your practitioner.

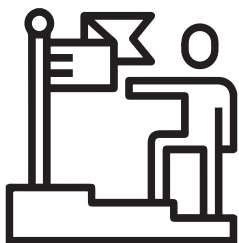
What are you going to do between sessions to help you achieve your goals?

Any questions/concerns after session to bring back next time

Session 8

Staying well

What do we need to talk about today? Are there any questions/concerns or particular things you want to discuss in today's session?



Review of things you did to help achieve goals between sessions? What helped/didn't help? What have you learnt?



Staying well plan

What did you want to achieve at the start of sessions? Were there particular problems or difficulties you wanted support to overcome?

What is your understanding of what was keeping these problems/difficulties going?

Have things got any better? How do you know?

What has helped you to overcome these problems/difficulties?

How would you know if the problems/difficulties were getting worse again?

What could you do if this happened?

Short term goals:



Long term goals:



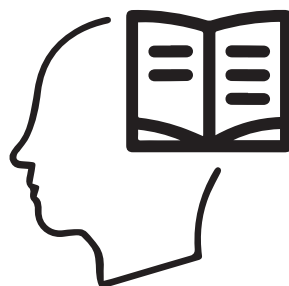
Write down what will happen next. Are any additional referrals being made for further support? Is there a date for a planned review?

Who can I speak to now our sessions have finished?

There are lots of ways you can get extra help now your sessions are finished, including using the resources suggested below.

Books

- Biegel, G.M. (2009). *The Stress Reduction Workbook for Teens: Mindfulness Skills to Help You Deal with Stress*. California: New Harbinger
- Ciarrochi, J. Hayes, L. & Bailey, A. (2012). *Get Out of Your Mind and Into Your Life for Teens: A Guide to Living an Extraordinary Life*. California: New Harbinger
- Ford, E., Liebowitz, M. & Wasmer Andrews, L. (2007). *What You Must Think of Me: A Firsthand Account of One Teenager's Experience with Social Anxiety Disorder*. U.S.A., Oxford University Press.
- Schab, L. M. (2009). *The Anxiety Workbook for Teens: Activities to Help You Deal with Anxiety and Worry*. California: New Harbinger
- Shannon, J, Shannon, D. & Padesky, C. (2012). *The Shyness and Social Anxiety Workbook for Teens: CBT and ACT Skills to Help You Build Self-Confidence*. California: New Harbinger
- Stallard, P. (2002). *Think Good – Feel Good: A cognitive behaviour therapy workbook for children and young people*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons. (plus, additional online resources after purchasing book <http://www.wileyurope.com/go/thinkgoodfeelgood>)
- Tompkins, Michael. A. & Martinez, Katherine, A. (2009). *My Anxious Mind: A Teen's Guide to Managing Anxiety and Panic*. Washington: Magination Press



Helplines

- Childline **0800 11 11** (free confidential 24hr helpline for young people who are aged up to 19 years old)
- Samaritans **08457 90 90 90**
(free confidential 24-hour helpline)
- Papyrus HOPELineUK **0800 068 41 41** (free confidential helpline for anyone concerned about a young person at risk of harming themselves. Open weekdays 10am – 5pm, 7pm – 10pm; weekends 2pm – 5pm)



Websites

- www.livinglifetothefull.com
(a useful website with a range of booklets, worksheets and computer-based self-help modules)
- <http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/>
(a self-help site full of resources and booklets for dealing with depression, anxiety and other difficulties)
- <https://moodgym.anu.edu.au>
(free web-based CBT programme, which includes modules on assertiveness and inter-personal skills)
- www.anxietycanada.com
(a useful website with information for young people and parents on different types of anxiety and ways to overcome it)
- <http://www.thesite.org>
The Site (online guide to life for young people 16 years and over)
- Childline www.childline.org.uk
If you would prefer to speak to a counsellor online:
<http://www.childline.org.uk/talk/chat/pages/onlinechat.aspx>
(or you can exchange emails with a counsellor.)
- <http://www.papyrus-uk.org/support/for-you>
& <http://www.papyrus-uk.org/support/for-parents>
(advice and support for young people dealing with self-harm and emotional distress and for those who are worried about them).
- Harmless www.harmless.org.uk
(user-led organisation that includes a range of information and support for people who self-harm)

Support groups

- **Young Minds** (Charity committed to improving the mental health of young people. Support for those worried about a young person's behaviour or mental health. Provides information leaflets) www.youngminds.org.uk/
- **Rethink** (Provides information and a helpline for anyone affected by mental health problems) Helpline **0300 500 0927** www.rethink.org
- **Mind** (Provides information on mental health problems and treatments): Helpline **0300 123 3393** (Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm) www.mind.org.uk



Coping strategies



Controlled or calm breathing

When we get anxious and the fight/flight/freeze response is triggered our breathing often becomes very fast and shallow. Learning how to slow our breathing down and ensure that we use all of our lung capacity can be a really helpful way of calming down and reducing feelings of general anxiety and stress. It's really important initially to practice this skill when you are in a calm and quiet place. Once you have practiced it a lot and feel confident, it is then much easier to use to help you calm down at times when you are anxious or stressed.

Find somewhere comfortable to sit or lie down.

1. *Put one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach.*
2. *Take a deep breath in slowly through your nose for 7 seconds; both your hands should rise gently as you breathe.*
3. *Hold the breath for 2 seconds.*
4. *Release the breath slowly for 11 seconds.*
5. *Repeat*

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

This technique can help you recognise how different your body feels when you are tense and when you are relaxed. Learning to relax your muscles when thinking of a key word, such as relax, can help at times when you feel stressed and anxious. Tense each muscle in the series below for 5 seconds and then release the tension whilst thinking of the word "relax". Notice how different it feels when you relax the muscles.

Hands – *clench your left fist and then relax, do the same with your right.*

Arms – *bend your elbows and tense your arm and bicep and then relax.*

Neck – *press your head back and roll it from side to side slowly. Feel the tension moving and then bring your head back into a comfortable position.*

Face – *focus on the jaw and forehead. Lower your eyebrows into a frown and then raise them. After 5 seconds relax them and clench your jaw for 5 seconds and then relax.*

Chest – *take a deep breath and notice your chest rising. Hold it for 5 seconds and relax.*

Stomach – *tense your stomach as tight as you can and then relax.*

Legs – *straighten your legs and stretch out as far as possible. Bend your feet up towards your face. After 5 seconds of tensing, wiggle your toes and relax.*



Grounding Techniques

Helping to find ways to focus on the here and now when you are feeling very anxious and lost in your worries can be really helpful. Below are a couple of strategies that you might want to practice and try using when you are anxious.

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Describe/name 5 things you can see

Describe/name 4 things you can touch

Describe/name 3 things you can hear

Describe/name 2 things you can smell

Describe/name 1 thing you can taste



Colours

Find 3 things in the room that are red/yellow/green etc..

The aim of the above strategies is not to distract you from your thoughts or replace those thoughts but to help you focus on what is happening around you and where you are, rather than focusing on your body sensations or your thinking. If you do experience anxious or upsetting thoughts while you are doing the exercises, just notice they are there, let them go and try to focus back on the things you are trying to describe.

There are lots of other resources and techniques that you may also find helpful. Here are a few websites to check out.

www.youth.anxietycanada.com

www.youngminds.org.uk

NHS apps library:

<https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/>