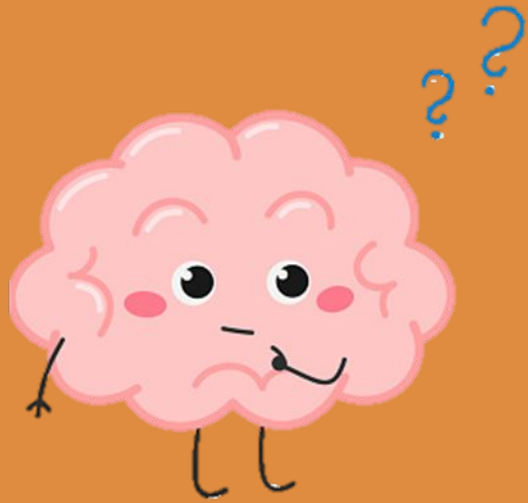


# Anxiety

Dr Joe Vacher – Clinical Psychologist



# Nice to meet you!

Dr Joe Vacher

Clinical Psychologist in Child and  
Adolescent Mental Health Services

Wellbeing and Mental Health in  
Schools (WAMHS) Project



A graphic of a spiral-bound notebook with a white page and an orange background. The spiral binding is at the top. The page contains the title 'Setting the Scene' and a bulleted list.

## Setting the Scene

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- Your safe space
- Use of jargon/acronyms
- Informal – ask questions!

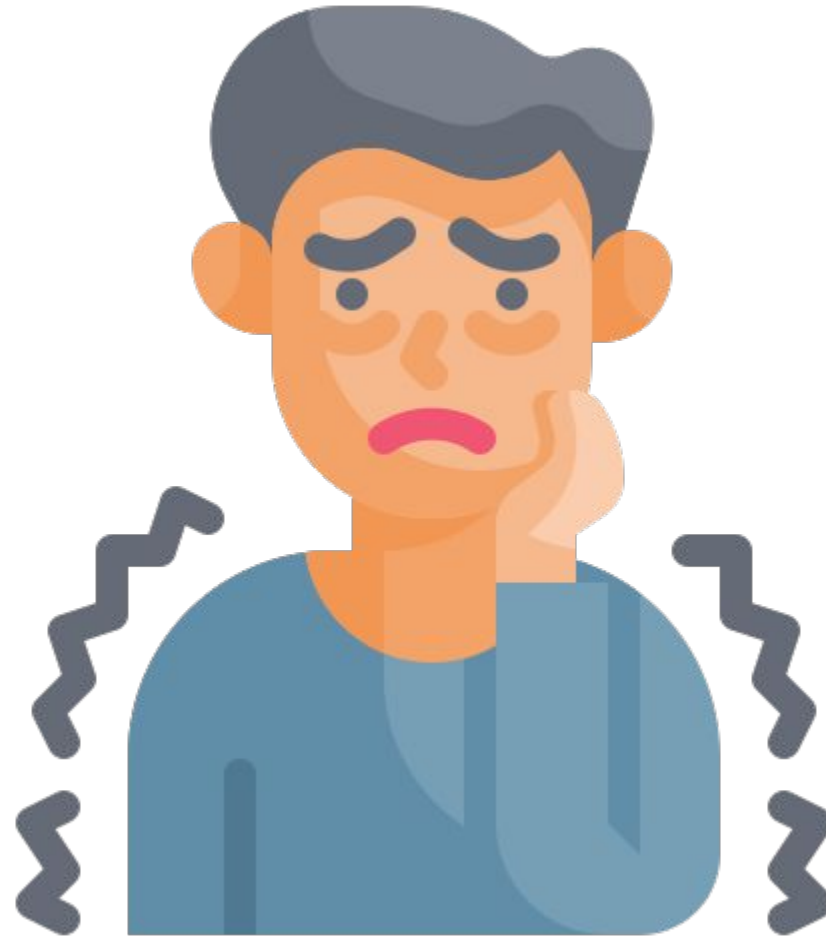
# Learning aims

- What is anxiety?
- What makes us anxious?
- Anxious thoughts



Anxiety

Worry



Discomfort

Activity time!

*How many people on the planet  
experience **anxiety**?*

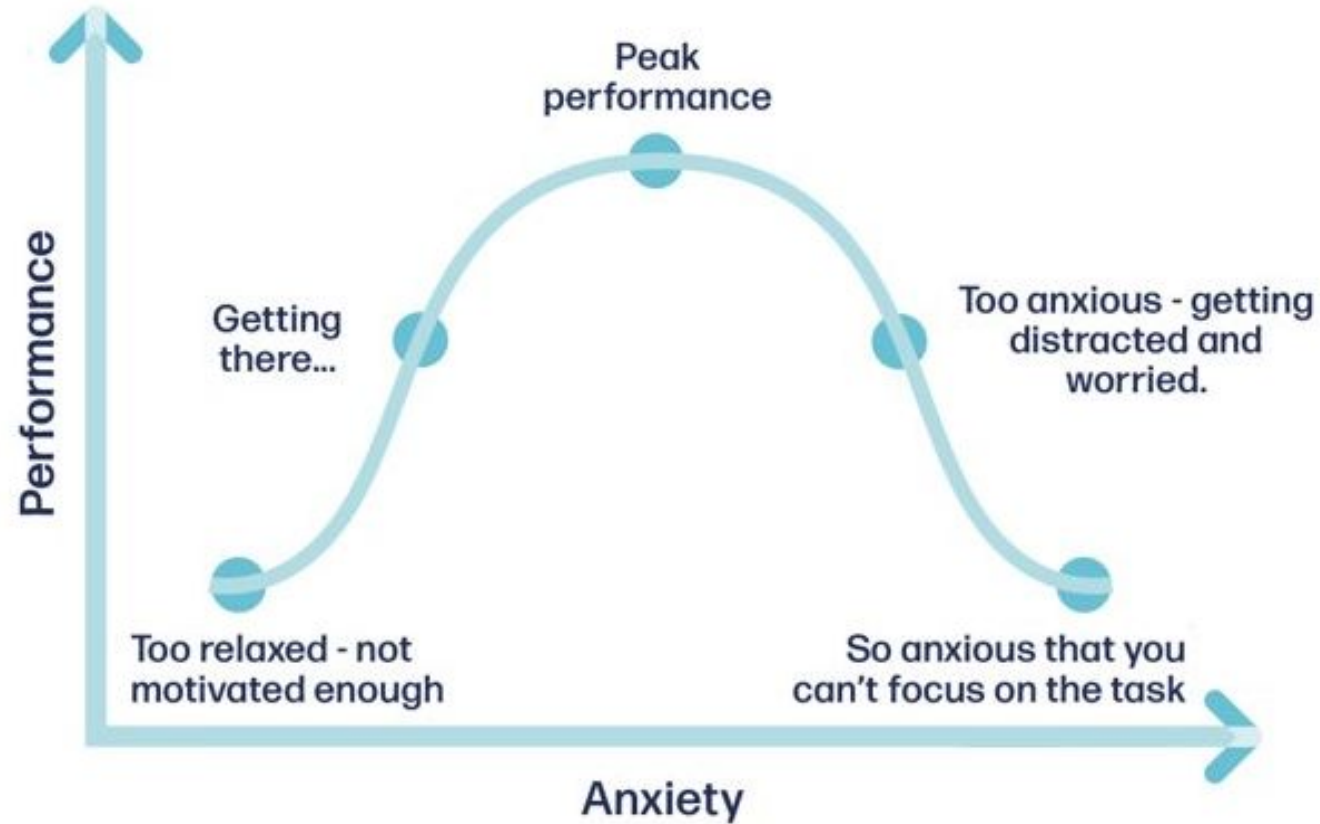


**EVERYBODY!**

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# The anxiety curve



Anna Freud

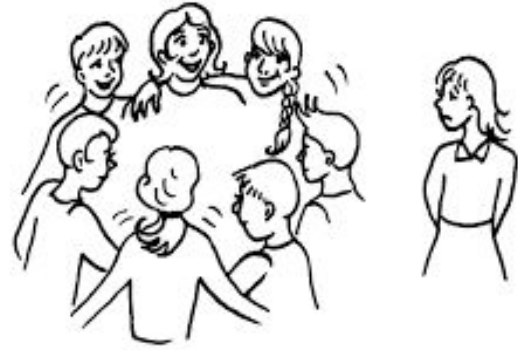
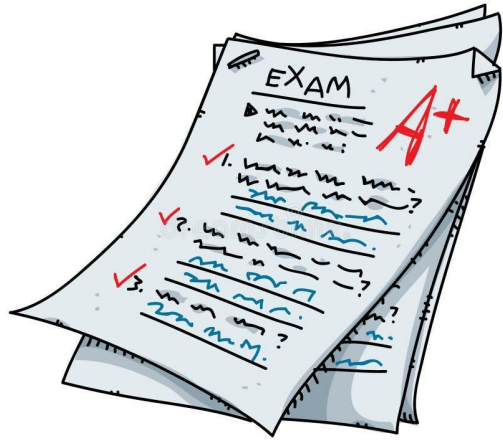
# How to speak about anxiety

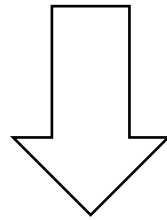


- **Normalise.** Everyone experiences anxiety!
- **Externalise.** Label the anxiety – maybe even give it a name!
- **Review together:** What might be the triggers? Where are they feeling changes in their body?
- **Comfort:** Let them know that they are safe, and you are always there to support them.
- **Plan:** How can you challenge the anxiety together little and often?

*What **events** might make your child  
**anxious?***









I will get lost!

I will not make any  
friends!

I will fail!

My teachers will  
not like me!



Look out for  
**"Thinking Traps"**

## **Black & White Thinking**

I am always wrong

## **Emotional Reasoning**

I *feel* ugly, so I must *be* ugly

## **Should & Must**

I should have at least 5 best friends

## **Catastrophising**

I will fail the exam and be kicked out of school

## **Mind Reading**

They think I am weird

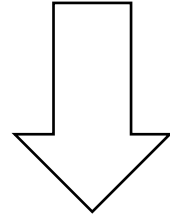
## **Ignoring the Positive**

I passed the exam because I was lucky

*How can you help your child escape  
the **thinking trap**?*

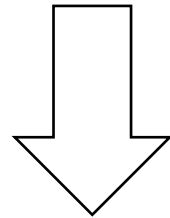


"I am *always* wrong"



**Label it together!**

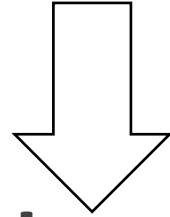
*Black & White Thinking*



**Balance it together!**

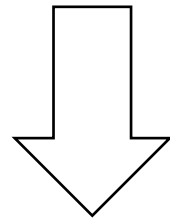
*"We all make mistakes – that does not  
define who we are"*

"I *feel* fat, so I *must be*  
fat"



**Label it together!**

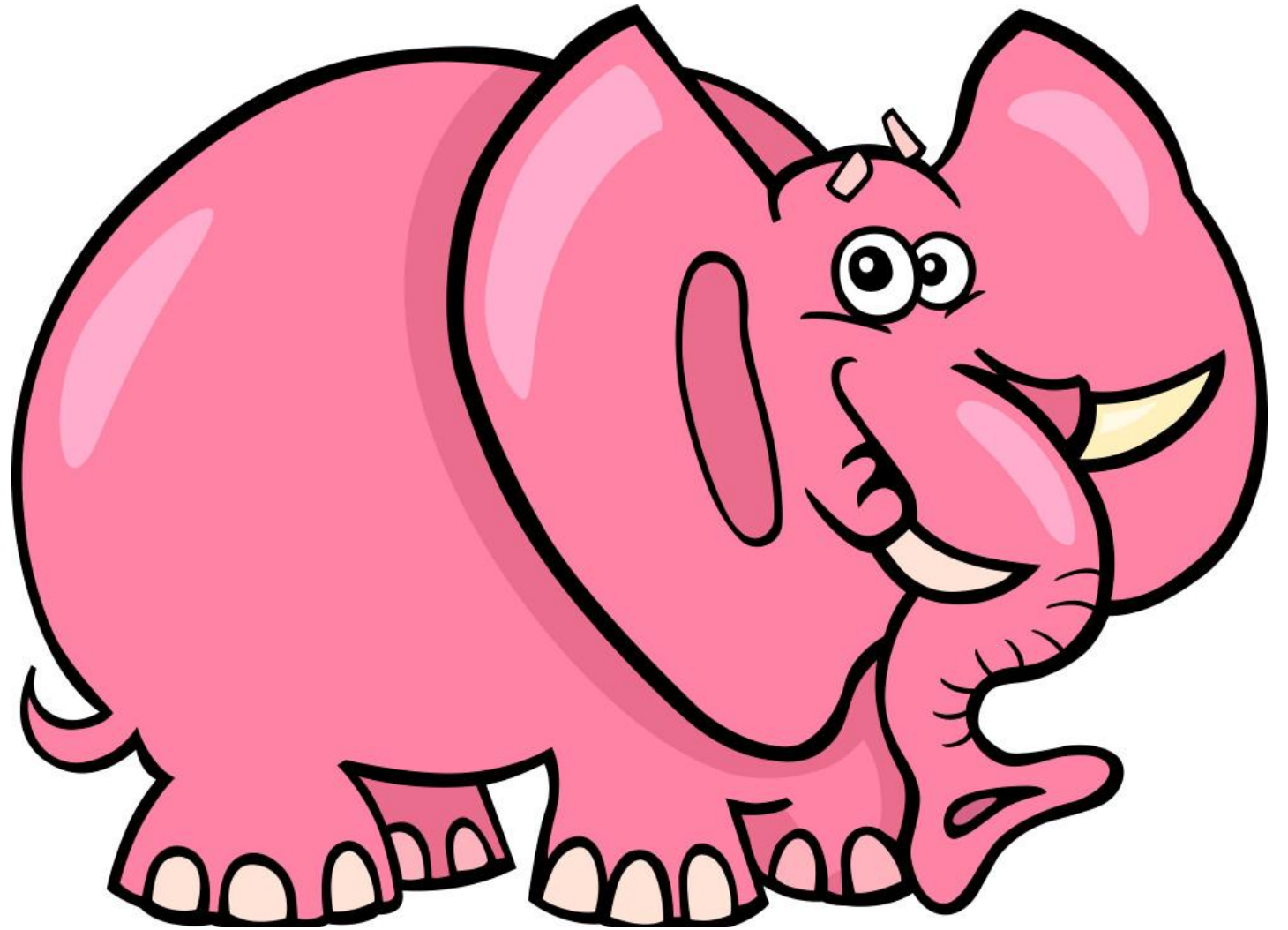
*Emotional Reasoning*



**Balance it together!**

*"Just because I think/feel something does  
not automatically make it true"*

**EXERCISE**





**EXERCISE**

*What happened?*

# Negative Thoughts on Trial

Here is my negative thought...

*No one likes me*

## Weigh up the evidence

**FOR**

*No one asked me to play  
No one picks me as a  
partner*

**AGAINST**

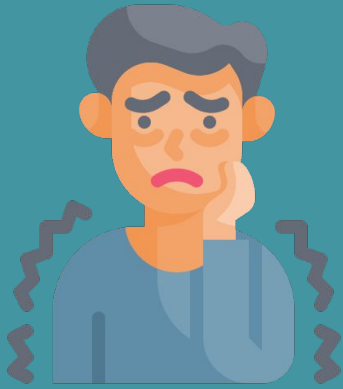
*Sarah smiled at me today  
Lucy helped me with my  
homework  
I got invited to Susan's  
birthday party*

©Elsa-Support

Here is my new positive thought...

*Some people like me, and I can always make more friends.*

# Remember...



Everybody experiences anxiety!

You can shrink the anxiety!

Talking

Identify Thinking Traps

Challenge the Thought



# Thank you!

