

Curious Questioning

To encourage our young people to trust their internal voice, and try independent thinking, we can consider reducing parental reassurance and using curious questioning to encourage them to come to their own conclusions and think independently. Over time this has the potential of increasing confidence, independence and resilience, whilst reducing anxiety and avoidance behaviours.



The work that we do with young people and their parents is informed by evidence-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and is aimed at treating mild to moderate symptoms, with a particular focus on early intervention and prevention of these difficulties. CBT works by looking at the things that are affecting our mental health and making changes about how we think and behave in response to those things.

Examples of validating, curious questioning and reassurance reducing might include:

- I can hear that sounds really difficult/frustrating/stressful for you, what do you think the main emotion you're feeling is?
- I'm sorry you're finding that so tough, which part of the situation are you most worried about?
- I'm sorry you've been worrying so much about 'X', do you think that's a likely outcome, or a worst-case scenario?
- I notice that you're worrying about 'this', what is your most feared outcome in this situation?

Once you've understood your young person's ultimate worry, then you can collaboratively decatastrophise:

- I wonder, why do you think you're worried about that? ...Has that happened to you before?
- What evidence tells us that this might happen? What evidence tells us this might not happen?
- What do you think might be the most likely outcome?
- If your worst feared outcome did come true – how might you cope with it?
- How might you feel a week later? ...a month later? ...a year later?

If you wish to discuss a referral to the MHST, please speak to the Designated Mental Health Lead at your child's school. **Please note: the MHST are not an emergency service. Should your child need urgent support please visit your GP, A&E, or call 111.**



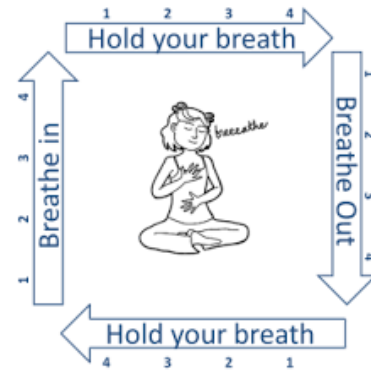
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAMS



Consider creating a Self-Soothe kit, that appeals to all five senses, for your young person to use independently as a regulation tool.

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/video/5-of-7-make-your-own-self-soothe-box/>

Breathing techniques used in the moment can help us to regulate. Used daily, they can help us to increase our tolerance to stress. Activities like square breathing and finger breathing can be found on YouTube.

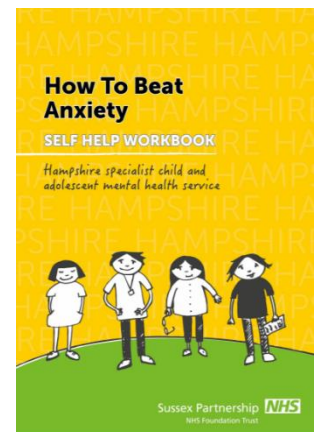


Books:

Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries by Cathy Cresswell and Lucy Willetts

What To Do When You Worry Too Much by Dawn Huebener

Hampshire CAMHS How To Beat Anxiety Workbook – www.hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk



If you wish to discuss a referral to the MHST, please speak to the Designated Mental Health Lead at your child's school. **Please note: the MHST are not an emergency service. Should your child need urgent support please visit your GP, A&E, or call 111.**

