

HELPING KIDS MANAGE ANXIETY

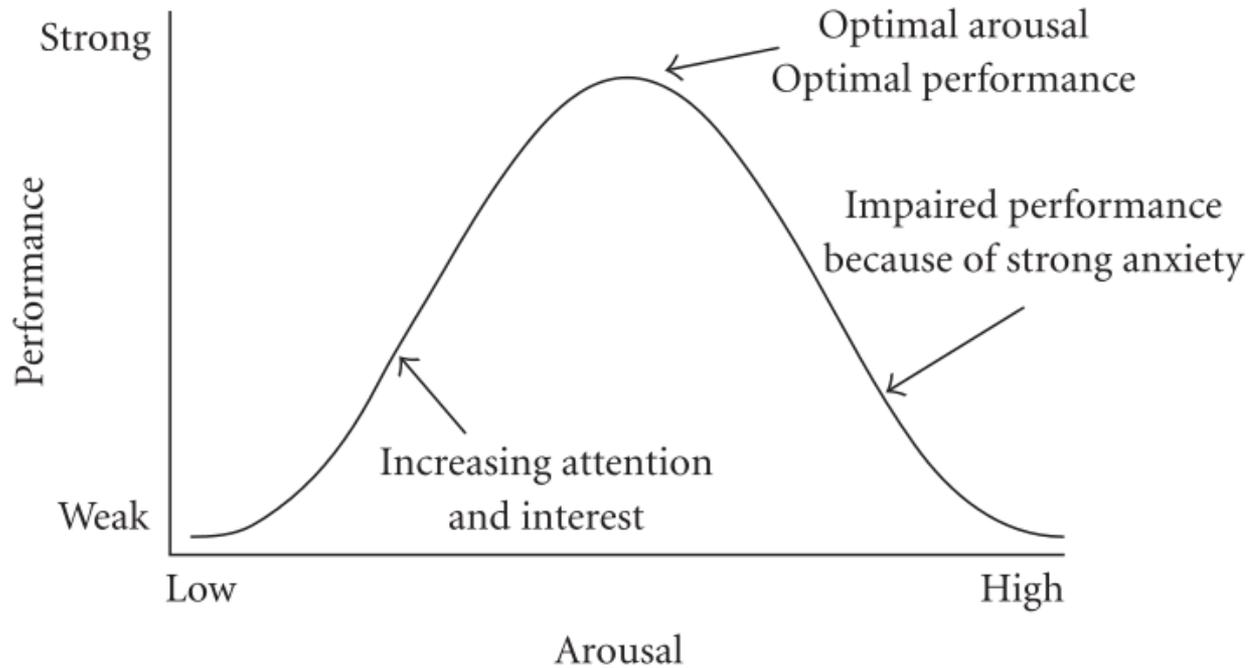
**ALEXANDRA RAMOS DUCHATEAU, PH.D.
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST**

ANXIETY

- What is Anxiety?
 - Characterized by worries, rational or irrational. Can often have physical manifestations.
- Why is anxiety important?
- “Without anxiety, little would be accomplished,” David Barlow.
- Relationship between Anxiety and Performance



YERKES-DODSON LAW (1908)





THE FACE OF ANXIETY

BILL WATTERSON

TYPES OF ANXIETY

- Social Anxiety
- Separation Anxiety
- Academic Anxiety/ test anxiety
- Sports Anxiety
- Public Speaking Anxiety
- Anticipatory anxiety & Catastrophizing
- Generalized Anxiety
- Others: death, crime, relationships, college, finances



ANTICIPATORY ANXIETY



CATASTROPHIZING



WORRIES DON'T HAVE TO BE RATIONAL.....



PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY

- Heart racing
- Knot in the throat
- Nausea
- Dizzy
- Stomach pain
- Sweating
- Headaches
- Feeling cold
- Weak
- Tingly
- Tearful
- Faint
- Breathless
- Butterflies in the stomach

- What I tell kids to explain anxiety...

WHY DO WE GET THESE PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS ?

- In evolutionary terms: Very helpful!
- There is a part of your brain, the amygdala, that turns on when it thinks you are in danger. Its like a fierce warrior and its job is to get you ready to run from danger or fight it. People call this “fight or flight.”
- The amygdala gives your body what it needs to be strong and powerful. It fills your body with oxygen, hormones, and adrenaline that you need to fight or run. It happens really quickly. So if there is something dangerous like a wild dog, then the amygdala is really helpful. But....

Hey Sigmund

CONT.

- Have you ever burned toast and set off the fire alarm? The smoke detector can't tell between the two. The amygdala also can't tell between a wild dog and a new school. Sometimes it switches on before you know why. It is always working to protect you, even when you don't need it.
- If you don't need to fight or flee, then there is nothing to burn off all that fuel : oxygen, adrenaline, and hormones. It builds up and that is why you feel like you do when you have anxiety.

Hey Sigmund

WHEN YOU ARE ANXIOUS....

- Breathing changes to fast little breaths so oxygen gets sent to the muscles to run or fight.
- If not used, the oxygen builds up and we can feel dizzy or confused.
- Fuel gets sent to your arms and legs and this makes your muscles feel tense.
- Body cools by sweating so it doesn't overheat if you fight or flee (this is why you feel sweaty).
- Digestive system shuts down so the fuel used to digest can go to your arms and legs, this is why your tummy hurts.

Hey Sigmund

Can present as
intense anger or
sadness

Physical complaints:
headaches/
stomachaches

Mood swings,
irritability

Concentration
problems

Sleep or eating
problems

Tantrums when
you separate

Extreme shyness

Avoidance of
situations

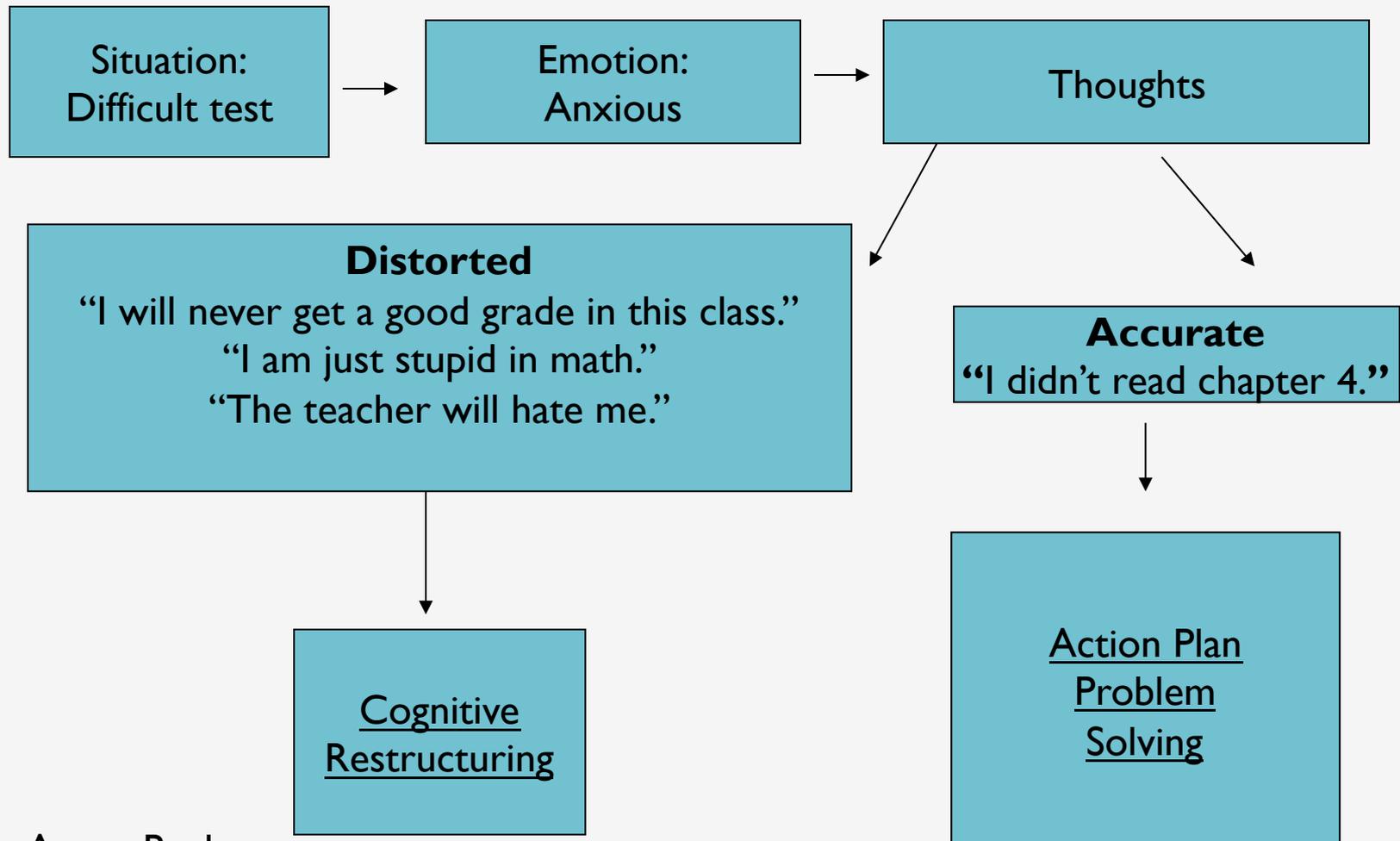
ANXIETY IN KIDS

ANXIOUS MOMENT VS. BASELINE ANXIETY

Goal: learning to cope with high anxiety moments and reducing overall Anxiety.



COGNITIVE ASPECT: ANXIOUS MOMENT



DISTORTIONS OF ANXIETY

- Tricks you into believing you are stupid, incompetent, foolish, and weak.
- Exaggerates and sees danger where none exists!
- You believe that a lot of terrible things are going to happen all at the same time.
- Having an anxious thought doesn't make it true!
You think the elevator will get stuck, doesn't mean it actually will (even though you feel scared).

THE LIES OF ANXIETY

- “I can’t do this.”
- “I will fail.”
- “Something bad is about to happen.”
- “Something will happen that I can’t handle.”
- “I have no friends.”
- “I will make a fool out of myself.”
- “People think I’m stupid.”
- “I will never get into college.”
- “No one likes me.”
- “I’m going to get sick and die.”

- Goal is to identify the distorted thoughts and correct them into:

Accurate and realistic thoughts

This process is called cognitive restructuring.

Its not POSITIVE thinking, since often anxious kids don't trust positive thoughts.

COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING

- The POWER OF LOGIC:
 - Logic is thinking about what is really true vs. what you are afraid might happen.
 - Reminding yourself that really bad things don't happen very often.
 - Even if bad things happen, you'll get through it.
- The POWER of probabilities:
 - Worst case scenario
 - Most likely
 - Best case scenario

Situation	Distorted	Restructured
<p>A group of kids looking at her and laughing.</p>	<p><i>Oh no, they are laughing at me. I must look stupid!</i></p>	<p><i>They are probably laughing about something funny, and I just walked by. I don't actually know that they were laughing at me!</i></p>
<p>Not being invited to a birthday party.</p>	<p><i>She doesn't like me. I bet I am the only one who didn't get invited in the whole class.</i></p>	<p><i>They probably just forgot. Or maybe it was just a small party. I have other good friends.</i></p>
<p>Getting a low grade on a quiz.</p>	<p><i>I suck. I am never going to do well in spelling I don't know why I even try. .</i></p>	<p><i>Well, I tried my hardest. It's only one grade! I will practice more next time.</i></p>

NAME THE LITTLE MONSTER



What lies is he telling you?

TALKING BACK TO YOUR WORRIES



Worry Bully

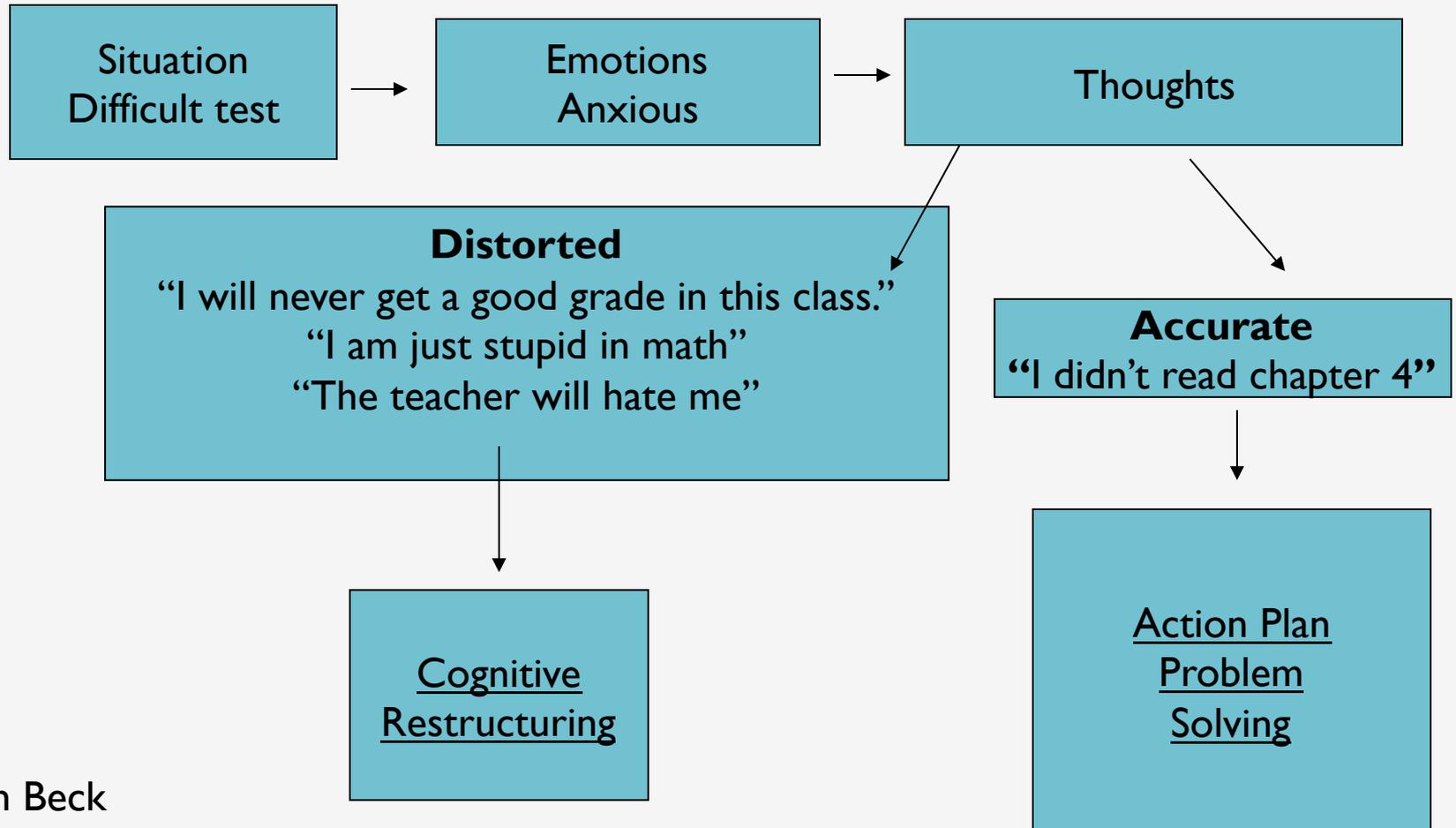


Worry Ally

TALK BACK!

- I don't believe you!
- That's a bunch of GARBAGE!
- LEAVE ME ALONE!
- GET LOST!
- You lie, I am not going to listen to you anymore!
- It will come back quickly....You have to practice talking back to it so that it doesn't see you as a wimp anymore.
- Dawn Huebner, Ph.D.

COGNITIVE ASPECT



WHAT IF THE ANXIETY IS NOT LYING?

- With real stressors, worries are not distorted but a normal reaction.
- Decide if there is no distortion.
- No distortion: Action Plan.
- Is there something I can do to make the situation better?
- No solution? Acceptance.
 - Ex. Medical conditions, deaths, divorce, natural disasters

TEENS

- Distortions are more complex & extreme. Especially of social/romantic relationships & future.
 - Ex. “Everyone hates me, I am hideous, no one will ever like me, I will fail, I will not get into a college.”
- Risk self-medicating with drugs and alcohol.
 - Marijuana has been found to make panic attacks worse.

TEENS

- Anxiety is fueled by bad habits such as caffeine intake, procrastination, sleep deprivation, avoidance, & perfectionism.
- These behaviors/thoughts feed the anxiety monster.
- Mindshift app : cognitive restructuring

ADOLESCENT ANXIETY

- **Introduce the STOP Plan to your older child:**
 - 1. Pay attention to signs of anxiety (= S)
 - 2. Pay attention to anxious thoughts (= T)
 - 3. Think of other helpful thoughts (= O)
 - 4. Plan for next time (= P)
- AnxietyBC.com

PROCRASTINATION & ANXIETY

- The cycle of Panic

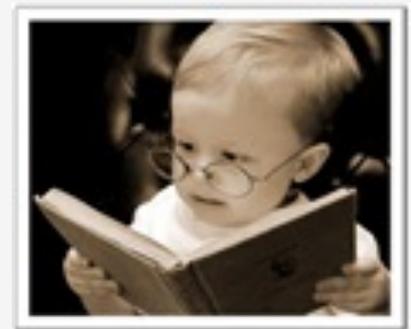


PROCRASTINATION

- Doing school work is already painful, Why make it more painful by doing it in a panic?
- Do the hardest thing first.
- Electronics and procrastination experiment
- All-nighters
- Not estimating time correctly, especially minimizing.
- Wiggle room

STUDY SKILLS & ANXIETY

- Organization
- Breaking projects into long term and short term tasks
 - weekcal app
- Learning to anticipate crunch times.
- Avoidance



AVOIDANCE & RATIONALIZATION



PERFECTIONISM: FOOD FOR THE MONSTER

- Fear of making mistakes and failure.
- Comparison to others: Focus on my best not other's best.
- Strong correlation between perfectionism and anxiety and depression.
- Encourage concept of: Good enough.

MINDFULNESS

- Can't fight every thought.. too many!
- Thoughts as waves. You observe your thoughts.
- Decide which to analyze and which to let go.
- Anxiety lives in the past and future.
- If the mind wanders to the future bring it back to the present by focusing on your five senses.
 - Ex. Bathing kids.
- Non-judgmental about your thoughts.
- Visit www.gozen.com & Juliann Garey

MINDFULNESS

- Creating distance from disturbing thoughts to observe them without reacting.
- When I worry about X = I know I am anxious. Thoughts are noise created by anxiety.
- My thoughts do not define me.
 - I can feel like a loser, and not be one.
- A way to quiet the mind

MINDFULNESS

"We're so busy watching out for what's just ahead of us that we don't take time to enjoy where we are."

- Calvin & Hobbes



WHAT CAN PARENTS DO IN THE ANXIETY MOMENT?

- Notice out loud: “It seems you are thinking/upset about that test.”
 - Put an emoji on it (especially for younger kids). Use “emotion” words such as frustrated, angry, sad, anxious, stressed.
- Normalize anxiety: “Most people feel anxious before a test. I remember feeling like that when I took tests.”

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- Listen and take the time to hear the story or rationale. Ex. \$ in puddle
 - *What is making you feel scared?*
 - *What are you worried will happen?*
 - *What bad thing do you expect to happen in this situation?*
- Comment on feelings they are experiencing: “That sounds tough!”
- Validating the emotion, not empowering it.
 - Not sending the message: “You shouldn’t feel that way.”

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- Stay calm when your child becomes anxious about a situation or event. Be a role model of calm behavior.
- Encourage the child to tolerate the anxiety. Avoid avoidance.
- Help your child brainstorm of things to do. Make a plan. Your child should create it, their participation will build confidence and they are more likely to implement it.
- Clark Goldstein, Ph.D.

BRAINSTORMING

- Breathing exercises
 - Apps: Calm
 - App for women: Sanity & Self
- Write down your worries.
- Is there another way of thinking of this situation (cognitive restructuring)?
- New plan of action?
- After the action plan.....Distraction.

DISTRACTIONS

- Physical activity: natural anti-anxiolytic.
- Focus your brain on another activity (music, book, games)
- Playing with a pet
- Visualize a happy place:

HAPPY PLACE



HUMOR



GET THEM OUTSIDE



WHAT DOES NOT WORK..

- “Don’t worry.”
- “That’s not going to happen.”
- “Just relax.”
- “Just think positive.”
- “You don’t have real problems, why are you stressing?”
- “Don’t be so dramatic.”
- “You shouldn’t feel that way.”
- “This is such a little thing, why are you stressing?”
- “You are making this bigger in your head than it really is.”
- Don’t make fun of their fears.
- “Just be brave, you got this!”



- Just be there. Sometimes they don't want to talk but they don't want to be alone. Sometimes they just need comfort. Just being in the same room can be comforting.
- Sometimes they need to be alone. Give them space.
- Be patient. Resist the urge to fix every problem. Focus on developing problem solving skills.

WHAT CAN MAKE ANXIETY WORSE...



- Electronics
 - Don't learn how to deal with boredom, sadness, stress.
 - Avoid discomfort by escaping
 - Don't learn to cope with negative emotions

WHAT CAN MAKE ANXIETY WORSE..

- Unrealistic praise
 - Puts pressure on kids to live up to these goals or labels
- Not developing study skills
 - Manage time
 - Manage stress



WHAT CAN MAKE ANXIETY WORSE

- Parenting out of fear.
 - Parents that can't tolerate their own anxiety
- Not enough rest or play time.



WHAT DOES HELP..

- Stress as an ally: it's a message that you need to focus on something.
- Stress= overestimate difficulty and underestimate your ability to deal with it.
- EMPATHY
- ACCEPTANCE
- FAITH in Competence and Coping



COMPETENCE

- Parents as protectors not guides
 - Failure, rejection, and disappointment as normal parts of life.
- If you try to create a stress-free life, the message is “You can’t handle things.” = Fragility
- Yo no puedo bregar! “I can’t deal!” : 2 problems
- You can’t eliminate anxiety: you can manage it.

REDUCING OVERALL/BASELINE ANXIETY

- Routines are important.
- Avoid Overscheduling.
- Modify expectations during stressful periods.
- Plan for transitions (Ex. allow extra time in the morning if getting to school is difficult).
- Watch caffeine & sugar intake.
- Importance of Sleep: helps regulate emotions.

SLEEP



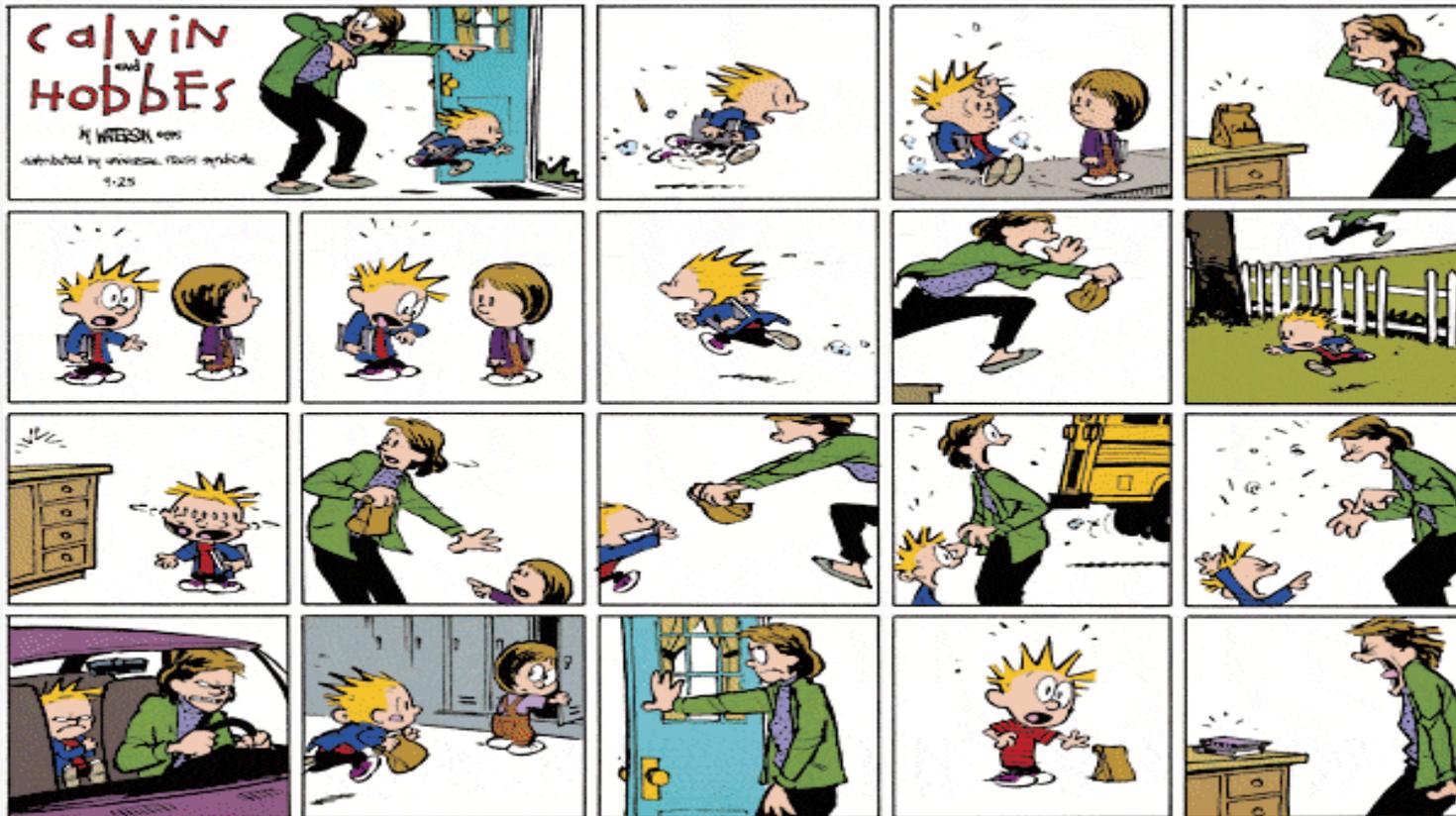
SLEEP

- Teens: 9 hours
- Middle Schoolers: 10 hours
- Elementary : 11 hours



REDUCING OVERALL ANXIETY

- Be a calm example in daily life



- Anxiety Contamination

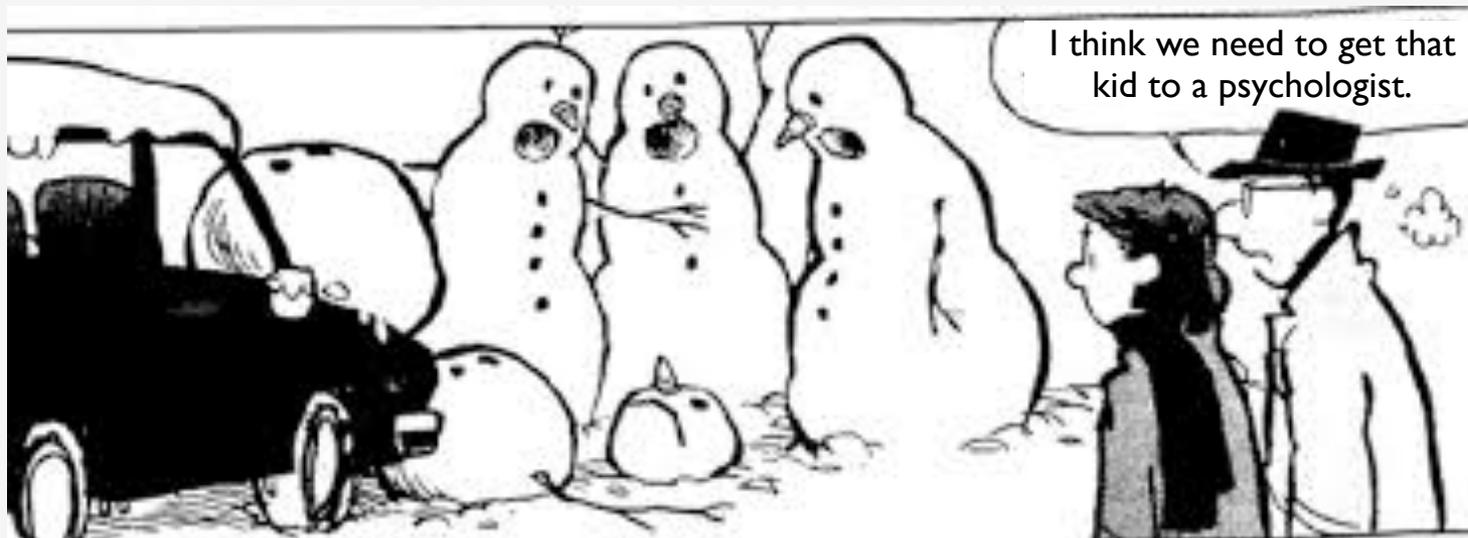
- Your anxiety

- Reinforcing fears

- Sending them message that the world is an scary place.

- Limit exposure to news and upsetting media.

PROTECT THEM FROM THE MEDIA



Goal: a kid who knows how to roll with life's ups and downs, put feelings into words, calm down when needed, and bounce back to try again.

- Alexandra Ramos Duchateau, Ph.D.
- 787-565-9957
- aramos0@yahoo.com
- www.psychologypr.com
- Facebook: 123PSK

REFERENCES



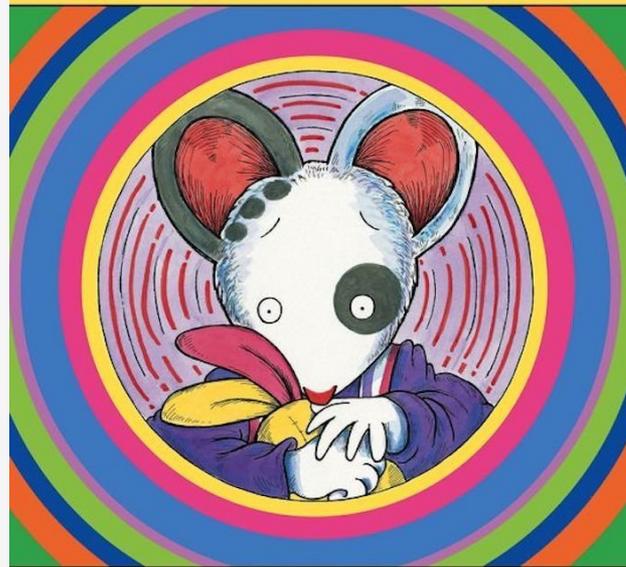
**MY ANXIOUS
MIND**



**A TEEN'S GUIDE
to
MANAGING
ANXIETY and PANIC**

by MICHAEL A. TOMPKINS, PhD and KATHERINE MARTINEZ, PsyD
illustrated by MICHAEL SLOAN

Wemberly Worried



by KEVIN HENKES

An Instant Help Book for Parents & Kids

The Worry Workbook for Kids

Helping Children to Overcome
Anxiety & the Fear of Uncertainty



30 simple, fun
activities to help kids:

- Turn “what if” into “let’s see”
- Try new things
- Build confidence & resilience

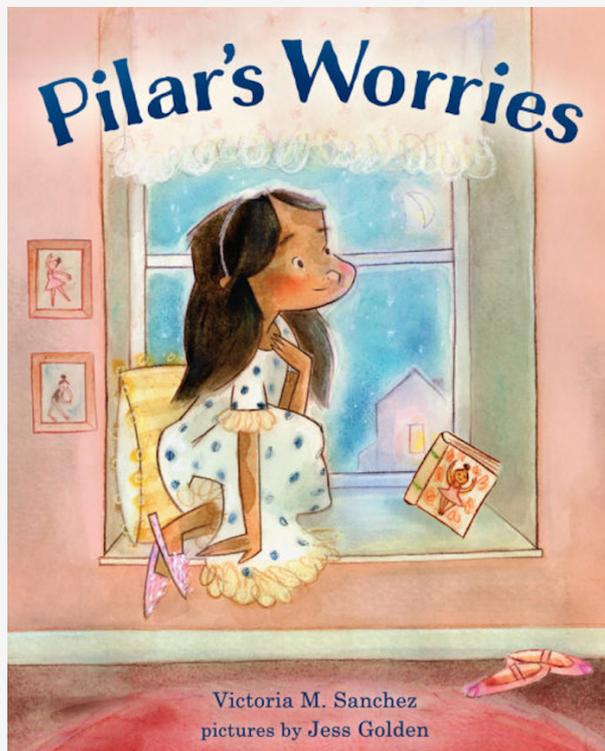
MUNIYA S. KHANNA, PhD
DEBORAH ROTH LEDLEY, PhD
FOREWORD BY TAMAR CHANSKY, PhD

THE GIRL
WHO NEVER
MADE
MISTAKES

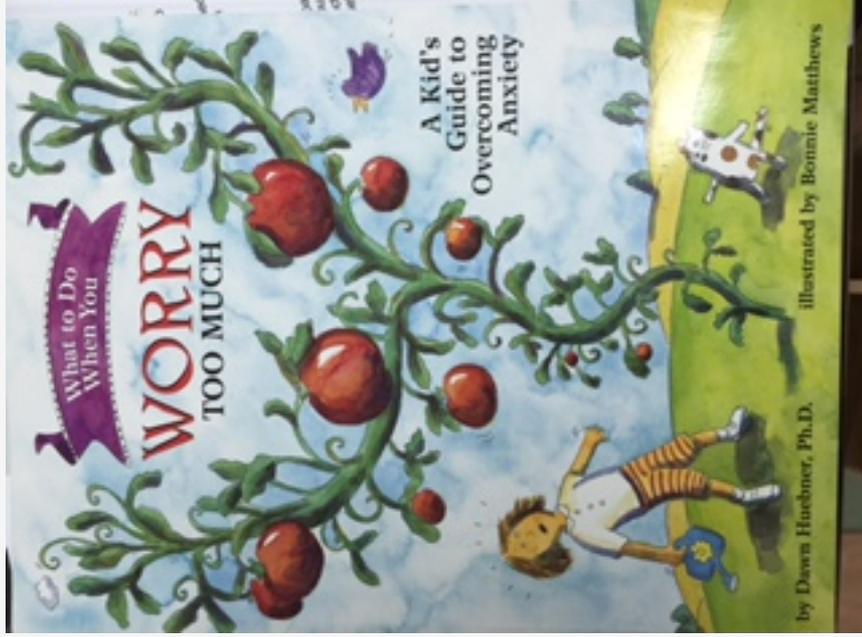
by MARK PETT and GARY RUBINSTEIN
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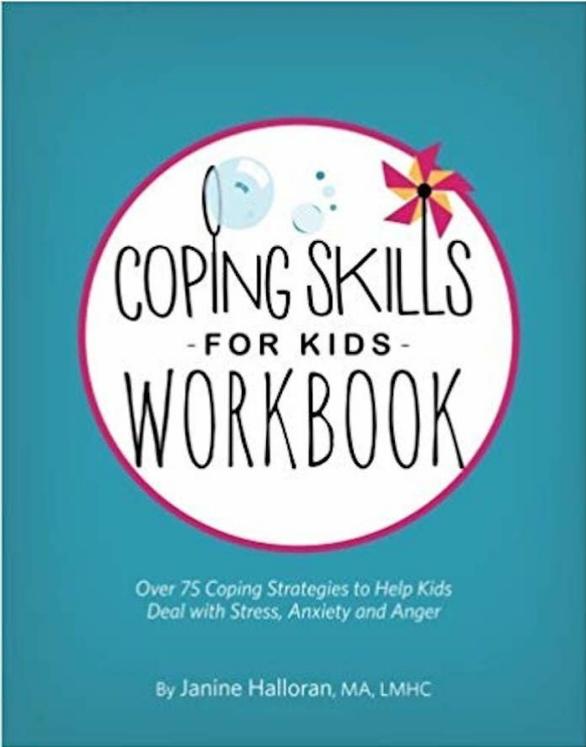


Pilar's Worries



Victoria M. Sanchez
pictures by Jess Golden





COPING SKILLS
- FOR KIDS -
WORKBOOK

*Over 75 Coping Strategies to Help Kids
Deal with Stress, Anxiety and Anger*

By Janine Halloran, MA, LMHC





A NEW HARBINGER SELF-HELP WORKBOOK

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A POWERFUL, STEP-BY-STEP PROGRAM TO HELP YOU:

- Understand why trying to control anxiety can keep you stuck & suffering
- Break free from the anxiety struggle & the trap of avoidance
- Practice mindful acceptance & a willingness to do what works
- Discover what you can deeply about & commit to making it happen
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how mindfulness & compassion
can free you from anxiety,
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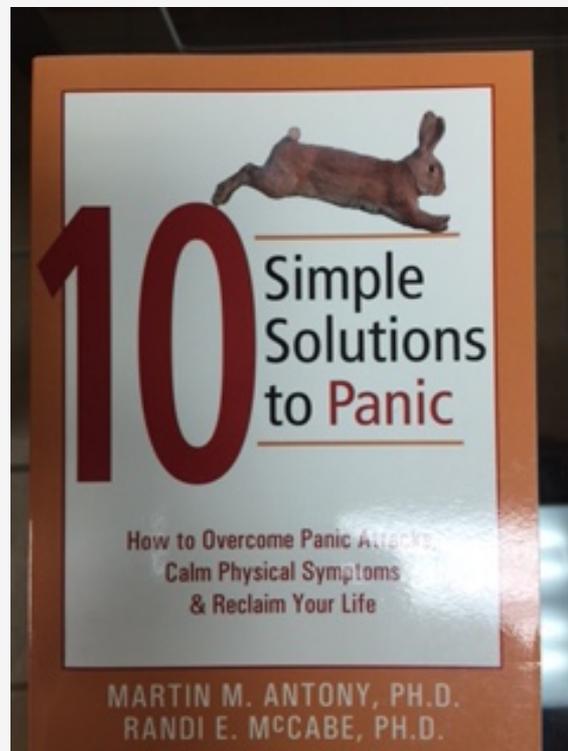
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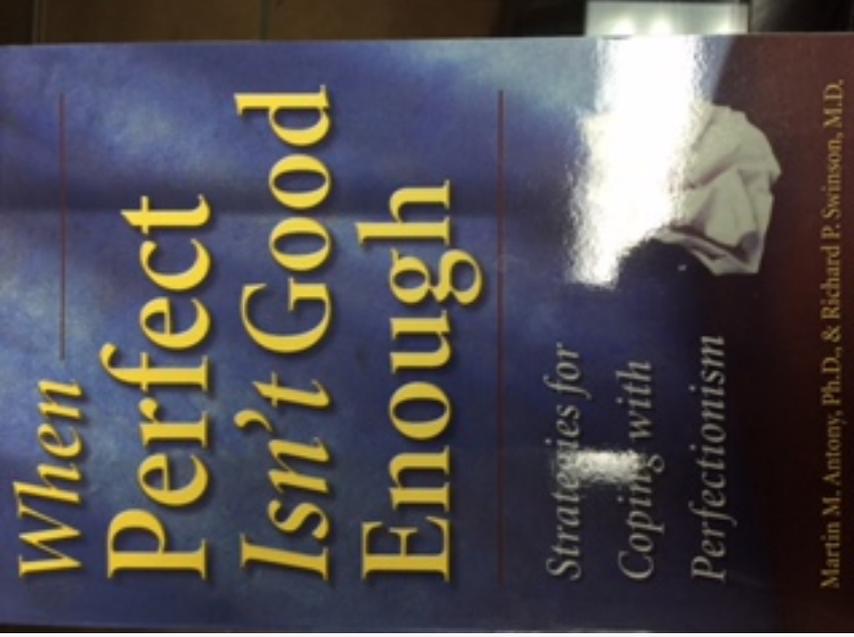
JON KABAT-ZINN, PH.D.

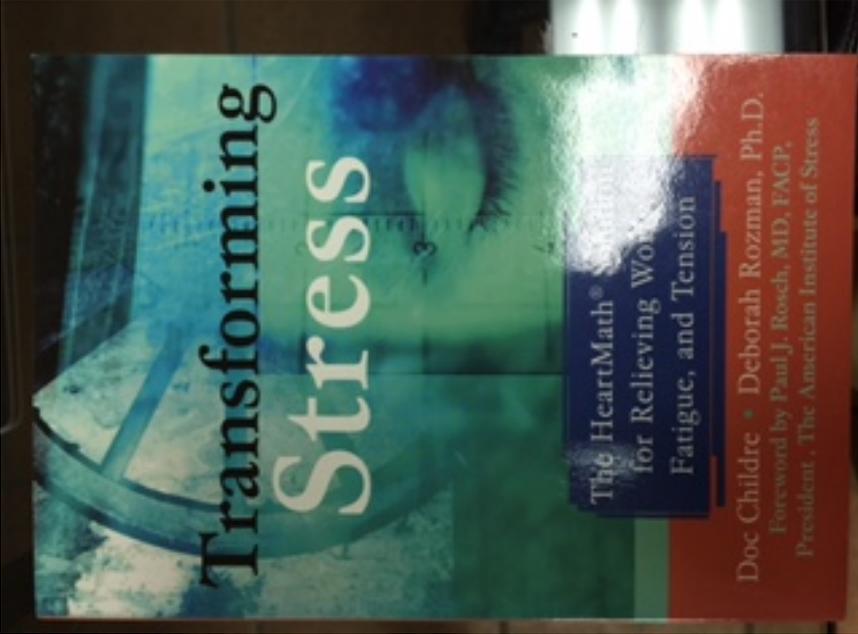
The Shyness
& Social
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The HeartMath® System
for Relieving Work-Related
Fatigue, and Tension

Doc Childre • Deborah Rozman, Ph.D.
Foreword by Paul J. Rosch, MD, FACP,
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"A MASTERPIECE."—Jon Kabat-Zinn

MINDFULNESS IN PLAIN ENGLISH

Bhante Gendun Chopel

THE CLASSIC BESTSELLER