



Supporting Mental and Emotional  
Wellbeing

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As a community we grow

Barrhead High School

**RAISE THE BARR**



## Overview

As a school staff, we all have responsibility for Mental Health and Wellbeing. The following additional support is also available:

- Lessons via the PSHE curriculum.
- Pastoral Support Teacher who meets your child weekly.
- Be Well survey completed by all young people and individual and whole school interventions planned.
- Learners trained as Heroes to support peers.
- Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors organising whole school events.
- Mentors for Violence Prevention programme delivered by staff and learners.
- Walk N Talk with a teacher.
- Access to our school counsellor.
- Referral to Healthier Minds

Mental wellbeing is an aspiration for all East Renfrewshire's children and young people. Everyone who features in the life of a young person has a role in contributing to this. Healthier Minds is East Renfrewshire's framework for people working in partnership across services to nurture mental wellbeing in children and young people.

Healthier Minds explains how to support children and young people's mental wellbeing, using a Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach. It outlines ways to support mental wellbeing in a holistic way and provides information about services that can help East Renfrewshire's children, young people and their families at different stages in their time of need. Resources can be found on the Healthier Minds website. Please click on the link below:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/PsychologicalService/school-staff/building-resilience/healthier-minds/inf>



## What you need to know

If you are experiencing anxiety, it is normal. There is no one who doesn't feel anxious at some time. It is even more common to feel anxious during adolescence, because so many changes are taking place in their body, mind, and emotions.

Try the following activities. They are tools, intended to be used over and over throughout their life. The more you practice using them, the better you will become at managing anxiety.

## Anxiety Explained

The feeling of anxiety has been described with many different words. Here are some of them: stress edginess apprehension the jitters worry jumpiness panic fear butterflies uneasiness nervousness freaking out disquiet agitation angst While everyone experiences anxiety, some of us feel it more often, some more deeply, some less frequently, and some less intensely. Your own experience of anxiety will depend on:

- Genetics—how your parents, grandparents, and ancestors experienced anxiety.
- Brain chemistry—the type, amount, and movement of the chemicals working in your brain.
- Life events—the situations you are faced with in your life.
- Personality—how you look at and interpret things that happen to you.

Genetics, brain chemistry, and life events are factors that you have little or no control over. Your personality, or the way you perceive and handle life events, is something you have a great deal of control over—probably more than you realise.

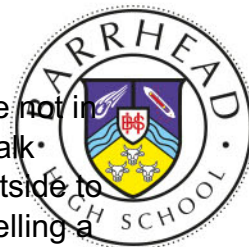
## 5 point sensory scale

5: Acknowledge FIVE things you see around you. Maybe it is a bird, maybe it is pencil, maybe it is a spot on the ceiling, however big or small, state 5 things you see.

4: Acknowledge FOUR things you can touch around you. Maybe this is your hair, hands, ground, grass, pillow, etc, whatever it may be, list out the 4 things you can feel.

3: Acknowledge THREE things you hear. This needs to be external, do not focus on your thoughts; maybe you can hear a clock, a car, a dog park. or maybe you hear your tummy rumbling, internal noises that make external sounds can count, what is audible in the moment is what you list.





2: Acknowledge TWO things you can smell: This one might be hard if you are not in a stimulating environment, if you cannot automatically sniff something out, walk nearby to find a scent. Maybe you walk to your bathroom to smell soap or outside to smell anything in nature, or even could be as simple as leaning over and smelling a pillow on the couch, or a pencil. Whatever it may be, take in the smells around you.

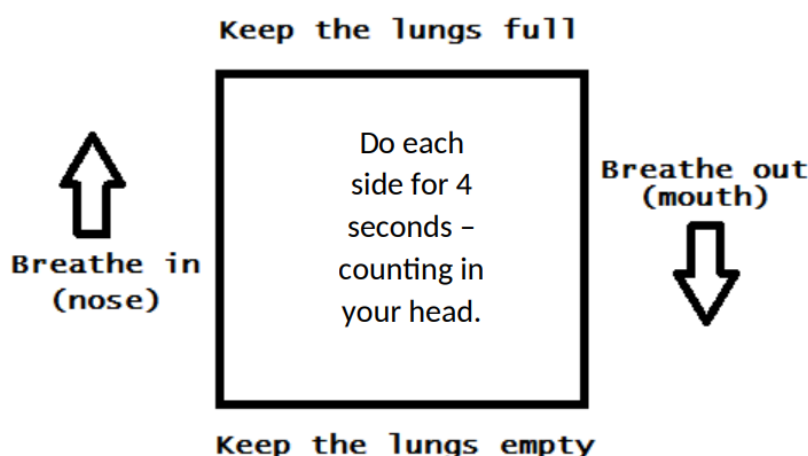
1: Acknowledge ONE thing you can taste. What does the inside of your mouth taste like, gum, coffee, or the sandwich from lunch? Focus on your mouth as the last step and take in what you can taste.

0: Take a big deep breath in through the nose, to your diaphragm and out through your mouth.

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## **Box breathing**

Try this if you are feeling: anxious, angry, frustrated, nervous, upset, irritated etc.



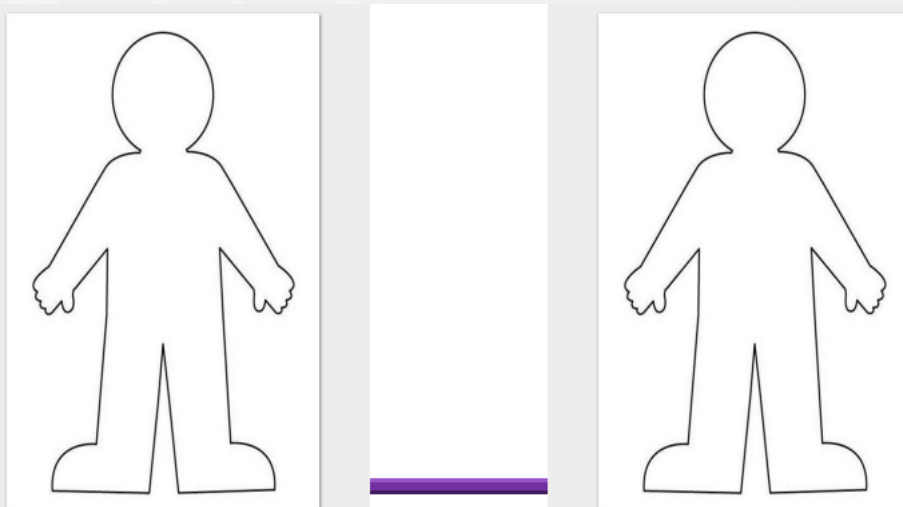
### **The Bigger Picture**

Consider the following scenario – A pupil was feeling anxious because their Maths teacher had asked them to be the first one to give their presentation to the class the next day. The pupil's older sibling knew there was something wrong and asked what was wrong. The pupil said they were worried about the presentation. The older sibling told them to look at the bigger picture: the pupil was achieving a level B in the class already, the teacher liked them and knew they were a hard worker and the pupil was well prepared for the presentation with notes. They told their younger sibling that if they did it first it would be out of the way and they could relax for the rest of the time in Maths. When they considered this in 'the bigger picture' they felt much calmer and more in control.

The pictures below emphasis the difference of stopping and thinking about the bigger picture, this allowing things to be put into perspective and appearing more achievable;



When you find yourself in a situation where you feel overwhelmed and are experiencing feelings of anxiety draw or write in the box, as if you were looking at yourself in the situation from 'the bigger picture'. Putting this down on paper will help you see the positives and make the task which is causing you anxiety, more achievable. Inside..... Outside.....





## Relaxed Stretching

When you stretch your muscles, you help to take away the stress chemicals that have collected in them and you increase the blood circulation in your body, both of which help relieve anxiety. If you breathe peacefully and deeply while you stretch, you help bring oxygen to all of your muscle groups, also relieving anxiety.

Stretching is one of the easiest anxiety-reducing techniques you can use because you can stretch almost any muscle group at any time, almost anywhere you are.

It is important to stretch slowly and gently so that you don't overextend your muscles. If you stretch a little every day on a regular basis, you will help keep your anxiety level low. If you take a stretching break when you are feeling particularly tense about something, it will help you release and manage feelings of anxiety.

You can use the scale below or do it in your head, rate yourself 1-10 (1- calm and collected to 10 – very tense and anxious) before and after you stretch, with the hope being that you feel more in control of your emotions after your stretching.

### Relaxed Stretching

Anxiety level before one session of relaxed stretching:

0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Anxiety level after one session of relaxed stretching:

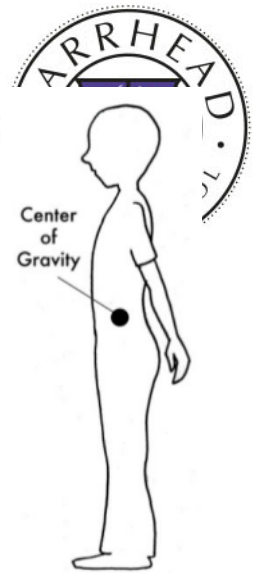
0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

## Centre of you

Stand straight with both feet flat and solidly on the floor, shoulder-width apart. Close your eyes. Adjust yourself so that you feel balanced. Place your attention on your physical body. Without moving or touching your right hand, put your attention on it. Now without moving or touching your left knee, put your attention on it. Next, without moving or touching your navel, put your attention on it. Now be aware of a spot an inch or two behind and two or three inches below your navel, in the back centre of

your abdomen. With your eyes closed, try to get a sense of this inner spot that is the centre of gravity of your body.

Keep your attention focused on this point. Imagine yourself drawing in all your scattered energy and concentrating it here. Continue to focus your energy here for a few minutes until you feel stable and balanced.



## Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the act of keeping your focus on the present moment which helps ground you and prevents you worrying about things in the future which may cause anxiety.

**Exercise 1** Choose a simple activity that you can do in the next few hours to practice mindfulness. It could be anything from eating a packet of crisps to getting dressed to lying on your bed listening to music. Make a conscious effort to perform this activity with mindfulness. As you perform the actions, try to keep your attention focused only on what you are doing right at that moment. Use all your five senses to experience the activity. Pay close attention to exactly what you are seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, and tasting as you do this.

**Exercise 2** One way to help yourself stay focused is to talk to yourself silently as you perform each activity, simply reminding yourself of what you are doing at the time. For example, as you are eating chips, think to yourself, "Eating, I am eating." As you are getting dressed, think to yourself, "Dressing, I am dressing." It will probably seem a little strange at first, but it will help keep your mind focussed on the present and off anxious thoughts.











**Exercise 3** As you go through the day, whenever you notice yourself feeling anxious because you have moved your thinking into the future or the past, simply remind yourself, "Come back to the present." Then move your mind away from wherever it has wandered to and bring it back to what you are doing right now, using the above techniques to help you do this



SELF HELP APPS TO TRY		
App		Description
	Calm Harm	To help manage and understand self-harm
	Headspace	To help calm and still your mind
	MindShift CBT – Anxiety Relief	To help manage and understand anxiety
	Be Okay	To help manage and understand panic attacks
	SAM – Self Help App for the Mind	To help manage and understand anxiety
	Freedom	To allow you to block social media apps and websites to reclaim focus
	Stop, Breathe and Think	Guided meditations to help you relax, reduce anxiety and give you space
	Present – Guided Meditation	Guided meditations to help you relax and sleep
	Mindful Gnats	An app to help young people develop mindfulness and relaxation
	Motivation	Daily positive quotes to help you live a happier life
	Moodfit	Fitness for your Mental Health
	Smiling Mind	Meditation for young people 7 years and up. Developed to bring balance
	SuperBetter	Build personal resilience, ability to stay strong, motivated and optimistic even in challenging circumstances.
	Happify	Science of happiness into activities and games that help you lead a more fulfilling life.
	SAM	SAM is an app to help you understand and manage anxiety.



Self-Help Online Resources		
Organisation	Description	Website
<b>BEAT</b> 	Support & advice about eating disorders.	Helpline 0808 801 0677 9am- 8pm Monday- Friday Weekends - 4pm-8pm  <a href="https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/">The UK's Eating Disorder Charity - Beat (beateatingdisorders.org.uk)</a> 
<b>The Mix</b> 	Mental health & wellbeing information, support & advice for under 25s.	☎ 0808 808 4994 💬 1-2-1 Chat 📱 Crisis Messenger  <a href="https://www.themix.org.uk/">https://www.themix.org.uk/</a> 
<b>Moodjuice</b> 	Work through a self-help guide that uses cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to improve self-esteem.	   <a href="#">Self-esteem self-help guide   NHS inform</a> 
<b>Moodzone</b> 	Tips and advice to boost mental health & self-help tools.	   <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/">Mental health - NHS (www.nhs.uk)</a> 
<b>Students Against Depression</b> 	A website offering advice and guidance to those affected by low mood, depression and suicidal thinking.	   <a href="https://www.studentsagainstdpression.org/">https://www.studentsagainstdpression.org/</a> 
<b>Young Minds</b> 	Support and information for young people worried about their mental health and wellbeing	   <a href="https://youngminds.org.uk/">https://youngminds.org.uk/</a> 
<b>SAMH</b> 	Every young person deserves to grow up with an understanding of mental health	   <a href="#">Children and young people   SAMH</a> 
<b>Childline</b> 	Whatever your worry, it is better out than in. We're here to support you.	Helpline 0800 1111 <a href="#">1-2-1 counsellor chat</a> online.  <a href="https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/">https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/</a> 
<b>Samaritans</b> 	Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you. We're here 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.	24/7 Call free on 116 123 Email <a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a>  <a href="#">Contact Us   Samaritans</a> 

Self-Help Online Resources		
Organisation	Description	Website
 <b>Place 2 Be</b> <small>Improving children's mental health</small>	Mental health support for under 18s	Text SHOUT to 85258. Free, 24 hours a day.  <a href="https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/mental-health-support-for-under-18s/">https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/mental-health-support-for-under-18s/</a>
 <b>Breathing Space</b>	A confidential phoneline for anyone in Scotland over the age of 16, feeling low, anxious or depressed.	Helpline 0800 838587 Monday-Thursday 6pm to 2am Friday 6pm-Monday 6am  <a href="https://breathingspace.scot/">https://breathingspace.scot/</a>
 <b>Aye Feel by Young Scot</b>	How to look after your emotional wellbeing, support from organisations and tips on how to promote a positive mindset.	 <a href="#">Aye Feel   Young Scot</a>
 <b>The Junction</b> <small>young people, health &amp; wellbeing</small>	You can use our Drop-In or Digital Drop-In to have a free, confidential, one-to-one chat with a worker.	Text <a href="tel:07758348850">07758348850</a> Email: <a href="mailto:support@the-junction.com">support@the-junction.com</a>  <a href="#">The Junction (the-junction.org)</a>
 <b>The Spark</b>	Youth counselling is about providing teenagers with an opportunity to discuss any issues they are struggling with.	Freephone: 0808 8022088  <a href="#">Youth counselling   counselling services for young people   The Spark</a>

Mental Health and Wellbeing Podcasts			
Genre	Name and Graphic		
Anxiety/Self-Help Podcasts	The Self-Help Podcast 	Not another anxiety show 	The You Project 
	Warrior Mind Coach 	Your Motivational High 5 	Owning It 

Mental Health and Wellbeing Podcasts			
Genre	Name and Graphic		
Eating Disorders	The Eating Disorder Therapist Podcast 	End Eating Disorders 	The Recovery Warrior Show 
	Eating Disorders in Discussion 	Take the Cake 	Food Psych with Christy Harrison 
Grief	Grief Cast 	The Grief Gang 	Terrible, Thanks for Asking 
Self-harm	Let's Talk about Self-harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What It Takes; Tiny Leaps, Big Changes</li> <li>The Habit Coach with Ashdin Doctor</li> </ul>	
Relationships and Positive Psychology	Where we should begin 	Happy Place 	ON Purpose with Jay Shetty 
Inspirational and Resilience	Road to Resilience 	The School of Greatness with Lewis Howes 	The Daily Boost 
For Parents	The Psychology of Self-Injury (parents) 	Talking to Teens 	The Parent and Teen Toolbox 
Other genres	Let's Talk about Self-harm 	Feel Better, Live More 	Sleep Junkies 