



Wellbeing Wednesday

Understanding anxiety



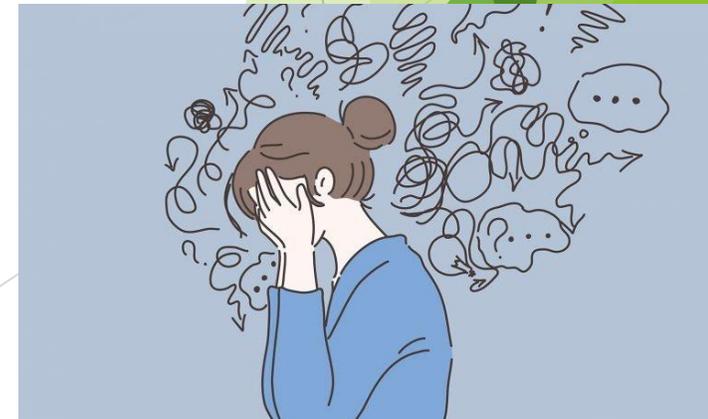
Well Being

- ▶ Well-being is about how we are doing and how we feel about our lives.
- ▶ Low well-being has been linked to mental health conditions like depression and anxiety. It can impact our relationships with family and friends and how we feel about and interact with the world around us.

What is anxiety?



- ▶ Anxiety is a normal, human feeling of fear or panic. When we face stressful situations, it can set off our brain's in-built alarm bell system, which tells us something isn't right and that we need to deal with it. Our brain wants the difficult situation to go away, so it makes us feel more alert, stops us thinking about other things, and even pumps more blood to our legs to help us run away.
- ▶ Most of us worry sometimes - about things like friendships or money - and feel anxious when we're under stress, like at exam time. But afterwards we usually calm down and feel better.
- ▶ But when you're not in a stressful situation, and you still feel worried or panicky, that's when anxiety can become a problem.



Grounding Techniques for Anxiety



- ▶ **Square breathing** - this is where you breathe in for four seconds, hold for four seconds, breathe out for four seconds, hold for four seconds and repeat.
- ▶ **Just chatting** - taking your mind off of the worry is a lot easier than you'd think sometimes.
- ▶ **Going through my senses** - to do this, name five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste.

Believe in yourself



- ▶ It's common to suffer from low self-esteem at some point in your life, but you can do things to make it better.
- ▶ Self-esteem is how we see and feel about ourselves. Many people will have low self-esteem at some point in their lives.
- ▶ It can be caused by a number of things - comparing yourself to your friends, problems with family, problems at school, or problems with your health. Sometimes it passes on its own, but you can take steps to help yourself feel better.
- ▶ If you tackle low self-esteem early, it can help prevent depression or anxiety from developing. You can start to build your self-esteem today with these steps.

Believe in yourself

Step 1: Understand why you focus on negatives

- ▶ What negative things do you think about yourself?
- ▶ When did you start thinking these things?
- ▶ What happened to make you think this way?

Step 2: Challenge the negative feelings

- ▶ Ask yourself: Is there another way of looking at things?
- ▶ What advice would you give to a friend who was having similar negative feelings? **Remind yourself of things that have happened which prove that these negative thoughts aren't true.** Maybe the thing that caused those feelings has stopped.
- ▶ Try writing down a list of these things to keep and bring out next time you feel low.

Step 3: Stay active and connected

- ▶ Get some fresh air and exercise every day - whether that's walking, running, scooting, skipping, doing an online workout or an egg and spoon race in the garden! This is really important for wellbeing and helps to lift our mood. The government is currently advising that people can go outside with people they live with once a day for exercise - as long as no one in the household is showing symptoms or has a condition that means they need to isolate more strictly.
- ▶ Connect online with family and friends. Having contact with our support networks is really important at the moment - and you and your children can keep in touch with people using free apps such as Whatsapp, Facetime, Zoom, Skype, Google Hangouts and more.

“Just because you hold these negative thoughts about yourself, it doesn't mean they are true.”

