



Worry Balloons:

Worries can be tricky and sneak back in when we don't want them to so **imagine**:

- Blowing a balloon up, you choose the colour, size & shape.
- Pay attention to how much breath the balloon took to fill it, the smell of the balloon, the feel of it. Tie a knot in it.
- Choose a pen, notice the size and shape, how does it feel in your hand. What colour is it?
- Imagine writing your worry on the balloon, notice the sound the pen makes, what word do you write or have you drawn a picture of your worry?
- Imagine opening the window or the door, is there a breeze, what is the weather doing in?
- Let the balloon and your worry go, watch it float away.
- Notice the worry and balloon change in size as the worry and balloon floats away.
- You may need to do this again if other worries that pop into your mind.

Using Our Imaginations:

My Amazing Team Photo:

Sometimes worries seem too big for just us to manage on our own and we need an amazing team of our favourite people to help us.

- Who would you have in your amazing team?
- Now think about why you've chosen the people and pets to be in your team.
- What skills do they have?
- How do you feel when you are with that person or pet?
- If they had a sneaky worry what would they do about it?
- Imagine a photograph of your whole team and you in the middle.
- How do you feel now facing the worry with your Amazing Team?



Help & Information:

For a child friendly explanation of Covid-19:

www.bbc.co.uk/newsround

N. Yorkshire Healthy Child Team

www.hdft.nhs.uk 01423 885959

www.youngminds.org.uk

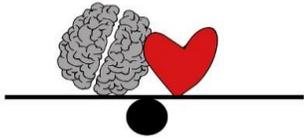
www.annafreud.org



Parenting, Anxiety &
Covid-19
Kerry Boddy
SCPHN, RN(M)

Parenting,
Anxiety &
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Together we can....



Ideas for coping with worry for children and adults:

Worry Time

- The same time each day but not before bedtime.
- Set a timer and make a space for the worries, sometimes writing them down helps.
- At the end of worry time, let the worries go or put them away.
- Do something different e.g. relaxation or something physical and practical.
- If worries creep in again, notice them and return your focus on your breath, what's going on in the here and now.

Worries come from our minds when we are anxious. Worries are thoughts.

Sometimes we have silly thoughts, sometimes happy thoughts and sometimes cross thoughts.

Some thoughts are real like a memory or a fact like when we learn what 2+2 is in maths.

Some of our thoughts are from our imagination just like when we make up a story. Sometimes our imagination makes us worry too but just like stories we don't have to believe everything in our minds.

We can use our imagination to help us to get on top of sneaky worries too!

Taking time out to tame our worry is key to helping us to parent our kids in anxious times.

Finding a balance between checking in with the news and loved ones and keeping to a routine will help to reduce the time available to worry. Boredom is a worry's best friend.

Trying to avoid worry uses as much energy as over thinking.

Making time to pay attention to our breath and notice our surroundings in the here and now provides a brain break. Exercise and being with others (digitally whilst isolated) boosts mood too.

Problem solving practical worries is helpful to free up some head space.

If you are isolated and struggling, or are worried about someone who is, The Community Hubs (check the NYCC website) provide advice about support available in your local area. **Remember you are not alone.**

Self Help can be accessed from:

www.nhs.uk

www.getselfhelp.co.uk

Headspace Meditation & Sleep App



Anxiety comes from a place of threat, hypothetical (something may happen) or real (it has happened). Covid-19 has brought us both.

The statistics tell us our fear is real but we do not know how it will affect our health or our loved ones or what the future holds, these are hypothetical.

With constant media updates and big changes to family life the threat is topped up throughout the day for everyone. Stress hormones are released with every false alarm being raised by our early warning system in our brains, the amygdala. When the alarm bell rings we are designed to run away or fight the threat we can't do either when the threat is invisible.

The stress hormones make our bodies feel different; tired, on edge, wound up, achy, tummy upsets, it's hard to relax. Our feelings change, tempers are hotter, we're quick to cry, we feel snappy and anxious. Our behaviours change we go to bed late, we eat more or less, our screen time goes up, it's hard to concentrate on learning or work which is left undone. We feel stressed and worried.

Guilt and tiredness make it even harder to think and find a way to get on top of the anxiety.