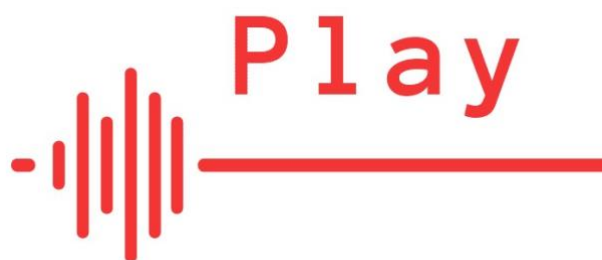


PLAY: “Play, Learn, fight back Anxiety



Scenario 2 educational material

Stress, Anxiety and Mental Health

Everyone has problems, both big and small. Thinking about your problems leads to anxiety. When you get anxious you get stuck in a negative thinking pattern. To solve your problems, it helps to learn how your thoughts, feelings and actions are connected.

Imagine you have an upcoming text and you think “I’m going to fail” - because of this thought, you start to worry. You are so worried that you feel sick just thinking about the test, and because you feel sick – you cannot study and find it hard to remember information because all you can think about is not doing well in the exam.

What might happen if you control your anxious thoughts? What if you changed how you are thinking and became more relaxed and more positive?

Your negative thoughts can affect you - If you think “I cannot study, I keep thinking about failing the exam” your feelings then become anxiety-based feelings. You feel physiological changes, your heart pounding and your hands shaking or sweaty, your mouth becomes dry, you think you might be having a heart attack and you cannot study. This creates more feelings of anxiety and so a downward cycle continues. This is the fight flight response to stress – adrenaline is flowing through your body.

There are many different thoughts you can have about a situation – thinking calming thoughts can help you spiral into positive calm space and can help us feel better and act in ways that are helpful. If you think, “If I calm down, I can focus and then I can study so I can pass the exam”, you will feel better and may be more likely to study.

TIPS FOR DEALING WITH STUDY ANXIETY

Write down a to do list:

Your challenges will seem a less overwhelming if they are broken down into steps.

Break things down into manageable chunks:

Achieving a simple task (and ticking it off the to-do list) can help to get us started and give us a boost. This can reduce stress and motivate us to take on the next task. Some students find a study timetable can help.

Watch your inner voice:

What how you talk to yourself and avoid being overly critical – negativity can make you more stressed. Think of a time that you did well in an exam –What did you do to prepare and study? How did you feel? Thinking of your successes can help you feel more confident.

Talk it out:

Talking to someone else about how you're feeling can make a huge difference. This could be with a friend, parent, counselor or teacher. Talking about what's stressing you will help you find your own solutions. A problem shared is a problem halved.

Relax:

Catch yourself when you are getting anxious – what are the signs that you need to take a break and relax? Relax and stay calm if you feel you are getting anxious use your breathing to -----Make sure to break from your studies to enjoy life and relax, exercise can help or socialising talking with friends and family.