

D34 ParentConnect Council

Family Service Center

Renee Z. Dominguez, PhD, Executive Director Robin Lake, MA, LCSW, Therapist & Outreach Educator

District 34

Dr. Dane Delli, Superintendent

Erik Friedman, Principal, Pleasant Ridge

Cathy Kedjidjian, Director of Communications & Strategic Planning Keeley Lawriw, School Social Worker, Attea Middle School Melanie Walstrom, Communications Assistant

Parent Liaisons

Missy Amrol, Springman
Jen Biank, Hoffman, Springman
Beth Burns, Hoffman
Brandie Fagin, Lyon, Pleasant Ridge
Karen Hitzeman, Attea
Whitney Langas, Pleasant Ridge
Jennifer Leitel, Springman
Siva Mohsenzadeh, Glen Grove
Alison Parry, Henking
Westbrook Parent Rep TBD





Children and Anxiety: Considerations for Mindful Parenting October 3, 2019

Presenters: Renee Z. Dominguez, PhD

FSC Executive Director

Robin Lake, LCSW

FSC Therapist & Outreach Educator





Mindful Parenting

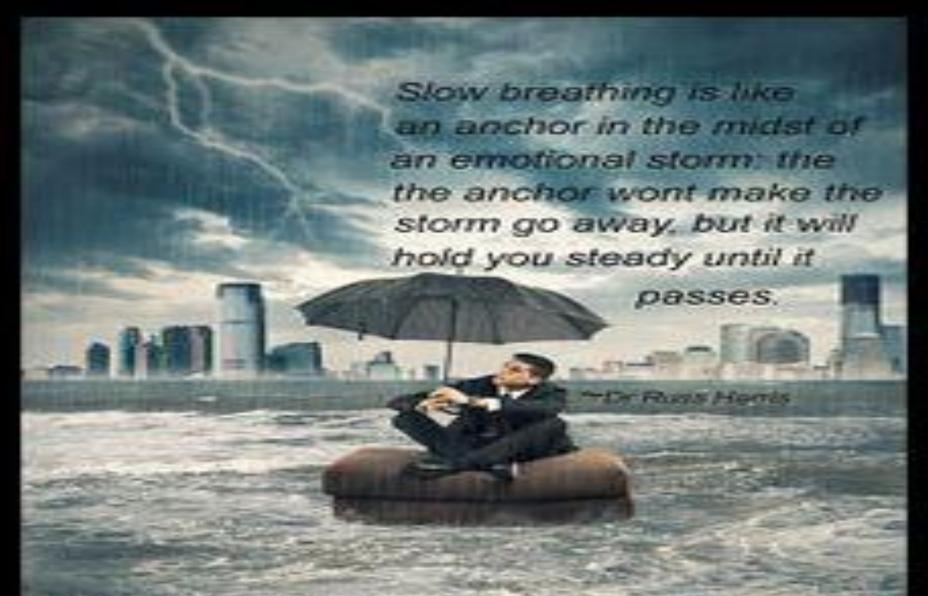
Mindfulness: The practice of paying attention, to the present moment, on purpose, and without judgment

- Being Present
- Informal Mindful Practices
- Mindful Principles





Weathering the Storm of Anxiety



Anxiety is an emotion characterized by *feelings* of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes like increased blood pressure.

ted faint defeated depressed falling apart pessimistic selfdaks hate desput londiness these paint dend inside sen declaring antitepress the faint defeated depressed falling apart pessimistic selfdaks hate desput londiness these paint dend inside sen declaring apart the faint you used to live, you don't realise what you had write its your escape self backing broken escape defeated by an control deformined whe

audion the tring you used to me you the computate warrisome menes westy palms extreme apprehension hospitalization death fielfulness awas the problem have have named the problem of the problem and the problem and the problem of the natural you have nothing to marry about teep placed harribly buely emotive the labor of lace i munit to be accepted imant to beheard flee heavy help emotive the labor of lace i munit to be belown flee heavy help natural you have nothing to be depressed about immore yourself in work relex lementing is fine empting is going to be alright stop lies a medicated you are safe, stop attacks withour blanket of security ican't breathe lawages medicated in last behind you i court sleep renaissance behavorial center asylum asylum asylumhelp me impationst calm monty tassion trama presure disturbed mental amareness disorders and iname behavorial center asylum asyum asymmetry new transfer to avaid stop don't look at me stop stressed is it worth it have me alone process made it stop stressed in the week it since me alone process made it since the process made

disorder sleep fear GAD panic disorder interms terror trembling disciness nauses changes in behaving make it stop reporting process most despuit scared why me how why depressed topeful appropriate SAD social stop don't look at me as away i have you igitared warry fear is suggested appropriate of the complete court form in stop stop stop stop obsessed Compatisions repression post-transmatic stress stop hate in a cold disciplination for the leave me alone country process are not disciplinated to be a superior of the stress beginning to the superior of the superior of the stress beginning to the superior of th

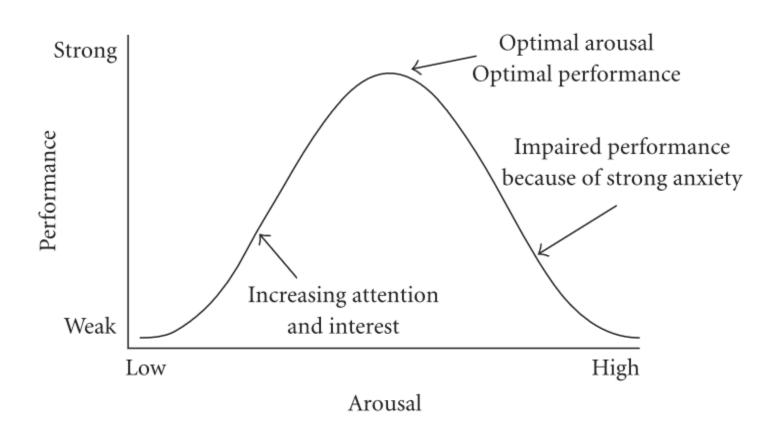
- Universal- It's a part of life
- Why do we have anxiety? Function?

worry fear anger despair scared why me know timid hard-trabled panished emessed shaker-moderia





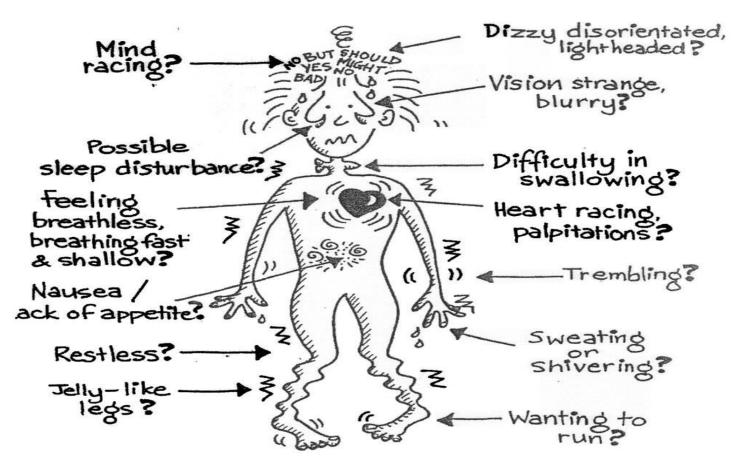
Anxiety and Performance Yerkes-Dodson Principle







How Anxiety Shows Up

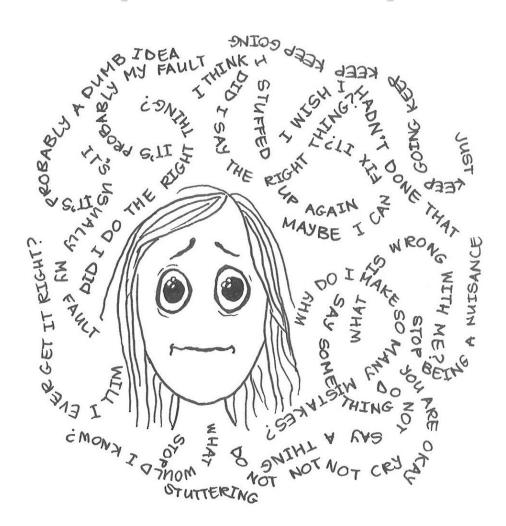






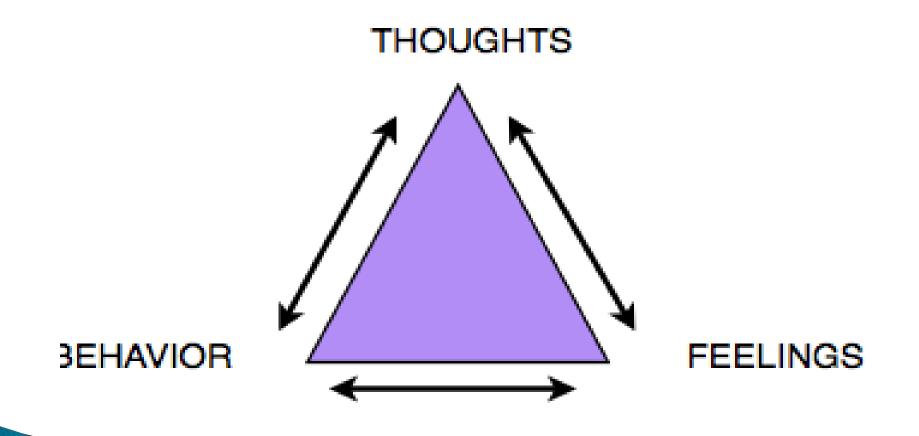
How Anxiety Shows Up

- Sounds like...
 - What if...
 - I can't
 - I'm scared
 - I have a stomach ache
 - I don't feel well
 - I'm bored
 - I don't want to
- Looks like...
 - Nail biting
 - Cheek chewing
 - Standing apart
 - Hanging back
 - Shutting down
 - Avoidance, Escape
 - Procrastination





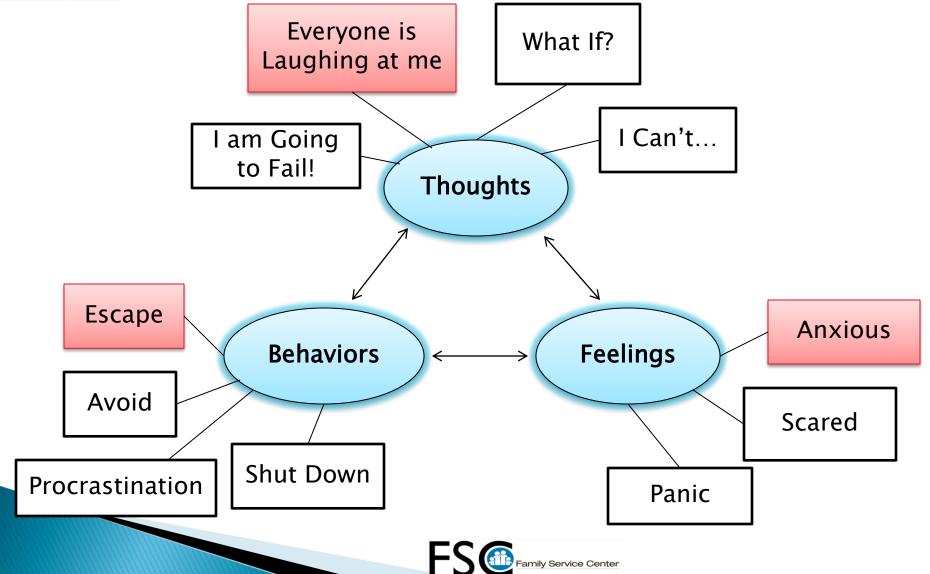
Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors are related and influence each other





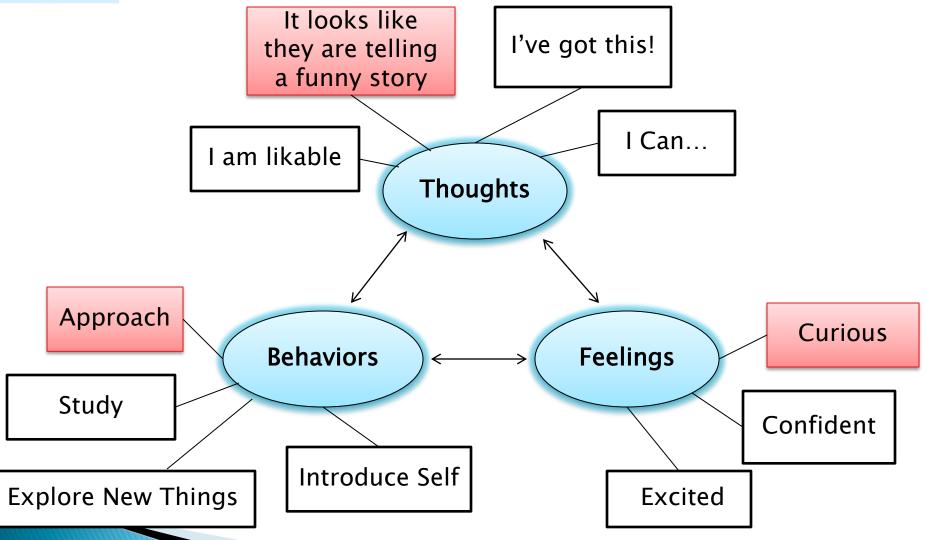


Anxiety: Cognitive Triangle





Cognitive Triangle



nily Service Center



"Friends" of Anxiety

- Perfectionism
- Attention—growing tomatoes
- Spotlight
- Competition
- Social hierarchy
 - Imaginary Audience (Adolescence)
- Fixed mindset
- Rigid thinking

"Perfectionism is a dangerous state of mind in an imperfect world." ~ Robert Hillyer



Natural, But Unhelpful, Parent Responses-Behavioral

- Avoid and "Protect"
- Deny
- Ignore
- Logic
- Cheerleading





Natural, But Unhelpful, Parent Responses – Emotional







"We aren't held captive for the rest of our lives by the way the brain works in this moment we can actually rewire it so that we can be healthier and happier. This is true not only for children and adolescents, but also for each of us across the life span."

The Whole-Brain Child Daniel Siegal, MD & Tina Payne Bryson, PhD





What Helps?

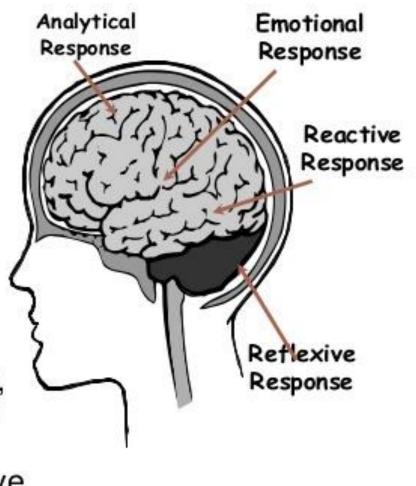
- Neuroscience Calming the Stress Response
- Validation, Validation, Validation
- Anxiety Education
- Preparation
- Distress Tolerance





UPSTAIRS/DOWNSTAIRS BRAIN

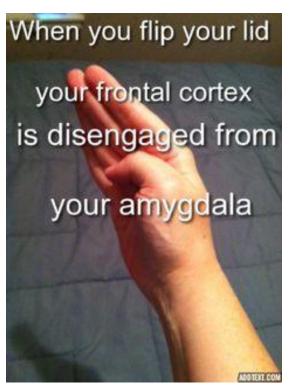
- Downstairs brain:
 - Brain stem and limbic region
 - Basic bodily functions, emotional reactivity, attachment, fight/flight/freeze
- Upstairs brain:
 - Cerebral cortex
 - Decision making, planning, self-understanding, control over emotions and body, empathy, morality, executive functioning





Handy Model of the Brain







You are the Lifeline







Target Physiology to Calm Anxiety

- Anything you cannot do while being chased by a tiger....
- Take a deep breath / Let's take a deep breath
- Want to squeeze my hand?
- Count to 10 / Let's count to 10
- Can you find three colors in this room?
- Smell the flowers, blow the candles
- Would you like a drink of water?
- Can you stand on one foot?
- Can you feel your toes?
- Can you squeeze this ball?
- Tactical breathing
- Eye contact and gentle smile







Calming Physiology: Necessary First Step



It may not get you all of the way, but it's a necessary first step

 Calms the body down to allow for addressing unhelpful thoughts and behaviors

Adrenaline & Cortisol



Helping Your Child: Strategies

Validating, Validating

Validate their feelings even when they don't make sense to you. You don't have to agree with the logic behind their expressed reason!

Helpful language for validating

- I see you (describe what you see your child doing)
- I hear you (repeat what you hear your child saying)
- It sounds like you are feeling scared
- It matters to me







Helping Your Child: Strategies

Information-Anxiety Education

- 1) Neuroscience
- 2) Cognitive Triangle

Common thinking patterns that are not helpful

- It's all or nothing
- Catastrophizing
- Forecasting the future







Helping Your Child: Strategies

<u>Preparation</u> - For anticipated challenges

- Rehearse
- Problem Solve
- Role Play
- Emotional Support
 - Extra time
 - Extra snacks
 - However you demonstrate love, care, and comfort
- Talk to other adults responsible for your child's care
- <u>Debriefing</u> Highlighting when your child tolerates the anxiety and distress and pushes through





Tolerating & Thriving with Anxiety

- Eliminating anxiety is not the goal—helping your child manage anxiety is the goal
 - Monsters in the boat
 - You don't have to believe your thoughts
 - Without your buy in, they can not stop you
 - This, too, shall pass
- If you can provide support, don't avoid things your child worries about or fears
 - Celebrate participation/accomplishments
- Express confidence that your child will be ok, that life will continue and that their story is more than one moment
 - Help think things through and develop a plan



You Can Do It!

- The only way to the other side of anxiety is "through"
- Feel the feelings, calm the body, talk back to the thoughts, and continue on your path
- This applies to parents and children!





Reflecting on Mindful Parenting

- Informal Mindful Practices (Neuroscience)
 - Tactical Breathing, Slow Deep Breathing
 - Tuning in to Sensation (e.g., Body Awareness)
 - Present Moment Awareness
- Mindful Principles (Strategies)
 - Acceptance
 - Gratitude
 - Beginner's Mind
 - Impermanence

Compassion

Curiosity

Non-Striving

Sympathetic Joy











Key Take Aways

- Anxiety is part of life- the goal is not to eliminate it entirely, the goal is to manage it;
- Moderate levels of anxiety are associated with optimal performance;
- You are your child's lifeline-self care and self-regulation will help you and your child; Being emotionally present with your child is essential;
- You help your child to develop necessary life skills by modeling how to manage anxiety, teaching them about what anxiety is, helping them face it;
- Avoiding anxiety provoking situations and "protecting" them from experiencing any discomfort can interfere with them learning how to tolerate even low levels of distress;





Key Take Aways

- Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors are related and influence each other- If you change one, you likely change another;
- It's very difficult to change an emotional experience directly; you usually have to go through thoughts or behavior to get there;
- Calming the Stress-Response System is a necessary first step, but may not get you the full way (It allows the thinking brain to re-engage);
- Once the thinking brain is re-engaged, you can recognize that it's "anxiety" talking, and can consider more helpful thoughts and behaviors;





Key Take Aways

- Be present with your child
 - Start with the body (mindfulness practices)
 - Coping strategies (mindfulness principles)

"The curious paradox is that when I accept myself as I am, then I can change"

-Carl Rogers

Questions? Discussion?

