



MindsThatMatter
PSYCHOLOGY
For Children + Adults

Adolescent Angst: a snapshot of anxiety during adolescence and strategies to help.

Dr Jennifer Papoutsis

Clinical Neuropsychologist

Minds That Matter Psychology, Caulfield

Monash Children's Hospital, Clayton



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Anxiety is **not** the enemy



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1. Don't DIE

2. Don't get thrown out of
the group



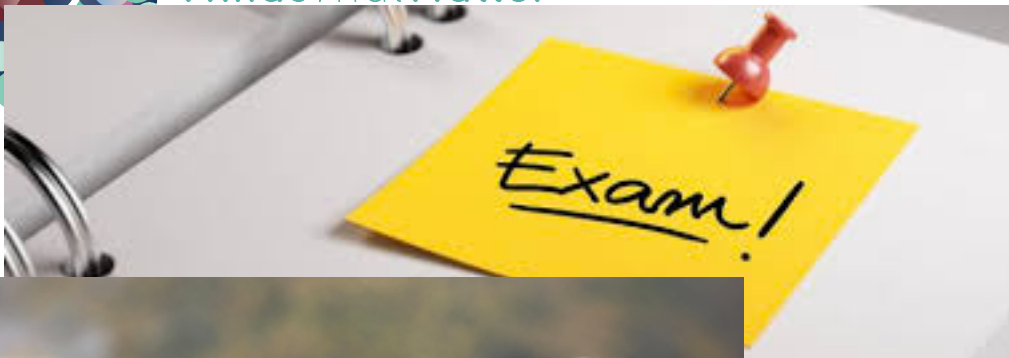


1. Don't DIE
(things that harm us)

2. Don't get thrown out
of the group
(social anxiety)











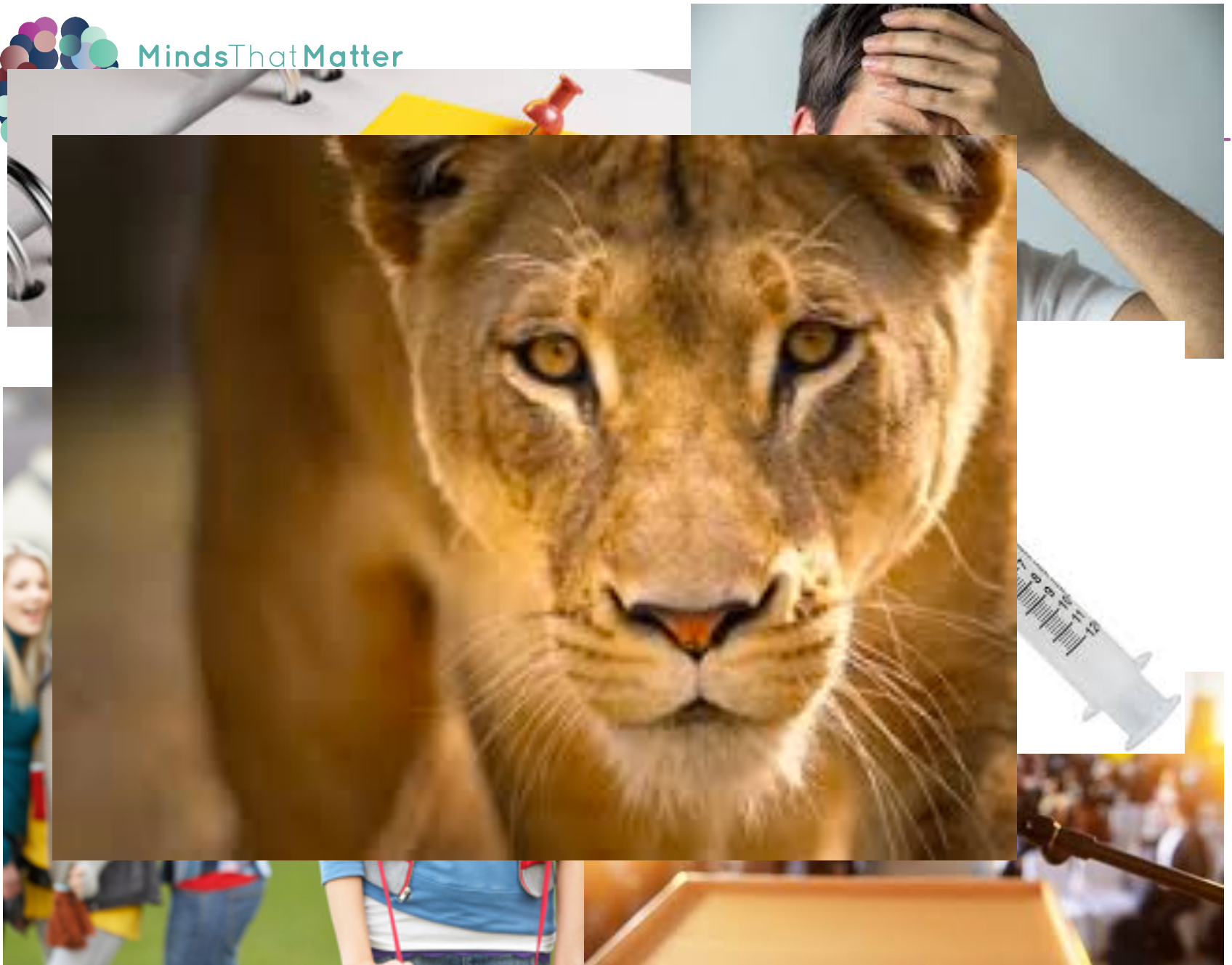








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Slides by Jennifer Papoutsis, Clinical Neuropsychologist, 2019



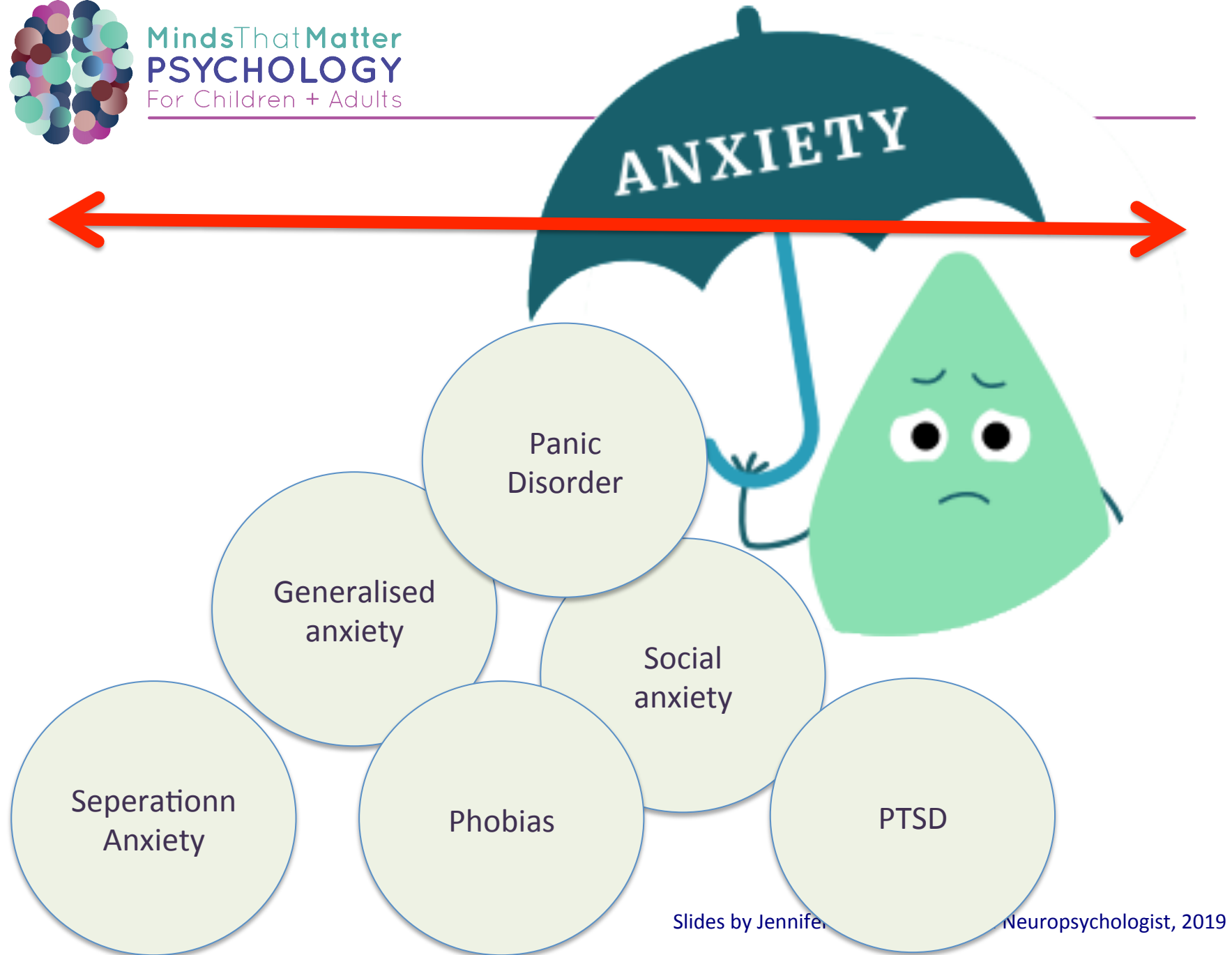
- **Anxiety:** excessive fear and related behavioral disturbances (DSM–V)

Exists on a spectrum



All worries are normal, some just more intense than others

- most common type of psychological difficulty in children
 - Varies but approximately 1 in 10
- Increase in the rate of anxiety during adolescence
- Can impact all aspects of life
 - Relationships (family/friends)
 - Academic performance
 - Participation in valued activities
 - Sleep





- Not an “all or nothing”
- Often inconsistent
- Not logical



Panic
Disorder

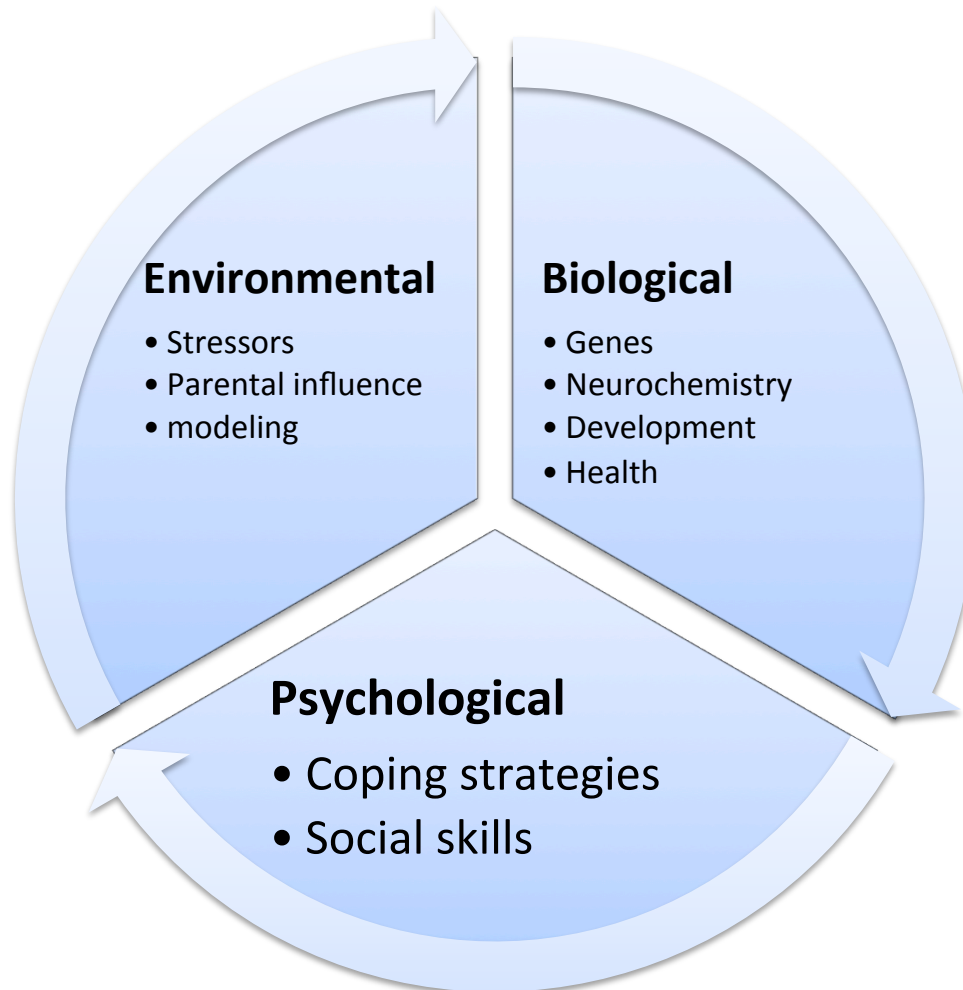
Generalised
anxiety

Social
anxiety++

Seperationn
Anxiety

Phobias

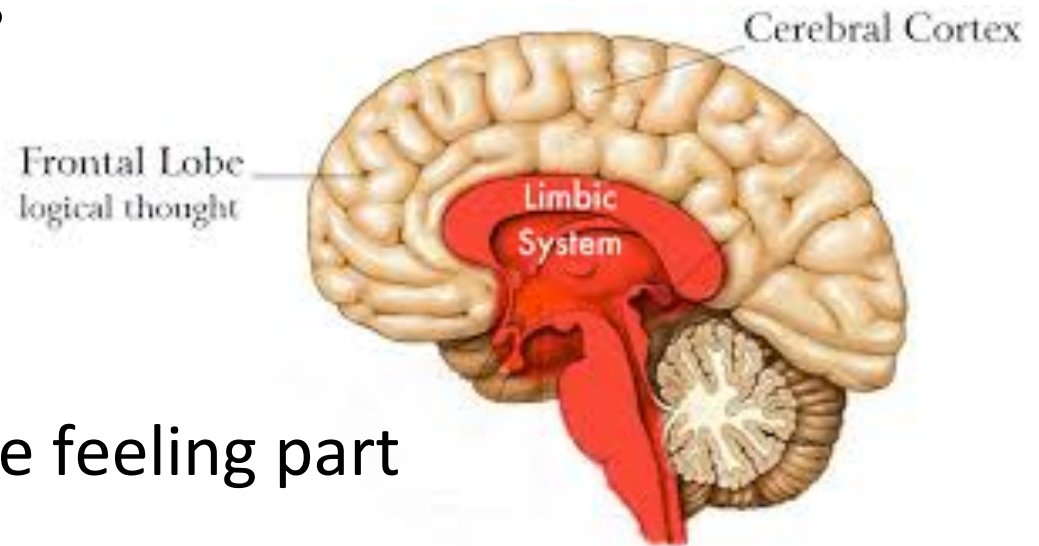
PTSD





Frontal lobe (prefrontal cortex)

- 'future' oriented – the thinking part
- executive functions



Limbic System

- 'now' oriented – the feeling part
- feelings



**MY SON LOST IT BECAUSE I WOULDN'T LET HIM
GET INTO THE CAR PARKED NEXT TO US**

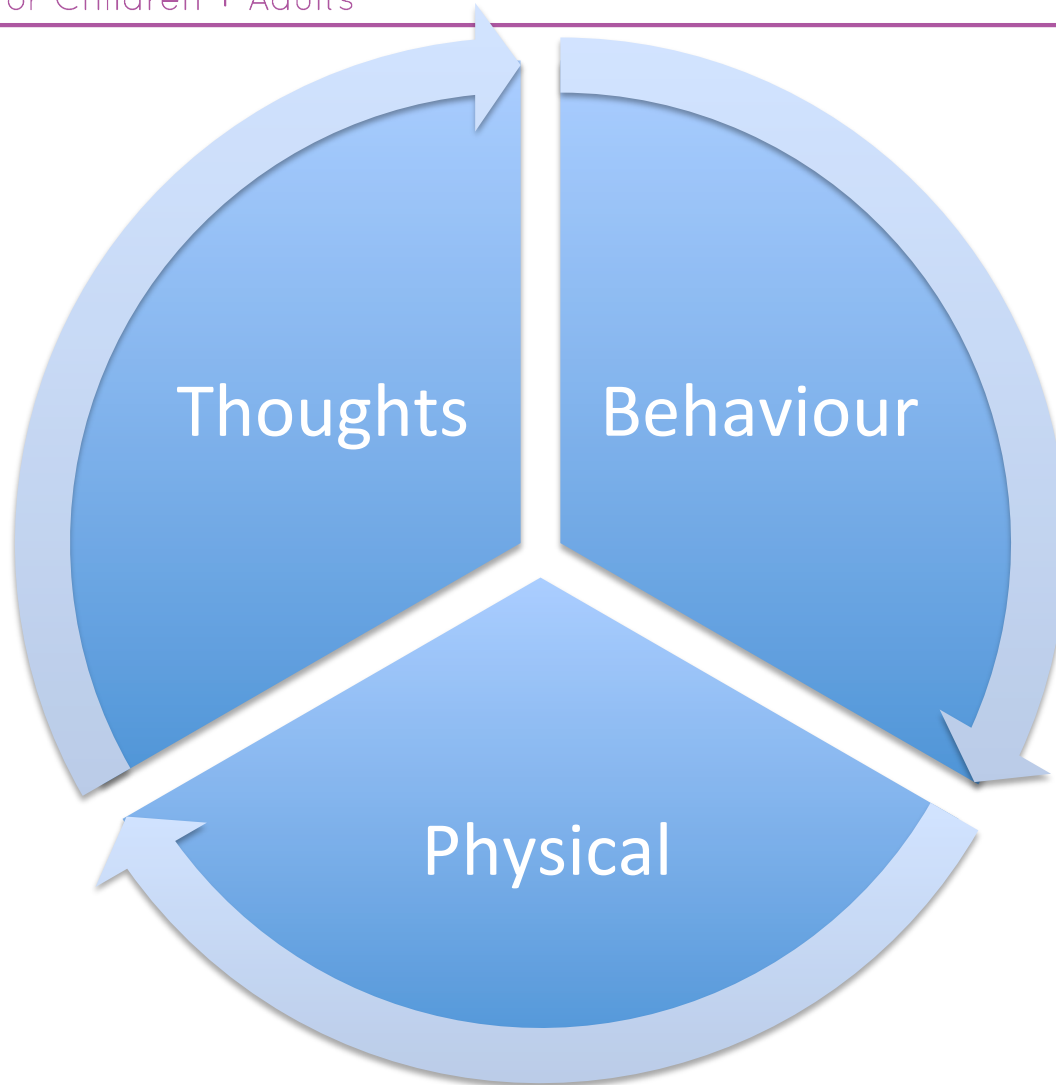
**It's all
LIMBIC!**



**MY KID SCREAMED AT HIS BALLOONS FOR AN HOUR
BECAUSE THEY WOULDN'T STOP FLOATING**

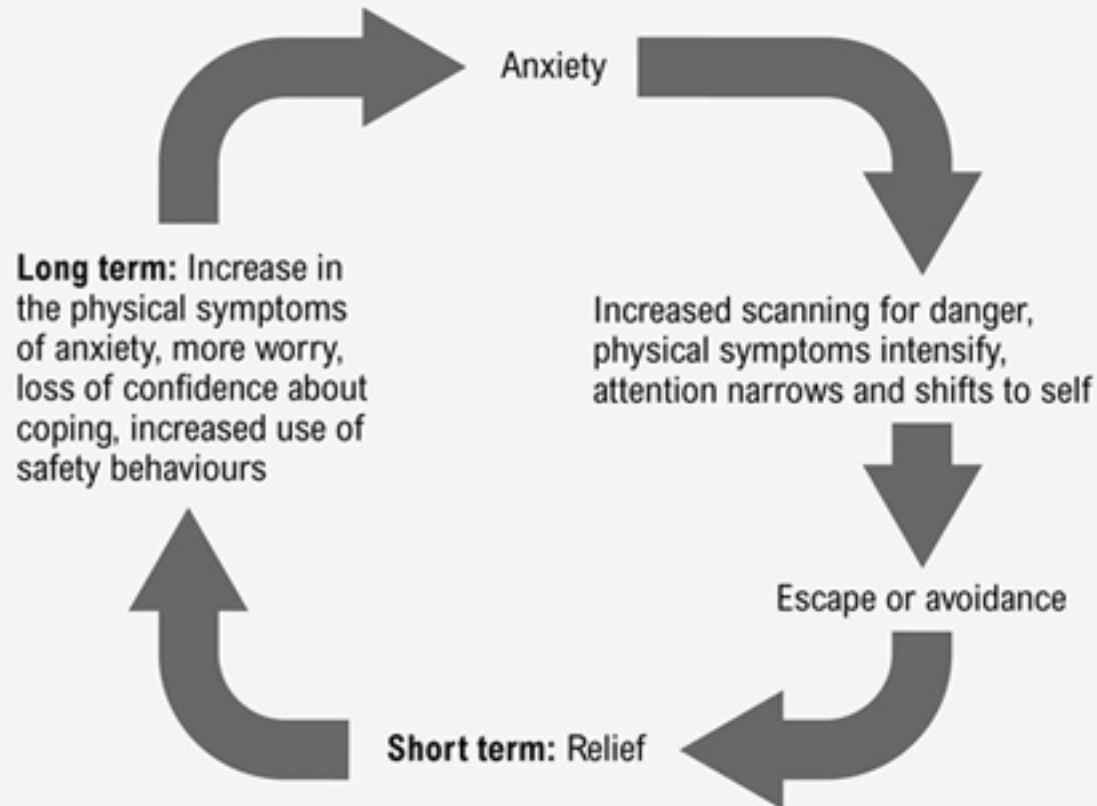


- **Emotional changes**
 - Feeling “keyed up”/on edge/irritable/restless
- **Social changes**
 - Avoiding social interactions with friends, extracurricular activities, isolating from peer group, spending increased time alone
- **Physical changes**
 - Headaches, tummy pains, fatigue, change to eating habits
- **Sleep disturbance**
 - Trouble falling or maintain sleep, not feeling rested
- **Reduced school performance**
 - Decline in grades, missed assignments, feeling overwhelmed by workload, increased procrastination
- **Symptoms of panic**
 - Rapid heart beat, sweating trembling, dizziness, hard to breathe, chest pain, derealization
- **“What ifs”** – requiring more reassurance and harder to ‘believe’ logic
- **Worry about things hours/days/weeks ahead**
- **Interferes with daily life – is it stopping your child from doing valued activities?**





The vicious cycle of anxiety





Thinking



Physical



Behaviour





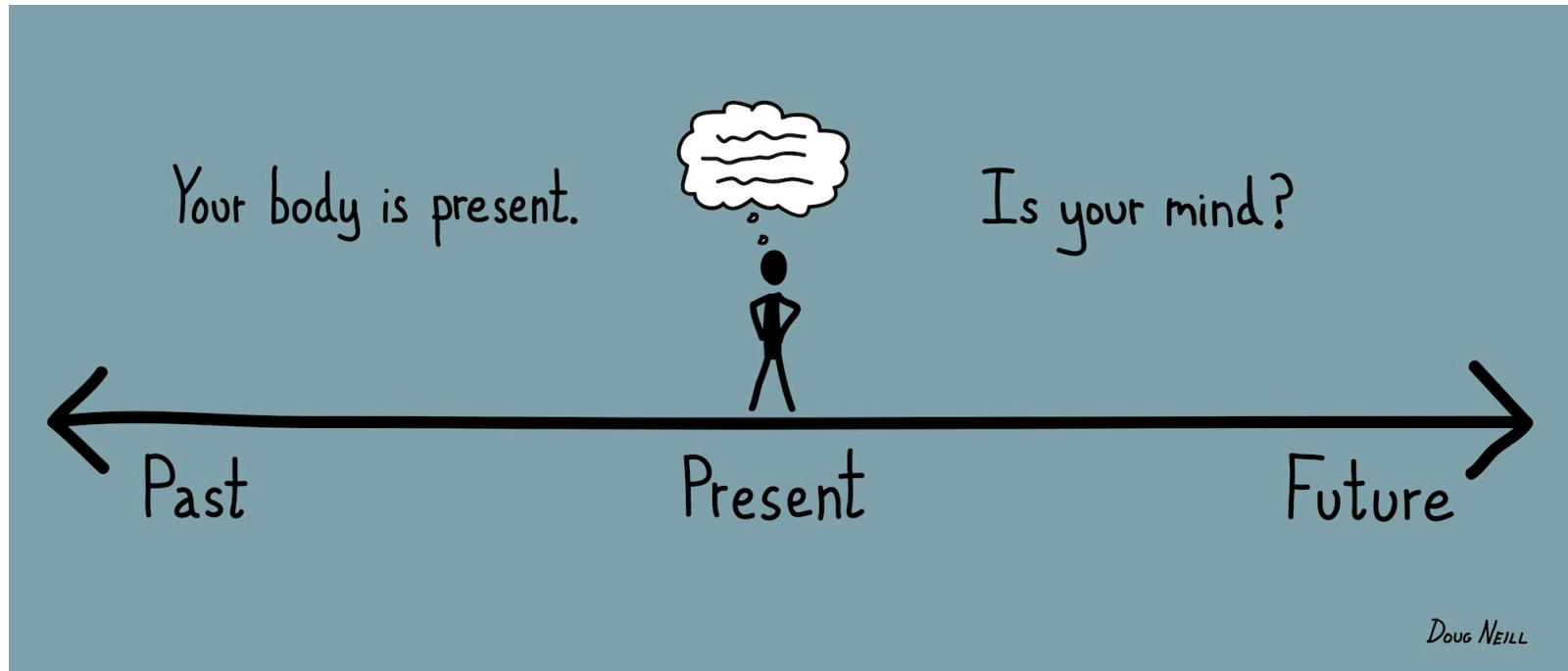
Thinking

Start to NOTICE and be aware of your thinking

Are you thinking mindfully or mind full(y)?



Mind Full, or Mindful?





Physical

Learn how to calm your body

- meditation
- yoga
- deep breathing
- do something you love
- go for a walk

Learn how to calm your breathing

Find your *flow*



Behaviour

Avoid Avoidance!!!

- Don't let the short term solution become the problem
- Challenge yourself
- Break activities down into smaller steps



For parents

- Model different emotions to your child
- Just listen
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajBHZKoKYbU> (stop 1.28)
 - don't rush in with reassurance
- Help your children come up with their own solutions
 - Apprentice model



- Find a local psychologist to help
- Helpline
 - Life line 13 11 14
 - Headspace – in person or online support
 - Beyond Blue 1300 22 46 36
- Boks
 - Get out of your mind and into your teens (Ciarocchi, Hayes)
 - I just want to be me (bowden)
- Information
 - Raising Children (raisingchildren.net.au)
 - Kids Spot (kidspot.com.au)



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Avoid avoidance

- Short term solution becomes the problem
- Break tasks down into smaller manageable steps



- Anxiety does not ‘go away’
 - Normal emotion that helps us perform to the best of our abilities and keep us safe in dangerous situations
 - Reduce to manageable levels
 - Continue to live a rich, meaningful and valued life where you live the best life that you can



- Barriers to seeking help
 - “They will grow out of it”
 - “It is just their personality, nothing we can do about it”
 - “I was just like that at their age”
 - Parents don’t realise how much it affects the child
 - Parents/children see the worry as trivial or silly
 - If we focus on it, it will make it worse – mountain out of a molehill



When does anxiety become a problem?

- All fears are 'normal', some are just more intense than others
- How do I know
 - Is it stopping your child from doing valued activities
 - Is it impacting your family
 - Is it lasting longer than other children who have outgrown it
- Preventative not just curative



- Anxiety: excessive fear and related behavioral disturbances (DSM-V)

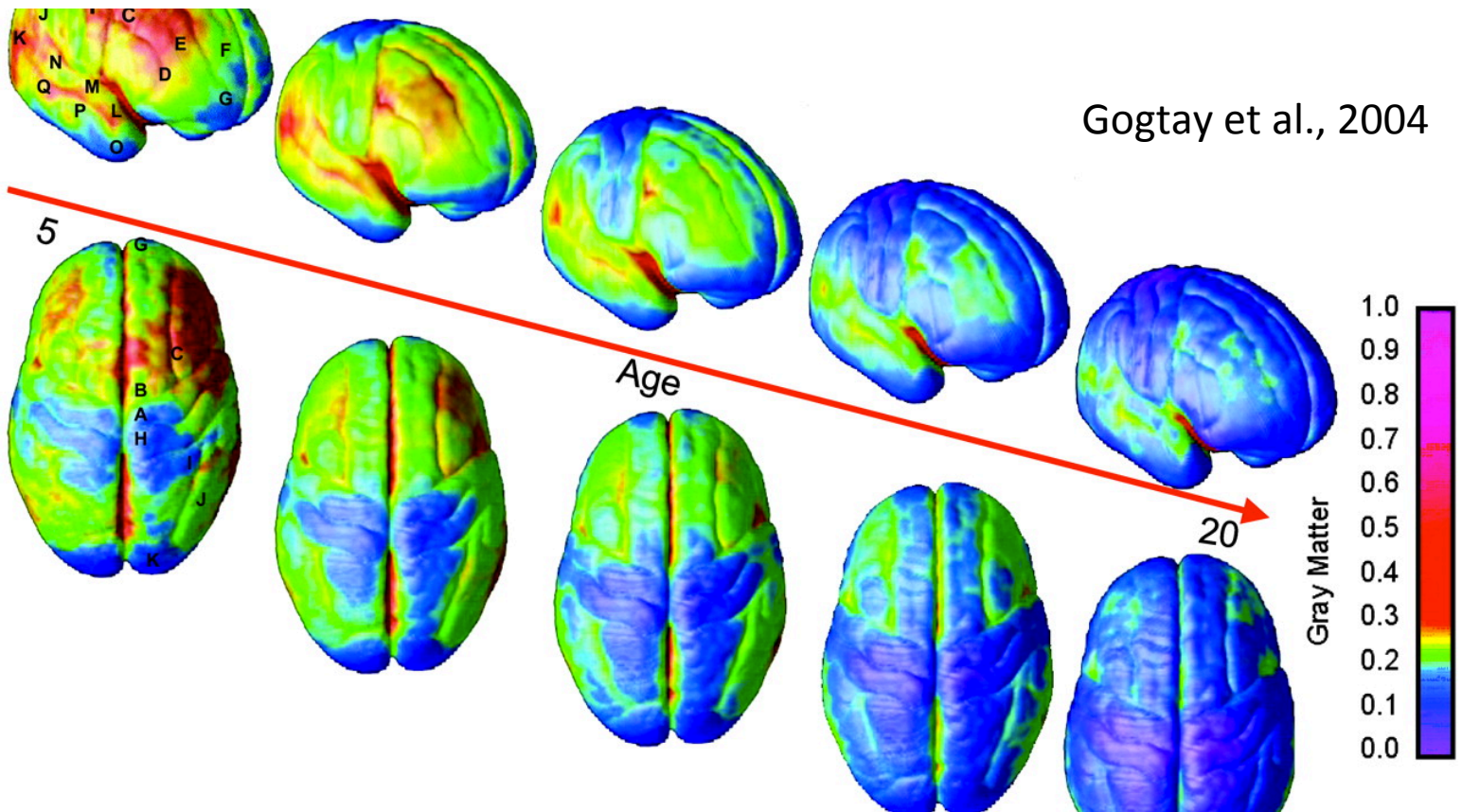
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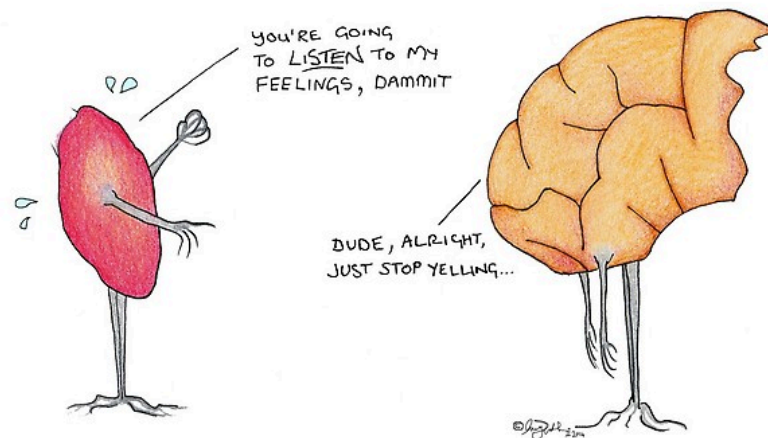


Why the increased rate of anxiety in adolescence?





WHEN PEOPLE SAY THEY LISTEN TO THEIR HEART
WHAT THEY REALLY MEAN IS THAT THEIR LIMBIC
SYSTEM IS BOSSING THEIR FRONTAL LOBES AROUND...





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