

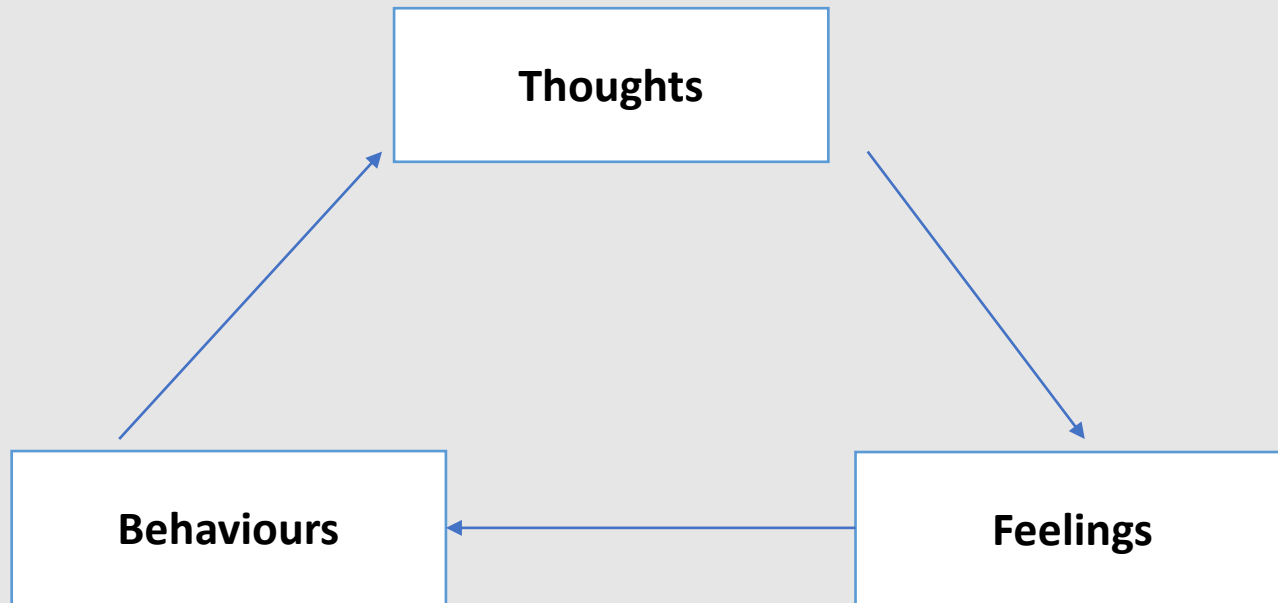
# Anxiety

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# The Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviour Cycle

Our thoughts, feelings and behaviours are all related, and have a big impact on each other.



Making changes in what we think will affect what you do and feel, and changing what we do, affects the way we think and feel. Making changes help to break the cycle and can reframe our thoughts and feelings.



The world is not a safe place

Other people should not be trusted

## The 7 thoughts of anxious children

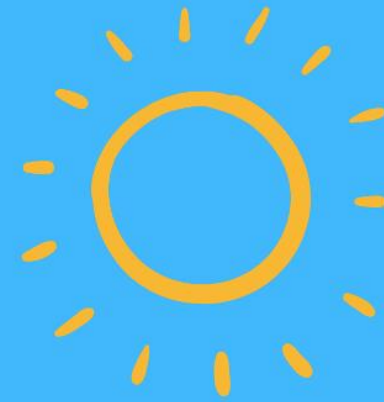
I can't cope with lots of things

Bad things happen to me

I have no control over the things that happen to me

Bad things come out of the blue

Other people don't respect me



The world is a pretty safe place

People are pretty nice really

## The 7 thoughts of confident children

I can cope with most things

Bad things don't usually happen to me

I have some control over the things that happen to me

Bad things don't pop up out of the blue

Other people respect me

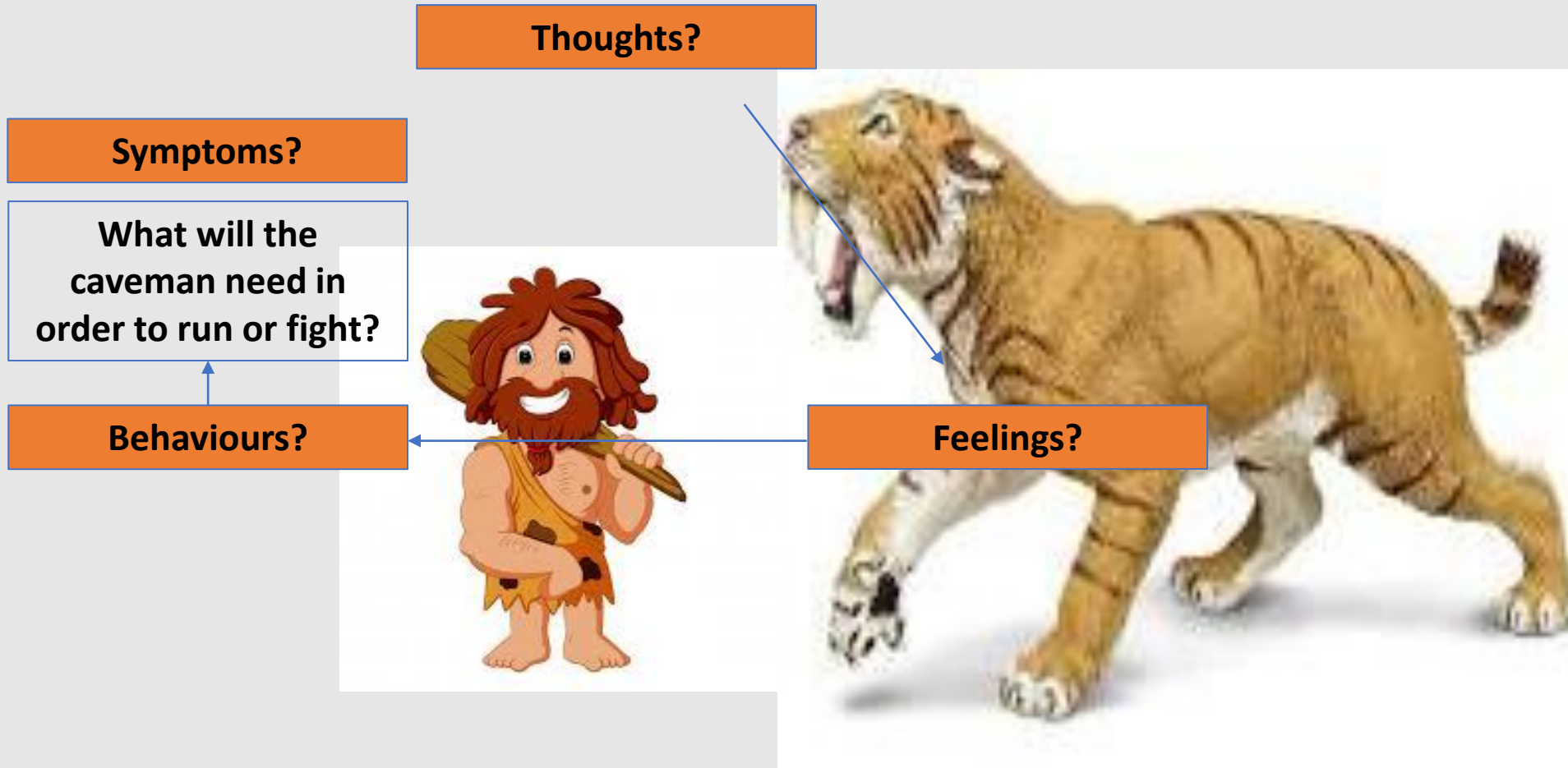


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Anxiety : The fight /  
flight / freeze  
response



# The fight / flight / freeze response



# The fight / flight / freeze response

Cold hands or feet

Jelly legs / shaking

Racing heart

Pale skin

Tight chest

Butterflies / stomach  
pains

Lump in throat

Feeling sick

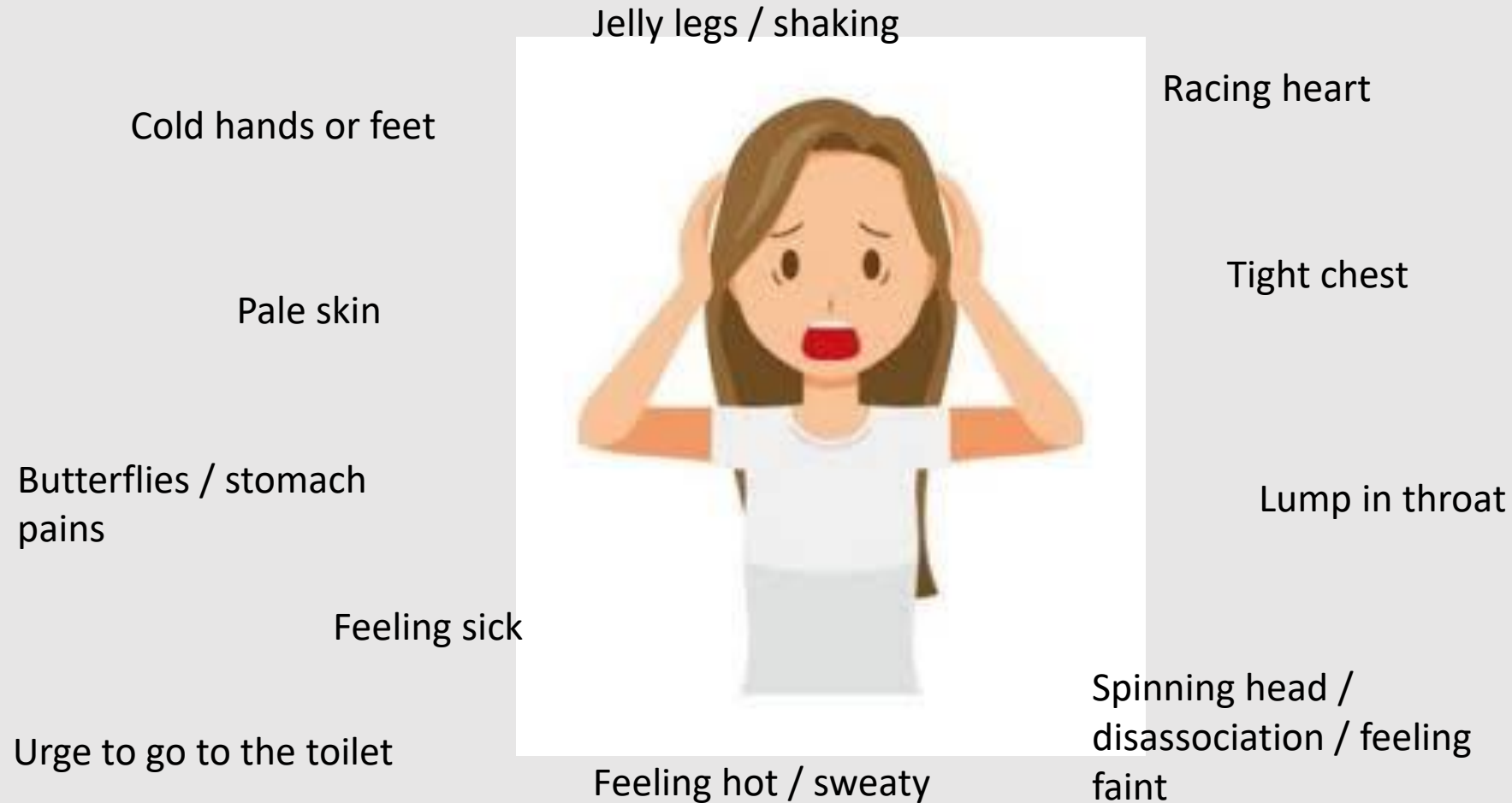
Spinning head /  
disassociation / feeling  
faint

Urge to go to the toilet

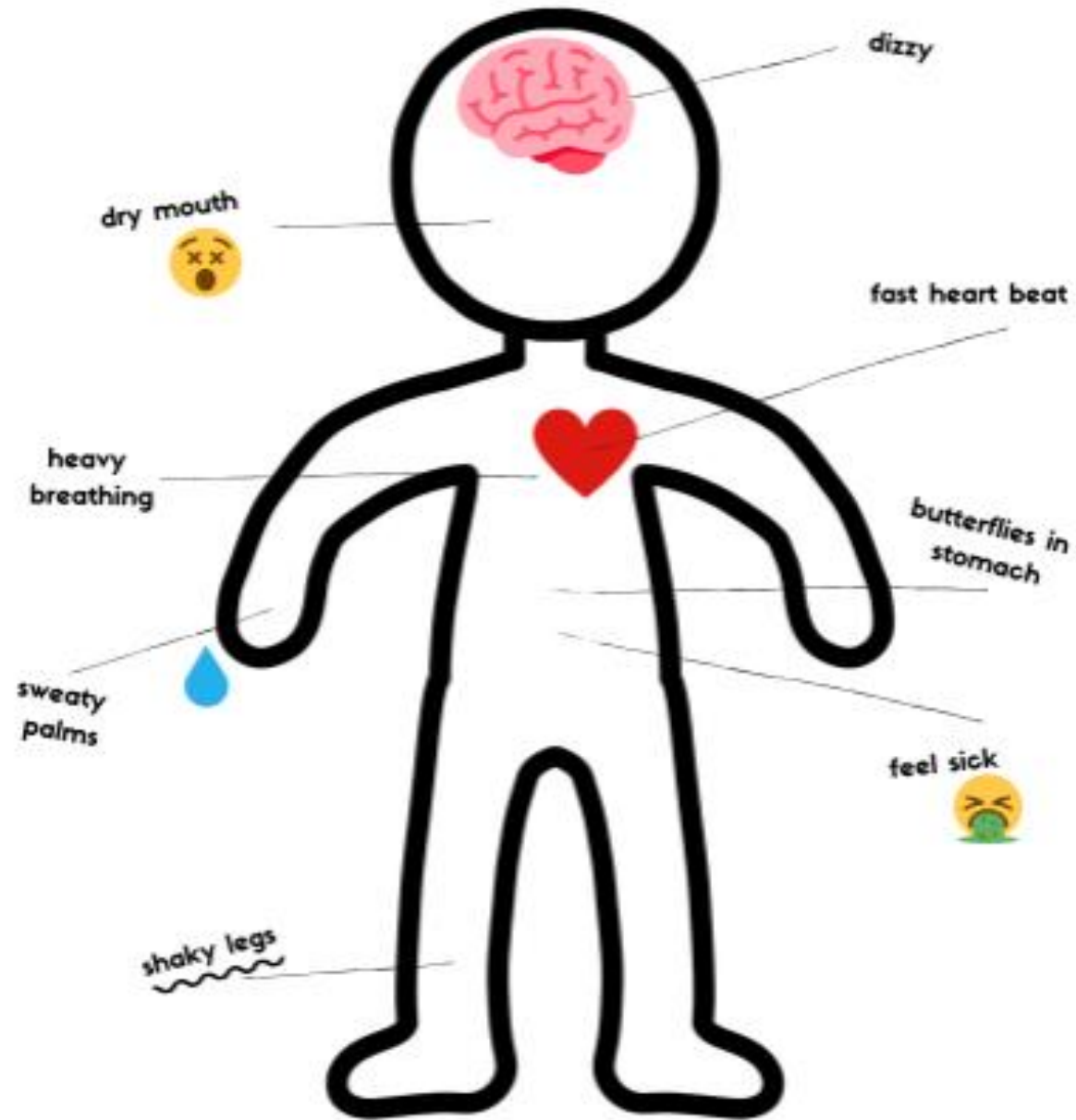
Feeling hot / sweaty



# The fight / flight / freeze response



Where do you feel anxiety in your body?



When feeling anxious we all experience some physical symptoms which can be unpleasant and upsetting.

It's important to remember that these are **NORMAL** body reactions to a feared situation that everyone experiences at some time or another.

What fight, flight, freeze might look like in the classroom

FIGHT

FLIGHT

FREEZE



FIGHT

Hyperactivity

Acting out

Being silly

Opposition, defiance, non-compliance

Hitting, kicking, biting, throwing

Screaming, using unkind words

FLIGHT

School refusal

Sleeping

Procrastination, avoidance of the situation

FLIGHT

Fidgeting, restless, overactive

Running away

Hiding

FREEZE

says 'I don't know' a lot

Difficulty completing tasks

Appears depressed, numb, apathetic

Refusal to engage

Shutting down, mind goes blank

Zoned out, day dreaming



# How can we calm the symptoms?

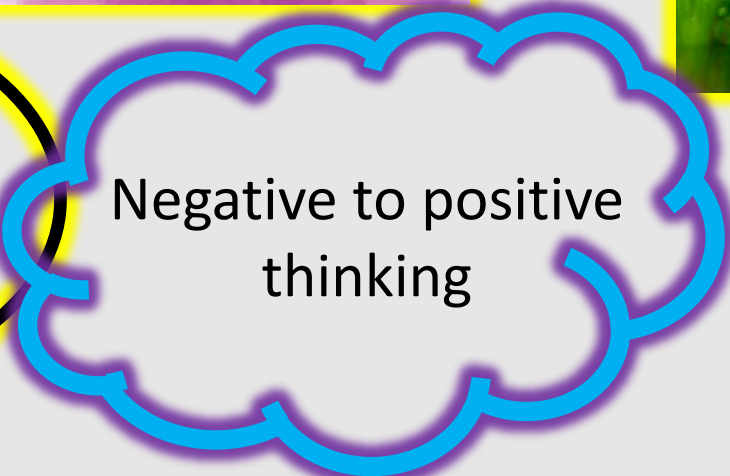
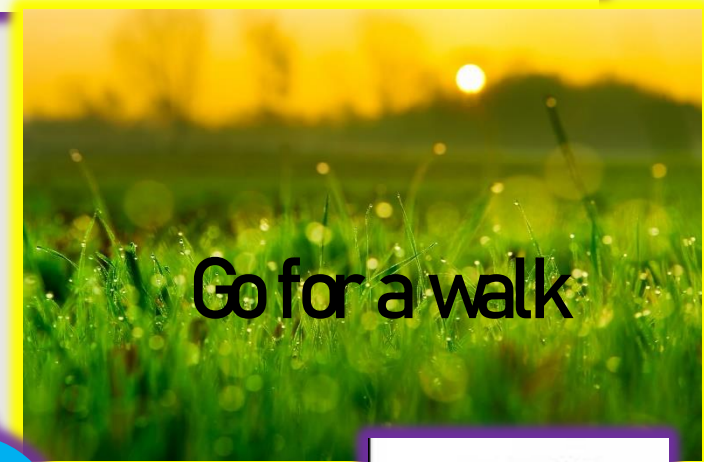
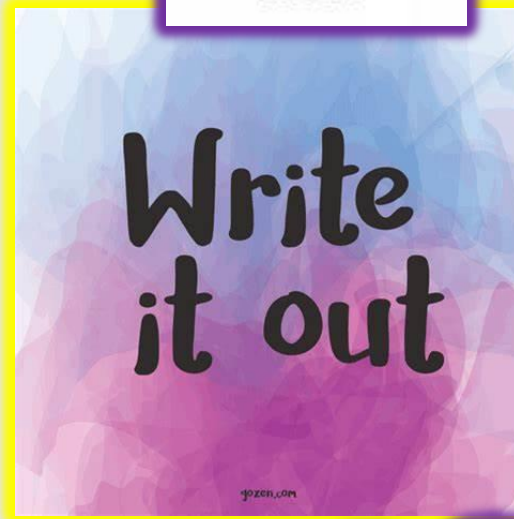
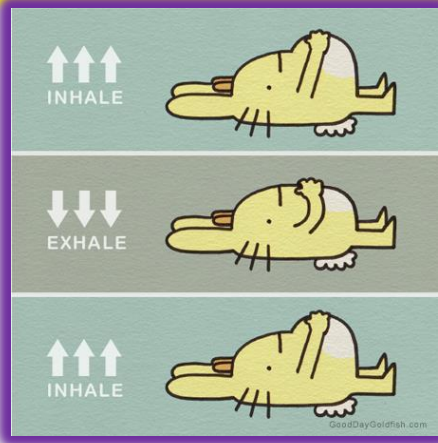
## Powerful thoughts



Read

### Simple grounding exercise:

- 5 Things you see
- 4 Things you feel
- 3 Things you hear
- 2 Things you smell
- 1 Thing you taste



# How can we calm the symptoms?

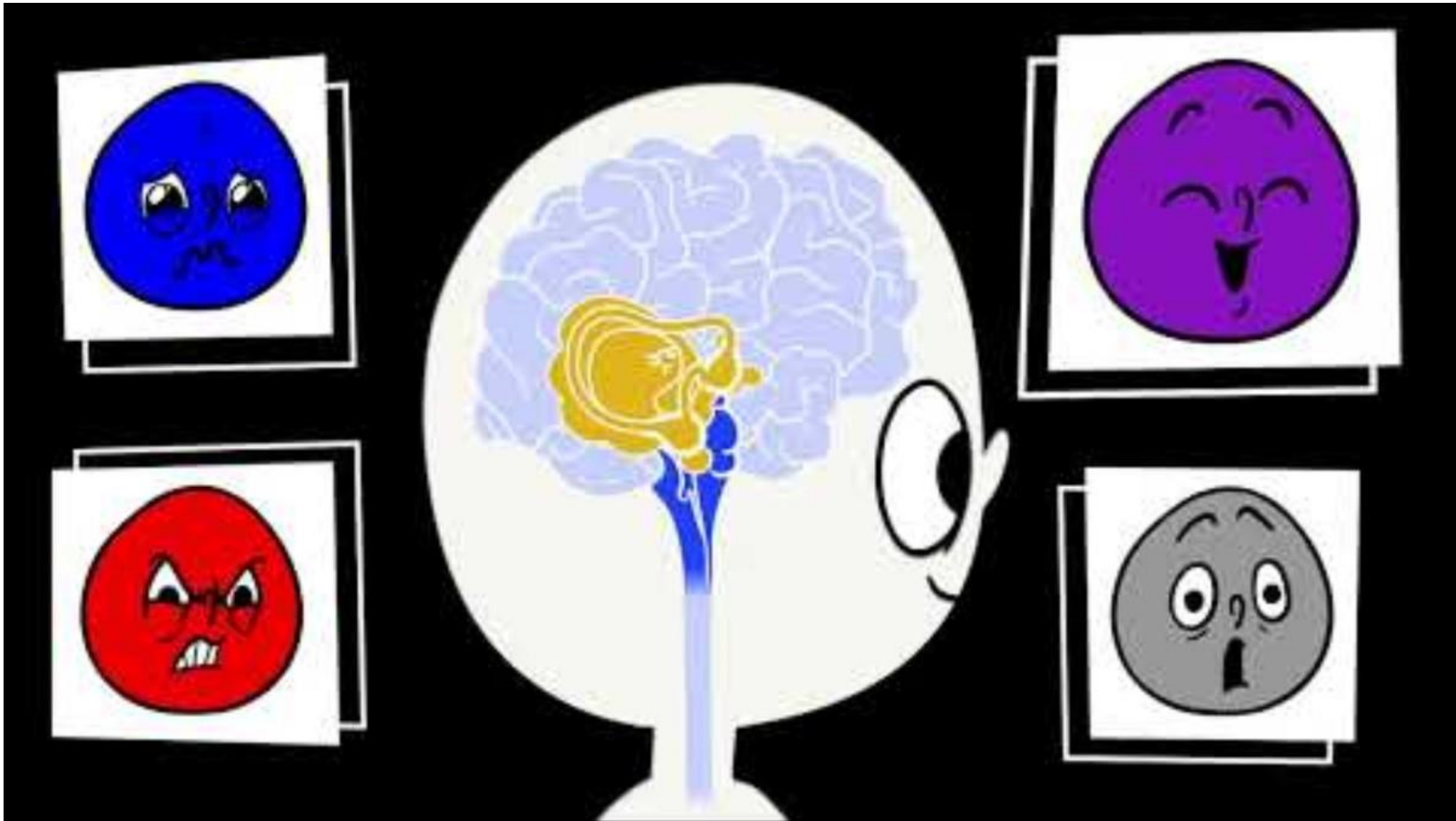
- Physical exercise
- Getting outside / getting full spectrum light
- Maintaining a healthy diet
- Cutting out caffeine
- Maintaining routines
- Practising mindfulness / meditation (remaining 'in the moment')
- What else?



# The fight / flight / freeze response is not harmful!

- After fight or flight, our immune system is **super-charged** for a few hours, so we are more resistant to germs and bugs
- Sprinters use fight/flight to get a lightning-quick start to races
- Even though we might feel like it, we **can't faint** during the fight/flight response. Our blood pressure goes up.
- Even though we might feel like we're going mad, we're not! Blood is rushing to our head and we might have rapid and frightening thought processes. **This is completely normal** and not a sign of madness.





[The Hand Model of the Brain - YouTube](#)

# The role of avoidance in maintaining anxiety

**Avoidance** is the key behavioural factor in **maintaining anxiety**

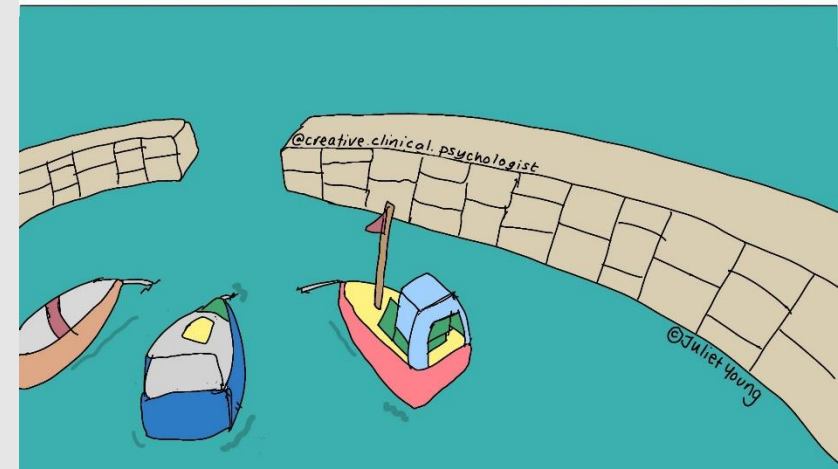
If we avoid things that we are frightened of, we do not get the **opportunity** to find out that they are **harmless**

We miss out on opportunities to learn new **copng skills**

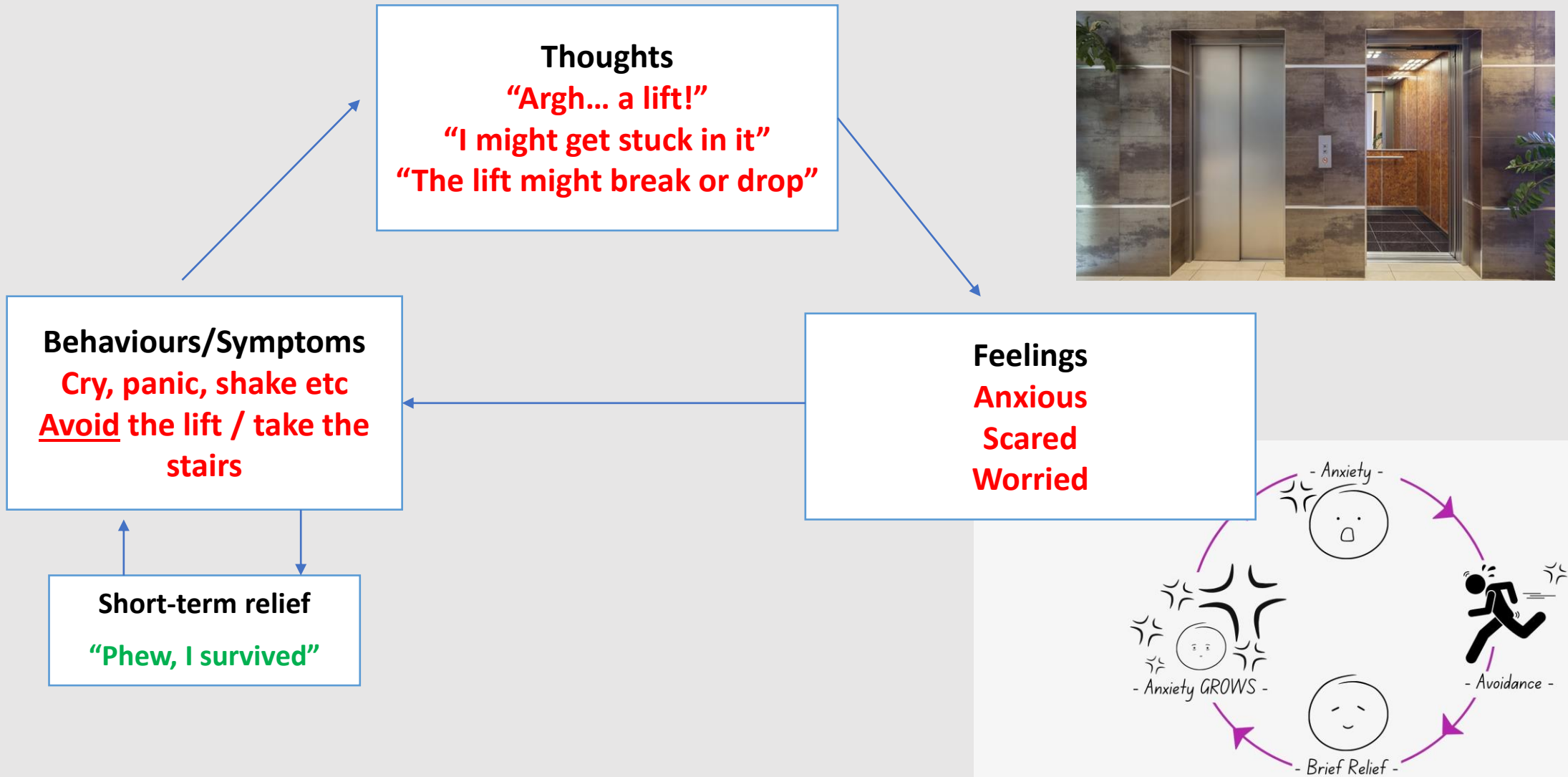
The longer we avoid, the **bigger the fear** gets



Always responding to anxiety with retreat is like forever keeping a boat in the harbour. That's not what boats are for

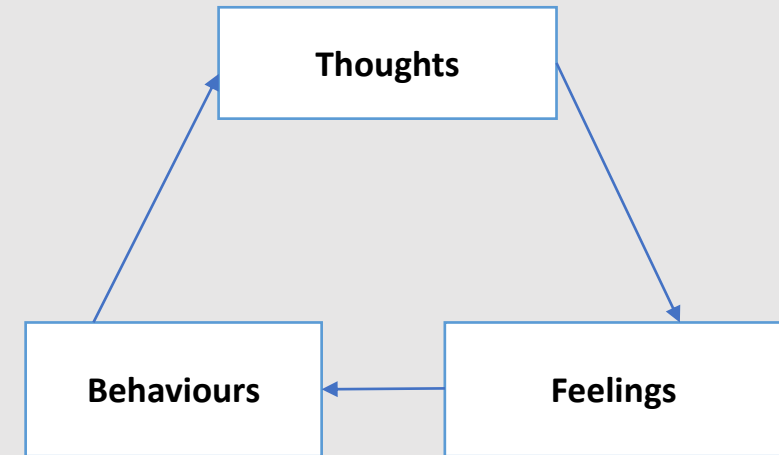


# The role of avoidance in maintaining anxiety



## To push or not to push...?

|      | Pushing  | Not Pushing  |
|------|--|--|
| Pros | <p>My child might gain confidence.<br/>My child might have a better life.<br/>My child will feel good about themselves.<br/>It will boost the Seven Confident Thoughts.<br/>I will feel good as a parent.<br/>Once it's done, family life will be easier.<br/>My child will learn a useful life skill.</p> | <p>It will be easier not to bother.<br/>My child won't get upset.<br/>I won't get upset.<br/>It will be less time and hassle for the whole family.</p>                                   |
| Cons | <p>It could harm my child.<br/>It could go wrong.<br/>My child will hate me.<br/>I will get very upset.<br/>It will be a hassle.</p>   | <p>My child won't get any better.<br/>My child might get worse- they may struggle to find a good job, leave home etc...<br/>I might feel that I've missed a chance to help my child.</p> |





Children copy their parents? Never ...!

# Modelling of anxiety

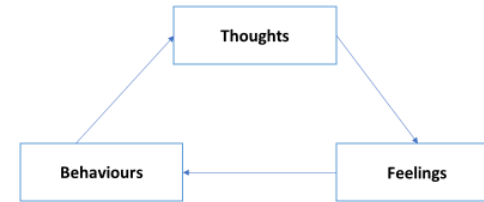
A large proportion of anxiety is learnt

Some children are particularly sensitive and can easily detect stress, fear, worry and potential danger

Children copy their parents' anxious behaviours and their **confident behaviours**.

## The Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviour Cycle

Our thoughts, feelings and behaviours are all related, and have a big impact on each other.



# Have you had practise of Modelling confidence



'Zipper mouth'

'Botox Face'

'Oscar-winning Performance'

Compensating



# The role of avoidance in maintaining anxiety



# Anxiety and the Brain



Thankyou for listening



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