

**Handout for WQSB Workshop**  
**November 28, 2018**  
**Presented by: Joanne Doucette, MSW, RSW**

## **Calm Breathing**

When we are stressed or anxious, our body feels uncomfortable and tense. Sometimes, we feel sweaty, shaky and out of breath. Calm breathing helps to relax our body and feel more in control.

- Sit comfortably in a chair or on the floor, relax your body.
- Place your hands gently on your belly.
- Breathe in through the nose, to a count of 4.
- Exhale slowly through the mouth, also to a count of 4.
- Feel your belly rise as you breathe in, and the air go out as you exhale.

### **Making it kid-friendly**

#### **Flower-candle**

- Imagine you are holding a beautiful flower in one hand and a candle in the other.
- Slowly sniff the flower, to a count of 1, 2, 3, 4.
- Then, gently blow out the candle, to a count of 1, 2, 3, 4.

#### **Cookies out of the oven**

- Imagine a delicious batch of cookies just came out of the oven
- As you breathe in, smell the cookies ....
- But they are hot, so you need to cool them down: blow on them (breathe out)

Adapted from “Creative CBT Interventions for Children with Anxiety” by Liana Lowenstein.

# Worry Time

## Guidelines

- Set aside 10-15 minutes each day for discussing worries.
- No distractions or interruptions allowed: kids and parents need to put away all screens, parents should redirect siblings from interrupting, etc.
- Parents will listen carefully to the worries. Say things to let the child know you understand, but be cautious not to get into problem-solving too much unless the child asks for advice. Just listen and be supportive.
- Very important: at any other time of day when the child feels worried, they need to be reminded to wait until worry time to talk about it.
- Parents must resist answering questions about the worries, providing reassurance or discussing the worries at all, until it's Worry Time.

## What to expect

- Parents may feel guilty - it seems kind of mean to insist on putting the worries away.
- Children may be initially frustrated by this change as they are used to talking often about their worries.
- It is very important that they learn to postpone discussing their concerns, because paying attention to worries makes them worse.
- Also, children will start to forget about some of the worries by the time they get to Worry Time, and eventually, they may say they don't have any worries to talk about!
- When this happens, keep using this time to connect and talk daily, but you can start talking about other things, and re-name it "Talk Time".

Adapted from "What to do When You Worry Too Much: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Anxiety" by Dawn Huebner.

# Changing Thoughts

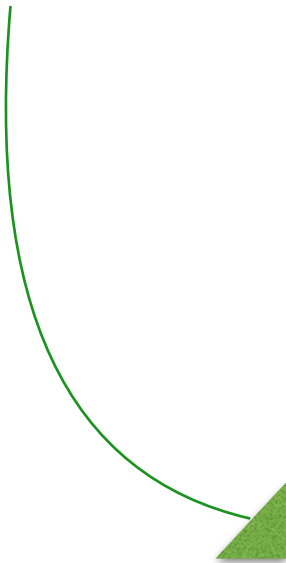
## Unhelpful Thoughts

I can't do it.  
What if I make a mistake?  
Everyone will laugh at me.  
This is too hard.



## Thoughts Changers

Is that really true?  
Is there another, braver way to think about this?  
Can I expect myself to always be perfect?  
Am I ignoring the positive?  
Could I be exaggerating?



## Helpful Thoughts

I can do it!  
I will feel better if I overcome this worry.  
This is scary but I have faced my fears before.  
This may be challenging but I can handle it.  
I just have to try my best.  
It's OK to make mistakes, I don't have to be perfect.  
I can be brave.

Adapted from "FRIENDS for Life Activity Book for Children, by Paula Barrett and "Creative CBT Interventions for Children with Anxiety" by Liana Lowenstein.