

# Let's Talk Mental Health Parent workshop

Shirley Moody – EMHP  
Lauriane Constans – EMHP  
Greg Cronie – Advisory Teacher

West Sussex County Council | Psycho Educational workshops for Oathall Parents | NHS

## Let's Talk Mental Health

a Parent Workshop from Thought-Full  
Mental Health Support Team

Is your child struggling with their mental health?  
Are you unsure how to support them?  
Have they got BIG emotions?  
Wish they'd talk more about it?

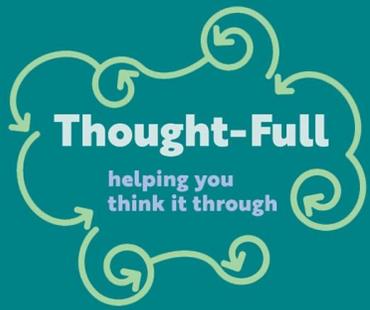
We'll cover strategies to give your child, how to talk to them and how to encourage them to open up too.

**Oct 5** Thursday 5th October 5 - 6pm

**Future Dates:**

- Thurs 16th Nov
- Weds 24th Jan
- Weds 22nd Mar
- Thurs 2nd May
- Thurs 18th July

PROBLEM SOLVE TOGETHER  
SHARE QUICK WINS  
LEARN ABOUT THE BRAIN  
CONNECT WITH OTHER FAMILIES  
GAIN IDEAS



# Aims of the session



- Mental Health Overview
- Anxiety
- Low Mood
- How to talk MH with young people
- Some Strategies to use

# What is mental health?

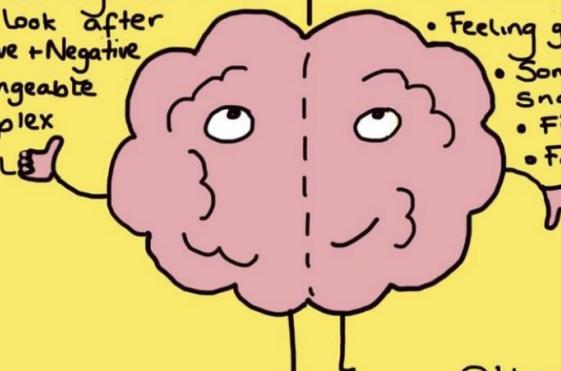
## MENTAL HEALTH

**IS...**

- Important
- Something everyone has
- Intrinsically linked to (+ probably inseparable from) physical health
- On a continuum
- Worth making time for
- Part of being human
- Something we need to look after
- Positive + Negative
- Changeable
- Complex
- Real

**ISN'T...**

- A sign of weakness
- Shameful
- All in your mind
- Always something negative
- Something you decide to have
- Something to think about only when it feels broken
- An interchangeable term with mental illness
- Feeling good all the time
- Something you can snap out of
- Fixed
- Fake news



@thepsychologymum

## WHAT MENTAL HEALTH IS OFTEN DEFINED AS:



THEM



US

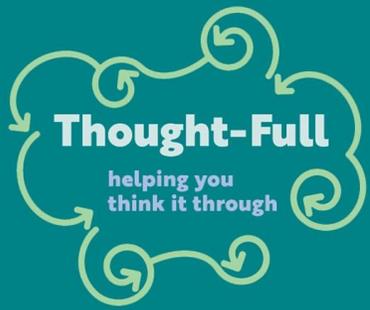
## WHAT MENTAL HEALTH ACTUALLY IS:

MENTAL ILLNESS



MENTAL WELLBEING

@thepsychologymum



# What is good mental health?



*'Mental Health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes **their own ability**, can cope with **the normal stresses of life**, can **work productively** and is able to **make a contribution to their community**.'*

[W.H.O. (2014)]

- Good mental health is **about more** than the absence of mental health problems.



Anxiety



# What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is what we feel when we are **worried, tense or afraid** – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think **could happen** in the future.

Anxiety is a **natural** human response when **we perceive** that we are under threat.

It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations.

**mind.org.uk**

Anxiety is **common**, **EVERYONE** experiences worries, fears, stress and anxiety some of the time.

**“Think of anxiety like fog, if it covers everything, makes it makes it hard to see, stops you from doing what you usually do, and generally gets in the way, then it has likely become a problem.”**

**(Dr Paul Linsley, UEA)**



# Anxiety is developmental



**Separation anxiety**  
**Stranger danger**  
**Loud noises**  
**Large objects**



**Imaginary creatures**  
**Noises**  
**Sleeping alone**  
**Darkness**  
**Injury**  
**Animals**  
**Medical interventions**  
**Thunder**



**Thunder**  
**School performance**  
**Health**  
**Death**  
**Social competence**



**New experience(s)**  
**School performance**  
**Health**  
**Natural disasters**  
**Social competence**



## Normal Anxiety vs. Problem Anxiety

### Normal

- Triggered by certain events and situations
- Intermittent
- Beneficial

### Problem

- Interference with daily life
- Irrational
- Chronic



- There is no denying, anxiety is uncomfortable.
- Children often think it is a problem due to how unpleasant it is.
- But we want it, we just don't want too much of it.
- Don't assume 'anxiety' is always problem anxiety



Low Mood

# What is low mood?

An absence  
of feeling

A lack of  
motivation

A lack of pleasure

**Irritability**



It **IS NOT** a  
psychological  
illness

We all experience  
feeling low or  
down from time  
to time.

Feeling low is  
common after  
distressing events  
or major life  
changes

sometimes periods  
of low mood  
happen for no  
obvious reason



# Common Causes of Low Mood



# PSYCHOLOGICAL

Isolating self/ withdrawal

Sad / tearful

Anxious / worried

Upsetting thoughts

Guilt

Lack of interested

Lack of motivation

Less confident

Frustrated

Angry / irritated

Low self esteem

## Signs of low mood

LOW MOOD MAY

NOT ACTUALLY

BE OBVIOUS

# PHYSICAL

- Aches and pains
- Increased appetite
- Decreased appetite
  - Tired
- Disturbed sleep
- Increased sleep
- Lacking energy
  - Headaches
- Quieter in self
  - Self Harm





# THE DIAGNOSIS OF DEPRESSION IN CHILDREN



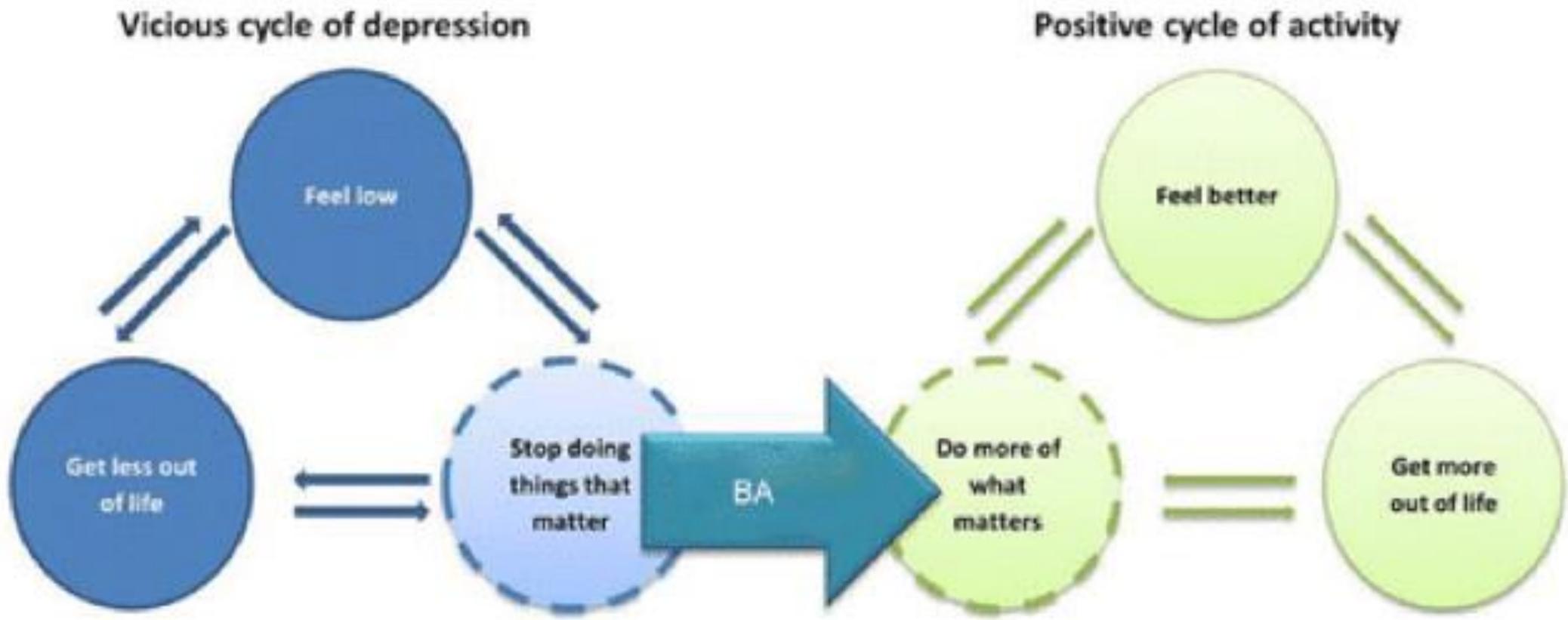
**Five or more symptoms present during a 2 week period.**

**Two of the following symptoms:**

1. Depressed or irritable, cranky mood (outside being frustrated)
2. Loss of interest or pleasure

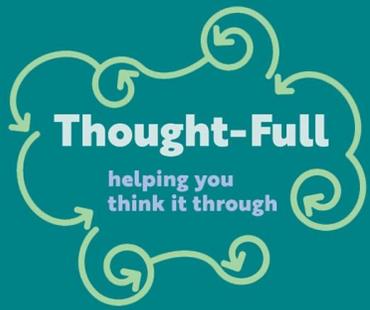
**And any three of the following:**

1. Significant weight loss or decrease in appetite (more than 5 percent of body weight in a month or failure to meet expected weight gains.)
2. Insomnia {difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep} or hypersomnia {excessive sleepiness}
3. Psychomotor agitation- pacing, tapping toes, wring hands, difficulty sitting still, excessive talking.
4. Fatigue or lack of energy
5. Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
6. Decreased concentration or indecisiveness
7. Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide



**Figure 1.** Simplified old versus new behavioral maintenance cycle used in Brief BA.

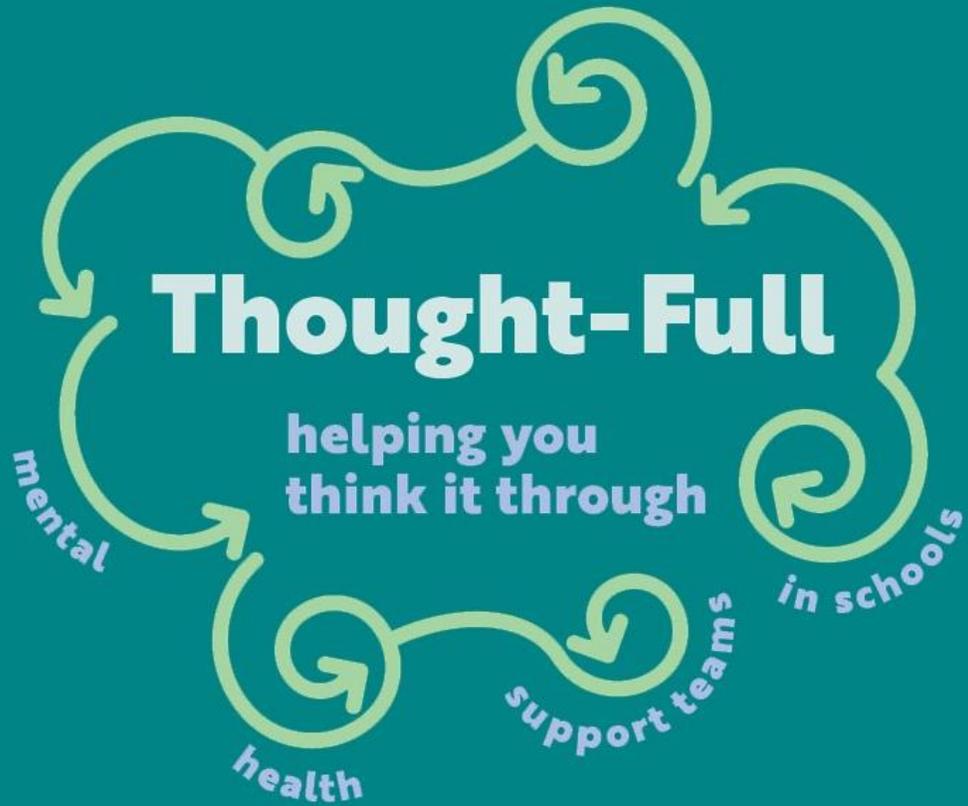
*Note.* BA = Behavioral Activation.



# Tips to encourage improvement in mood

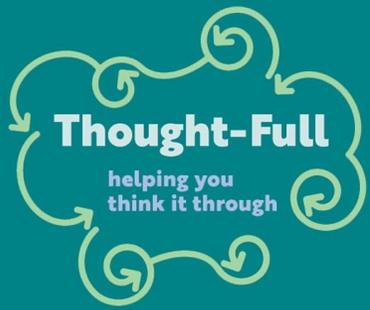


- Talk with them about the things they used to enjoy doing and make a step-by-step plan
- Avoid phrases that minimise their experience
- Explore basic needs with the child or young person, for example, diet, sleep, exercise
- Encourage the child or young person to talk about how they are feeling



# Talking MH with your child

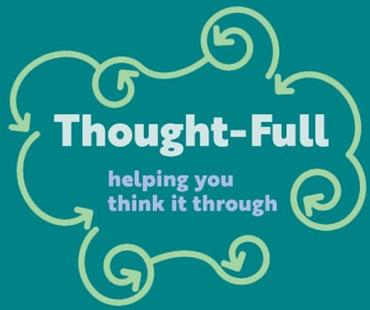
There is no '1 way' to do it right. (Sorry)



# Talking MH



- You don't have to know EVERYTHING
- You don't even have to know SOMETHING
  
- But you do – **have to listen.**
- To how they say, not just what they say.
  
- Be honest (within reason) if you're unsure of a topic.



# Tuning In



- **Papworth et al. (2013)** use an analogy of an analogue radio for understanding emotions.
- We need to be able to **‘tune in’** to receive the broadcast properly.
- Otherwise, we may miss parts, mis understand or leap to conclusion.
- The only way to clarify if we’re on the right wavelength is by asking!





# But, what do I ask? (5 W's)

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| What  | What is the problem?                            |
| Where | Where are you when you feel like this?          |
| When  | When do you feel like that the most or least?   |
| Who   | Is there anyone who makes this better or worse? |





# But, what do I ask? - FIDO

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Frequency</b> | How often do you feel like that at the moment?   |
| <b>Intensity</b> | When you feel like that, how big is that feeling?<br>You can use scales to gauge (0-10), set parameters for the numbers. |
| <b>Duration</b>  | How long will that feeling last for?   |
| <b>Onset</b>     | Do you remember when you started feeling like this?  |

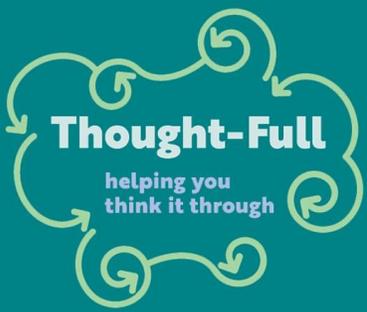


# Closed to Open Questions



| Closed                                 | Open   |
|--|--|
| Did you walk to school?                | How did you get to school today?                           |
| Is that your friend?                   | Can you tell me about your friends?<br>what are they like? |
| <i>I guess that made you feel sad?</i> | How did that make you feel?                                |
| Do you feel that way a lot?            |  |
| <i>So you don't like school?</i>       |  |
| Are you okay?                          |  |

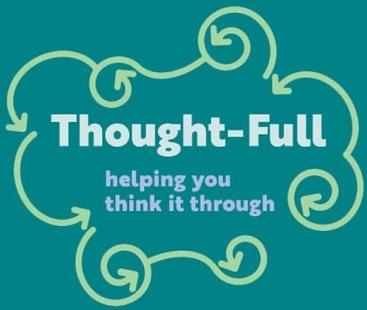
Be cautious not to ask double (or even treble) questions!



# Don't Assume

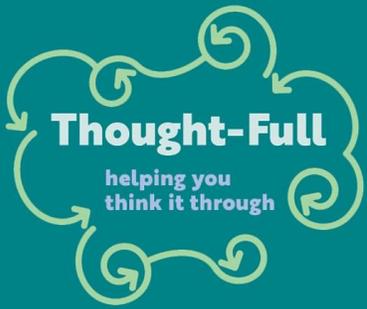
- It's **very easy** to assume with younger people.
- All too easily done, that empathy turns into assumption of emotion.
- Empathy is about understanding emotion, NOT understanding the EXACT same situation.
- Everybody responds differently – and that is ok.





# Risk

- **Not everyone** who experiences low mood or depression will be a risk to themselves
- BUT, Feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness and numbness **can** lead to thoughts/actions of *self-harm and suicide*
- **Do** ask them if they are experiencing these thoughts – they can be scary to talk about, many people report **feeling relieved that someone asked** them
- Make sure you **ask questions** to determine the nature of the thoughts and actions to determine **if action needs to be taken**

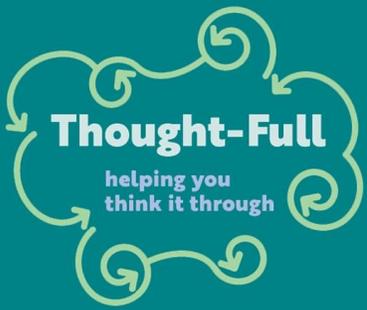


## Calling for Help:

<https://www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/your-mental-health/getting-help/sussex-mental-healthline>

- **Only** send them to A&E or call 999 **if the child needs medical attention** or is an **immediate risk** to themselves.
- Otherwise contact the Sussex Mental Health Line 24/7  
**0800 0309 500 or 111 – option 2**
- Provide the young person and their family with a **safety plan**: this can just be who to talk to / who to call when school are not available.
- This could include Sussex Mental Healthline or the Young Minds Crisis Text line (**Text SHOUT to 85258**, available 24/7)





# Services and resources



- If low mood or anxiety is getting in the way, you could consider a referral for further support
- For more information and some useful resources see our website:

[www.westsussex.gov.uk/Thought-Full](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/Thought-Full)

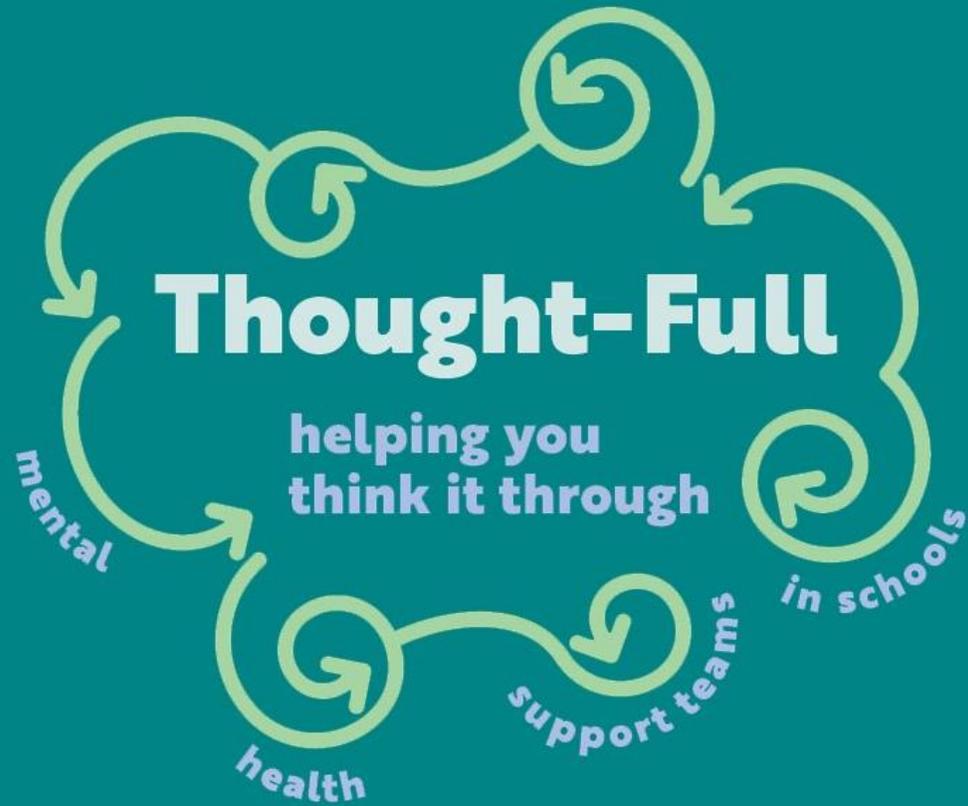
- Anna Freud Centre
- Schools in Mind
- Mentally Healthy Schools
- Charlie Waller Trust
- Young Minds
- MindEd for e-training modules



# Wear Yellow – 10<sup>th</sup> October



- Sometimes, them knowing your there, makes ALL the difference.
- So wear Yellow on the 10<sup>th</sup> October

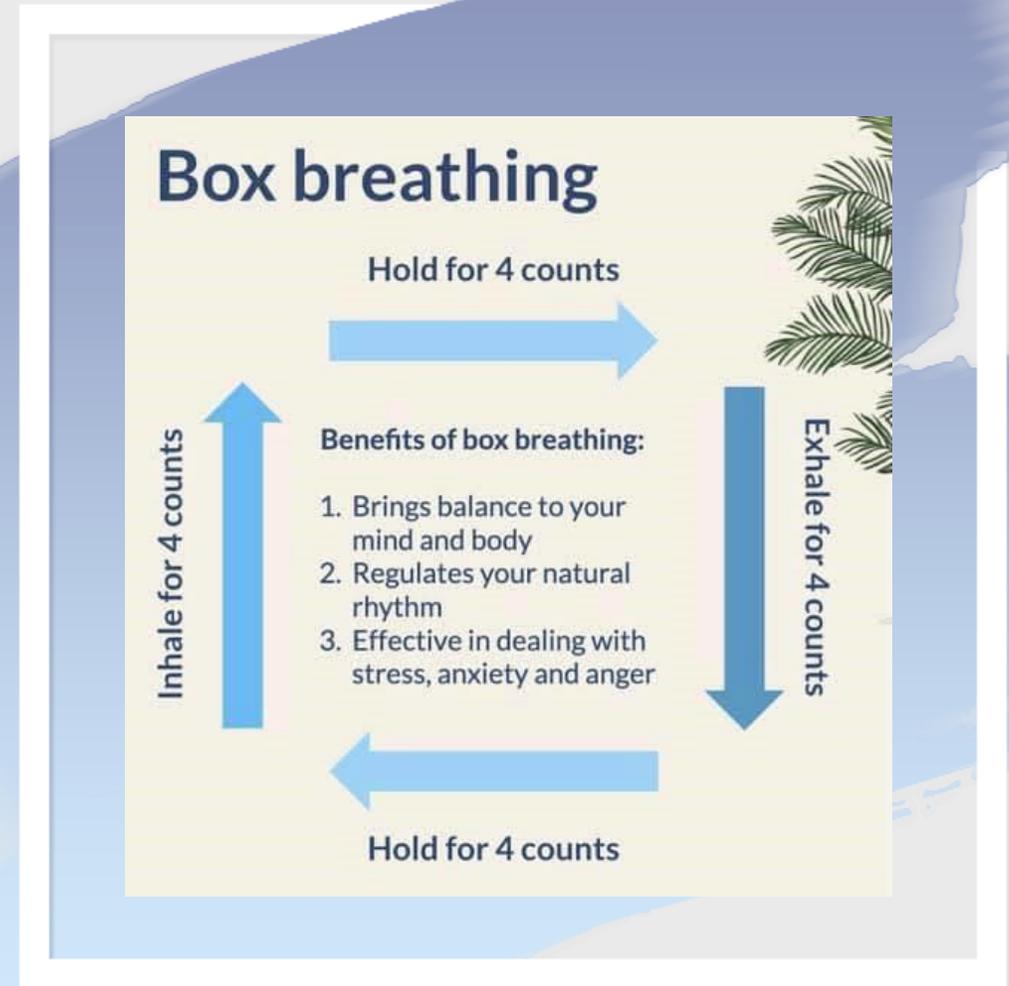


But how do we help the child **when they're anxious?**

# Box Breathing

- This helps to calm your breathing, slowing it down.
- Gaining back control of your breaths, will help to slow down your heart rate.
- Taking back control.

Inose  
mouth



# 5 finger Breathing

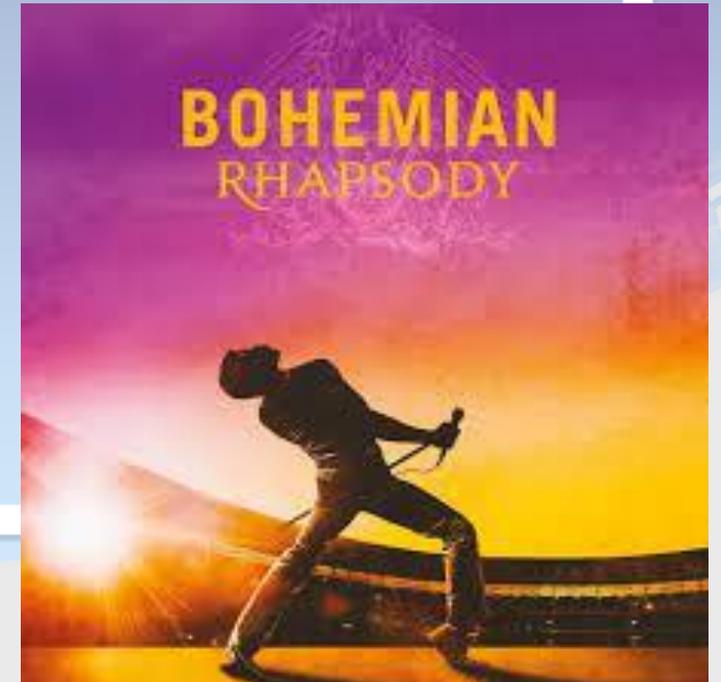
- This helps to calm your breathing, slowing it down.
- Gaining back control of your breaths, will help to slow down your heart rate.
- Taking back control.

I nose  
mouth



# Distraction Techniques

- Count things
- Think of words
- Imagine a place
- List things
- ***Use your interests***
- Lyrics to a song helps.



# Grounding

- Common distraction technique that helps by bringing the attention back to the present
- Engaging the 5 senses
- Plus it makes you think

*Stay Grounded Using Your 5 Senses*

Relax Your Body, Take a Few Deep Breaths and Focus on the Following...

**5** Things You Can See 

**4** Things You Can Feel 

**3** Things You Can Hear 

**2** Things You Can Smell 

**1** Thing You Can Taste 

5 4 3 2 1 Grounding Exercise \_\_\_\_\_

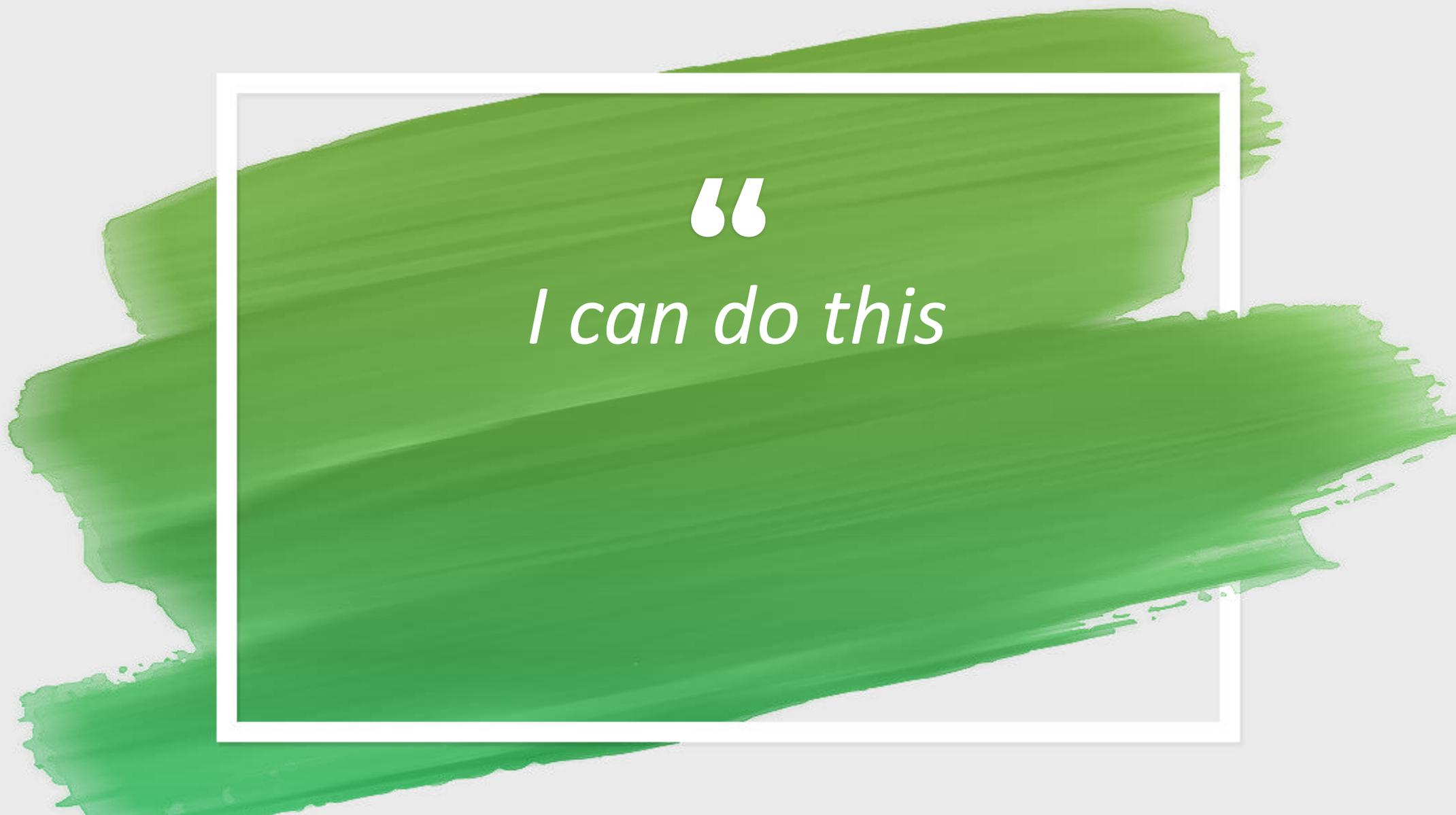
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# Positive Thinking

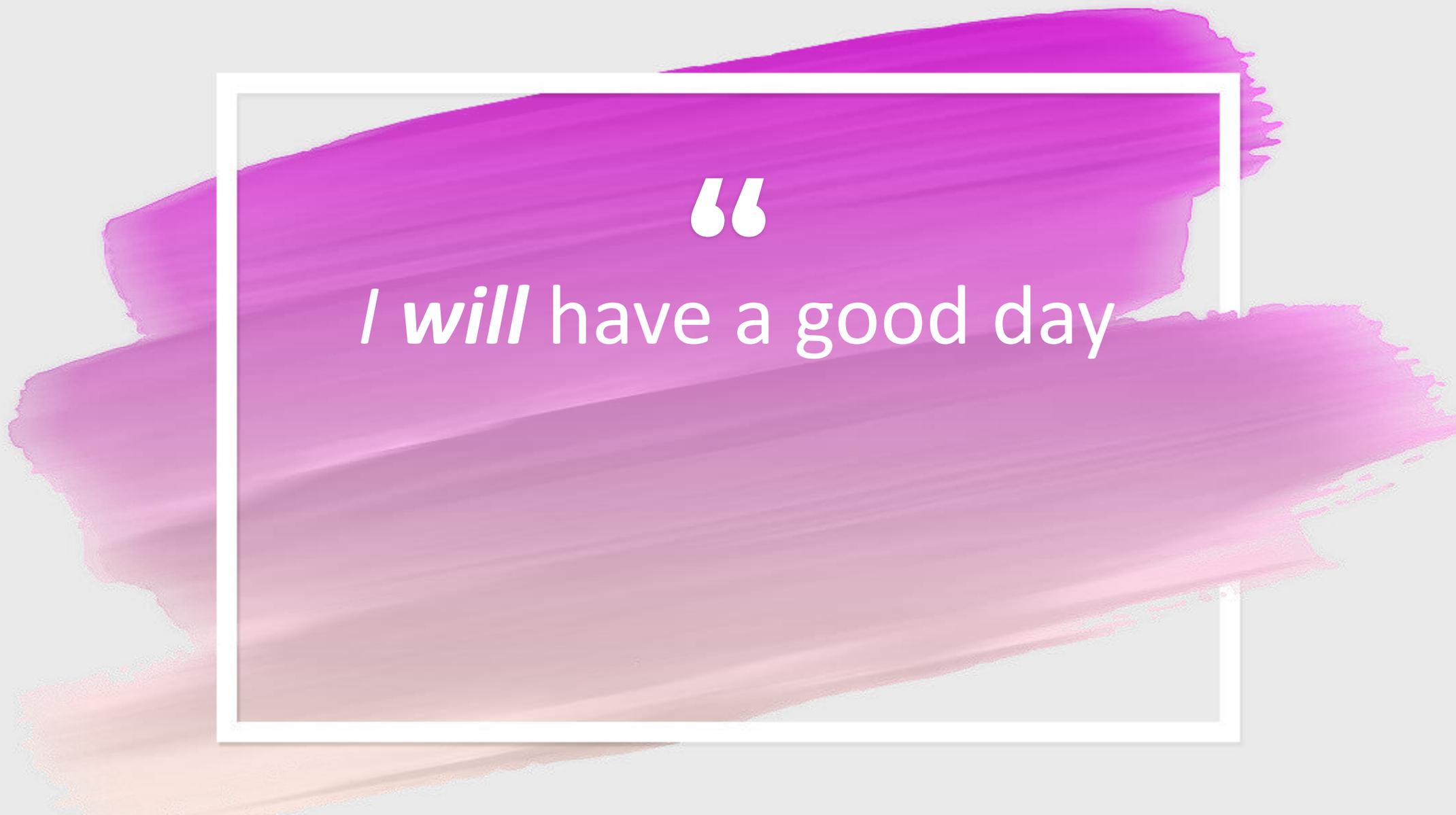
- On the next few slides are some statements.
- Lets say them out LOUD together.
- I need to hear you. I will say it first, then you
- It works best when the child works out their own phrases





“

*I can do this*



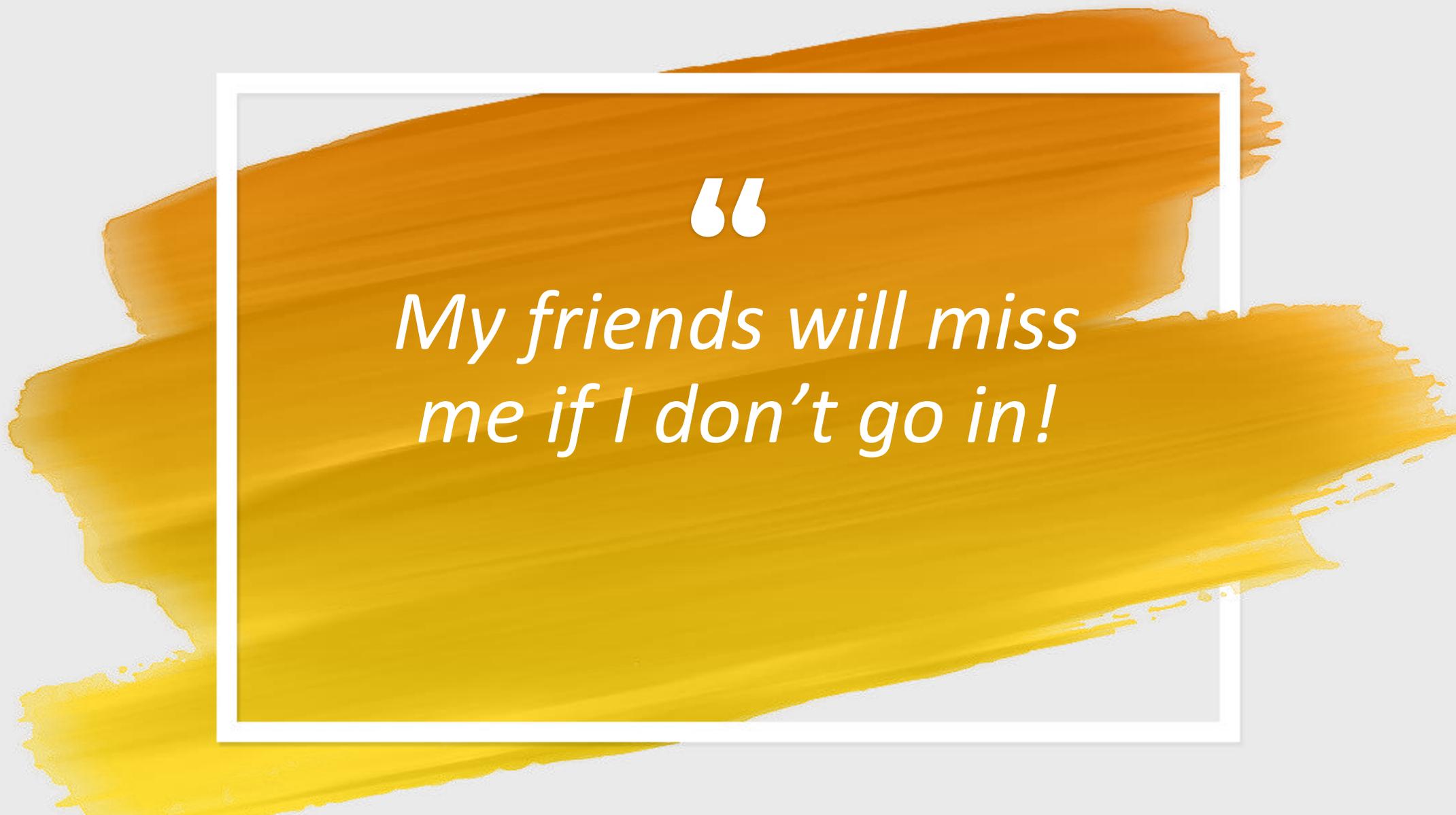
“

*I will* have a good day



“

*I've done this before, I  
can do it again*

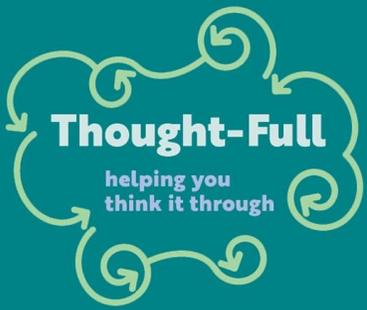


“

*My friends will miss  
me if I don't go in!*



QUESTIONS



# Future Sessions:



## Future Dates:

Thurs 16th Nov  
Weds 24th Jan  
Weds 22nd Mar  
Thurs 2nd May  
Thurs 18th July

- Anxiety
- Exam stress
- Low mood
- Building Resilience
- Social Anxiety



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