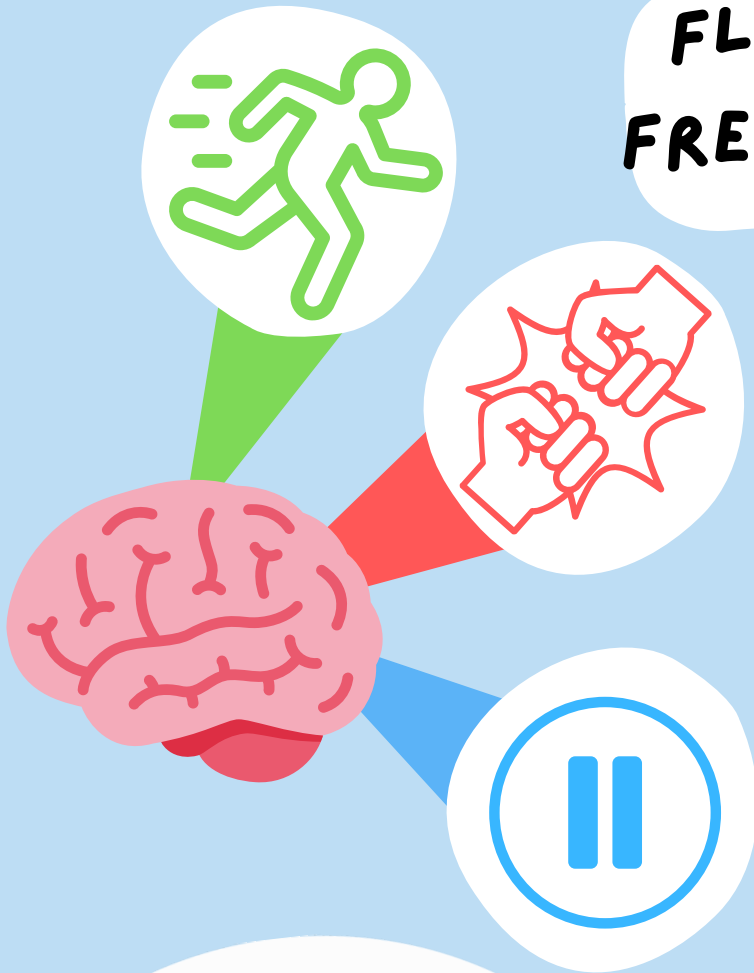


WHAT IS ANXIETY?

It is important to recognise that anxiety is the body's normal response to danger or believing that we're in danger!

FLIGHT, FIGHT, FREEZE RESPONSE

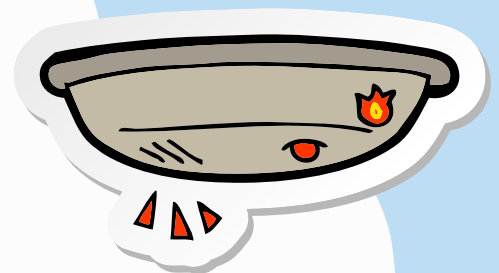


This response developed in the caveman times. This allowed their bodies to go into survival mode when in danger. Their heart-rate and blood pressure would increase so they had a better chance of running away (flight), fighting the danger (fight) or staying hidden (freeze). We all react differently but this is a completely normal response to danger.

LIKE A SMOKE ALARM...

Imagine you have a smoke alarm that is really sensitive and goes off all the time, even when there isn't a real fire or danger.

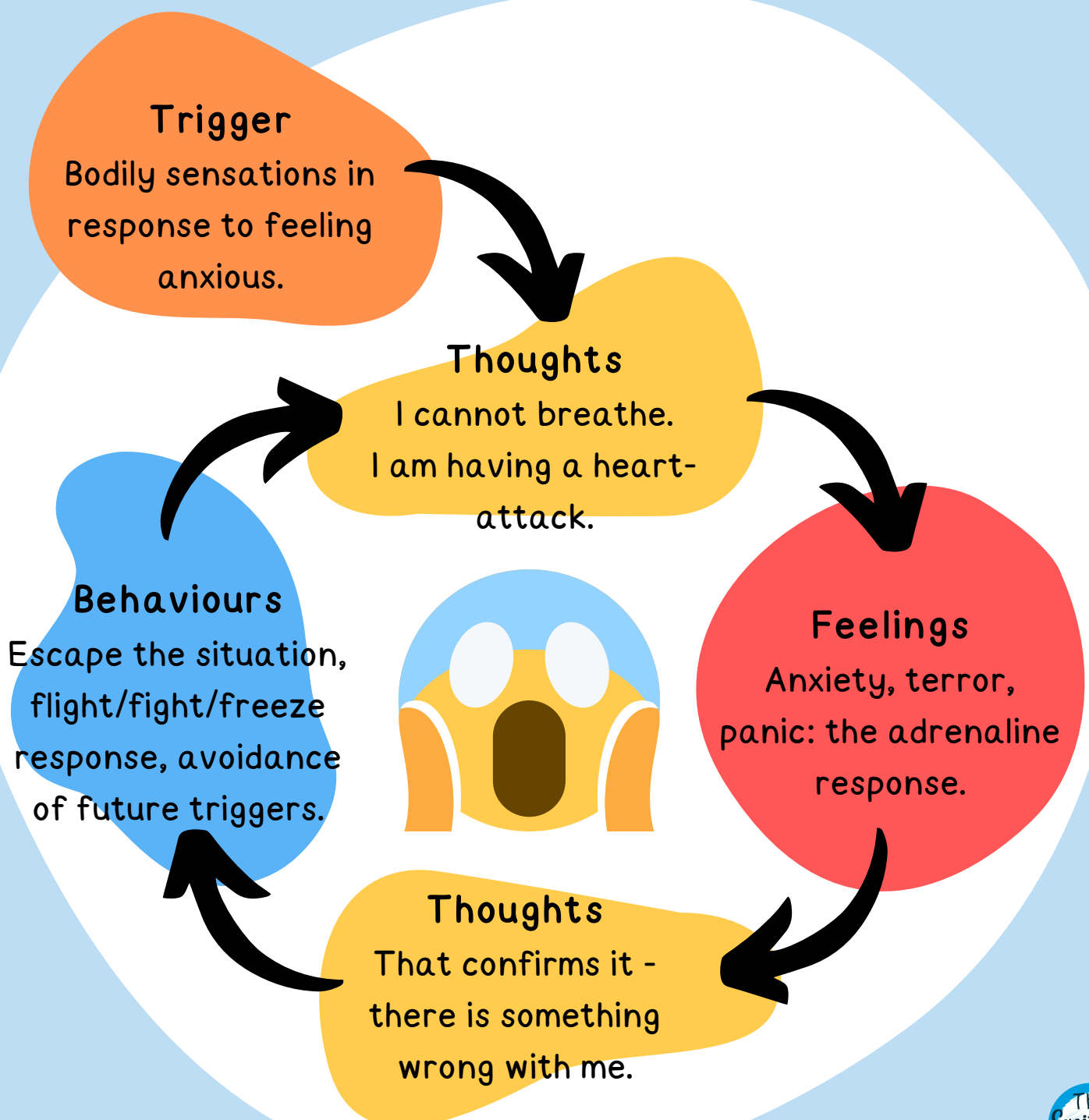
When you have Anxiety, your flight/fight/freeze response is just like this - it goes off and causes the symptoms of anxiety, even if there isn't any danger.



WHAT IS PANIC?

Panic is when our body responds to situations in a physical way. It is your body overreacting to fear and anxiety.

WHAT DOES PANIC LOOK LIKE?



WHO ARE THE MAIN CULPRITS?

When we are stuck in this cycle, there are two main culprits that keep us there: misinterpreting and catastrophising symptoms.

These include fearful thoughts and bodily sensations.

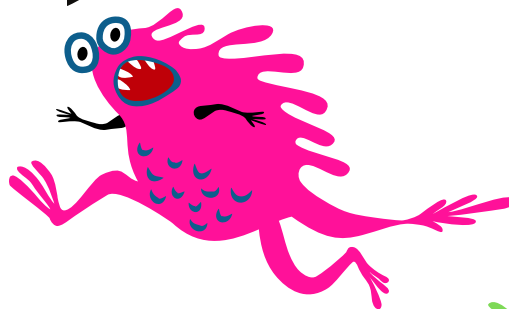


You must be ill or something is wrong, maybe you cannot breathe...

What if this never goes away? What if I cannot cope? What if I collapse? I need to escape, I need help!



AAAARRGHHH!



MISINTERPRET



CATASTROPHY

SUPER SCANNER



We have our own inbuilt super-scanner which is programmed to look for signals and dangers. These work differently for each person. For example, some people can sleep through snoring but others cannot. Another person who worries about what other people are thinking or doing constantly tries to read social situations and people. People who suffer from panic, are often very alert to changes in their body, such as breathing more quickly, and heart-racing and they believe that they are in immediate danger of something bad happening.



Once our super-scanner is triggered then your attention focuses there, you zoom in on the scanner and everything else fades into the background.

Once we notice the super sensitive super-scanner then we want to turn down the sensitivity dial slightly.

TURNING DOWN THE SUPER SCANNER SENSITIVITY

1

Notice the scanner: "That's that super-scanner again!"

2

Readjust the sensitivity dial: "Okay, the scanner is noticing that?? and that is triggered these unhelpful thoughts."

3

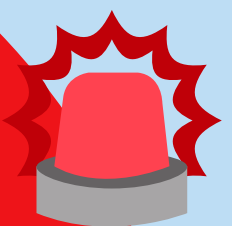
There's no need to fight the thoughts, you can notice them, and let them pass.

4

Change your focus of attention: refocusing technique and breathing.

5

Move on - do and/or think about something else.



REFOCUS YOUR ATTENTION

Breathing can help to calm our mind and body when we feel distressed. Mindful breathing is about allowing thoughts and feelings to come and go without getting caught up in them.

INFLATE AND
DEFLATE THE
BALLOON



Imagine you have a balloon in your tummy.

Breathe in slowly to inflate the balloon and breathe slowly out to deflate the balloon.

Feel your tummy rise as you breathe in and fall as you breathe out.

As thoughts or sensations come into your mind, that is okay, simply notice them and bring your attention back to breathing. It is natural for thoughts to enter into your head and for your mind to wonder but no matter how many times this happens, bring your attention back to breathing.