

Managing Emotions with ADHD



Tuesday 14th October 2025
7.30pm

With
ADHD 

Managing Emotions with ADHD

“If you only have a hammer, you tend to view every problem as a nail”

Abraham Maslow



Thoughts & ADHD



Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy



Healthy v Unhealthy Emotions

Anger
Anxiety
Depression
Guilt
Shame
Hurt
Jealousy
UH Envy

Annoyance
Concern
Sadness
Remorse
Regret
Disappointment
Relationship Concern
H Envy



Anger & Annoyance Scales

Unhealthy Anger



Healthy Annoyance



A

Activating Event

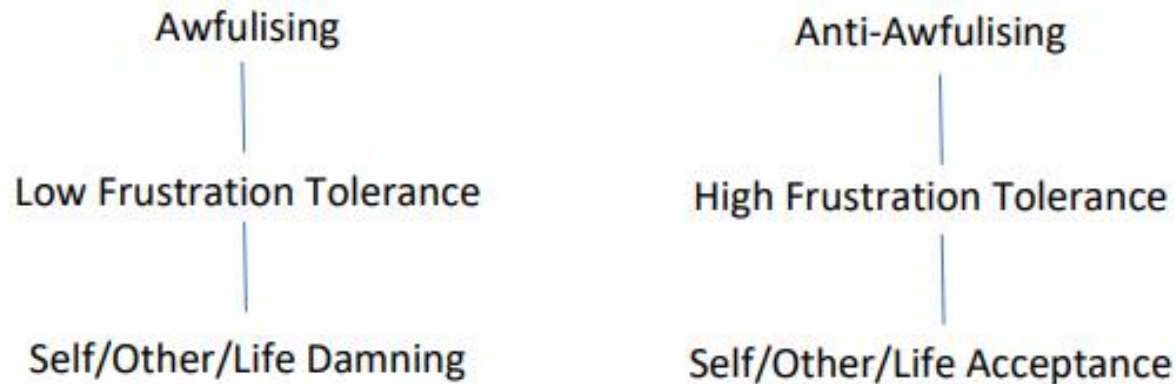
- Real
- Imagined

- Past
- Present
- Future

- Internal
- External

B

Beliefs



Goal Sabotaging

Goal Assisting

C

Consequences

- Behaviour

- Emotion

- Action Tendencies

- Symptoms

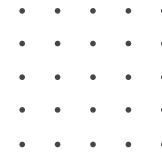
- Thoughts

(BEAST at C)

ABC Model

Activating Event

Consequences



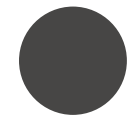


ABC Model

Activating Event

Beliefs

Consequences



Unhealthy Beliefs

DEMAND

I / you / the world Must/Needs to/has to

Awfulize

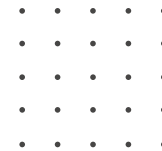
It's the end of the world

LFT

I can't stand it / bear it / cope

Damn

I / You / The world is bad ...



ABC Model

A

Activating Event

Real
Imagined

Past
Present
Future

Unhealthy

DEMAND

Awfulising

Low Frustration Tolerance

Self/Other/Life damning

B

Beliefs

Healthy

PREFERENCE

Anti-awfulising

High Frustration Tolerance

Self/Other/Life acceptance

C

Consequences

B

Behaviour

E

Emotions

A

Action Tendency

S

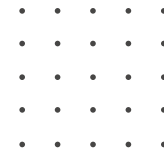
Symptoms

T

Thoughts

Consequences

- B** Behaviour
- E** Emotion
- A** Action Tendency
- S** Symptoms
- T** Thoughts



Demands

MUST - SHOULD - NEED TO - HAVE TO

You must

I Should have

I Need to

You shouldn't have

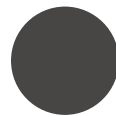
Life must be



Preferences

Prefer - like - nice

I'd prefer it if
It would be nice if I
It would be nice if you



ABC Example

My boss mustn't make any more changes

If she does it will be awful (100% bad)

I can't cope with any more change

It means my boss is thoughtless, selfish and inconsiderate

I'd prefer it if my boss didn't make any more changes

If she does it will be bad, but not the end of the world

It will be hard but I can cope

It means my boss may have other things to consider rather than just me like, instructions from their boss, external pressures etc.



Anxiety & Concern Scales

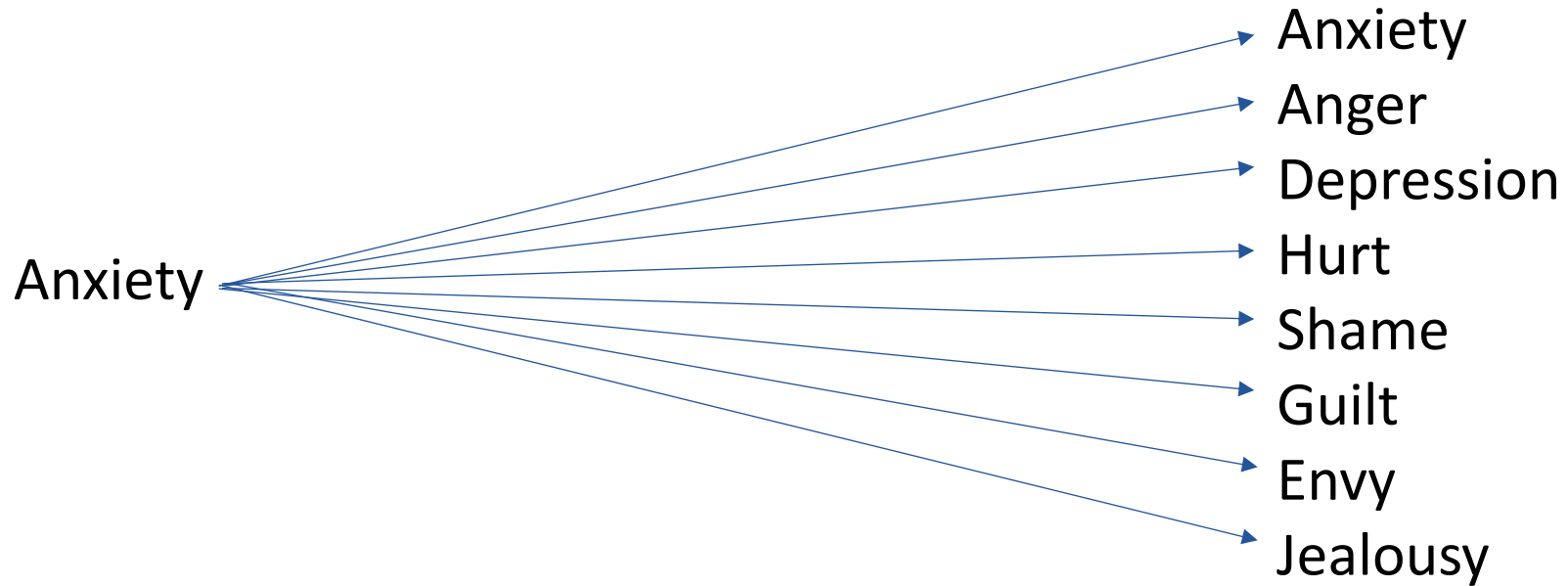
Unhealthy Anxiety



Healthy Concern



Meta-emotions



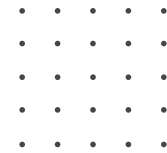
Cognitive Behaviour Therapy



CBT Thinking Errors

Also called Cognitive distortions

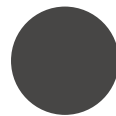
Irrational and extreme ways of thinking



Personalising

Interpreting events being related to you personally
when that is not the case

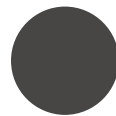
e.g. It's all **my fault** that I didn't get the job.



Blaming

Attributing an unfavourable outcome to the **fault** of somebody

e.g. It's **his** fault that I didn't get the job.



Mind reading

Guessing what someone is thinking and then telling yourself it is true

e.g. I bet **he thinks** I am an idiot



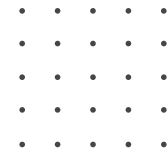
Making comparisons



Comparing two or more different variables and concluding about one based on the other



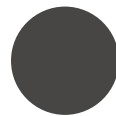
e.g. “I’m just not as good as other people at this”



Over-generalising

Creating a general rule from an isolated incident

e.g. Everybody thinks that I am an idiot



Mental filtering

Not noticing the positive events and focusing solely on the negatives.

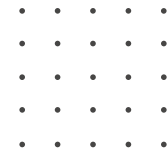
e.g. despite tidying the house and catching up with a friend in the morning, thinking “Today has been a **complete** waste of time”



Discounting positives

Noticing the positives but trivialising them

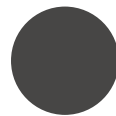
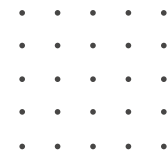
e.g. “You’re just saying that to make me feel better”



All or nothing thinking

Because a situation isn't 100% positive, discounting any middle ground, concluding that it is 100% negative

e.g. "I have completely wasted my life on that person"



Emotional reasoning

Assuming emotions are always a good guide, and correct.

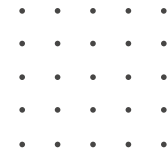
e.g. “I’ll be ready to start **when I feel** like starting” or “I’m not happy here so this is a bad situation”



Labelling

Using derogatory names to describe self and others

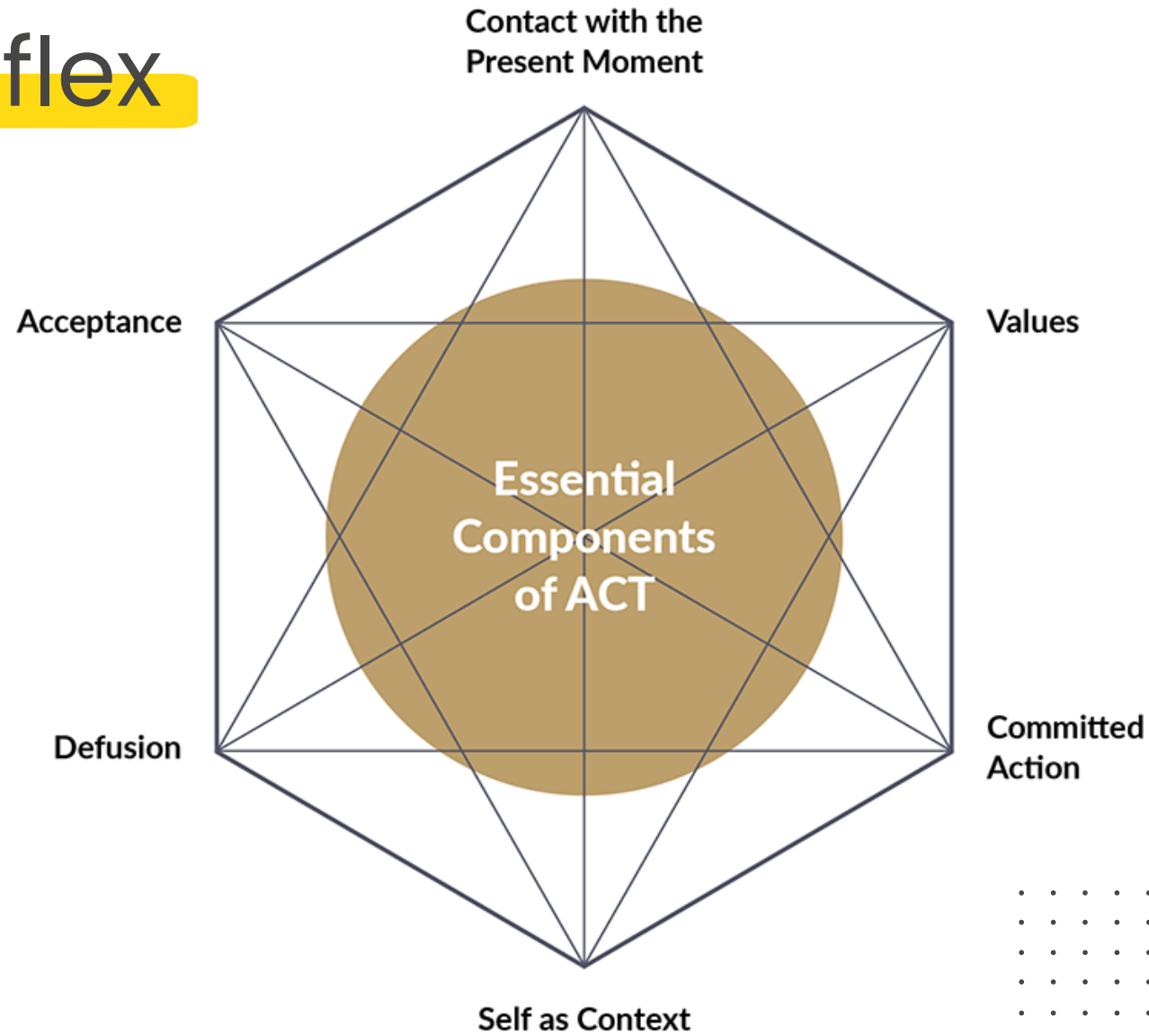
e.g. “I’m a failure”



Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)



ACT Hexaflex



ACT

Values Exercise

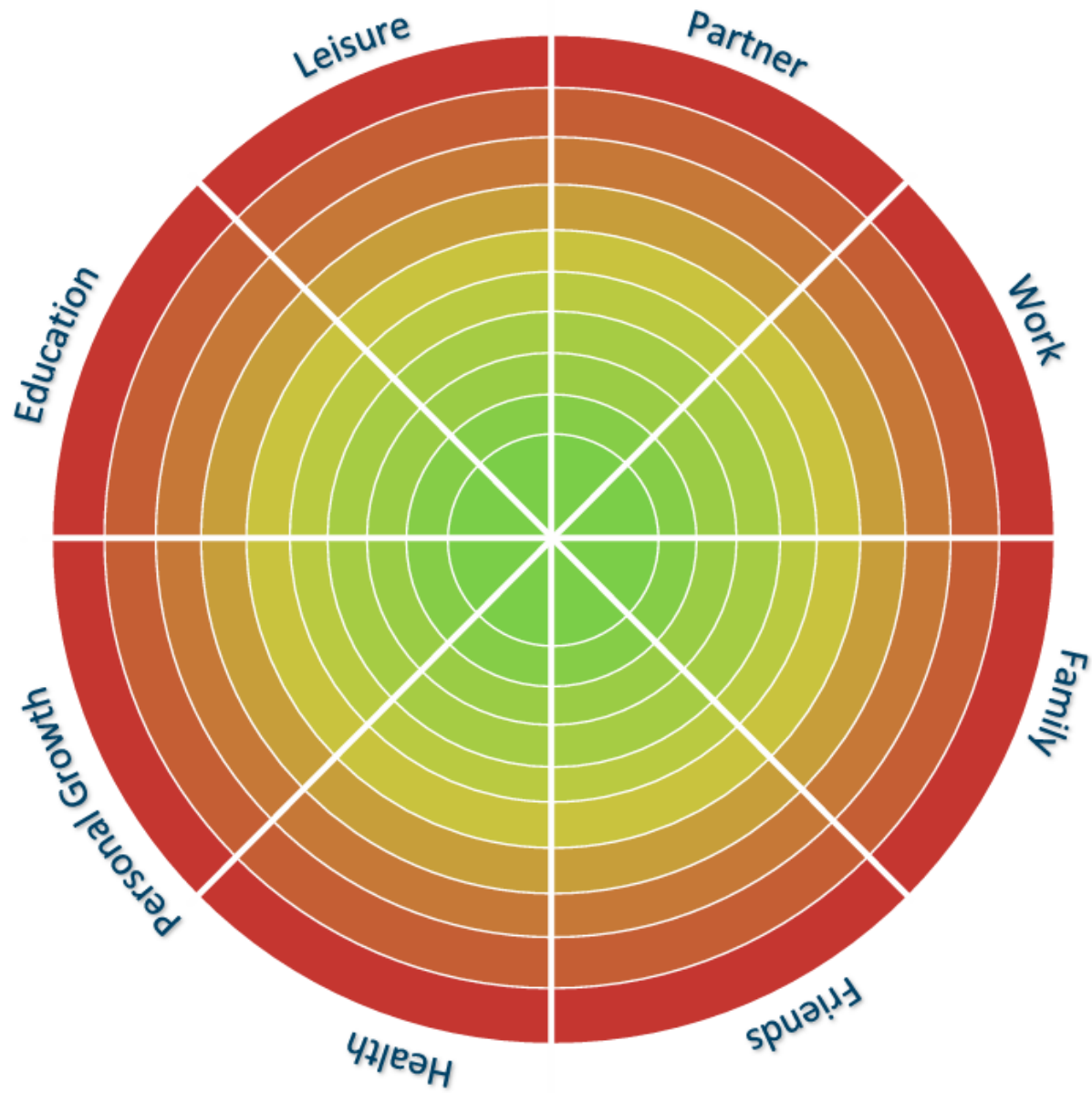


ACT

80th Birthday Values Exercise



Acceptance	Dependability	Imagination	Openness	Self-control
Accomplishment	Determination	Improvement	Optimism	Selflessness
Accuracy	Diversity	Independence	Order	Self-respect
Achievement	Education	Influence	Originality	Sensitivity
Adventure	Elegance	Individuality	Peace	Serenity
Altruism	Efficiency	Initiative	Perfection	Service
Ambition	Empathy	Inner Peace	Perseverance	Simplicity
Amusement	Enlightenment	Innovation	Persistence	Spirituality
Assertiveness	Equality	Intelligence	Play	Spontaneity
Authenticity	Excellence	Integrity	Pleasure	Stability
Autonomy	Expertise	Intimacy	Polite	Strength
Balance	Fairness	Intuition	Positivity	Structure
Beauty	Faith	Inventiveness	Power	Success
Being	Fame	Joy	Practicality	Tenderness
Belonging	Family	Justice	Privacy	Timeliness
Boldness	Fitness	Kindness	Proficiency	Thoroughness
Calm	Forgiveness	Knowledge	Progress	Thoughtfulness
Capable	Freedom	Leadership	Prosperity	Tradition
Challenge	Friendship	Laughter	Purpose	Tranquility
Cleanliness	Fun	Learning	Rationality	Trust
Collaboration	Generosity	Legacy	Recognition	Truthfulness
Comfort	Gratitude	Love	Reliability	Understanding
Compassion	Growth	Logic	Relationships	Uniqueness
Competence	Happiness	Loyalty	Relaxation	Usefulness
Confidence	Hard work	Mastery	Respect	Variety
Conservation	Harmony	Meaning	Responsibility	Vitality
Contentment	Health	Moderation	Resourcefulness	Victory
Contribution	Honesty	Modesty	Restraint	Vision
Courage	Honor	Money	Risk	Wealth
Creativity	Hope	Nature	Security	Wholeness
Decisiveness	Humility	Nurturing	Self-awareness	Wisdom



The Values Bullseye



Compassion Focussed Therapy



Compassion

“A sensitivity to suffering in self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it”

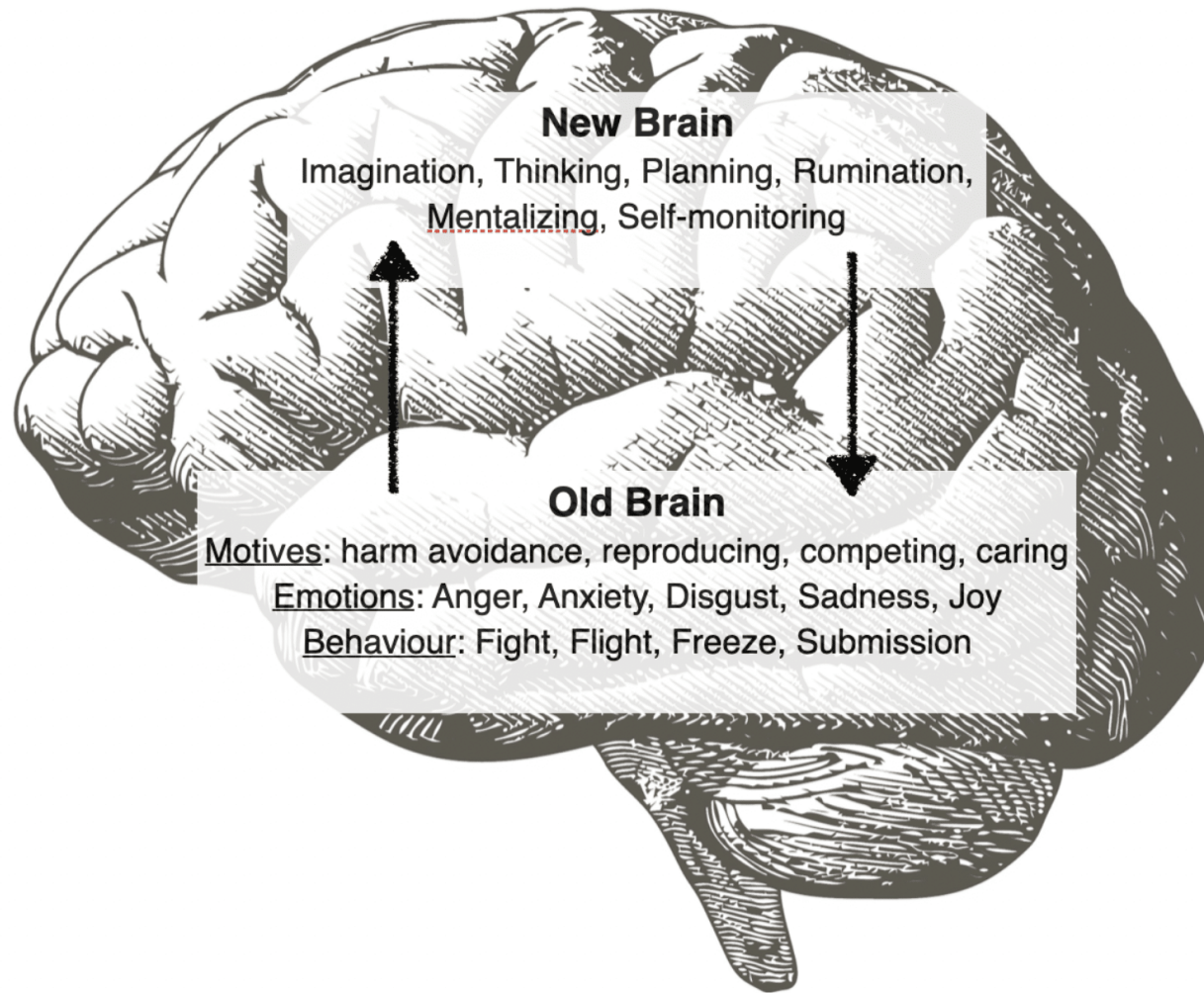
Paul Gilbert



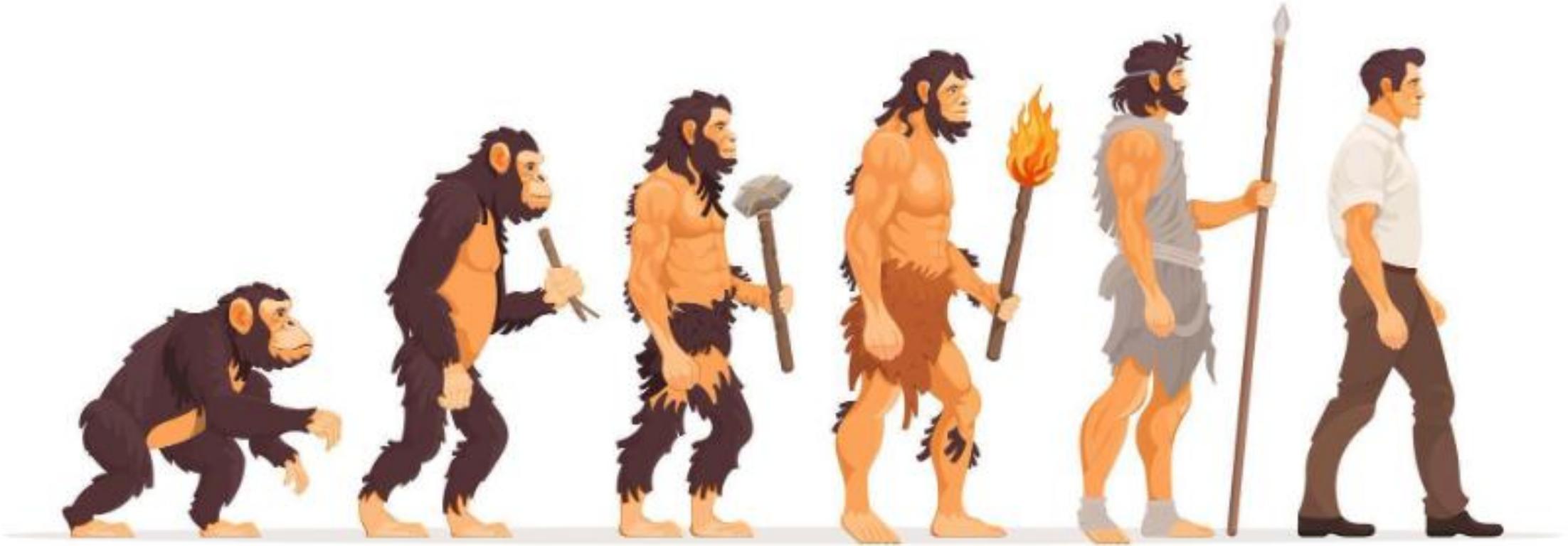
CFT

1. Tricky Brain
2. Timeline

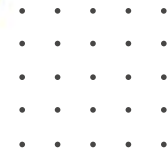
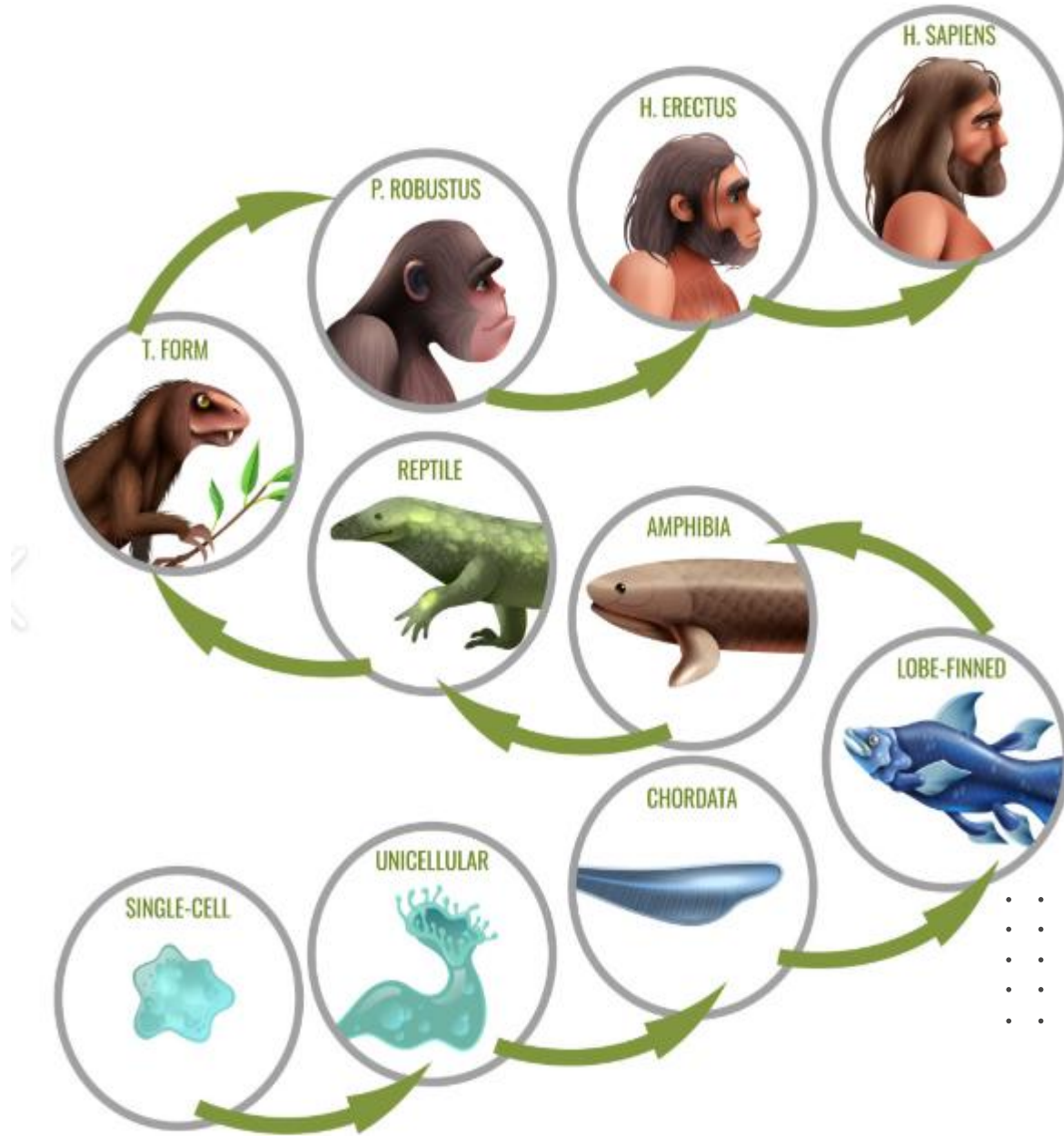


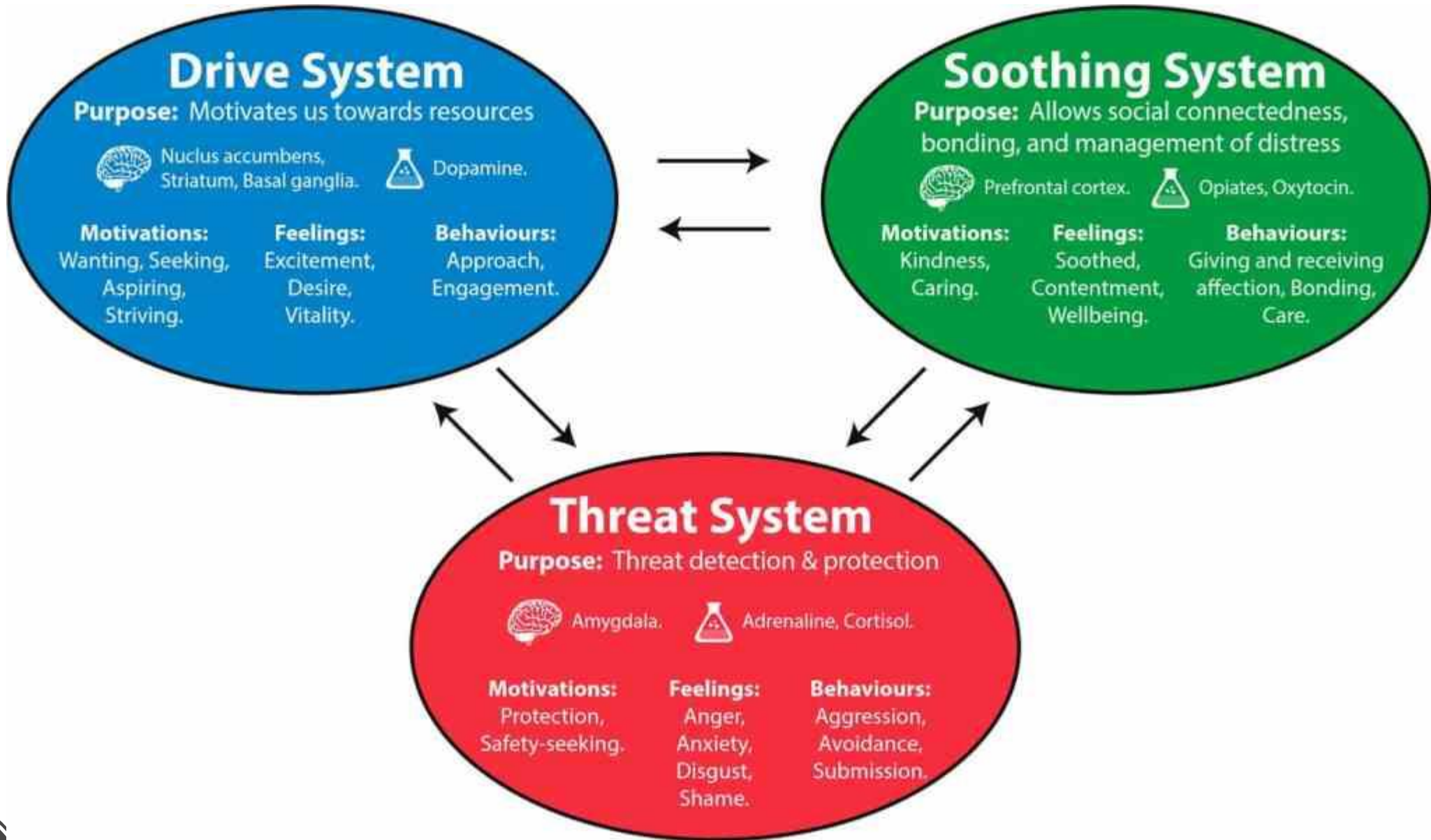


CFT



CFT





Mindfulness



ADHD

“A deficit in behavioural inhibition, sustained attention and resistance to distraction and the regulation of one’s activity level to the demands of a situation”

“A disorder of self-control”

Dr Russell A Barkley



ADHD

“A Ferrari Engine with bicycle brakes”

“Variable Attention”

“It’s not a deficit of attention, it’s an abundance”

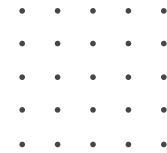
Dr Edward Hallowell



Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a direct, intuitive knowing of what is going on from moment to moment, in the outside world and the inside world.

Mark Williams PhD

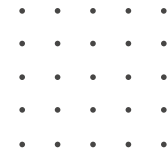


ADHD & Mindfulness

ADHD is a self-regulation disorder.

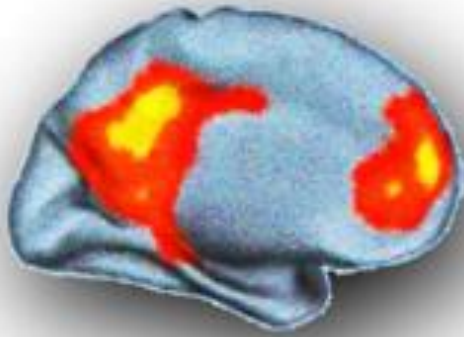
Mindfulness is self-regulation training.

Lidia Zylowska M.D.



The ADHD brain

Default Mode Network
more active at rest (task-negative)
mind wandering



Attention Network
more active during tasks (task-positive)
engaged attention





The Neurotypical Spotlight of attention

The untrained ADHD spotlights of attention



The Trained ADHD spotlight of attention



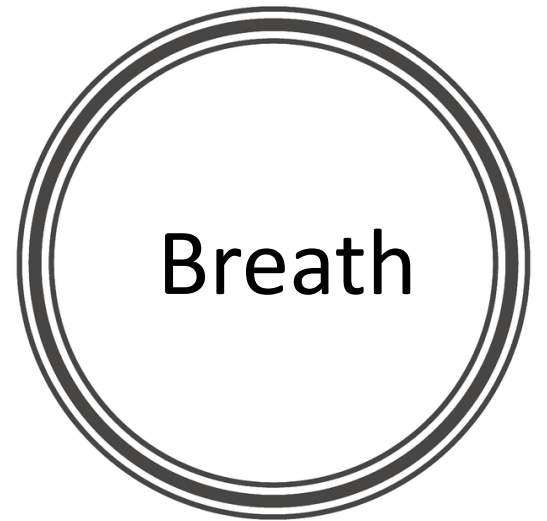
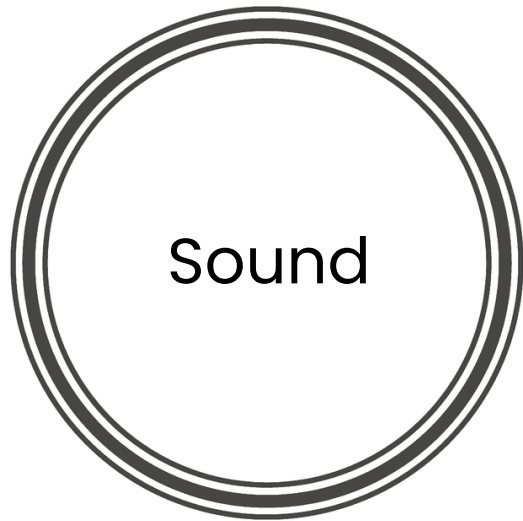
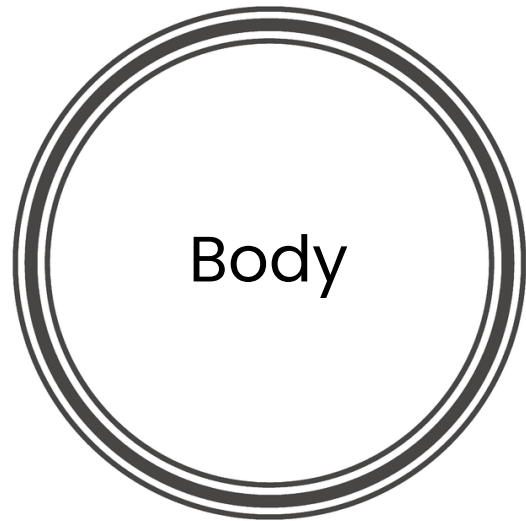
A large, faint, circular logo in the background. It consists of two concentric circles. Inside the circles, the words "ADHD" and "THERAPY" are stacked vertically in a bold, distressed, sans-serif font. The text is light gray and semi-transparent.

Mindfulness of breath

Mindful awareness of body

ADHD
THERAPY









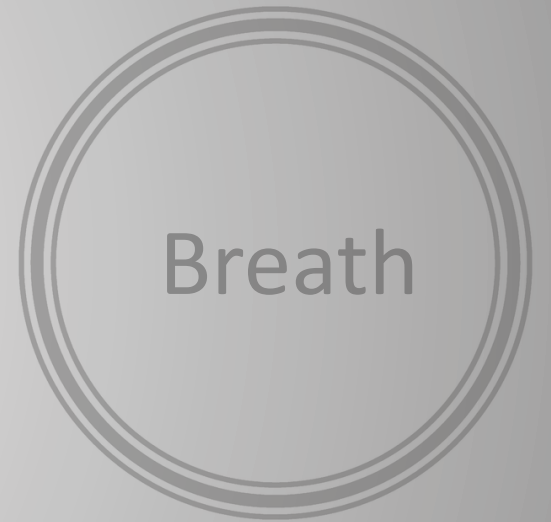
Body



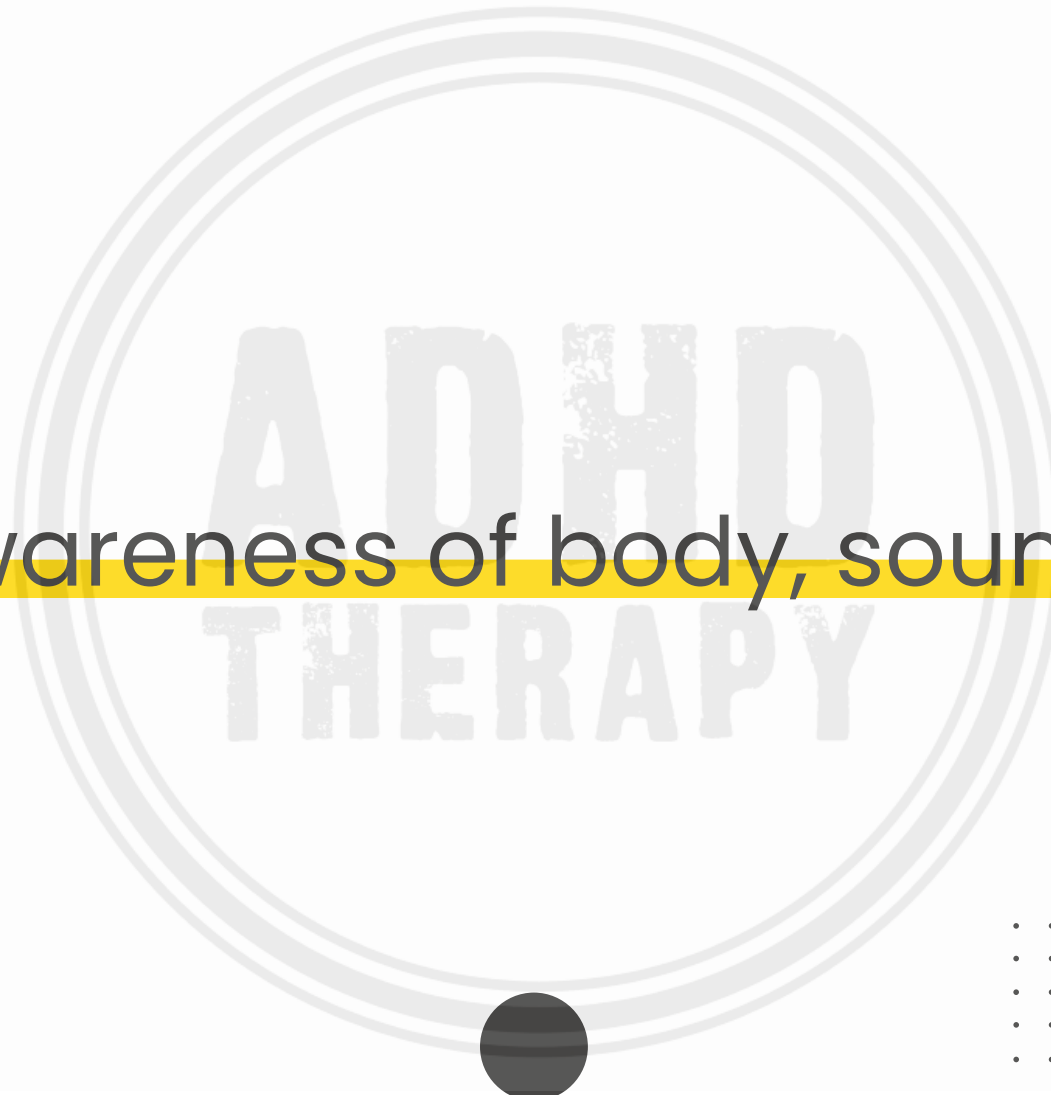
Sound



Breath



Mindful awareness of body, sound & breath



Ideas for Mindfulness

Cooking

Eating

Walking

Sitting in nature

Candle flame

Listening to music

Body Scan

Breath

Listening to the sea

Watching clouds

54321 senses

Pick a colour

Exercise

Observing thoughts

Leaves on a stream

Safe space



Anger & Annoyance Beliefs



Unhealthy Anger



DEMAND

Awfulize

LFT

Damn

Healthy Annoyance

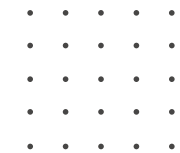


PREFER

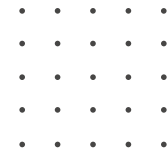
Anti-awfulize

HFT

Accept



Meta-emotions



Anger plus ...

... Guilt

"I shouldn't have shouted at my son"

... Anxiety

"I really don't want to get angry again"

... Shame

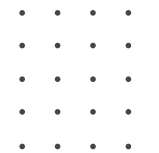
"I don't want other people to find out I get Angry"

... Depression

"I hate getting angry, but I see no way out"

... Anxiety plus Anger

"I hate myself for this anxiety about getting angry"



...plus Anger

Hurt

"They shouldn't have cheated on me"

Anxiety

"I really don't want to get angry again"

Shame

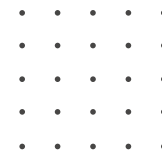
"He made me feel that way my entire childhood"

Depression

"I hate the way I feel. I hate my life"

Anger

"My neighbour pisses me off every day and I've had enough"

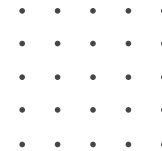


How to be annoyed

1. Accept other people will have their own views and opinions
2. Stand up for what is right, but don't demand everything goes your way
3. Weigh up the pros and cons, and see both sides.
4. Take a moment or two to think
5. Accept – Self, Others, Life
6. Understand that people do things differently / have different opinions
7. Weigh up a problem realistically
8. Think through situations
9. Accept situations and you won't need to ruminate.
10. Reflect on yourself and on situations

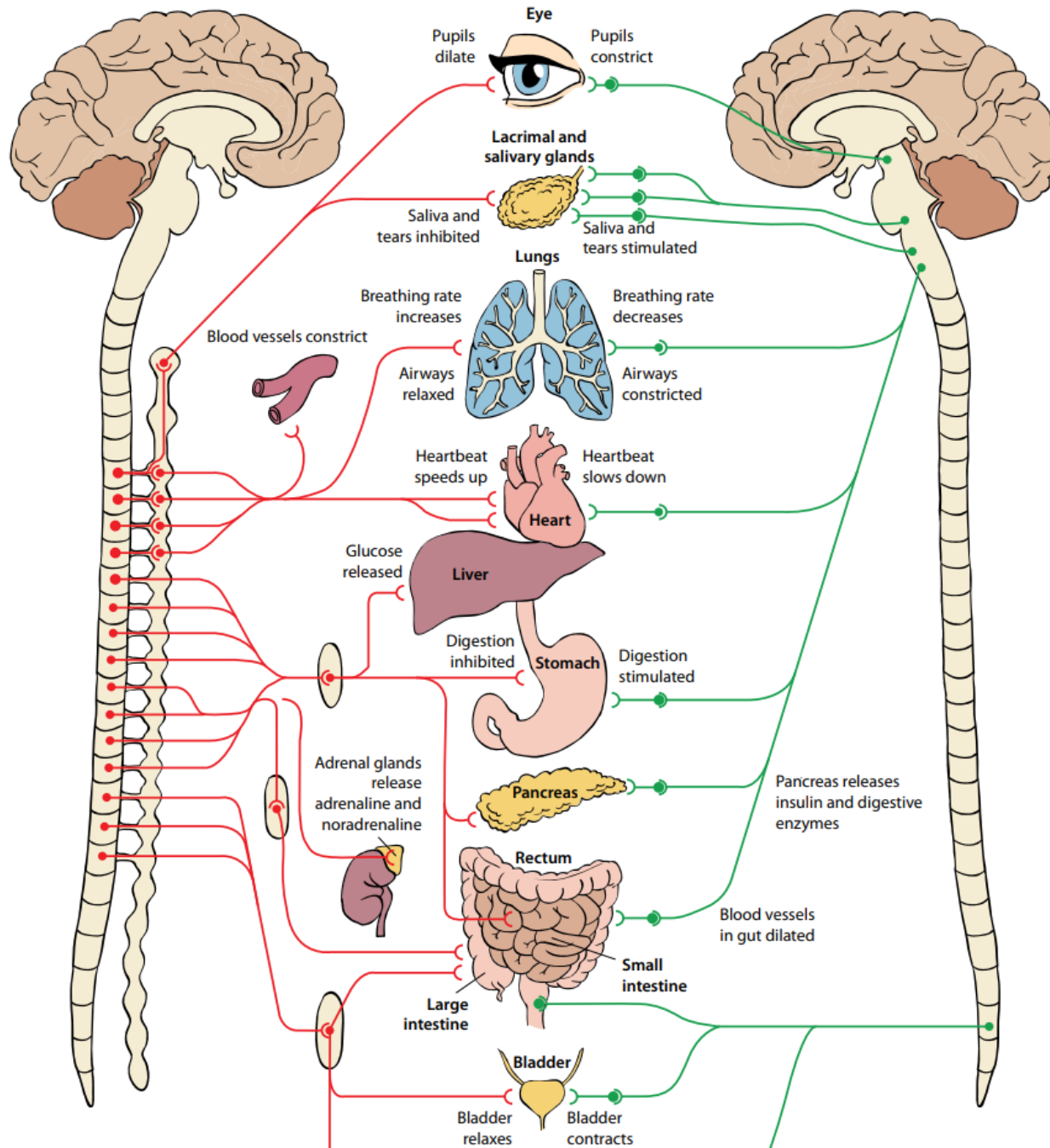
What to do

1. Recognise your anger triggers
2. Recognise anger warning signs/symptoms
3. Ask yourself “What am I demanding”
4. Tell yourself “It’s not the end of the world”
5. Notice that you can cope
6. Take time to evaluate who/what you’re angry about
7. Ask yourself what it means?
8. Self-reflect post event
9. Use top-down / bottom-up approaches



Sympathetic nervous system

Parasympathetic nervous system



your heart rate variability means

07:42

Today's a piece of cake

37%

Stress
Light

76%

Energy
Enough

95%

Health
Resilient

Key Insights

You're fairly relaxed and your engine is running smooth as butter. Today is great for taking up a challenge you've been putting off. Presentations, deep thinking and planning, big projects — you can do it all. A workout would do you a lot of good too.



your heart rate variability means

07:45

You're burning the candle at both ends

73%

Stress
Elevated

43%

Energy
Moderate

95%

Health
Resilient

Key Insights

You're worked up and it's a bit much for you, though you're coping ok. If you stick with a chill flow and don't try to overdo it, you'll shine today. Brain fog might be a problem, so leave serious decision-making for another time. If you're planning to work out, go easy on yourself.



your heart rate variability means

07:47

Ready, set, flow!

40%

Stress
Light

82%

Energy
Enough

95%

Health
Resilient

Key Insights

You're fairly relaxed and your systems are running like a well-oiled machine. Today is great for taking up a challenge you've been putting off. Presentations, deep thinking and planning, big projects — you can do it all. You're in tip-top shape for a good workout, so hit the gym if you can.



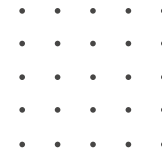
Case Study – Ellis

Ellis is a mum to toddler twins, a boy and a girl. She has ADHD.

Ellis's partner works full time and some extra work evenings and weekends to help pay the bills and pay for trips away. The twins are hard work and Ellis often loses her temper with them.

Ellis is a great mum and provides all the love and care the children need, but hates herself for losing her temper. Because her partner isn't around and the twins take up her time, she rarely sees her friends. When she does she wants to forget about her struggles at home so doesn't talk about it. She has no one to talk to about losing her temper and she feels she is a terrible mum.

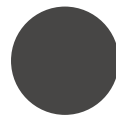
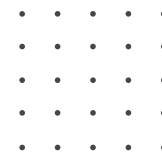
What emotions could Ellis be feeling?



A bit about RSD_D

Dr. William Dodson

If a patient does not benefit from medication, they have little control over an episode of RSD once it begins. The incidents have to run their course. Some people with ADHD, however, report that getting interested in something new and fascinating can help to end an RSD episode more quickly than it would otherwise. In my clinical experience, neither coaching nor traditional psychological or behavioural therapies — like CBT or DBT — offer any prevention or relief from impairments.





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www.adhd-therapy.co.uk or www.2343.co.uk

Slides etc –

www.adhd-therapy.co.uk/adhdalliance