

Today's webinar

Befriending the Anxious Mind

Clearly we are all living through turbulent times. Old ways of doing things are being moved aside for the “new normal” - which is also constantly changing. Strong emotions can arise such as anger, frustration, sadness and anxiety. So how can we best equip ourselves for this new reality as teachers? And how can we help both ourselves and our students stay present, in this ever-changing landscape?

In this hour-long session we will explore how we can turn towards those challenging moments using practical tools that allow us to be more compassionate when difficult emotions arise. We'll explore what stress is, how it affects us and what we can do to nurture a sense of calm in the classroom. Just pausing and asking ourselves what is good in this moment can be a starting point.....

Biodata

Emma Reynolds is an accredited Mindfulness teacher for adults (MBSR- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction) and for children through MiSP (Mindfulness in Schools Project UK). She gives talks and workshops on Emotional Intelligence and Mindfulness in the classroom at schools and also at teachers' conferences including APAC and ELT, Barcelona. She has written two articles for MacMillan on Mindfulness in schools and is happy to be back again offering webinars aimed at teachers of teenage students. Originally from the UK, she has lived in Spain for over 20 years.



Befriending the Anxious Mind – A Practical path to Calm in the Classroom

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Today we're looking at:

- How emotions make us feel
- What triggers negative emotions
- Where emotions come from
- Practical ways to re-focus the mind away from anxious thoughts
- Nurturing a more positive outlook

Please lower your gaze...

One word for the Body

One word for the Mind

Write how you feel

Breath in and out and count 1.

Now write how you feel

Is there any difference?



Exercise: Naming Emotions

Anger

Sadness

Frustration

Boredom

Confusion

Anxiety

Loneliness

Happiness

Excitement

Curiosity

- Have more words to add.

How do these words make you feel?

Consider how you speak –

To yourself

To others

What you read

What you hear ...

How does it affect how you feel?

What feels good?

What stresses you/ your students out?

The X and Y Exercise: On a piece of paper write:
I feel X (emotion) when Y (event) happens...

I feel **ANGRY** when **people don't respect my space/ wear a mask**

I feel **WORRIED** and **ANXIOUS** when **I think of the work I have to catch up on**

I feel **SAD** when **I think about how things were**



Now roll up the paper and throw it across the room.

What stresses you/ your students out?

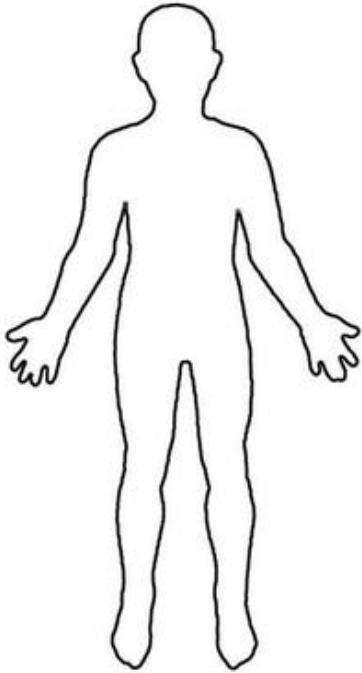
I feel X (emotion) when Y (event) happens...

Benefits of exercise:

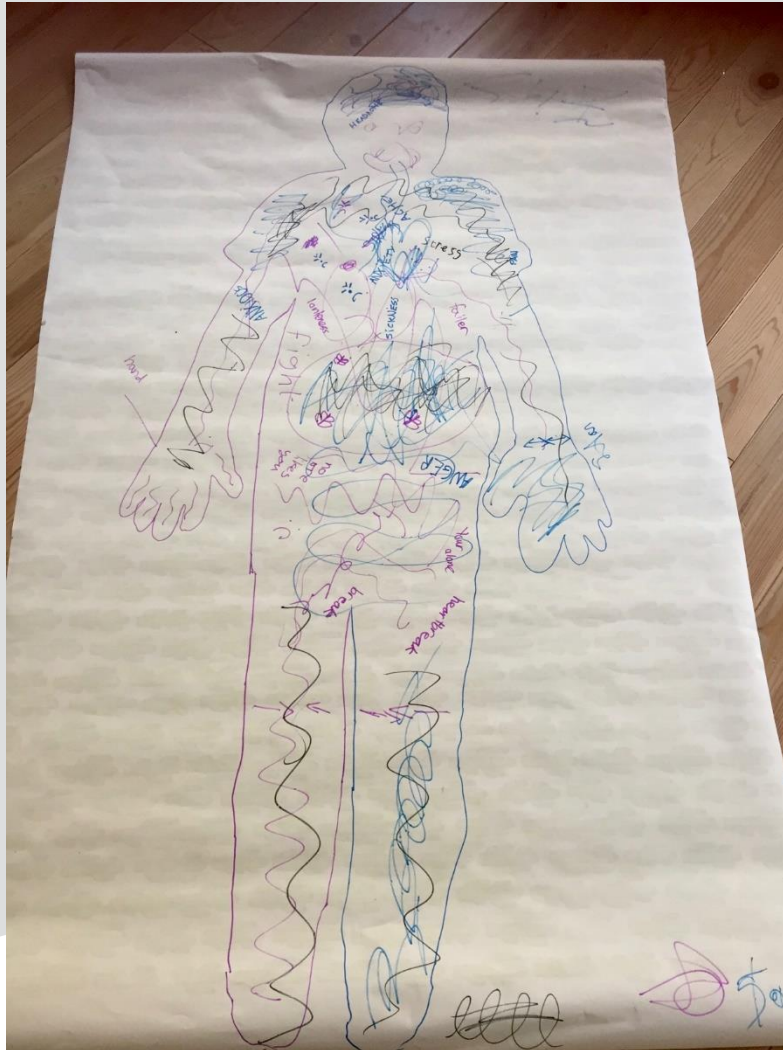
- Sharing (you are not alone)
- We all worry about different things (a-ha moment)
- Insight for teachers into concerns of students
- A great discussion starter
- Can bring a lightness to the situation



How does stress feel?



We feel our emotions...



Tight shoulders
Head beating fast
Tight stomach
Feel hot
Tired - Can't sleep
Feel heavy in the chest
Jaw hurts
Headaches etc

What's the body doing?

Fight or Flight



Try this short practice-

Please lower your gaze

- Think of something stressful
- Think of licking a lemon
- Think of something that makes you feel good
- What links them all?

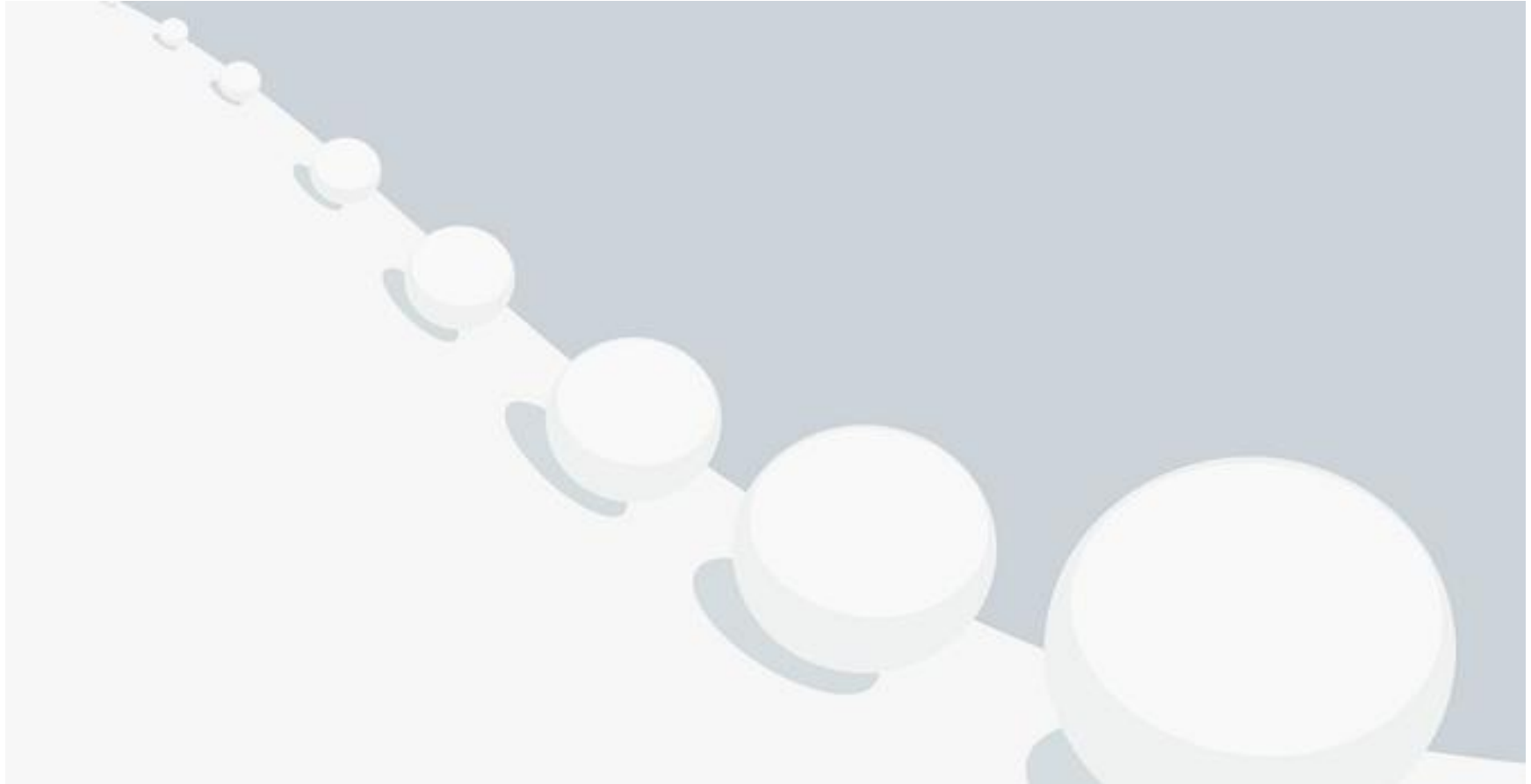


**We have between 70,000 and
125,00 thoughts a day,**

80% negative

90%+ we've had before

Snowball effect



Catastrophizing:



We get mentally stuck:

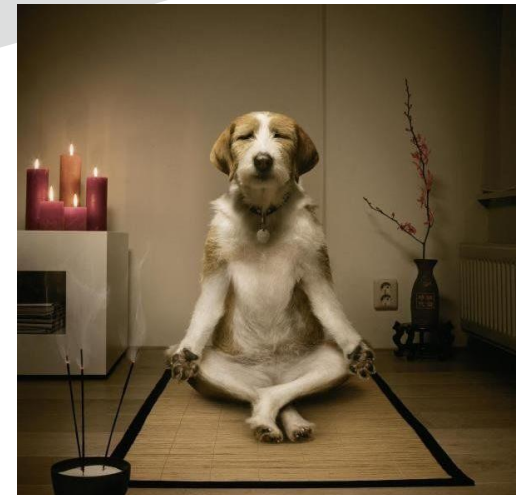
- 1. The past – if only...**
- 2. The present – I don't want this, I want more of that**
- 3. Future – What if?**

We get mentally stuck:

- 1. The past – if only...**
- 3. Future – What if?**

We can notice our thoughts and come back to the present, through the senses:

- Breathing**
- Sensing the body sitting here**
- Listening**

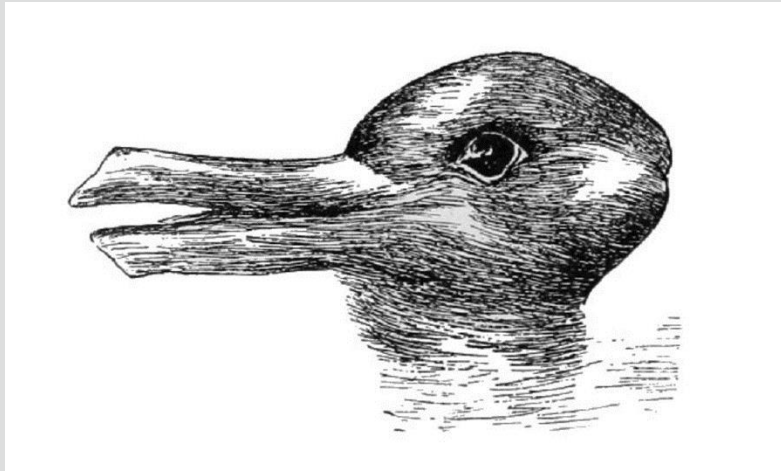


Thoughts and perceptions can be misleading...

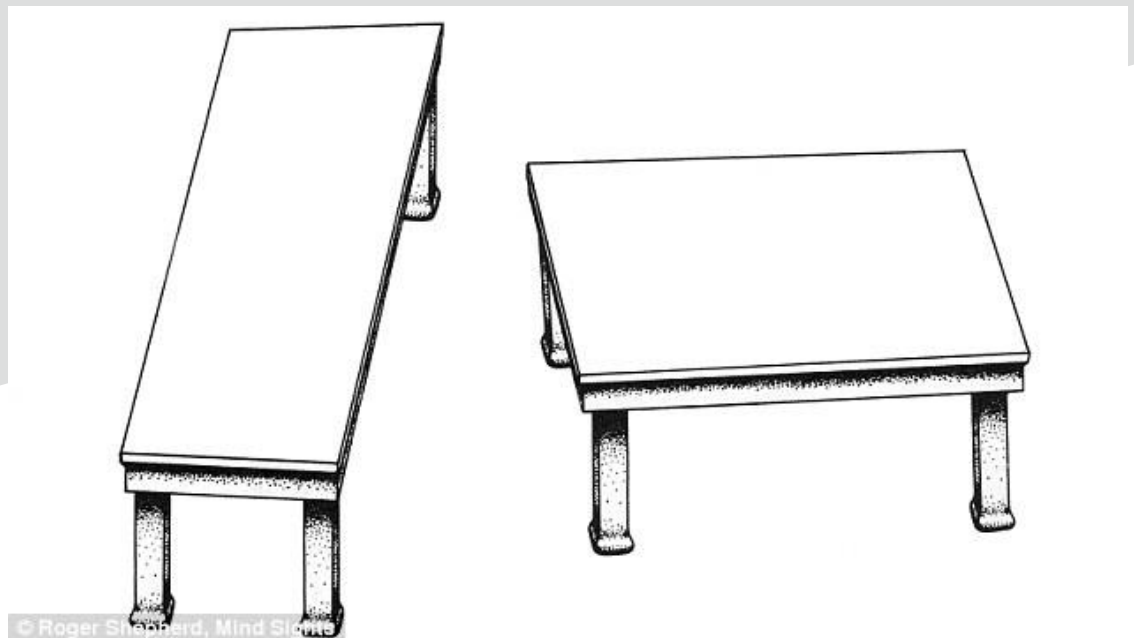
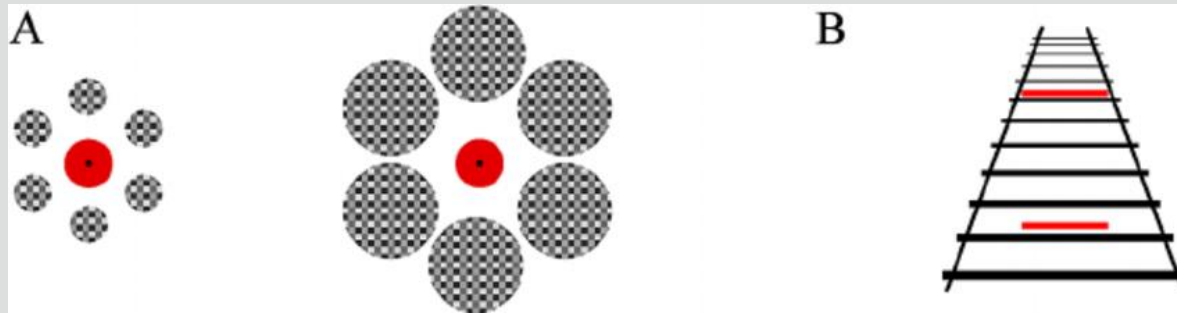


Get some perspective

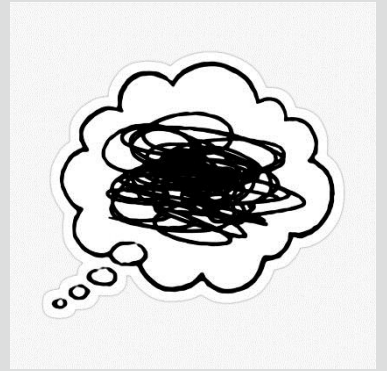
Look at these images, what do you see?



Which is bigger?



Is it true?



- Yes 100% - (Automatic Pilot)
- Are you sure? Is there any other way to see this?
- How does this show up in the Body or Mind?
- What is the storyline?
- What would it be like to let go of this story?
- What benefits might you feel?

We all get mentally stuck:

2. The present – I don't want this, I want something else

We can notice our thoughts and practice being the witness. Thoughts are real – but are they true?

We can also look for the good in this moment. Gratitude can change our mood...

Helping ourselves

- Ask yourself what is good in this moment. What do you appreciate right now?

What is good outside of this experience? Family, friends, health, hobbies, pets etc



- A sense of service. How can I help? Who can I help?

Gratitude practices

- Gratitude jar
- Gratitude circle
- Gratitude tree
- Bookend the day



Finding a way to balance our negativity bias

We are 5 times more likely to remember the “bad” experience than the “good” experience.



Review of exercises

- **Breath in and out count 1, up to 10**
- **Sit and just listen**
- **The power of words -Emotions list**
- **Draw how we feel on the body**
- **X and Y – what triggers us?**
- **Getting perspective and question thoughts and beliefs**
- **Looking for the good, gratitude and service**

Consider how you feel:



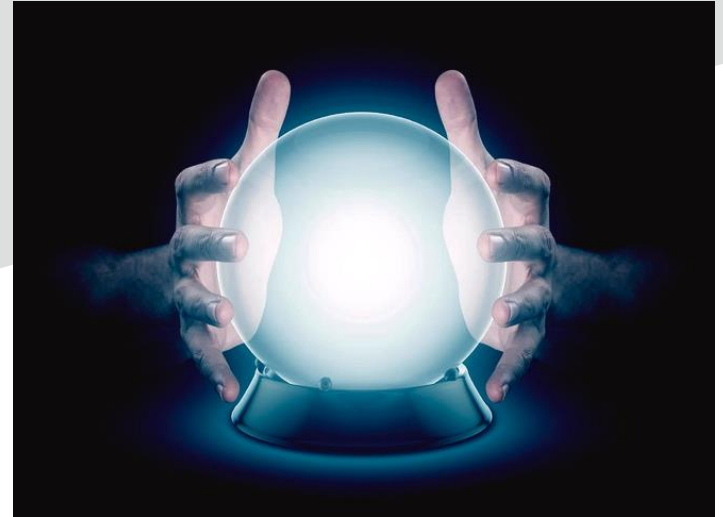
Before starting the class:

- **Be aware of the energy you take into class**
- **Steady yourself with your breath**
- **Look up and smile!**
- **Get a hug!**

Life is uncertain

Life is always changing

We can never know the future...



Jon Kabat Zinn, Mindfulness teacher:

“You can’t stop the waves but you can learn to surf.”



Thank you- Emma Reynolds

For more information on Mindfulness:

www.MBSR-Mindfulness.com

Apps: Headspace, Calm, Insight Timer

Courses: M.B.S.R.

Talks: Ted X



Any questions...

ABCDE practice

A – Awareness

(Notice how you're feeling)

B – Breathe

(Take deep breaths)

C - Count

(Count these breaths, so in and out 1, in and out 2 etc until 10)

D – Distance yourself

(If ABC isn't enough, if possible move away from the person or situation that is triggering)

E – Express yourself

(Once the moment has passed you may like to calmly express how you were feeling and why)