

be
happy
be
you :)
THE TEENAGE GUIDE

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Collins *be happy be you* THE TEENAGE GUIDE

5 feed your inner creative

You can't use up creativity.
The more you use the more
you have.

Maya Angelou, author and activist

Creativity is about growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes and having a heap of fun. It doesn't always mean being an incredible artist, dancer, musician or performer. Creative thinking is a 'muscle' we all use every day, and one we can develop.

Fear of failing can be a huge barrier to trying something new though, so creativity expert Elizabeth Gilbert suggests imagining your projects as road trips. Fear can come along in the car, but there is no way fear is allowed to drive.

the science bit

Have you ever lost track of time working on a creative project? Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi suggested that we experience a state called flow when working on creative activities we love. This contributes to an upward spiral of positive emotions and psychological wellbeing.

creativity and you

Some people might enjoy working hard at one project, while those who crave novelty might try lots of new things. Some might prefer to work on their own, whereas others might like group activities.

Remember, creativity doesn't have to be perfect. In fact aiming for perfection can make you feel stressed.

Try to have times where you relax and don't worry about the outcome being perfect. Things that don't fall into place straight away can teach us more than things we get perfect first time.

- / Write down five ways you like to be creative.
- / What's your creative personality?
- / When do you experience flow?
- / Has a creative project ever gone wrong?

mind mapping

Mind mapping is a brilliant way to mirror and tap into the layout of your brain. Lists tell us what we already know, but mind maps let us create new ideas.

- 1 Write your topic, worry, theme or question in the middle of a page.
- 2 Add words as they come to mind, imagining each of your ideas as tree branches.
- 3 Play word association or let your mind wander. Don't say no to anything!
- 4 At first your ideas might seem obvious, but soon you will come up with less obvious ideas.
- 5 As your ideas slow down, look for words that link – you might want to connect them up with lines.

MIND MAP EXAMPLE



6 anxiety tool kit

You can't always control what goes on outside. But you can always control what goes on inside.

Wayne Dyer, self-help author

Life definitely isn't something you can always direct. Three exams on one day, hormones going crazy, parents refusing to give you more independence? Ahh yes, life outside of you is not always under your control and it really helps to

accept and acknowledge that (even if it is really irritating). What you can control is how you feel and how you react. Both those things are in your hands even if it doesn't feel like it right now. Let's take a look at anxiety. Feeling anxious is just horrible and can feel completely overwhelming. But you know what? There are a whole lot of things you can do to control anxiety so it doesn't control you.



the science bit

Researchers believe that brain changes during adolescence do make teenage brains more vulnerable to depression and anxiety. One in three young people may experience some form of anxiety by the age of 18 and might need extra help from their GP or other specialists to overcome it.



Research has also shown that how we handle things has a direct impact on how much anxiety we feel. So the more strategies you have in your toolbox to help you cope with worry and anxiety, the more resilient you will become. Change the way you deal with worry and you will quickly lower your anxiety levels.

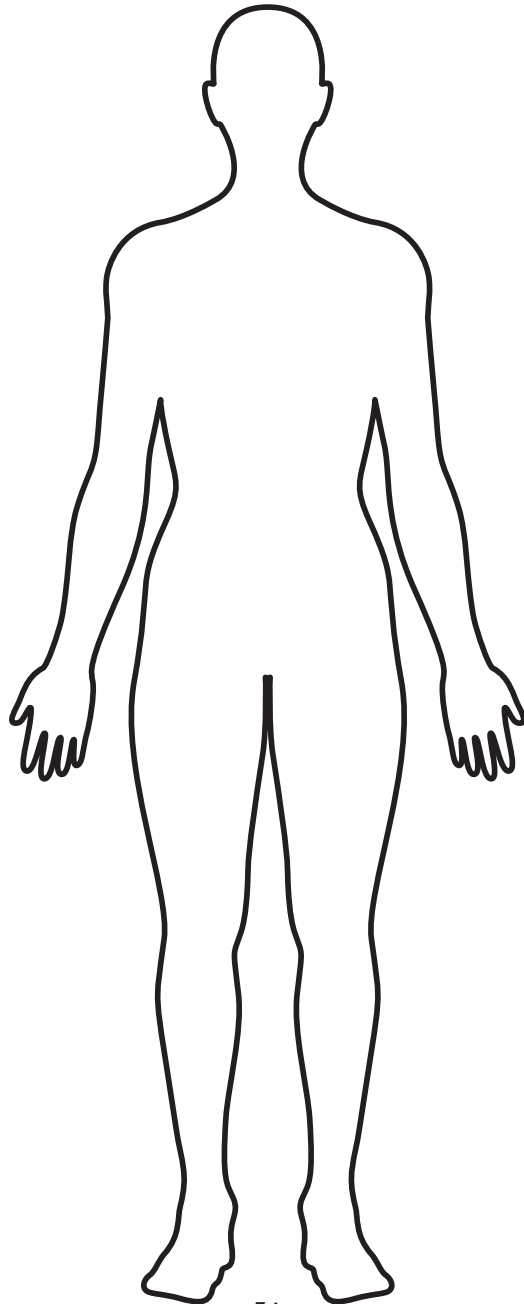
where do you feel anxiety?

Psychologically, anxiety can make you feel worried, uneasy, affect your sleep, give you poor concentration, make you irritable or feel like you are on high alert all the time and struggling to relax. Anxiety can make you tearful or in need of reassurance from others.

Physically, anxiety can make your heart pound, make you feel sick, dizzy, short of breath or faint. It can give you headaches or make you break out in a sweat or feel like you have butterflies in your stomach.

Anxiety can feel horrible, but it is important to remember it is a temporary feeling – it comes like a wave, but it crashes and passes by. The sooner you find ways to deal with it the less likely it is to grow.

draw or label where or how YOU
feel anxiety on your body



try some of these strategies to reduce anxiety:

● Grounding yourself

Grounding yourself when you feel anxious works brilliantly. It is all about taking control and reminding yourself about what is real and where you are right now.

Why not try it ... first notice **five** things you can see, then **four** things you can touch, **three** things you can hear, **two** things you can smell and lastly **one** thing you can taste.

● Breathing

Deep breathing and focusing on your breathing are actions that have been practised for thousands of years to calm the mind. When you are anxious your heart rate increases and your breath gets really shallow. Deep breathing helps get more oxygen into your bloodstream, which helps you calm down and lowers your stress levels.

Let's make it really easy to breathe deeply by using the power of your imagination. Find a comfortable upright sitting position and focus on your natural breathing.

Now imagine a feather in your hand. Take a deep breath in for a count of 4, then exhale slowly. Imagine blowing on the feather and it gently moving. Repeat the deep breaths in followed by gentle breaths out until you feel calmer.

● Distraction

It's okay to distract yourself when you feel anxious; in fact it's a very good strategy. Figure out what works for you, counting the beads on a chakra bracelet, rubbing a small stone or crystal you keep in your pocket, doing a maths problem in your head, or listening to some music you know will chill you out. Distracting your mind takes strength but as you do it again and again it will become a habit and a really useful one.

● Mantra

A mantra is a motivational chant that is repeated to spur yourself on. It is often used in meditation to calm the mind. Mantras have been used for centuries to guide the mind's focus and are a brilliant tool for dealing with anxiety.

Neuroscientists have used advanced brain-imaging tools to show how mantras actually work, and they have found mantras help free a mind of background noise and calm your nervous system as a result.

'Ommm,' 'Peace' or 'My mind is clear and calm' could all work. Anything goes. You could choose a sound, a word or even a short phrase or prayer – as long as you repeat something with focused attention it will help you feel calmer

/ When I am anxious I feel...

/ It helps me to...

be happy be you...

...by recognising how and where anxiety affects you and trying out techniques to release it. There are lots more activities to help with this throughout the book.



7 finding your happy place

Nobody can bring you peace
but yourself.

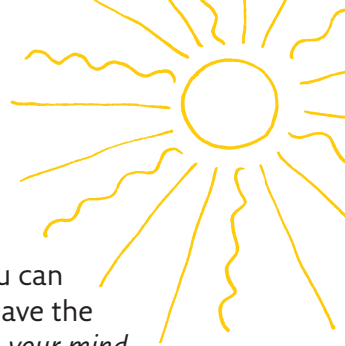
Ralph Waldo Emerson, writer and philosopher

People often talk about their happy place. At the time of writing this there were over seven million images hashtagged #happyplace on Instagram – beaches, hills, living rooms, animals, gardens, sports, travel, hobbies.

the science bit

Researchers from Surrey University measured the brain activity of twenty volunteers as they were shown pictures of landscapes, houses, other locations and personally meaningful objects.

One thing they noticed was that the amygdala, that area of the brain associated with emotional responses, was fired up when shown places to which the individuals had strong personal ties. Favourite places stimulated a feeling of belonging, of being physically and emotionally safe.



go to a happier place

Your happy place doesn't have to be a place you can physically get to, because often we can't just leave the situation and location we are in. But you can *in your mind*, so it's worth having a happy place stored up for when you need to get away from stress, worry, anxiety or negative thoughts.

Set aside some quiet time to work on this. Get comfy, take some deep breaths...

Spend some time daydreaming about a place that makes you feel happy and secure. Work on all your senses until you can quickly bring it to mind and see, smell, hear, touch and even taste things in this place.

When you need some calm, perhaps at the start of a busy day, on the bus or walk to school, take a minute to remember your happy place.

/ Write a description of your happy place, or draw or stick a picture in your journal or somewhere you will see it each day.

How do you bring the calm of your happy place into everyday life? In real life, removing clutter and bringing elements of your happy place into your bedroom can all help.

Be happy be you...

...by using all your senses to
conjure up a happy place.

Increase the happiness levels of the most
important person you will ever meet...

you

(AND THEN YOU CAN DEAL WITH
THE REST OF THE WORLD!)

Packed full of ideas and practical
activities to increase happiness, plus
explanations of the science behind
how and why they work.

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