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Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder

(ARFID)

Workbook

EDUCATION

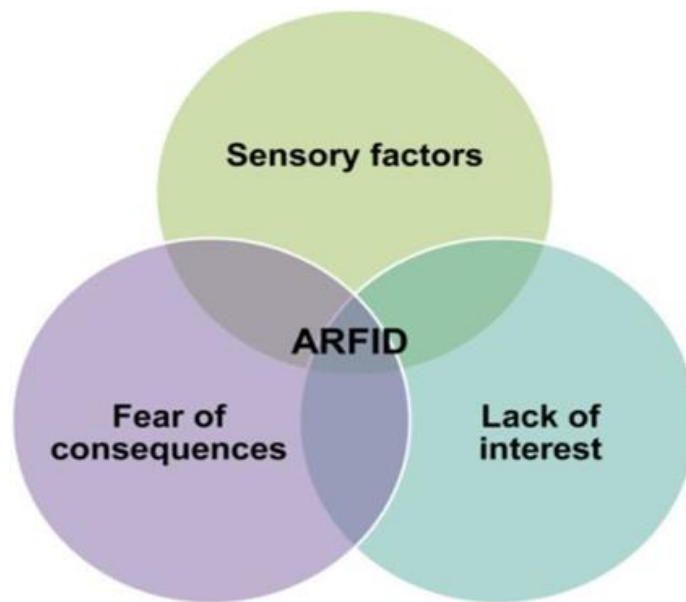
What is Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)? (taken from BEAT)

Avoidant restrictive food intake disorder, more commonly known as ARFID, is a condition characterised by the person avoiding certain foods or types of food, having restricted intake in terms of overall amount eaten, or both.

Someone might be avoiding and/or restricting their intake for a number of different reasons. The most common are the following:

- They might be very sensitive to the taste, texture, smell, or appearance of certain types of food, or only able to eat foods at a certain temperature. This can lead to **sensory-based avoidance or restriction of intake**.
- They may have had a distressing experience with food, such as choking or vomiting, or experiencing significant abdominal pain. This can cause the person to develop feelings of fear and anxiety around food or eating, and lead to them to avoiding certain foods or textures. Some people may experience more general worries about the consequences of eating that they find hard to put into words, and restrict their intake to what they regard as 'safe' foods. Significant levels of fear or worry can lead to avoidance based on **concern about the consequences of eating**.
- In some cases, the person may not recognise that they are hungry in the way that others would, or they may generally have a poor appetite. For them, eating might seem a chore and not something that is enjoyed, resulting in them struggling to eat enough. Such people may have restricted intake because of **low interest in eating**.

It is important to recognise that any one person can have one or more of these reasons behind their avoidance or restriction of food and eating at any one time. In other words, these examples are not mutually exclusive. This means that ARFID might look quite different in one person compared to another. Because of this, ARFID is sometimes described as an 'umbrella' term – it includes a range of different types of difficulty. Nevertheless, all people who develop ARFID share the central feature of the presence of avoidance or restriction of food intake in terms of overall amount, range of foods eaten, or both.



Diagnostic criteria for ARFID

Previously known as selective eating disorder (SED), ARFID was introduced in the most recent edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5). The following criteria must be met for an individual to be diagnosed with ARFID:

1. An eating or feeding disturbance (e.g., apparent lack of interest in eating or food; avoidance based on sensory characteristics of food; concern about aversive consequences of eating) as manifested by persistent failure to meet appropriate nutritional and/or energy needs associated with one (or more) of the following:
 - Significant weight loss (or failure to achieve expected weight gain or faltering growth in children)
 - Significant nutritional deficiency
 - Dependence on enteral feeding or oral nutritional supplements
 - Marked interference with psychosocial functioning.
2. The eating disturbance is not attributable to a concurrent medical condition or is not better explained by another mental disorder.
3. The disturbance is not better explained by lack of available food or by an associated culturally sanctioned practice.
4. The disturbance does not occur exclusively during the course of anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa, and there is no evidence of a disturbance in the way in which one's body weight or shape is experienced.

Signs, symptoms and risks associated with ARFID

Behavioural and psychological

- Weight loss
- May wear layers to hide weight loss or stay warm
- Constipation.
- Abdominal pain
- Intolerant to the cold intolerance.
- Lethargy and/or excess energy
- Vague gastrointestinal issues (“upset stomach”, feels full, etc.) around mealtimes that have no known cause.
- Dramatic restriction in types or amount of food eaten
- Only eating certain textures of food
- Fears of choking or vomiting
- Lack of appetite or interest in food
- Limited range of preferred foods that becomes narrower over time (i.e., picky eating that progressively worsens).
- No body image disturbance or fear of weight gain
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Physical

- Stomach cramps, other non-specific gastrointestinal complaints (constipation, acid reflux, etc.)
- Menstrual irregularities—missing periods or only having a period while on hormonal contraceptives (this is not considered a “true” period)
- Periods stopping all together.
- Difficulties concentrating
- Blood or electrolyte abnormalities (anaemia, low thyroid and hormone levels, low potassium, low blood cell counts)
- Dizziness
- Fainting episodes
- Feeling cold all the time
- Sleep problems
- Dry skin
- Dry and brittle nails
- Fine hair on body (lanugo)
- Thinning of hair on head, dry and brittle hair
- Muscle weakness
- Cold, mottled hands and feet or swelling of feet
- Poor wound healing
- Impaired immune functioning
- Brittle and weaker bones (resulting in increased fracture risks and osteoporosis).

Anxiety

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is an unpleasant feeling that we all experience at times. It is a word often used to describe when we feel 'uptight', 'irritable', 'nervous', 'tense', or 'wound up'.

When we are anxious we normally experience a variety of uncomfortable **physical sensations**. These include:

- Increased heart rate
- Muscular tension
- Sweating
- Feelings of breathlessness
- Tense body/Muscular pain
- Dizzy/Faint
- Chest tight or painful
- Stomach Churning
- Trembling or tingling sensations
- Breathing faster or slower than usual
- Concentration difficulties

Let's think about why these physical changes happen?

The main reason we experience these physical changes is due to the release of adrenaline, this is a sign that the body is preparing for action.

- We experience breathlessness or fast breathing as the body tries to get in as much oxygen as possible to send to its vital organs and muscles.
- We experience muscle tension, restlessness or shaking because the adrenaline makes them ready for action
- You may experience clammy hands or increased sweating as the body tries to get rid of extra fluid so it can run faster.
- You may feel sick as the stomachs enzymes are disrupted by the release of adrenaline.
- You may experience 'butterflies' in your stomach, this is because the stomach gets extra sensitive when anxious and this is partially the cause.

Some of the **feelings** we may experience in relation to anxiety include:

- On edge
- Nervous
- Panicky
- Stressed
- Irritable/low patience threshold
- Uptight

When we are anxious, we often worry for large periods of time, so much so that our worry can feel out of control. These worries are often about a variety of issues and commonly our mind jumps quickly from one worry to another.

Some other symptoms relating to **thoughts** may include:

- You often worry 'what if' something bad happens
- Your mind jumps from worry to worry
- You often imagine the worst case scenarios
- You are always on the look out for danger

Anxiety also influences how we behave. For instance, when we feel anxious, we often avoid doing things that we want to because we are worried about how they will turn out. Although short experiences of anxiety are part and parcel of daily life, it becomes challenging when anxiety begins to follow people around and is a regular feature in their lives. Other **behavioural symptoms** can include:

- Avoid doing things you would like to
- Pace around/Find it hard to relax
- Snap at people too easily
- Get easily flustered
- Talk very quickly

What causes anxiety?

Anxiety is often the result of feeling as though we cannot cope with the unknown, the demands placed upon us or the demands of a certain situation.

Things that can affect anxiety levels include:

Thinking Styles:

Some people may have a thinking style that lends itself to experiencing anxiety. For example, anxious people have a tendency to expect that the worst possible scenario will always occur.

Unhelpful Thinking Styles

<p>All or nothing thinking</p>  <p>Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'</p> <p><i>If I'm not perfect I have failed</i></p> <p><i>Either I do it right or not at all</i></p>	<p>Over-generalizing</p>  <p>Seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw</p>
<p>Mental filter</p>  <p>Only paying attention to certain types of evidence</p> <p><i>Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes</i></p>	<p>Disqualifying the positive</p>  <p>Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another</p> <p><i>That doesn't count</i></p>
<p>Jumping to conclusions</p>  <p>There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mind reading (imagining we know what others are thinking)• Fortune telling (predicting the future)	<p>Magnification (catastrophizing) & minimization</p>  <p>Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophizing), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important</p>
<p>Emotional reasoning</p>  <p>Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true</p> <p><i>I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot</i></p>	<p>should must</p> <p>Using critical words like 'should', 'must', or 'ought' can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed</p> <p>If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is often frustration</p>
<p>Labelling</p>  <p>Assigning labels to ourselves or other people</p> <p><i>I'm a loser</i></p> <p><i>I'm completely useless</i></p> <p><i>They're such an idiot</i></p>	<p>Personalization</p> <p>"this is my fault"</p> <p>Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault</p> <p>Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault</p>

Biological Reasons:

It has also been suggested that anxiety has familial ties. In other words, if someone in your immediate family is an anxious person, there is an increased chance that you will have similar personality traits.

Evolutionary Reasons:

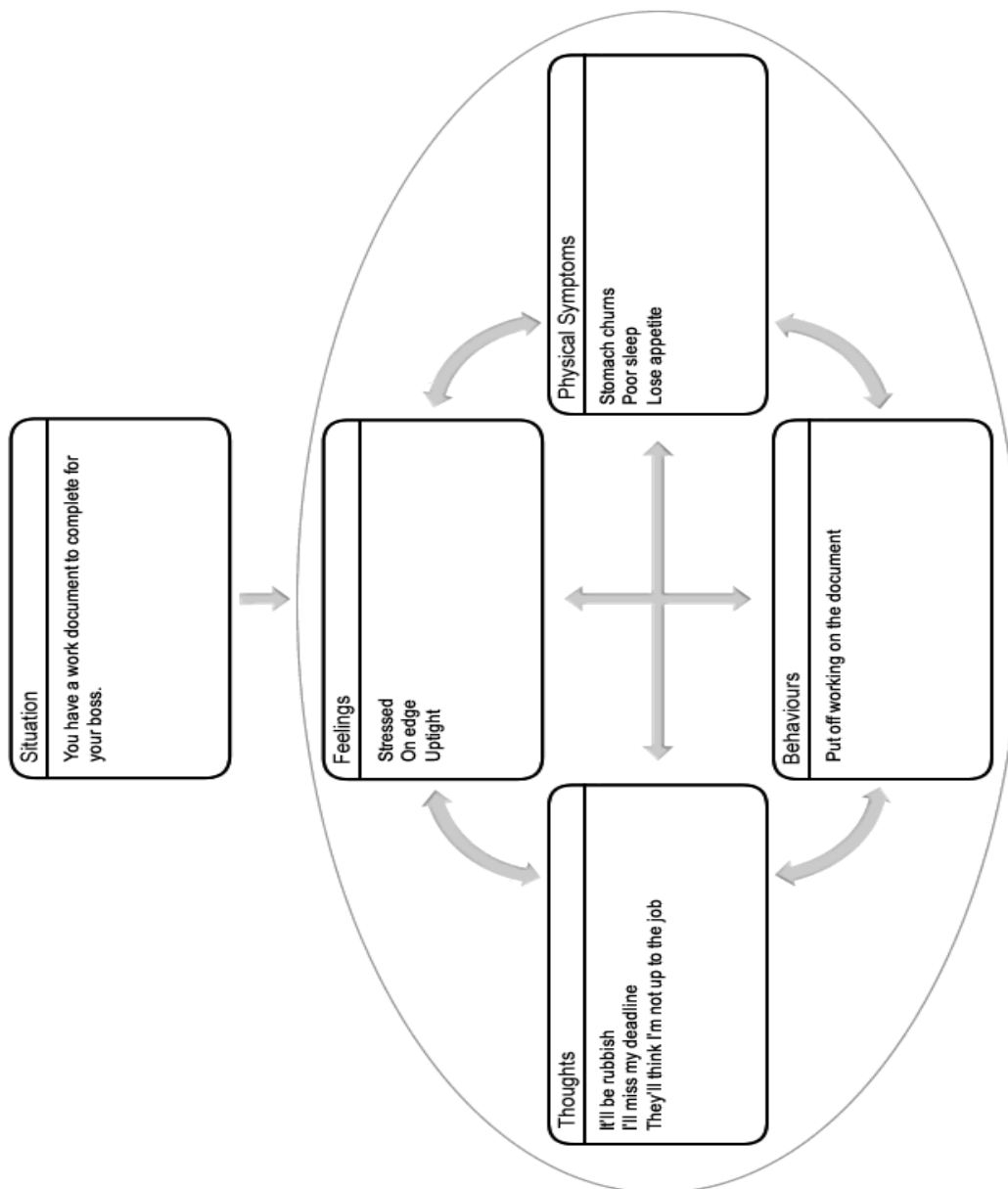
We also experience anxiety because of its evolutionary benefits. Put another way, although anxiety is largely an unpleasant experience, it also has positive benefits that have been useful to humans over the centuries. For example, when we are under threat or feel in danger (e.g. hear a burglar), we automatically become anxious. As a result, our heart beats more quickly which supplies blood to our muscles (which helps us run away from or fight the burglar); we sweat (which cools us down during this process); and our breathing changes (which ensures oxygen is delivered to our muscles quickly again preparing us for a quick response). When looking at anxiety in this way, you can quickly see how it can be very useful in certain situations.

But anxiety isn't always helpful!

Anxiety can become a problem when experienced in situations where there is no real danger and can have a significant negative effect on the individual's daily life. This is when anxiety can develop into a vicious cycle, as you start to become anxious your body reacts, this in turn increases your anxiety, which makes you feel worse. You may then start to avoid the situations that create this feeling of anxiety, which in turn makes the feeling stronger as your mind exaggerates situations and the impact anxiety will have on you.

Interaction between thoughts, feelings and behaviours

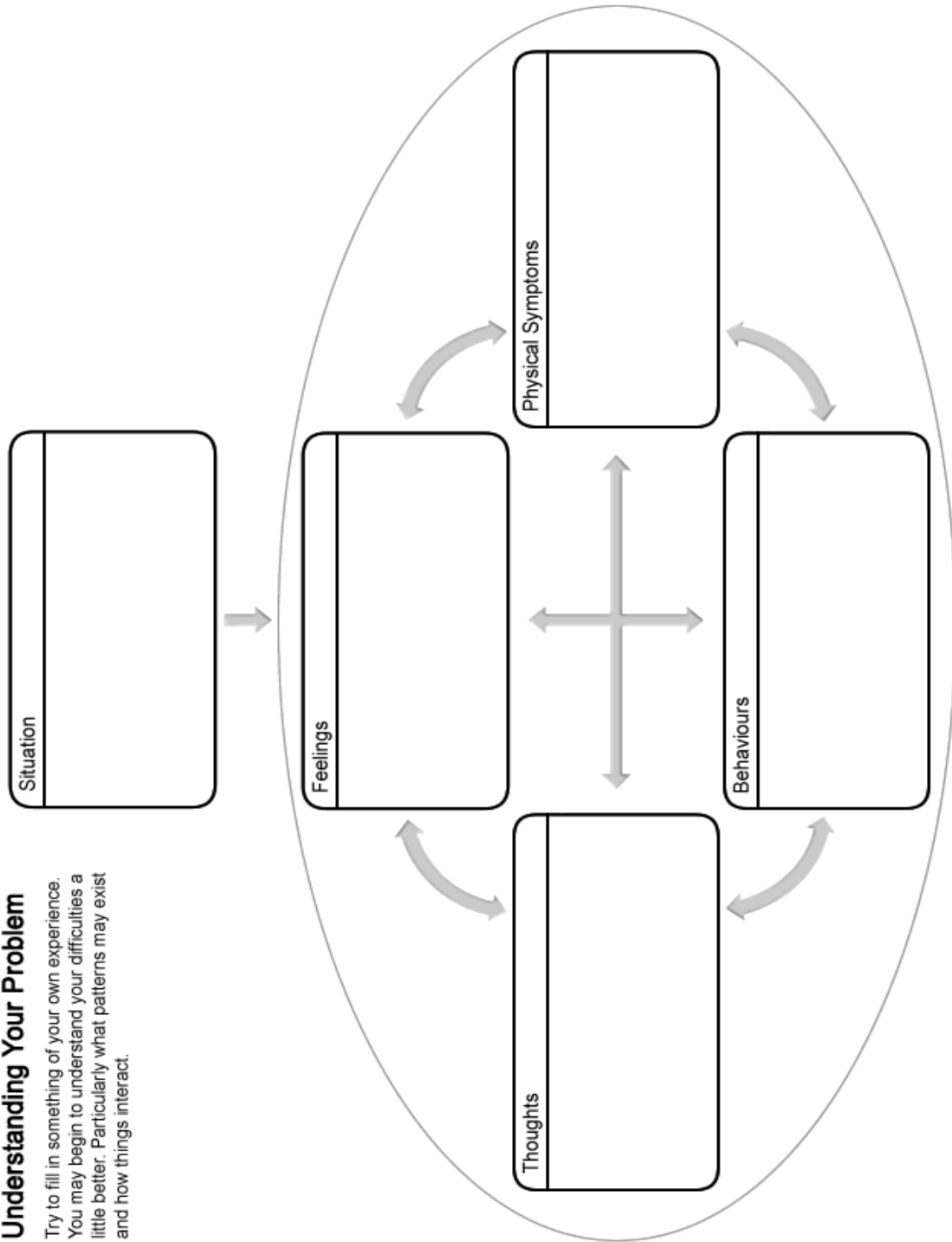
When looking more closely at anxiety, you can begin to see that our thoughts, feelings, behaviours and physical symptoms all interact and combine to keep our anxiety going. The diagram below provides an example of this.



Use the diagram below to draw your own vicious cycle of anxiety around food/consequences of food

Understanding Your Problem

Try to fill in something of your own experience. You may begin to understand your difficulties a little better. Particularly what patterns may exist and how things interact.



Managing Anxiety

This section of the workbook is aimed at providing you with some ideas of how you can reduce anxiety and manage any distress that may arise as you work towards change. These ideas include:

- ★ **Pros and cons** of making changes to intake.

- ★ The **STOP** skill – to allow space, understanding and reflection around what your mind and body are responding to.

- ★ **Breathing exercises** – to manage the breath.

- ★ **Grounding** exercises to feel calm and safe.

- ★ **Muscle relaxation** work to ‘calm the body’ and release any tension.

- ★ Ideas on how to manage the distress without making the distress any worse – **ACCEPTS**.

- ★ Ideas on how to **IMPROVE** the moment.

- ★ **Challenging** unhelpful thoughts.

- ★ **Encouragement** statements.

Pros and cons of change:

Pros of making changes to my intake	Cons of making changes to my intake
Pros of NOT making changes to my intake	Cons of NOT making changes to my intake



SKILL

Stop: Freeze! Don't react. Don't move. Stay in control!

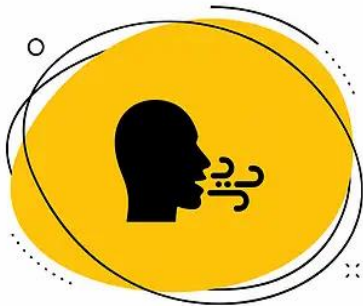
Take a break: Step back, take a deep breath, avoid letting feelings make you act on impulse.

Observe: Take note of of the situation, inside and outside of you, what are your feelings/thoughts, what are other people doing?

Proceed Mindfully: To decide what to do, think of the situation, your/other's feelings/thoughts, your goals. Ask your Wise Mind what will make it better/worse. Be aware of your actions.

3 Breathing Exercises for Stress Management

Deep breathing is beneficial to stay calm during a stressful situation.

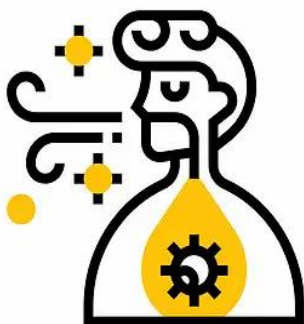


Pursed Lips Breathing

- Inhale through the nose for 2 seconds.
- Pucker your lips, then exhale for 4-6 seconds.
- Repeat several times until you feel a slowed rate of breathing.

Square Breathing

- Sit upright with your back straight.
- Inhale for 4 seconds, then hold your breath for 4 seconds.
- Exhale for 4 seconds, then hold your breath for 4 seconds.
- Repeat.



4-7-8 Breathing

- Sit upright.
- Put your tongue on the roof of your mouth near your teeth.
- Close your mouth, then inhale through the nose for 4 seconds.
- Hold your breath for 7 seconds.
- Exhale completely through pursed lips for 8 seconds.
- Repeat.

5-4-3-2-1

GROUNDING TECHNIQUE FOR ANXIETY & STRESS



5 THINGS YOU CAN SEE

4 THINGS YOU CAN HEAR

3 THINGS YOU CAN FEEL

2 THINGS YOU CAN SMELL

1 THING YOU CAN TASTE

SIX WAYS TO PRACTICE GROUNDING

with anxiety + intense emotions



body

lay on the ground, press your toes into the floor, squeeze playdough



5 senses

wear your favorite sweatshirt, use essential oils, make a cup of tea



self-soothe

take a shower or bath, find a grounding object, light a candle



observe

describe an object in detail: color, texture, shadow, light, shapes



breathe

practice 4-7-8 breathing: inhale to 4, hold for 7, exhale to 8



distract

find all the square or green objects in the room, count by 7s, say the date



THE GROWLERY



Physical Grounding Techniques

1. Focus on your breathing, notice each inhale and exhale, slow it down and repeat the word 'safe' on each inhale. Try breathing in for the count of 4 and out for the count of 7.
2. Grab tightly onto your chair as hard as you can.
3. Touch different objects, your pen, your keys etc.
4. Dig your heels into the floor, remind yourself that you are connected to the ground.
5. Carry a grounding object in your pocket - for example a small rock that you can touch whenever you feel triggered.
6. Stretch, extending your arms and fingers out as far as you can. Clench and release your fists.
7. If you can, run warm or cool water over your hands.



PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION (PMR)



Anxiety and stress can create muscle tension. Learn to relax using PMR, where you create tension and release the different muscle groups of your body one at a time.

HOW TO DO IT



- 1 Choose a quiet place and set aside about 15-20 minutes for this exercise.
- 2 You'll squeeze your muscles from the feet to your head: feet, legs, hands, arms, buttocks, stomach, chest, shoulders, neck, mouth, eyes, and forehead.
- 3 Focus on the first target muscle group. Take a slow, deep breath in and tense (squeeze) the muscle group, holding it for 5-10 seconds.
- 4 Focus on the difference between the tensed muscle and the relaxed muscle.
- 5 Relax for 10-20 seconds before moving onto the next muscle group.
- 6 Once you finish, count backwards from 5 to 1 to bring your focus back to the present.



! Don't tense your muscles too hard! You shouldn't feel any pain or cramping during the exercise.

Visit WalkAlong.ca for more wellness tips.



WalkAlong
Your Journey to Mental Wellness



Take each day one step at a time.

ACCEPTS

Things you can do to tolerate, accept and manage distress:

Crises Survival Strategies

Distracting with ACCEPTS

Activities

Engage in hobbies; cleaning; going to events; call or visit a friend; play sports or go for a walk; watch TV or a movie; listen to music; play a game or cards; read.

Contributing

Contribute to someone; volunteer; surprise someone with something; do something thoughtful; clean out your closet or pantry and give to a charity.

Comparisons

Compare how you are feeling now to a time when you felt different. How did you get through something hard in the past? What is a past memory that makes you feel empowered, happy or calm.

Emotions

Watch emotional TV shows or movies (Hallmark Channel or Disney movies); listen to emotional music. Ideas: Find music that matches your mood, and then find music that helps you change your mood.

Push away

Push the painful situation out of your mind TEMPORARILY; build an imaginary wall between you and the situation. Box it up and put it on the shelf.

Thoughts

Count to 10, count shapes, colors or like objects around you; work puzzles; read an educational book; learn a new language; do math worksheets.

Sensations

Hold ice in your hand or get a washcloth wet and cold and put on forehead; squeeze a stress ball; listen to loud music; eat something spicy or sour

Complete the table below with some ideas that might work for you:

Activities	
Contributing	
Comparison	
Emotions	
Push away	
Thoughts	
Senses	

IMPROVE

Some ideas of how you can improve the moment:

Distress Tolerance: Improve

I	Imagine. Do a guided meditation. Imagine a safe space. Visualize things going well and a positive outcome.
M	Meaning. What are you learning? How is this experience helping you grow? What positives can come from what you're going through?
P	Pause. Give yourself a few moments to take a deep breath. Get in touch with yourself. Pray or meditate.
R	Relax your muscles. Pay attention to where you're holding tension. Unclench your jaw. Give yourself a massage, yoga, or a bath.
O	One thing at a time. Stay in the present. Focus on what's in front of you. Organize your tasks and start from the top.
V	Vacation. Take a break. Do something that releases your tension. Stand up and shake it off. Take 15 minutes for you.
E	Encouragement. Practice positive self-talk. Be kind to yourself. Tell yourself that you're doing an awesome job. Be your cheerleader.

SelfLoveRainbow

Challenging unhelpful thoughts

Challenging Unhelpful Thoughts

Taking a particular unhelpful thought, see if you can test it.
Ask questions to test whether your belief has any real basis.

Unhelpful Thought



Challenges
Is there any evidence that contradicts this thought?
Can you identify any patterns of unhelpful thinking?
What would you say to a friend who had this thought in a similar situation?
What are the costs and benefits of thinking in this way?
Benefits:
Costs:
How will you feel about this in 6 months time?
Is there another way of looking at this situation?



Balanced Thought

Encouragement statements:

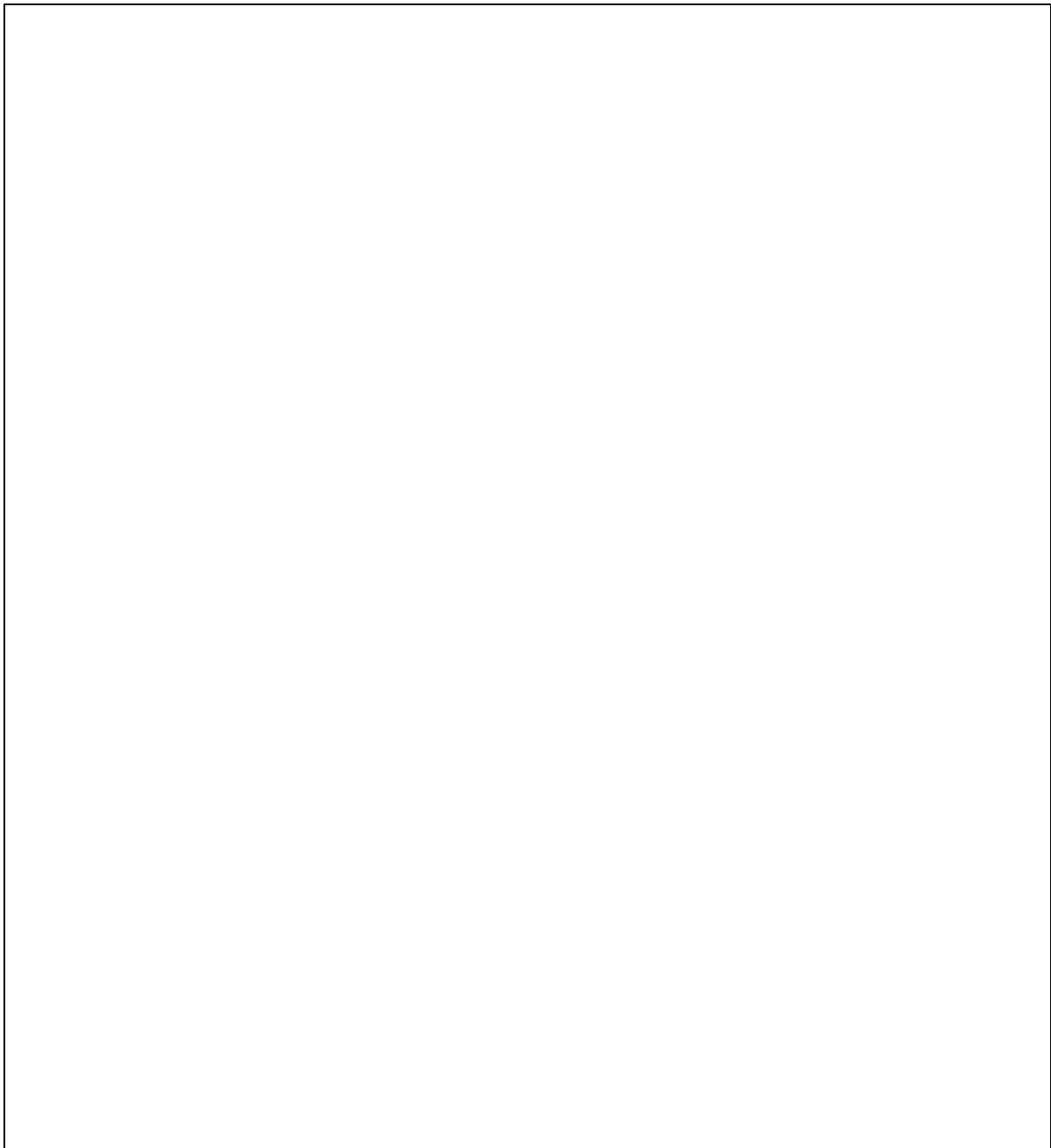
Use the space below to write your own statements of encouragement e.g.

'I will see this challenge as an opportunity to grow.'

'I don't have to rush things, I can take one step at a time.'

'These feelings will pass.'

'I can do this.'

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their own encouragement statements. It occupies the lower half of the page.

Making changes

Step 1: Identify avoided foods.

Step 2: Rate the avoided foods in order of significance.

Step 3: Goal setting.

Step 4: Preparation.

Step 5: Act.

Step 6: Repeat.

Step 1: Identify avoided foods.

Complete the table below (using the table on the next page as a reference to explore foods eaten and avoided):

Food Group	Foods I feel safe to eat now	Foods I can eat but cause anxiety/worry	Foods I avoid eating and feel unsafe
Carbohydrates			
Protein			
Dairy			
Fruit and Vegetables			
Fats important to health			
Food containing fat/sugar			

Example table of food groups:

	Carbs	Protein	Dairy	Fruit and Veg	Fats important to health	Food containing fat and sugar
What food is included?	Bread Crackers Pasta Cous Cous Potatoes Cereals Oats Plain Biscuits (e.g. digestives)	Meat Fish Meat and fish products (e.g. sausages, fish fingers) Eggs Lentils Pulses Beans Quorn Nuts and seeds	Milk Cheese Yoghurt Soya products Fromage Frais Ice cream	Fresh, frozen and canned fruit & veg Dried fruit Glass of fruit juice.	Margarine Butter Oils Salad dressing	Chocolate Crisps Sweets Biscuits Pastries Cakes etc
Main nutrients provided	Carbohydrate (starch) Dietary fibre Some calcium and iron B vitamins	Protein Iron B Vitamins Zinc Magnesium	Calcium Protein Vitamin B12 Vitamin A&D	Vitamin C Vitamin A Folate Dietary fibre Some Carbs	Fats Vitamin D, E & K Essential fatty acids	Fat Sugar Some other nutrients
How much is recommended	Should be eaten every 3-5 hours Good portion at every meal Plus some snacks	2-3 portions a day	3 portions a day	5 portions a day	Small portions at most meals (2-3 teaspoons) especially lunch and dinner	1-3 portions a day

Step 2: Rate the avoided foods in order of significance.

Construct a ladder of 8 foods that you are avoiding (taken from the table above) that are important for you to try and introduce into your diet. At the top of the ladder place those that make you most anxious, place those that cause some anxiety in the middle and those that cause the least anxiety at the bottom



Food:

Anxiety rating (0-10)

.....

.....

.....

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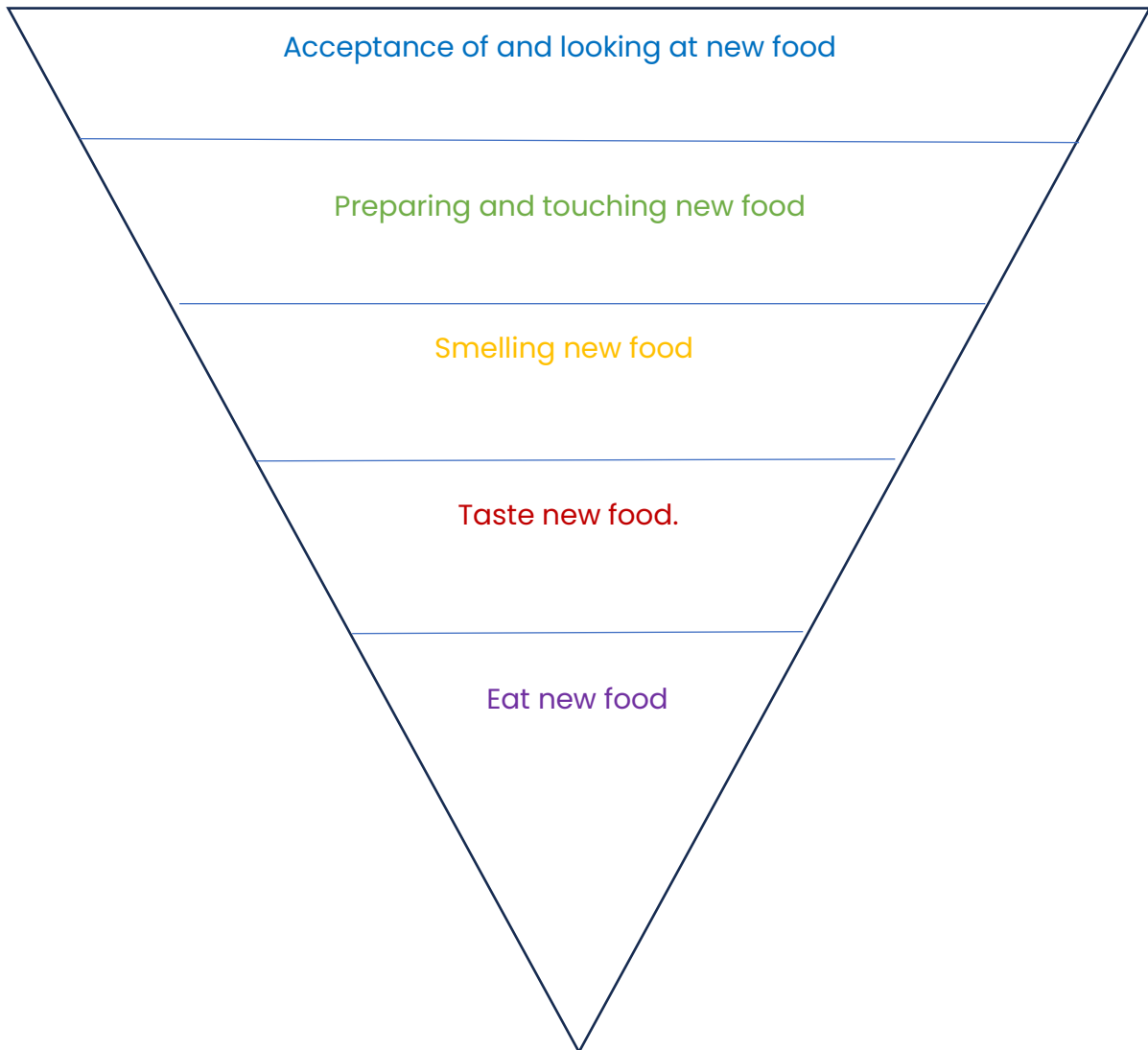
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Step 3: Goal setting.

Use the 'pyramid of change' to help set your goals:





What *exactly* are you trying to achieve?

How will you know when you've achieved it?

Is it genuinely possible to achieve it?

Does it contribute to your agency's revenue growth?

When do you want to achieve this by?

SMART GOALS TEMPLATE

S
M
A
R
T

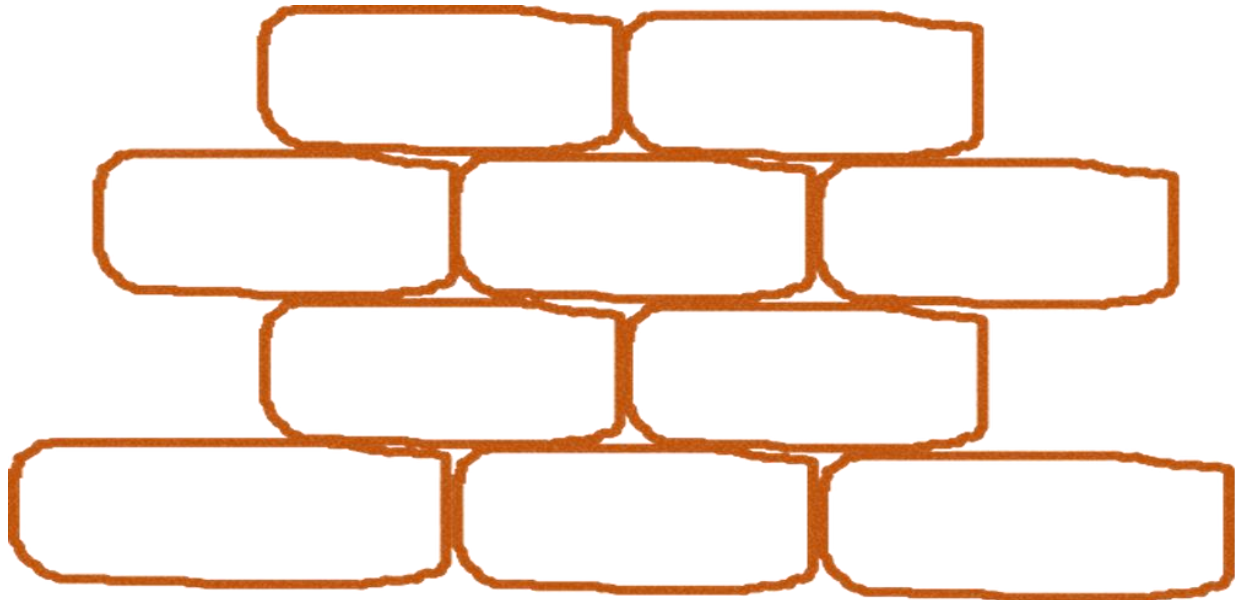
Specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is involved? What do I want to achieve? When do I need to achieve this? Why is the goal important? 	
Measurable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will I measure my progress? How will I know if my goal is achieved? 	
Achievable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it be clear when the goal is complete? Is it reasonable to complete the goal in the time allotted? 	
Relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this goal related to my overall success (or the success of my business/organization) 	
Time-Bound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How long should it take to accomplish this goal? When will I check in on whether or not the goal has been completed? Am I ready to start work on the goal? 	

In the space below, make a list of 5 long-term goals you would like to set yourself and consider the small steps needed to achieve these (THINK SMART!).

Long Term goal	Steps needed to make this happen: (Look, Touch, Smell, Taste, Eat, Repeat):
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Step 4: Preparation.

Use the wall below to help identify any barriers that may get in the way of you starting to achieve the goals you have just set out to achieve.



How can I overcome these barriers?

e.g. remind yourself of the anxiety management skills listed in the start of the workbook.

Step 5: Act.

Once you have completed your goal setting and planned for any potential barriers that may get in the way of you achieving your goals **THEN TAKE ACTION!**

Step 6: Repeat.

Ensure you keep eating the foods that you manage to introduce so they don't become fear foods again. And of course, if you're up for it – then set yourself another set of goals to make your way slowly through the avoided foods that you listed as important to have in your diet.

Gentle reminders:

- It is okay to feel anxious.
- Take one step at a time.
- Don't rush to make changes.
- Take it at the pace that feels comfortable to you.
- Stay grounded.
- You've got this!

