



Helping children with their 'viral' anxiety

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Paul's positive approach to life

Philippians 4

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, rejoice!

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, present your requests to God.

The peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

If there is anything excellent or praiseworthy, think on these things.

How do you manage your anxiety?

- ▶ Children learn from us.
- ▶ How are you managing your anxiety?
- ▶ What helps you? Do more of it.
- ▶ What makes your anxiety worse? Do less of it. Choose your focus.
- ▶ Don't catastrophize about the future. Live well today.
- ▶ Focus on a soothing Bible verses – Be still and know that I am God
Psalm 46:10
- ▶ Pray for peace and give your anxieties to Him.
- ▶ Distract yourself and lose yourself in something you enjoy.
- ▶ Use some of the ideas in this webinar.
- ▶ Tell your children how you calm yourself.

What to say about COVID-19

- ▶ Corona virus or COVID-19 is a virus, like flu or a cold.
- ▶ It can make people sick in all kinds of ways – fever, cough, loss of taste and smell.
- ▶ Some people find it difficult to breathe and they go to hospital to get the best possible care.
- ▶ Lots of people are working hard to find the best medicine and a cure.
- ▶ Most people get better quickly and easily.
- ▶ God cares for us all and we will take care of you.
- ▶ It's normal to be worried about the virus – lots of people are.
- ▶ The best things to do are to wash your hands well, be healthy, stay home, and be kind to as many people as we can.

Negative emotions

Anger

Contempt

Disgust

Embarrassment

Fear

Frustration

Guilt

Sadness

Shame

Stress



Tune in to your child's emotions

- ▶ Look for signs that usually tell you they are worried.
- ▶ They may look for more attention from you.
- ▶ They may be sad because they need to be comforted.
- ▶ They may play more aggressively and roughly.
- ▶ They may be less patient and tolerant than usual.
- ▶ They may just go quiet and spend time alone.
- ▶ Do an activity with them and get relaxed together before talking, if possible.

Connection calms

- ▶ When children are anxious – your calming presence is vital.
- ▶ Much of children's 'negative' behaviour is an expression of their distress and anxiety.
- ▶ It is important to recognize this so that you don't read their behavior as naughtiness and punish it – adding to their anxiety.
- ▶ Connect as soon as you can. "I'm wondering if you're feeling bit out of sorts...come here and have a cuddle. What would you like to do with me right now?"
- ▶ Give them attention, hugs/affection, soothing and comfort, say calming and encouraging things, distract, play, laugh, listen, help them with their challenges or schoolwork, involve them in kindness, gratitude, wonder, etc. Tell them how special they are to you.

LOVE
Comfort
Acceptance
Affection
Appreciation
Attention
Respect
Encouragement
Security
Specialness
Support

ALONENESS
Being judged
Rejection
Abuse
Criticism
Being ignored
Being shamed
Discouragement
Fear
Being put down
Being abandoned

10 most common positive emotions

Fun

Gratitude

Inspiration

Joy

Serenity

Hope

Interest

Feeling
valued

Awe and
wonder

Love



Amusement and laughter

- ▶ Share something funny with your child each day.
- ▶ Invite others to share examples of good humour.
- ▶ Have unexpected 'crazy' moments once in a while.
- ▶ Be playful and have some instant games ready for when you need them.



Awe and Wonder

- ▶ Start a nature corner in your home.
- ▶ Encourage children to slow down and pay close attention to God's creation.
- ▶ Hold an online photography competition or exhibition encouraging teens to take beautiful photos of nature, sky, etc.

Thankfulness

- ▶ Ask children to name things that they are thankful for beginning with each letter of the alphabet.
- ▶ Watch 'A Good Day' with Brother David Steindl Rast.
- ▶ Give children gratitude diaries to complete – three things a day.
- ▶ Make thank you cards.
- ▶ As a family or school, do things that show your gratitude to others in your community – police, hospital etc.



Hope

- ▶ Make sure that children/students always have something to look forward to.
- ▶ Plan simple celebrations and treats you can do in your home, and read chapter stories.
- ▶ Look out for those who are discouraged and find ways to nurture their hope.



Inspiration

- ▶ Create worships that inspire children and students to fall in love with God.
- ▶ Memorize soothing Bible verses. Decorate them and display them.
- ▶ Study the lives of inspiring people in the Bible, history and today who have managed anxious situations well.



Hand of God Prayer

- ▶ Draw around an adult's hand and cut it out.
- ▶ Imagine this hand is the hand of God.
- ▶ Write your anxieties on the palm of the hand.
- ▶ Give your anxieties to God.
- ▶ If you have more anxieties, cut out more hands.
- ▶ God cares about us.
- ▶ Cast all your anxiety upon Him because He cares for you.
- ▶ 1 Peter 5:7

Interest

- ▶ Help your children to focus on their hobbies in this time – online classes, educational subscription boxes, etc.
- ▶ Help them to find something they can 'lose' themselves in as a distraction – book, hobby, construction toy, craft – not on a screen!



Joy

- ▶ Invite children to identify the happiest moments in their day.
- ▶ Encourage them to find the joy in simple everyday experiences.
- ▶ Allow space for them to do what good things fill them with joy.



Calming

- ▶ Create a quiet space or time where children can be quiet and peaceful.
- ▶ Try bubble breathing.
- ▶ Know what helps to calm you and your child – a drink of cool water, smelling lavender and citrus, listening to soothing music, etc.
- ▶ See handout “Chilled” for more ideas.



Love is Kind

- ▶ Being kind to others is good for your emotional wellbeing – whenever you are kind to others you usually feel happier too.
- ▶ Being kind can be very effective in helping sad people to feel happier.
- ▶ See handout on “Growing Healthy Relationships”.



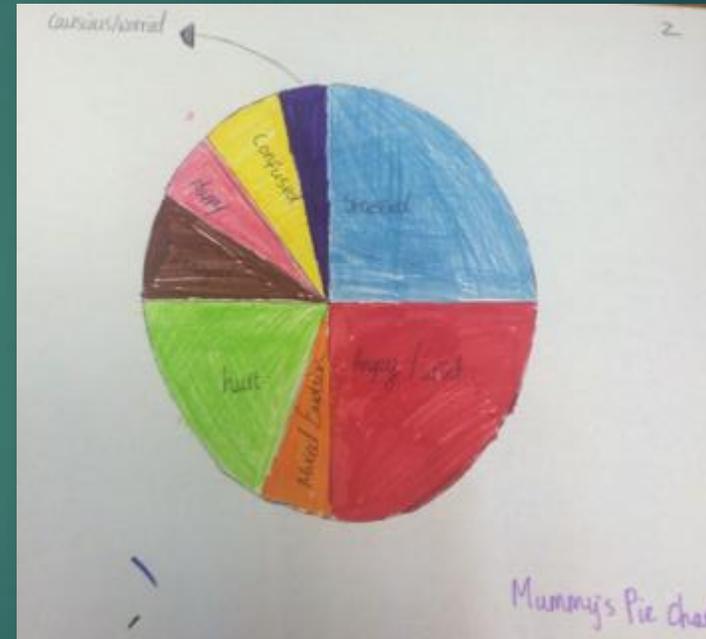
Make happy and healthy choices

- ▶ Find ways to fill your life with as many positive emotions as possible.
- ▶ Choose to do the things that nurture your own healthy emotions.
- ▶ Reduce contact with stressful news etc.
- ▶ Focus on the positive and believe the best. (Phil. 4)

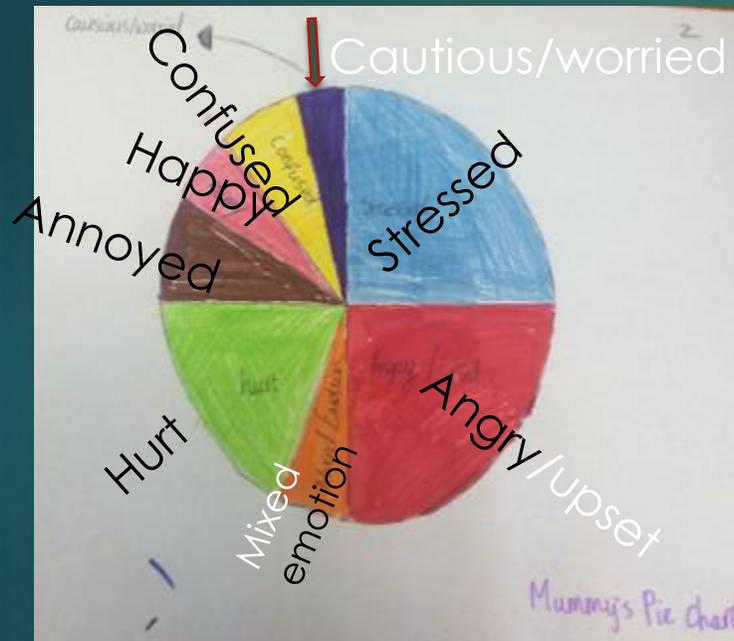


Emotional Pies

- Emotional 'pies' are pie charts showing our emotions.
- They can help us to understand our emotions and the emotions of others.
- Empathy and support.



Emotional Pies



- I am most likely to feel this when...
- When I feel this I show it by...
- When I feel this I need other people to...

What went well (WWW)?

- ▶ At the end of each day encourage children and students to think about three things that went well.
- ▶ (WWW – what went well?)
- ▶ Where did you see God today?
- ▶ Thank God for all His amazing gifts and love.

