

My Positive Mind TM Anxiety



Episode Six: Recognising, challenging and **THRIVING**

Recognising

The best way to recognise unhelpful thoughts is to write them down in your **knowledge book** so you can start to identify **when** and **why** they happen.

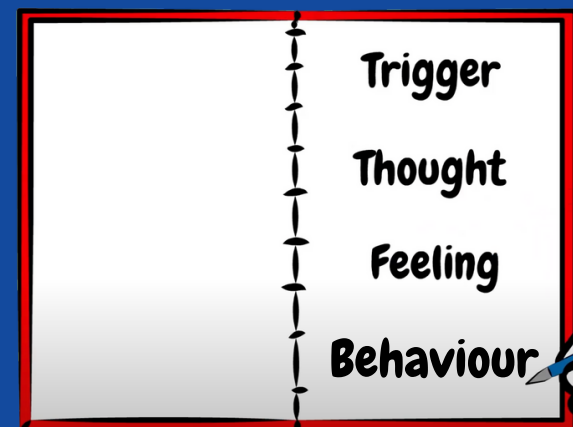
Your knowledge book



- This is the most **powerful tool in your toolbox**. You can use any diary or notebook.
- Write down what triggered the thought, what the thought was, what the feeling was and how it made you behave. Doing this will help you start to recognise patterns in your anxiety.
- Once you start to identify these patterns, you will have the clarity and knowledge to challenge unhelpful thoughts and prevent anxiety from taking over. Be patient; this process takes practice.
- Your knowledge book is your safe place where you can be completely honest.

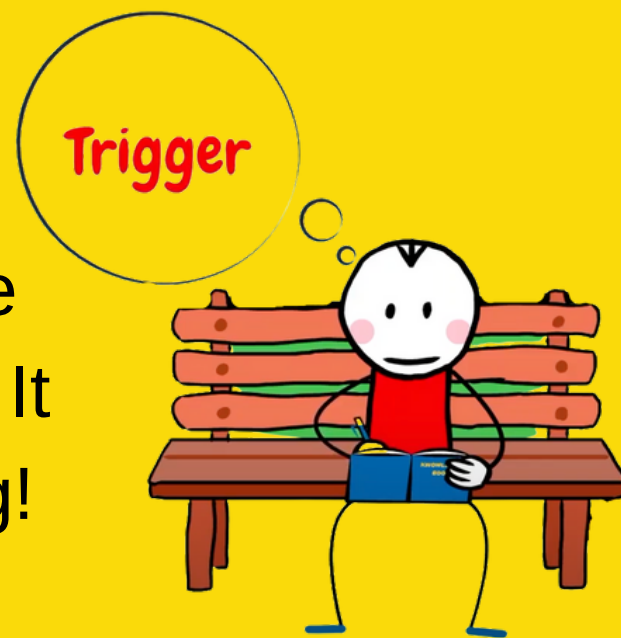
How to use your knowledge book

Using the 4 following steps when anxiety hits will help you to build the knowledge and skills to challenge anxiety. Make sure you put a date on each entry.



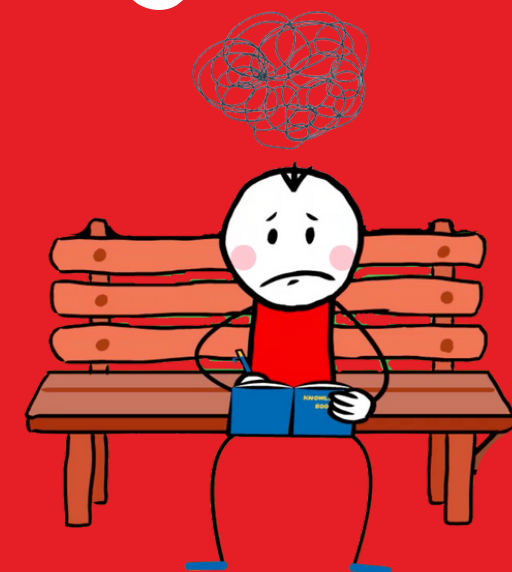
Step 1: Trigger

Write down what happened (the trigger) that made you feel anxious. It could be anything!



Step 2: Thoughts

Write down the immediate thoughts that popped into your head after the trigger happened.



Step 3: Feelings

- Write down how that thought made you feel.
- Rate the level of intensity of the feeling on a scale of 1 - 10



MILD

EXTREME



Step 4: Behaviours

Write down how this thought and feeling made you behave - what did you find yourself doing?



Challenging

Once you can recognise unhelpful thoughts, you can start to challenge them. Build evidence against your unhelpful thoughts so that you can turn them into more helpful thoughts.

Ask yourself:

- 'What are the facts?'
- 'Why do I think this is true?'
- 'How else can I view this situation?'
- 'How might someone else view the situation?'
- 'What would I tell a friend to do in this situation?'



Answering these questions will help you come up with solutions and more rational thoughts.

Got a question?

Our friendly psychologist Nat is here to support you.

Simply email your questions to: support@mypositivemind.com.au

Thriving

Be gentle on yourself. This is a process and will take time. But if you stick with it, you will notice how effective it is! Remember to use your **copied strategies** as soon as you have an unhelpful thought and feeling to reduce the intensity of that feeling.

As you fill your knowledge book up, go back and re-rate the intensity of your initial thoughts. You will see that the intensity of your feelings should reduce over time. Keep at it - you've got this!



Help Lines

If you feel overwhelmed or distressed, please reach out to your local GP or contact the following support lines. They are there to help you, even if it's just for a chat.

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732

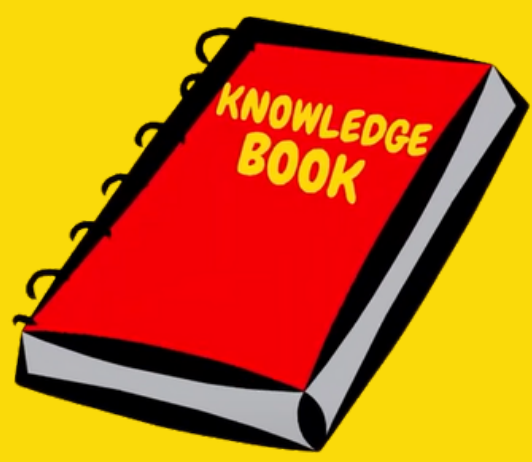
Eheadspace (12-25): 18- 650 890

Men's Line: 1300 77 98 77

Head to Health: 1800 595 212

Coming up in episode 7...

We're going to review what we have learnt in this series and we will go through the process of setting goals so you can start to make positive changes.



How to make a Knowledge Book



1 Buy yourself a notebook

Any simple notebook will do. Grab one at the shops and make it a habit to write things down when you're triggered.

This tool is going to help you to understand yourself and how you react in anxious situations so that you can stop the 'Domino Effect' that leads you down the path to anxiety.

2 Write it all down

Write down the trigger, your thoughts, how it made you feel and finally how you acted or behaved. It's important to put a date on your entries so that you can go back and review them.

Some days these entries might be quickly scribbled down and other days they might be neatly dot pointed. Write in whatever way works for you.

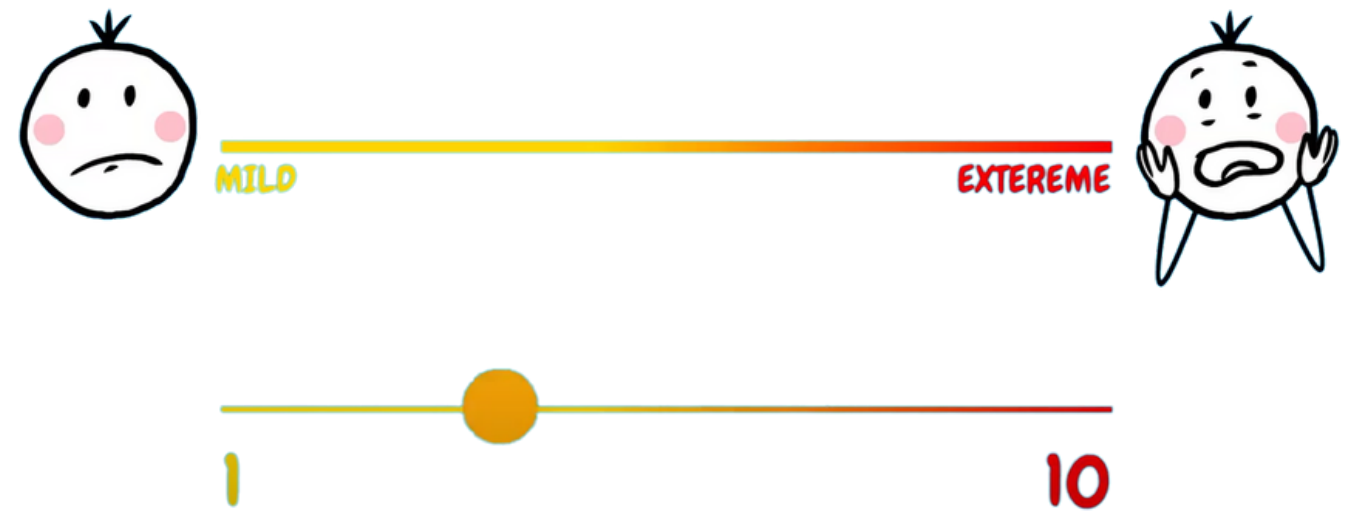
Thought Record

| Situation | Thoughts | Emotions | Behaviours | Alternate Thought |
|-----------|----------|----------|------------|-------------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
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3 Rate the intensity

On a scale of 1-10 write down how intense this feeling was overall in that anxious moment.

After practicing your coping strategies, go back and rate the intensity. Over time, you should notice that the intensity of these anxious feelings reduce.



4 Take it EVERYWHERE

Remember, its important to write down your trigger, thoughts and feelings as soon as they come up.

Bring your Knowledge Book everywhere you go. You will soon fall into a habit. Your book is there to listen to you whenever you need it.



5 Knowledge is your superpower!

This book is where you will find your knowledge by writing in it, it will help you to learn your triggers and what sets you off down an anxious path. Understanding these patterns is key so that you know when to use your coping strategies.

