



DOVER COURT  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
SINGAPORE  
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

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# Mental Health, Stress & Anxiety



# What *is* anxiety?

## Brainstem: the body's panic button

### Vital functions:

Heart rate

Respiration

Digestion

Blood pressure



- In extreme cases, the body shuts down (faints) to restore back to normal: CTRL ALT DEL.

# What *causes* anxiety?

Like an old house (basic, brainstem) with a new extension (highly developed, prefrontal cortex)...

- Old front door: brainstem, alarm system.
- 1<sup>st</sup> floor: the amygdala, the brain's 'emotional centre'.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> floor – the new extension: prefrontal cortex, for problem-solving (the “smart bit”).



# How to grow mental toughness

# What *maintains* anxiety?

- Leaving or avoiding a stressful situation = relief (that must have been dangerous).
- Next time, anxiety begins a little earlier and so on = generalise.
- Leaving it too late to act – escalation.
- Have the wrong expectations – don't aim for calm, aim for attention and focus.
- Labeling it 'anxiety'. Let's talk about being composed and having 'mental toughness'.



# Anxiety or excitement?

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- **Anxiety** and **excitement** are both arousal emotions and have similar symptoms:
  - Heart rate – heart beats faster
  - Respiration – faster breathing
  - Digestion – “butterflies”
  - Blood pressure – tense, ready for action.
- Interpretation: **positive** or **negative** emotion?



# Anxiety or excitement?



# Anxiety or excitement?





# Anxiety or excitement?

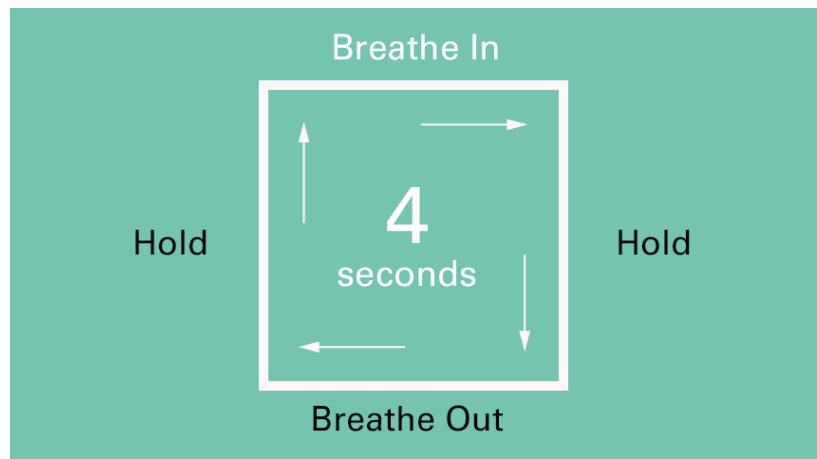
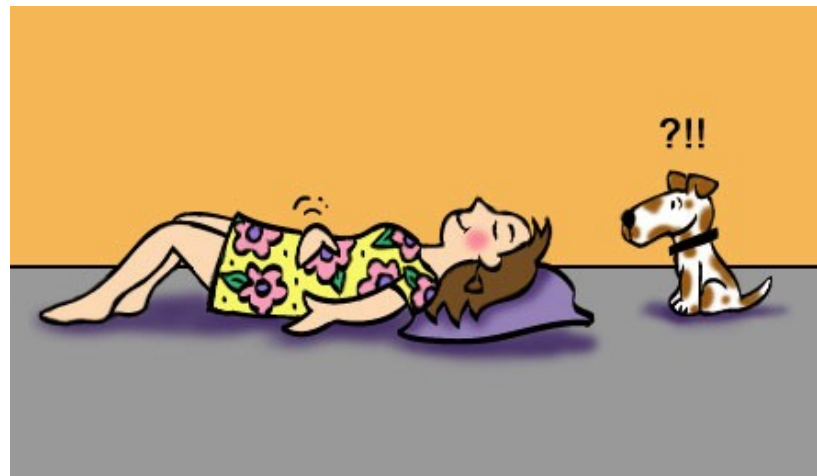


# Anxiety or excitement?



# How to *manage* it (be composed and take control)

- 1.



# Self-talk (be kind to yourself!)

Focus on what you CAN control



# Practice makes purrrrrfect!

Visualise | Practice | Exposure | Recalibrate





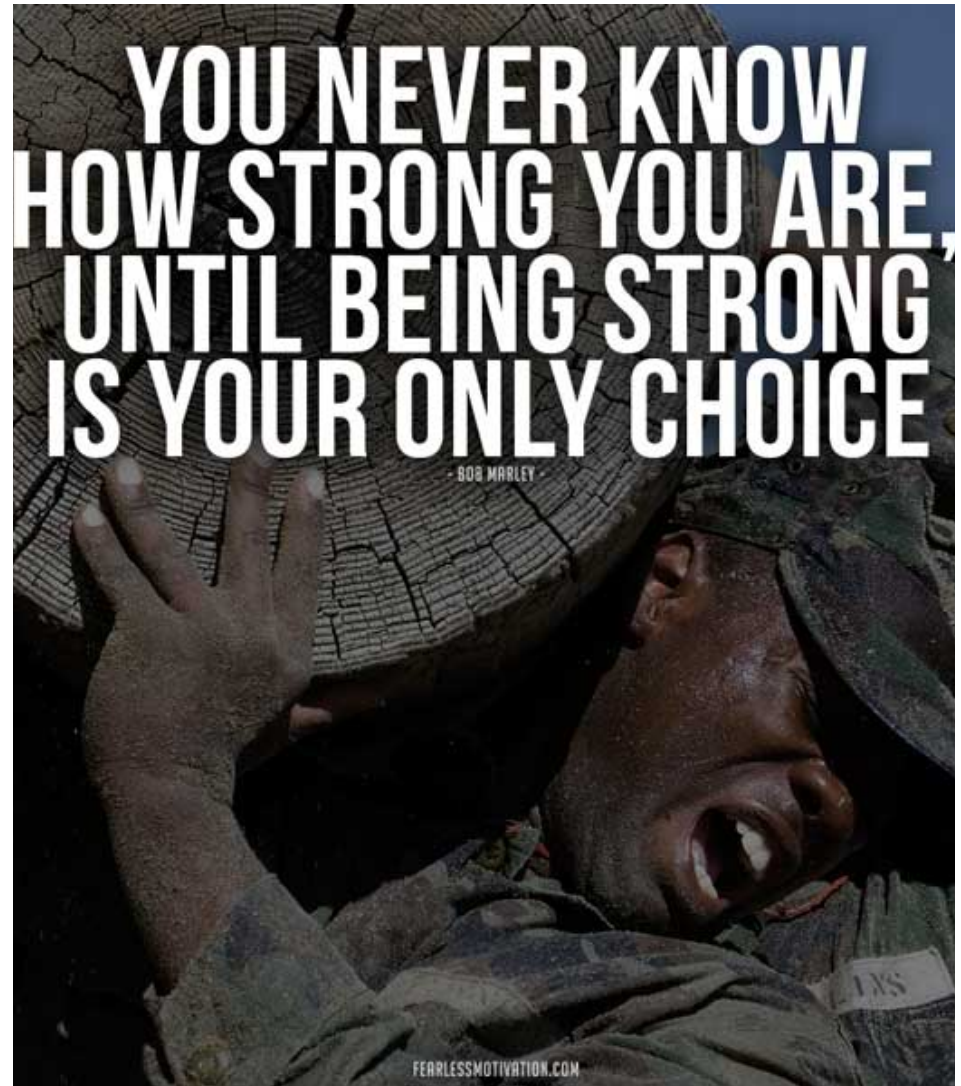
# Notice when you are “full up”



# Follow up...

Watch the Navy SEALs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZ-24JtAFQw>





**Any questions?**