

# **CLEAR RESILIENCE BOOTCAMP**

CLEAR

LEARN TO BUILD RESILIENCE  
AND OVERCOME SOCIAL  
ANXIETY WITH CLEAR

**CURRICULUM BOOKLET**





**TURN NEGATIVE  
VOICES INTO  
SPIRIT.  
COURAGE.  
POWER.**

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PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER  
CLEAR AMBASSADOR













## WELCOME

The CLEAR Curriculum is an innovative way of bringing the best science of resilience to treat the individual and social factors that contribute to social anxiety. The focus of this Curriculum is youth ages 16-24, though its content can be adapted to younger or older participants as well.

## CORE THEMES

There are nine modules in the Curriculum, covering the following topics:

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Introduction — what is social anxiety?	
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The CLEAR Curriculum is designed to focus on the following themes:

- Some social anxiety is normal.
- When faced with atypically high amounts of stress, success comes when we are both a Rugged Individual and a Resourced Individual.
- Whether you need to be rugged or resourced (or both) depends on the number and types of challenges you face (risk exposure).
- The resources we have around us help us to become our best (sometimes we have to acknowledge what is already there and make the best possible use of what we have).
- Ruminating on negative or troubling thoughts makes us more socially anxious.
- Lacking people who support us and opportunities to develop new life skills makes us vulnerable to social anxiety.



## THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

This curriculum was developed with input from mental health professionals and researchers affiliated with the Resilience Research Centre at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada, under the direction of Dr. Michael Ungar. Dr. Ungar holds the Canada Research Chair in Child, Family and Community Resilience, is a registered family therapist and a Professor of Social Work with over 200 published academic papers and 17 books and training manuals to his credit. His team includes mental health professionals and program developers with varied backgrounds around the world committed to improving young people's lives through applied research. Among them are Dr. Philip Jefferies, Dr. Raquel Nogueira Arjona, Sara Algashm, Daniel Epstein, Dr. Ou Ying, Dr. Tian Guo-Xiu, Dr. Andrew Low, and Dr. Molly Stewart Lawlor.

This project was initiated and supported by the many staff at Unilever, which since its origins, has been a purpose-driven company dedicated to making sustainable living commonplace. CLEAR is one of Unilever's largest and most prominent brands, and it aims to help people look and feel their best by clearing dandruff. CLEAR believes that it can play a greater purpose in society by tackling social anxiety, which dandruff may be a cause of. As such, CLEAR is committed to helping young people build resilience through initiatives such as the CLEAR Resilience Bootcamp Curriculum. CLEAR wants to build a generation of resilient youths who can perform at their best in the face of ever-increasing scrutiny and judgment.

## WHY THIS CURRICULUM WORKS

Some important things to know about this curriculum.

- The CLEAR Curriculum is evidence-informed, meaning it builds on recent research in the field of resilience.
- The CLEAR Curriculum is designed for young people who are struggling with mild to moderate social anxiety. Young people with more severely disordered thoughts and behaviour will need the support of a mental health professional. The CLEAR Curriculum should be used as just one piece of a comprehensive program of treatment for young people with more severe challenges.
- The CLEAR Curriculum is innovative, focusing on how to help young people become both rugged and resourced, the two foundations for resilience.
- The CLEAR Curriculum builds on the very latest studies of social anxiety and interventions designed to reduce social anxiety and sustain those changes over time.
- The CLEAR Curriculum is one part of a comprehensive strategy to change attitudes towards young people with social anxiety, reducing stigma and opening up opportunities for them to live bolder, more successful and resilient lives no matter the challenges they encounter.

## THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL ANXIETY

Social anxiety has become a major problem for many young people around the world as increasing expectations are placed on them to succeed and changing economic and social conditions make success more and more difficult. Social anxiety, while normal when experienced in manageable amounts, can become a serious barrier to living life fully when it prevents someone from doing age appropriate tasks like making friends, completing school or finding work. The most common definition of social anxiety is a persistent fear being in social situations where one is exposed to the scrutiny of others, real or imagined. While it is difficult to say exactly how many young people experience social anxiety a good estimate is that about 3% of young women and 2% of young men in the United States will experience severe forms of social anxiety while still in their youth (Schneier, Johnson, Hornig, Liebowitz, & Weissman, 1992). Over an entire lifetime, though, as many as 12% of people will experience a severe form of social anxiety at least once, with women of all ages reporting higher rates of the disorder than men (Asher, Asnaani, & Aderka, 2017). The difference between women and men has much to do with social expectations. Women experience far more pressure to conform to behavioural norms and



are typically judged on their looks and behaviour more harshly. Online, they are more likely to be bullied too.

The way to diagnose a social anxiety disorder is to see if one is experiencing many of the following symptoms:

- Marked fear or anxiety related to one or more social situations in which scrutiny by others is anticipated.
- Social situations are avoided or endured with intense fear or anxiety.
- Fear or anxiety is out of proportion to actual threat posed by social situation and to sociocultural context.
- Fear, anxiety, or avoidance is persistent, typically lasting for 6 months or more.
- Fear, anxiety, or avoidance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- If fear or anxiety is restricted to speaking or performing in public, social anxiety disorder is called performance anxiety (adapted from DSM-V; American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Sadly, social anxiety is often associated with other disorders, especially depression and substance abuse, including excessive use of alcohol which may act as a coping strategy for some individuals (Buckner, Schmidt, & Eggleston, 2006).

Though social anxiety has been observed among all populations around the world, it can look a little different in different contexts and cultures. For example, in China and other Asian countries, social anxiety is often referred to as social phobia. It is estimated that at any one point in time, approximately 1% of people experience a social phobia, and as many as 4% of all people in China will report an experience of social phobia in their lifetime (Guo et al., 2016). Caution is necessary, however, in comparing social anxiety across cultures. Some cultures, like that of China, value introversion more than others (e.g., the United States). Furthermore, whereas social anxiety in the US tends to appear as social withdrawal and anxiety when asked to speak with, or in front of, others, in Asian cultures social anxiety often appears as shame, or worry that one's actions will offend others.

To understand social anxiety, one has to distinguish between a social anxiety disorder, which is the most severe form of the problem, long-lasting, and debilitating in more than one area of a person's life (i.e., at home and at school), and what is called "non-clinical" social anxiety which is far more common. In fact, all people experience some mild form of social anxiety throughout their lifetime: when they change schools; when they start a new relationship; when they apply for their first job. Most people can report some of the non-clinical experiences associated with normal social anxiety: problems with concentrating at work, getting good grades, doing homework, and performing on tests; fear of situations that will be humiliating or embarrassing; rumination on what is wrong with us rather than what we do well. The more serious condition of a social anxiety disorder brings with it symptoms like the following: panic attacks; crying; tantrums; freezing; clinging; and shrinking or failing to speak in social situations. The consequences are also quite different. Mild social anxiety is temporary and seldom has a lifelong impact on our performance. More serious social anxiety, however, has long-term consequences in many different parts of our lives.

## **WHY RESILIENCE IS THE SOLUTION TO SOCIAL ANXIETY**

The study of resilience has helped to shift the focus in the field of mental health (including studies of social anxiety) from the factors that cause mental illness to how people survive and thrive when properly resourced. This understanding of resilience, however, is itself a challenge to common ways we think about individual change. Typically, we emphasize how people change their thinking or behaviour as the best way to predict personal success under stress. Generally, we describe individuals who can change themselves as "rugged" because



it looks like they are doing well all on their own. However, the idea of ruggedness is too narrow to properly explain why some people do well and others still fail when exposed to the same amount of adversity (Ungar, 2019). Resilience can be accounted for much better by both how rugged an individual is and how well-resourced the individual. The resources individuals have available to them have the potential to offer them plenty of ways to cope with problem situations without having to rely on a change in attitude or self-regulation alone.

This more ecological model of resilience is particularly relevant to young people who have few supports as it focuses attention on the impact emotionally toxic environments have on human development. Recently, studies of resilience have shown that people cope best when they are able to navigate to the resources they need to adapt to abnormal stressors (like the sudden death of a parent, or excessively high expectations to succeed academically) and negotiate for these resources to be provided in ways people experience as meaningful. These dual processes of navigation and negotiation have helped to explain why some people who get the help they need are more likely to succeed (Madsen & Gillespie, 2014). For this reason, providing a program to build resilience to social anxiety gives young people who feel awkward in social situations the ruggedness and the resources to battle against the isolation and depression that accompanies social anxiety, helping them to instead become bold and successful.

## **INTERVENTIONS TO DECREASE SOCIAL ANXIETY**

For more severe forms of social anxiety, there are plenty of different interventions, ranging from medications to psychological treatments like cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and lifestyle intervention (e.g., promotion of exercise). Many mental health professionals use a combination of these techniques at the same time. Most psychological interventions that include some type of CBT (like the CLEAR Curriculum) have been proven to be effective (Mayo-Wilson, Dias, Mavranzouli, Kew, Clark, Ades, & Pilling, 2014), though it is unclear if the changes people make last if the resources around them don't change and they continue to have to live in socially toxic and emotionally dangerous environments. Providing treatment in groups is likely to be just as effective and easier than providing individual treatment, though program planners should tailor their programs to meet the needs of as many young people as possible. Not all youth will be ready to participate in a group. Others might prefer a group, especially one that is advertised as a way to be bolder and more successful, than individual treatment that may carry the stigma of mental illness. With the rates of social anxiety increasing, group interventions are likely to become more and more important.

Finally, there is growing evidence that internet-delivered cognitive behaviour therapy (ICBT), virtual reality exposure therapy (VRET) can be effective as well, though the science is still emerging (Kampmann, Emmelkamp, & Morina, 2016). VRET for social anxiety contains virtual social situations and interaction targeting diverse social fears (e.g., giving a speech in front of an audience, talking to a stranger) and allows young people to confront their social fears in a controlled environment.

**THE CURRICULUM  
– AN OVERVIEW**

All of these interventions are just as common, and have been found to be just as effective, in many parts of the world, including Asia. For this reason, they are the basis for the CLEAR Curriculum. However, because this curriculum is designed to not just decrease social anxiety, but to also increase resilience and make young people bolder and more successful in many parts of their lives, it includes a number of innovative parts to ensure participants become both more rugged and better resourced.

The CLEAR Curriculum is designed as nine modules, to be offered during 90-minute workshops with small groups of 6-10 participants at a time. The Curriculum can, however be offered in other ways:

- For groups that already meet periodically, the Curriculum can be adapted. Content can be selected to support specific lesson plans that are already a part of programming. Individual modules may be shared over multiple meetings if there is not enough time to complete all parts of the module in a single session.
- Mental health professionals can borrow the Curriculum and use it during clinical sessions with their clients and patients. There is plenty of content to work with, and clinicians may find themselves needing more than one meeting to complete each module, depending on the level of difficulty their client or patient is experiencing.
- Online and other ways of offering the Curriculum are ideal for adapting the content of the modules and reaching more diverse and wider audiences.

The nine modules cover topics related to making individuals more rugged and resourced, two processes necessary for resilience.

Module	Key objectives	Core messages	Sample activity
<b>1. Introduction: What is social anxiety?</b>	<p>Participants will learn about social anxiety: a cognitive and emotional response to social situations – as well as sources and mechanisms/processes that create social anxiety.</p> <p>Participants will discover how social anxiety can be normal (experienced by all), or even beneficial, and when it can be unhelpful and limiting (i.e., the cycle of withdrawal).</p>	<p>Social anxiety is a common response to being in, or thinking about, social situations. .....</p> <p>A little anxiety in social situations is normal, even helpful. .....</p> <p>Social anxiety may be a problem when you or others close to you believe it is limiting your activities or participation too much. .....</p> <p>Social anxiety can be prevented, reduced, and mastered by becoming resilient.</p>	<p>Researchers have developed a series of questions that can be used to determine where one falls on the spectrum of social anxiety. In this activity, participants will discover how social anxiety is measured, where they fall on the spectrum, and what this means in terms of where they start their journey to becoming resilient to social anxiety.</p>



Module	Key objectives	Core messages	Sample activity
<p><b>2. Resilience to social anxiety: Rugged and Resourced individuals</b></p>	<p>This module introduces the process of becoming resilient to social anxiety.</p> <p>Participants learn that resilience is about having good protective factors within us (being rugged) and around us (being resourced) to bring out our best.</p> <p>Participants will identify sources of internal and external strengths. Participants will also learn to identify the sources of stress that make them socially anxious and threaten their resilience.</p>	<p>Resilience is not an unchangeable personality trait.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Resilience is about having protective factors within us and around us – being rugged and resourced.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>We can learn how rugged and resourced we are and where opportunities for improvement lie.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Being resourced is more useful than just being rugged when risk is high.</p>	<p>In this quiz, we want to check your understanding of resilience in the context of social anxiety:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We are born resilient and remain that way our entire lives – True / False</li> <li>2. Having family members who you can talk to about problems is part of being resourced – True / False</li> <li>3. Resilience is best for preventing social anxiety in the first place – True / False</li> <li>4. Without true friends we will be a poorly resourced individual – True / False</li> <li>5. Being a rugged individual means never having doubts – True / False</li> </ol>

Module	Key objectives	Core messages	Sample activity
<p><b>3. The rugged individual</b></p>	<p>This module introduces the rugged individual.</p> <p>Participants will discover how a person can be rugged by investigating what we tell ourselves about ourselves – our self-talk.</p> <p>Participants will perform a 'self-audit' of what they think others think about them, in a range of social situations.</p> <p>Participants will learn about different responses to being in, or thinking about, stressful situations.</p> <p>Internal voices and self-reflections are related to internal resources like self-esteem, self-confidence, and problem-solving.</p>	<p>Part of being resilient is being 'rugged'.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>We can learn about our ruggedness by paying attention to our "self-talk".</p> <p>.....</p> <p>We can respond in a range of ways to stressful situations, and there are various factors that influence our reactions.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Our internal resources, like how well we control our thoughts and emotions (executive function), are related to our internal voices and experience of resilience.</p>	<p>When you first enter the room, what do you think other people think when they see you? Try to come up with three responses and answer as honestly as you can.</p> <p>How do these internal messages make you feel? Score each on a 1-10 scale, where 1 = no problem at all and 10 = very stressed or upset.</p> <p>[Sample] When you meet someone new and have to make conversation, how uncomfortable does this make you feel?</p> <p>On a scale of 1-10, how easy do you find making conversation like this? (1 = no problem at all, 10 = extremely challenging).</p>

Module	Key objectives	Core messages	Sample activity
<p><b>4. Negotiating new meanings</b></p>	<p>Participants build on what they learned about ruggedness in the previous module. They will learn how to improve their thinking to be better able to cope in situations that trigger social anxiety.</p> <p>Participants will build resilience by fostering new self-talk and by challenging negative thinking.</p> <p>Developing ruggedness involves proven techniques from cognitive-behavioural approaches to treatment.</p>	<p>Resilience can be built by enhancing our ruggedness. .....</p> <p>Ruggedness can be achieved by fostering new self-talk and challenging negative thinking. .....</p> <p>Techniques from cognitive-behavioural approaches to treatment can help to reduce negative thinking and social anxiety.</p>	<p>Use the questions below to challenge one of the Automatic Thoughts you identified earlier that causes you the most anxiety.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do I know for sure that what I'm worried about will happen?</li> <li>2. What evidence do I have that this bad thing will happen?</li> <li>3. What is the worst thing that could happen?</li> <li>4. How bad would it be if the thing I'm worried about actually did happen?</li> </ol> <p>Summarise your answers to create rugged statements.</p>
<p><b>5. Fostering rugged resilience</b></p>	<p>Participants continue the process of developing ruggedness. Participants learn new strategies for working with difficult thoughts, and reflect on their past successes to uncover their existing foundations of ruggedness.</p> <p>Participants consider their goals and where they would like to get to live boldly. This involves thinking about what matters to them (their values) and identifying and setting realistic and achievable goals.</p>	<p>Developing non-judgemental awareness and acceptance of thoughts can help creates distance between the self and thoughts, making challenging thoughts more manageable. .....</p> <p>We tend to focus more on our failures than on our successes. The ability to draw awareness to and remind ourselves of our successes can help reduce the effects of negative emotions and protect against stress. .....</p> <p>Having clear, realistic goals that we move towards with adaptive problem-solving fosters our ability to live boldly.</p>	<p>Taken from the rugged roots activity:</p> <p>Make a list of the things you have achieved in life. Big or small, list them all using short phrases or sentences.</p> <p>We are often more capable than we realise, and our successes can be hard to identify. Sometimes it helps to think about these in a different way.</p> <p>Think back to difficulties, obstacles, or other kinds of challenges and how we overcame or recovered from these.</p> <p>Think about the positive personal qualities that could have contributed to your success.</p>



Module	Key objectives	Core messages	Sample activity
<p><b>6. The resourced individual</b></p>	<p>To learn about the resourced individual participants will reflect on the external sources of support that they have that bring out their best and improve their resilience.</p> <p>Participants will engage in a self-audit to map out past and current sources of support, including people they have turned to in difficult times, and people that they have looked to for inspiration.</p> <p>We develop resource maps by investigating the quality of participants' resources (e.g., which resources participants have depended on most, and which were most available or most helpful).</p>	<p>Resilience to social anxiety means being surrounded by, and engaging with, supportive resources – becoming a 'resourced' individual.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>These resources include peers, family, school, community, and other sources of support.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Some resources can be strong enough to make up for others that are not available.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>It is important to take advantage of the resources one has to build and maintain self-worth, self-esteem, and to be recognised for one's talents.</p>	<p><i>Taken from the resource mapping activity:</i></p> <p><i>Whether we are aware of them or not, we all have sources of support we depend on day-to-day. These might be friends or relatives who have supported us during difficult times, or clubs or groups we are a part of where we can be ourselves and that bring out our best.</i></p> <p><i>In this activity, we begin to construct our resource maps by thinking about the different kinds of external sources of support we have access to and how we make use of them.</i></p>
<p><b>7. Becoming resourced: Navigating to new resources</b></p>	<p>Participants learn to build resilience by learning new strategies to enhance resources.</p> <p>Continuing from their self-audit, participants will learn how to find and make use of new resources, building them into their social networks.</p> <p>Participants will also learn to strengthen the resources already present in their lives.</p>	<p>We can become more resilient by building a network of quality resources around us.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>New resources can be acquired and those we already have in our lives can be strengthened.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>There are many strategies we can use to enhance our resources in ways that make us bolder and more successful.</p>	<p><i>Focusing on just one of your identified resources that you feel could be improved, is the problem with this resource that it is not as supportive as you want it to be, or is the resource not accessible, or both?</i></p> <p><i>Availability: If the resource has limited availability, why is that? Is this availability changeable? If so, what would it take to make the resource more available? What impact would greater availability have on you? How would it change your life?</i></p>

Module	Key objectives	Core messages	Sample activity
<p><b>8. The novice mentor: Helping others to help ourselves</b></p>	<p>Participants are encouraged to become resilience experts who can refine their skills by helping their peers and family members to become more resilient.</p> <p>Participants learn about being a good mentor, and how both mentor and mentee can become more resilient together.</p> <p>Participants will further develop their skills to tackle social anxiety by helping other young people do the same.</p>	<p>We can become more resilient by helping others to prevent, overcome, and master their social anxiety. .....</p> <p>Being a mentor gives us important life skills that help us tackle our own social anxiety.</p>	<p><i>Knowing they [the mentee] struggle in social situations, imagine you have invited this person out for coffee to help them overcome these difficulties, and imagine they accepted – although perhaps reluctantly!</i></p> <p><i>You arrive early to make sure they aren't waiting alone. When you see them enter, they don't look particularly happy to be there. They look tense and upset. What could you do as a first greeting to put them more at ease? What could be the first thing you say to them to ease any tension and encourage a warm and friendly atmosphere?</i></p>
Module	Key objectives	Core messages	Sample activity
<p><b>9. Maintaining resilience in the future</b></p>	<p>Participants reflect on their progress to date and discover ways to maintain their resilience to social anxiety.</p> <p>Participants are encouraged to accept their experience of social anxiety and commit to small incremental changes in their behaviour.</p> <p>Participants identify new strategies they can use to live lives congruent with the personal characteristics they value.</p>	<p>Strong resilience involves having a plan for the future to maintain success. .....</p> <p>Using coping strategies to keep us resilient to social anxiety can be woven into our daily lives. .....</p> <p>We can monitor our progress and keep track of our success as a way of reinforcing our learning.</p>	<p><i>Returning to your list of rugged statements that you created in Module 4, how useful have these been in the last month? Rate each from 1-5 where 1 is most unhelpful and 5 is most helpful.</i></p> <p><i>Under each, explain your answer. Was a statement not useful because you didn't have an opportunity to use it, or is there another reason?</i></p> <p><i>Sort your statements into sections, with the rugged statements that can be used in any situation and those that work best in specific situations. Name these specific situations.</i></p>



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## 1

## Module 1

**INTRODUCTION – WHAT IS SOCIAL ANXIETY?**

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In this module, participants learn about social anxiety: a cognitive and emotional response (i.e., one's thoughts and feelings) to social situations. They will discover how social anxiety is normal and natural, but how it can become a problem if it holds them back and prevents doing the things they want or need to do. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about themselves in terms of how they are affected by social anxiety and the situations they may find most challenging.



**YOUR LOVE  
MAKES ME  
STRONG.  
YOUR HATE  
MAKES ME  
UNSTOPPABLE.**

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# Module Outline

## OUTCOMES

- Participants will develop a clear understanding of social anxiety, including what normal social anxiety is and when it becomes a problem.
- Participants will discover and reflect on their own general level of social anxiety.
- Participants will explore the social situations that are most challenging for them.
- Participants will learn that social anxiety can be prevented, reduced, and mastered, by becoming resilient.
- Participants will practice a focused deep breathing, a strategy they can use regularly to help manage anxiety.

## MATERIALS

- A 'talking stick' (or another symbol of group respect);
- Flipchart paper and markers, or other drawing tools (a computer screen, tablet, etc.);
- Copies of the body outlines (activity 1);
- Copies of the *Social Interaction Anxiety Scale* (activity 3);
- Copies of the armour scales (activity 4);
- Envelopes for participant work;
- A healthy snack.

## SESSION MAP 90 MINUTES

1. Welcome
2. The rules of engagement
3. Talking point
4. Discussion
5. Activity 1: Body mapping
6. Activity 2: Awareness practice — Deep focused breathing
7. Health break
8. Activity 3: Where am I starting from?
9. Activity 4: Invisible armour
10. Summing up / looking forward
11. Homework

**Part 1.**

# Welcome

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants are welcomed to the group and introductions are made.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Introduce yourself and explain the objective of the course, the duration, and commitments.
- Then, introduce the talking stick (or equivalent object), which is passed to any person wishing to speak.
  - This ensures that anybody with the object is free to speak without interruption and should be listened to respectfully while in possession of it.
- To begin, model a simple introduction, "Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am looking forward to meeting you all today."
- Next, pass the object to the first participant so they can introduce themselves to the group. If they do not feel ready, they can pass it to the next person.
- Each person with the stick should say who they are, and in a few words, how they are feeling about being here today.
  - Remind participants that everyone needs a turn to speak and, if possible, keep answers reasonably short.

**Part 2.**

# Rules of Engagement

**WHAT HAPPENS**

As a group, a series of rules should be established. These relate to the conduct of the group each time they meet, involving mutual respect, confidentiality, and a commitment to work together to help each other when needed.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Explain the need for a series of rules for the group to establish respect, safety, confidentiality, and a commitment to work individually and together on the course.
- Some sample rules should be shared to start the conversation.
  - For example: 'Turning off phones or putting them on silent while in the group', or 'Waiting to request the talking stick after someone has finished speaking'.
- Ask a person in the group to write the rules down on a flipchart or equivalent.
- Ensure the rules are inclusive, fair, and appropriate.
  - Keep the rules so they can be shown during future sessions.



- If by the end of the session, rules relating to confidentiality and respect have not been included, then strongly suggested that they are added.
- When established, one at a time, each person should say their name (this will help everyone remember who is in the group) and say, "I am committed to the rules".
  - If someone prefers not to speak, they can say their name and signal their commitment (e.g., with a thumbs up gesture).

### Part 3.

## Talking point – Learning about Social Anxiety

### WHAT HAPPENS

The facilitator shares what social anxiety is (the concept), what it can be like (in the real world), and what it can lead to (important outcomes). This will help participants understand what social anxiety means and introduce the many different ways people adapt to stressful situations. It will also help to explain how one can still be a bold and successful performer if one is experiencing social anxiety.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

#### What is social anxiety?

- Explain that social anxiety is a specific form of anxiety. It is a cognitive response (thoughts) and an emotional response (feelings) to social situations.
  - We can feel anxious not only when we are in social situations but also if we are thinking about them.
- Share relevant and everyday examples to give participants a sense of the different ways young people often experience social anxiety, and the places where it often occurs.
  - Examples include:
    - Academic anxiety
    - Becoming shy and withdrawn when attracted to someone and wanting to spend time with them
    - Fear of making others uncomfortable in the workplace
    - Being nervous about giving a speech/talk
    - Meeting others for the first time, meeting authority figures, etc.

### STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any questions. Then, ask if anyone has other ideas/suggestions about how and where young people may experience anxiety.

## ANXIETY IS ABOUT SURVIVAL

- Explain that anxiety is something that is normal and natural – it is a mechanism that helps us to be aware of dangers and to survive.
- Share the following examples that come from evolutionary, emotional, and cognitive perspectives:

## OUR BRAIN IS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR THREATS

- There is an important part of our brain involved in anxiety (the amygdala, which is a tiny almond-shaped cluster of neurons located deep in the brain's medial temporal lobe in the middle of our skull).



- We believe the amygdala has 'templates' for things that are dangerous to us – like snakes or spiders – because encounters with these are potentially fatal.
- So, if we see something thin, winding, and brown out of the corner of our eye, our amygdala triggers the stress response:
  - We get a surge of adrenaline which and our heart rate might spike before we see it properly and realise it's actually not a snake.
- This is important because if we took the time to study the object and evaluate it logically, it could be too late!
- Our quick action is made possible by how the stress response affects our brain functions. When the amygdala perceives a threat, and the stress response is triggered, information no longer travels to our *prefrontal cortex*, the 'thinking' region of the brain that is responsible for our attention, rationale thought, and judgement.
  - Remember, this is an adaptive response.
- **Optional additional example:** Imagine you stepped out into the road, and a big truck turned a corner about to hit you – you wouldn't want to stop and think about what you should do *"hmm...how fast is that truck travelling; should I step back?"* You need to act fast and jump out of the way of the oncoming truck. Bypassing the prefrontal cortex allows us to act quickly in moments of danger.



- The trouble is, our brain can perceive a threat, when there actually is none -- things like tests, social gatherings, or friendship problems.
  - Take for example, social anxiety. Here, our brain is perceiving social events as threats. When we move into a stress response state, we experience symptoms of fight-flight-freeze, such as a racing heart or sweaty hands, and our prefrontal cortex is not functioning normally.
  - This is why you may sometimes experience the feeling of your mind going blank (for example, not knowing what to say in a social context, or not remembering information during a test).
- The good news is we can learn to calm our brain and become less reactive and more responsive to stressors in our life!
  - We're going to practice an activity later today using our breath that will help us do this.

**WE ARE QUICK TO SEE DANGER**

- Neuropsychologists and cognitive scientists have found that we are faster to detect angry or fearful faces in crowds compared to others (see below).
- We are primed to see these faces quickly because it might be danger the face/person is conveying to us.
- This danger could be something coming to get us, or them (the person) coming to get us!
- This illustrates that our brains are hardwired to be always on the lookout for danger at every step.





## BEING VIGILANT IS USEFUL

- Social anxiety is actually very helpful at making us successful in our interactions with others.
- In fact, without some anxiety, we would keep making the same mistakes over and over again!
  - For example, if we are interviewing for a job and the interviewer seems unimpressed with what we are saying, and overall it seems not to have gone well, then if we don't reflect on this and feel bad about it, we won't change our approach next time.
  - There is a real danger that we will keep making the same mistakes (in the interview and in future interviews).
  - The shame, guilt, and other kinds of feelings that we get from judging ourselves in situations are protective mechanisms meant to motivate change.
  - So being aware of our responses to what we are saying (like in the interview example) helps us to change tact if things aren't going well so that the next time we are in a similar situation we do much better.

## SOCIAL SURVIVAL

- The cognitive and emotional parts of social anxiety are brought together by understanding that experiencing social anxiety is adaptive – way back when, it was part of a survival mechanism.
- We are supposed to be anxious in new situations so that we stay alert and keep ourselves away from death and danger.
- Today, social anxiety can be a social survival mechanism, helping us avoid situations where we are vulnerable. But if we experience too much social anxiety, and it prevents us from being in healthy relationships, then that's a problem we need to fix.
- Being overly cautious can dampen our chances of being our best and achieving our goals.

## STOP AND REFLECT

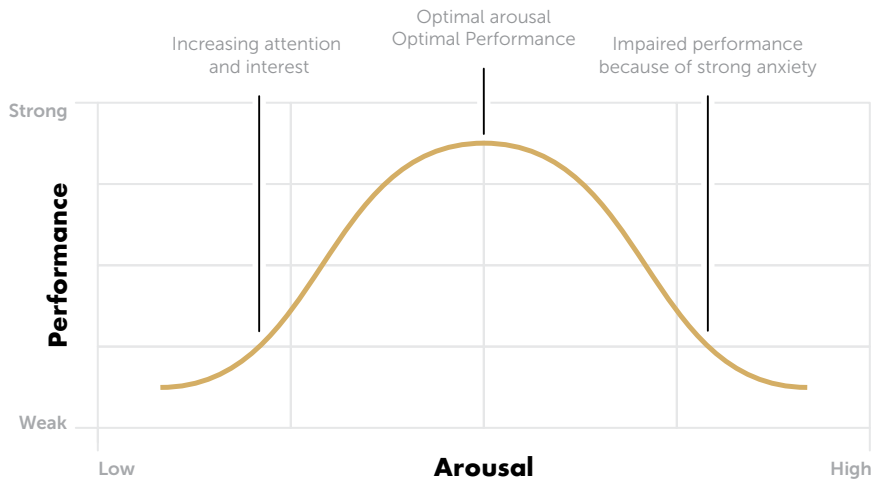
Stop and check for understanding with the group.

Check in with the group, and ask participants if they have any questions about what they've heard so far.

Then, ask participants if they can remember a time when they had a stress response that made it difficult to think, or felt like they froze. Ask them to consider that experience in relation to what they just learned about the brain – how was their experience linked to a survival mechanism?

**IT'S ABOUT BALANCE**

- The Yerkes-Dodson law is a classic theory from psychology. It comes from the work of Robert Yerkes and John Dodson, who in 1908, explored the relationship between arousal and performance <sup>ii</sup>.
- They found that too little arousal/anxiety is bad for performance, as is too much, but that there is a healthy level in the middle which helps us to be alert and responsive.
- As seen in the graphic below, this relationship between arousal/anxiety and performance was illustrated by Donald Olding Hebb <sup>iii</sup>.



**BALANCING SOCIAL ANXIETY**

- Regarding this idea of balance and optimisation, there are extremes of social anxiety which fall either side of this curve.
- At the right (high) extreme, there is Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD), which can involve extreme forms of academic anxiety (fear of failure in school, or taking tests) or Social Phobia (fear of social situations so intense it can lead to panic attacks or withdrawal from social life).
- SAD is a psychiatric condition, resulting in thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that are extremely harmful to one’s life.
- Individuals experiencing SAD may require help from a mental health professional like a social worker, psychologist or psychiatrist.



*Participants should be reassured by explaining that although they are experiencing difficulties, they are unlikely to have the disorder (according to Dr Xiaojing Guo and her colleagues at Guangxi Medical University, less than 1 in 20 people have a lifetime risk of SAD<sup>v</sup>). But it is still important to be aware of extremes at both ends and what these might look like and lead to.*

- It is important to note that although you are experiencing difficulties with anxiety, it is unlikely that you have a clinical disorder; less than 1 in 20 people have a lifetime risk of SAD.
- The goal of this course is to help you get as close to the middle as possible: to achieve ‘peak performance’ by using a little bit of anxiety that keeps you on your toes.

## Part 4.

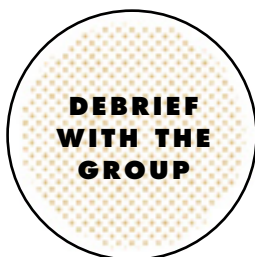
# Discussion – The Balance

## WHAT HAPPENS

Participants will be encouraged to think about three common scenarios and what might happen if they experience too much anxiety, or too little.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Read each of the following three scenarios aloud to the group.
- After reading aloud each situation, encourage participants to think about the following:
  - *What might too little anxiety (not enough arousal) lead to?*
  - *What might too much anxiety lead to?*
  - *What would the right amount of anxiety help you to do?*
- Then, invite participants to write down their thoughts about each scenario.
  - 1. In class:** In this scenario, you are asked to imagine you have completed a homework assignment, and then asked by your teacher to read some of this aloud to the rest of the class. You stand at the front of the room and begin to read your work. Halfway through, you pause and look around the room at your friends, peers, and the teacher, before continuing.
  - 2. At work:** In this scenario, you are asked to imagine that you are working in an office and have just been summoned to speak to your manager about a report you have written. When you arrive at the manager's office, you find some of your colleagues are also there. The manager says that the report is too long and they want to be told just the most important points. After deciding what might be important to talk about, you begin to share the main points with the group.
  - 3. Meeting up with someone:** In this scenario, imagine you have agreed to meet up with someone you have been instant messaging with for some time. You both meet at a local café and find a table to sit down at. The other person seems shy and the conversation does not come easily. To help avoid long silences, you talk a little about yourself, which the other person responds to now and then.



### Review the key messages:

- We examined some neutral scenarios (neither positive nor negative outcomes are implied) where the risks of too much or too little social anxiety can be explored.
- Too little social anxiety can be associated with making or repeating mistakes because we are not concerned about what will happen, and so we aren't as motivated to reflect on how things are going.



- Without this anxiety, we may not be prompted to change our behaviours to improve the chance of a good outcome.
  - For example, in the classroom, if the person speaking is not motivated to be aware of their audience, they might not notice cues like the teacher nodding at certain things they say, and so they may not recognise which parts of their work are best.
- Too much social anxiety is also associated with poor outcomes, where we might be 'frozen' or 'paralysed', or just feel unable to do things that help us show the best sides of us.
  - In the example of meeting up with someone, being overly concerned about saying the wrong thing might lead us to say very little, which would be bad if it prevents us getting on well with the other person, them realising we are interesting, and wanting to meet up again in the future.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Stop and check for understanding with the group.

Ask participants if they have any questions or comments about balance of anxiety, or if they have a comment to share about the scenario activity.

## Part 5.

# Activity 1: Body Mapping

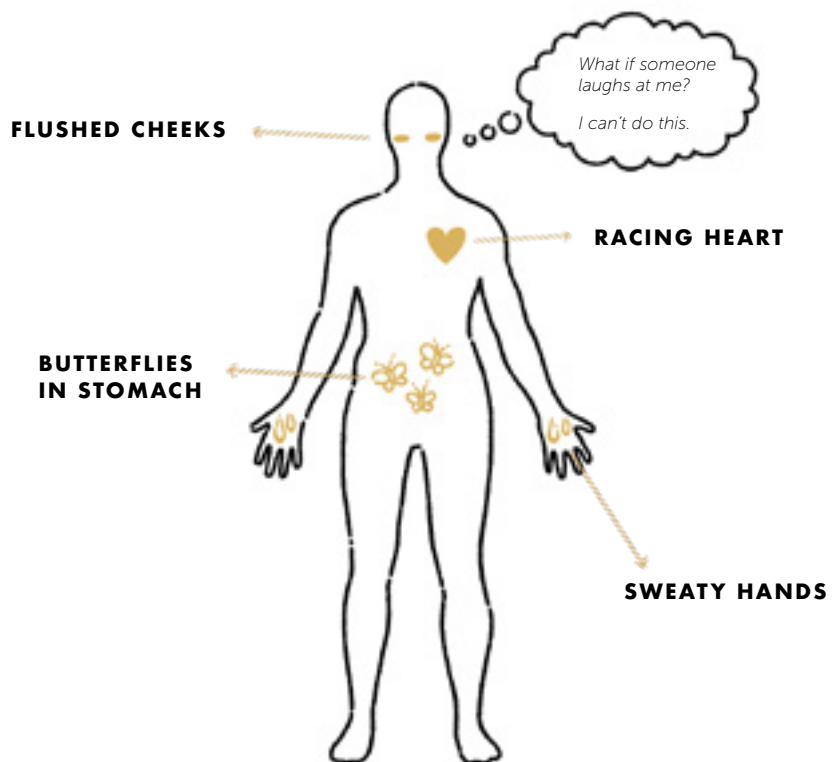
## WHAT HAPPENS

Social anxiety feels different to different people in different situations. Participants explore these feelings related to anxiety and identify how their bodies and minds react when they feel anxious.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Ensure each participant has two blank body outlines.
- Note that participants will do this activity twice – one representing their body during the time *before* (or thinking about) the situation, and one for their body *during* the situation.
- Remind participants that anxiety isn't just something in our heads – it's something that can affect our whole body – and so this activity involves pin-pointing different kinds of feelings relating to anxiety when we're in (or thinking about) social situations and where we experience anxiety in our bodies.
  - Examples of these feelings and their locations should be shared to help participants understand what is meant (e.g., tightening in the stomach, hot flushes, pins and needles, sickness, sweating, etc).
- Encourage participants to think about the situation where they feel most anxious.

- Ask participants to name the situation they find challenging and then, offer instructions to draw representations of what goes on internally for them.
  - Instruct participants to draw the representations twice -- one for the time *before* (or thinking about) the situation, and one for their body *during* the situation.
  - They can annotate with labels and notes to help others understand.
  - Share an example to help stimulate thinking, using an outline of a person waiting for a job interview.
    - In this outline, the classic 'butterflies in the stomach' should be illustrated. Arrows going from the stomach up to the head should be labelled to describe this feeling being recognised, leading to pulses beginning to race, etc.



- After sharing the example, invite participants to complete their first drawing representing the time before (or thinking about) the situation.
- After participants have drawn in their sensations, ask them to check if there are any thoughts associated with these feelings: Do the thoughts lead to the feelings, or, do the feelings lead to thoughts, or is it both?
  - Instruct participants to write these thoughts down in the thought bubbles by the head in the drawing.
- Then, ask participants to indicate a rating next to each of the sensations they put on their drawing:

**How challenging is the sensation, on a scale of 1-10?**

*(where 1 = does not bother me at all; 10 = extremely stressful)*

- Next, invite participants to repeat the activity with the second body outline representing their body during the situation.



### Important Note to Facilitator

*The objective for the debrief is to help normalize participants' experiences with the sensations of anxiety. To accomplish this, you may invite participants to share their body maps in small groups to help participants notice similarities amongst their peers. OR, you can ask for show of hands (talking points below) for a list of common sensations associated with anxiety.*

- Most of us feel the emotions on the body outlines to varying degrees at different times.
  - This will most likely be reflected by similarities between outlines created by members of the group.
- Raise your hand if you:
- Experience butterflies in your stomach when you are anxious.
- Experience a racing heart when you are anxious.
- Experience nausea, or feeling sick when you are anxious.
- Experience feeling hot or sweaty when you are anxious.
- **Optional:** Facilitators can also emphasize these connections by sharing examples of famous individuals talking about their feelings prior to a social engagement [to be identified locally, e.g., sports players describing how their hands shake prior to a match; idols talking about sweating when they did their school exams].

### End the activity by emphasizing the following points:

- These sensations are natural and may be unavoidable, however, having some anxiety is important (recall our discussion about optimal arousal for performance).
- The challenge is when these stop us from being bold and realizing our potential – causing us to make mistakes, hindering our performance in exams, etc. rather than making us alert and ready for what comes next.

### STOP AND REFLECT

Stop and check for understanding with the group.

Ask participants if they have any questions about what they've heard so far.

Ask participants if there is anything they would like to share with the group about the Body Mapping Activity.



## Part 6.

# Activity 2: Awareness Practice—Focused Deep Breathing

## WHAT HAPPENS

Facilitators lead a focused deep breathing exercise. Practicing focused deep breathing can help calm the brain (amygdala) and body by activating the parasympathetic nervous system.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

Review the following breathing tips below prior to leading the exercise.

- Tips for facilitating focused deep breathing:
  - **Invitational tone:** Invite participants to participate in the activity – this should be invitational and not mandatory.
  - **Posture:** Find a relaxed seated posture, with a straight, but relaxed back.
- Arms and legs should uncrossed, with feet flat on the floor.
  - Eyes may be closed, but it is not mandatory. If participants choose not to close their eyes, then offer an instruction for them to have a soft gaze looking forwards.
- Note that closing eyes can make some individuals anxious, and be challenging for those with a history of trauma.
  - **Breathing instructions:** Breathe in through the nose, and not the mouth (mouth breathing activates the sympathetic nervous system; whereas slow breathing in through the nose and out through the nose or mouth can activate the parasympathetic nervous system).
- Practice making the exhalation longer than the inhalation (this helps calm the body by activating the parasympathetic nervous system).
  - **Attention:** Try to place attention onto the breath. This will help activate the prefrontal cortex – the thinking region of the brain that also is responsible for emotion regulation.
- Next, use the following script as a guide to lead participants through the following breathing exercise (read slowly):
  - For the next few moments, you will practice taking several slow, deep, full breaths.
  - I will lead you through the exercise.
  - First, find a comfortable seat, with your back straight, yet relaxed. Uncross your legs and place your feet flat on the ground.
  - Have your arms uncrossed with your hands resting softly in your lap.
  - You may close your eyes if you choose. If you are not comfortable closing your eyes, then simply have a soft gaze looking forward.
  - Now, bring your attention to your breath.
  - Simply notice that you are breathing now; there’s no need to do anything special.

Pause

- As you breathe try to focus your attention on the sensations of breathing.
- By focusing your attention on something (your breath), you are activating your prefrontal cortex – the thinking region of the brain that also is responsible for emotion regulation.

Pause

- Now, take a slow deep breath in through your nose.
- Notice the sensation of the air moving in through your nose, expanding your ribcage, and travelling down to your belly. Notice your belly rise as you fill your body with air.

Pause

- Then, exhale slowly. Focus your attention on the sensation of the air moving out of the body – the belly falls, the ribcage contracts, and the air leaves out through the nose or mouth.

Pause

- Try this a few more times at your own pace.

Pause

- Over time, try to extend your exhalations – slowing them down as much as you can.
- Breathe in this way for one or two more breaths.

Pause

- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.



#### Explain to participants:

- Focused deep breathing can help calm the brain and body by calming the amygdala, and activating the prefrontal cortex and parasympathetic nervous system (link back to earlier learnings in this module about the brain and the stress response).
- This type of deep breathing can be done regularly, and practiced anytime you feel stress or anxiety.
  - Regular practice of focused deep breathing can help you become more responsive and less reactive to stress.
- It might feel relaxing, or it might not. It's okay you didn't feel relaxed. After some practice you may notice that it changes.
- Also, the goal is not to have an empty mind. Our minds were made to think, so thoughts are expected! Your job is to try to bring you attention back to where you chose (for example, your breath or body).
  - Do this with kindness towards yourself.
- Think of this like mental fitness! We exercise our bodies, this is mental exercise for your brain!

#### STOP AND REFLECT

Stop and check for understanding with the group.

Ask participants if they have any questions about focused deep breathing.

Ask participants if there is anything they would like to share about their experience with the breathing exercise.

**Part 7.**

# Health Break

**WHAT HAPPENS**

The group should take a 10-minute break to stretch their legs, relax, eat, drink, use restrooms, etc. The Health break also gives participants some informal time to talk between themselves about the exercises.

**Part 8.**

# Activity 3: Where am I Starting From?

**WHAT HAPPENS**

In this activity, participants learn about formal ways to assess social anxiety by learning about the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale. Participants learn why scales like the SIAS can be useful and they will complete one of these to get a sense of their 'baseline' social anxiety.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Explain how anxiety in social situations can range from a little to a lot, with participants experiencing 'no difficulty' or 'extreme challenge.'
- Scientists have developed various ways to get a rough indication of how much social anxiety a person is experiencing.
  - By asking participants to rate themselves on a number of questions which ask about different kinds of social anxiety experiences, we can get a general sense of where participants are and where they might like to be.
- Describe a situation that could make someone socially anxious:
  - Examples: Meeting someone new; going to a party; job interview; meeting an authority figure, etc.
- Ask participants to write down the scenario.
- Then, using the following scale, have participants rate themselves.
  - Repeat this for three situations.

**Not stressful at all**

(Doesn't make me feel uncomfortable)

**Moderate****Extremely stressful**

(Makes me feel very uncomfortable)





- Next, ask participants to complete the *Social Interaction Anxiety Scale* (previous page).
  - This is a short survey, originally created by the Australian researchers Richard Mattick and Christopher Clark in 1989.
  - It was later adapted by Dongei Ye, Mingyi Qian, Xinghua Liu and Xi Chen in 2007 to be more appropriate for people in China .
  - This measure has been scientifically validated and used by researchers and practitioners to help understand individuals’ social anxiety levels.



*Before participants complete the measure, they should be reassured that higher scores are not necessarily bad: we all experience different amounts of anxiety at different times in our lives and in different situations.*

*Maybe you score high because you just had a tough exam at school, or your parents were angry with you yesterday. Our scores can reflect what is happening in our life right now.*

- Prior to handing out the surveys, explain that the purpose of this survey is to gain a general sense where participants are at the beginning of this course. It is not meant to assess any clinical disorder.

Please circle the number to indicate the degree to which you feel the statement is true for you.

There are no right or wrong answers.		Not at all [0]	Slightly [1]	Moderately [2]	Very [3]	Extremely [4]
<b>1</b>	I get nervous if I have to speak with someone in authority (teacher, boss, etc.).	0	1	2	3	4
<b>2</b>	I have difficulty making eye contact with others.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>3</b>	I become tense if I have to talk about myself or my feelings.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>4</b>	I find it difficult to mix comfortably with the people I work with.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>5</b>	I find it easy to make friends my own age.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>6</b>	I tense up if I meet an acquaintance in the street.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>7</b>	When mixing socially, I am uncomfortable.	0	1	2	3	4

8	I feel tense if I am alone with just one other person.	0	1	2	3	4
9	I am at ease meeting people at parties, etc.	0	1	2	3	4
10	I have difficulty talking with other people.	0	1	2	3	4
11	I find it easy to think of things to talk about.	0	1	2	3	4
12	I worry about expressing myself in case I appear awkward.	0	1	2	3	4
13	I find it difficult to disagree with another's point of view.	0	1	2	3	4
14	I have difficulty talking to attractive persons of the opposite sex.	0	1	2	3	4
15	I find myself worrying that I won't know what to say in social situations.	0	1	2	3	4
16	I am nervous mixing with people I don't know well.	0	1	2	3	4
17	I feel I'll say something embarrassing when talking.	0	1	2	3	4
18	When mixing in a group, I find myself worrying I will be ignored.	0	1	2	3	4
19	I am tense mixing in a group.	0	1	2	3	4
20	I am unsure whether to greet someone I know only slightly.	0	1	2	3	4

- After completing the survey, ask participants to add up their scores. Items 5, 9, and 11 are reverse-scored (0=4, 1=3, 2=2, 3=1, 4=0). To make this simpler to understand, a second version of the measure with the values of the reverse-scored questions is also included (see below)
  - Participants do not need to share their scores with others, however, facilitators can explain how they can use the scoring tool to compare themselves to the general population of young people.
- When ready, the group should share if they felt their scores were an accurate reflection of themselves.
- Ask participants to reflect on the following questions and write down their thoughts and reflections.
  - *What did you think about the questions? Were they good or bad? Were there any questions that are missing?*
  - *Were your results the result you expected? If so/not, why?*
  - *Where would you like your score to be?*

Please circle the number to indicate the degree to which you feel the statement is true for you.

There are no right or wrong answers.		Not at all [0]	Slightly [1]	Moderately [2]	Very [3]	Extremely [4]
<b>1</b>	I get nervous if I have to speak with someone in authority (teacher, boss, etc.).	0	1	2	3	4
<b>2</b>	I have difficulty making eye contact with others.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>3</b>	I become tense if I have to talk about myself or my feelings.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>4</b>	I find it difficult to mix comfortably with the people I work with.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>5</b>	I find it easy to make friends my own age.	4	3	2	1	0
<b>6</b>	I tense up if I meet an acquaintance in the street.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>7</b>	When mixing socially, I am uncomfortable.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>8</b>	I feel tense if I am alone with just one other person.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>9</b>	I am at ease meeting people at parties, etc.	4	3	2	1	0
<b>10</b>	I have difficulty talking with other people.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>11</b>	I find it easy to think of things to talk about.	4	3	2	1	0
<b>12</b>	I worry about expressing myself in case I appear awkward.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>13</b>	I find it difficult to disagree with another's point of view.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>14</b>	I have difficulty talking to attractive persons of the opposite sex.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>15</b>	I find myself worrying that I won't know what to say in social situations.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>16</b>	I am nervous mixing with people I don't know well.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>17</b>	I feel I'll say something embarrassing when talking.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>18</b>	When mixing in a group, I find myself worrying I will be ignored.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>19</b>	I am tense mixing in a group.	0	1	2	3	4
<b>20</b>	I am unsure whether to greet someone I know only slightly.	0	1	2	3	4

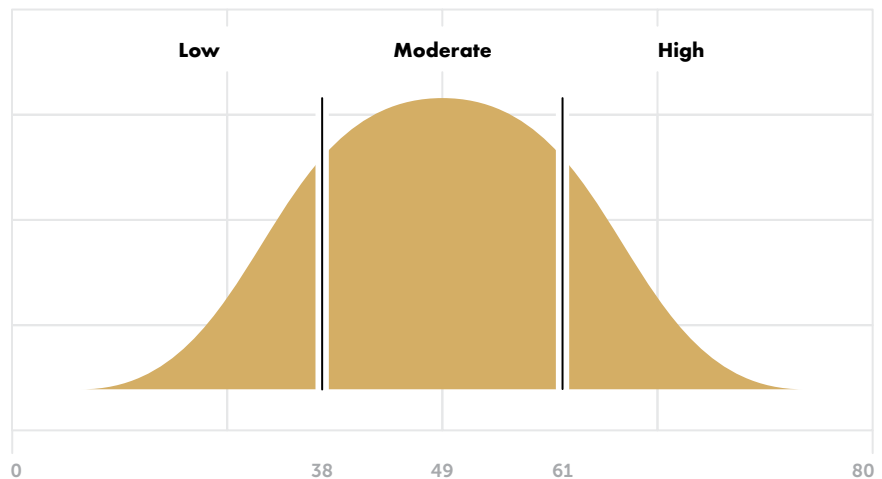
## SCORING AND INTERPRETING

To get your results, simply sum the results. On items 5, 9, and 11 scoring is reversed (0 = 4, 1= 3, 2= 2, 3= 1, 4= 0)

### SOCIAL ANXIETY (Using the SIAS)

Your score will fall between 0-80, where a higher score indicates higher social anxiety.

The Chinese revision of the SIAS measures anxiety when meeting and talking with others. The mean of the Chinese revision of the SIAS (Ye et al., 2007) based on a college student norm was 49.10 with the following thresholds:



**Low social anxiety** = less than 38

**Moderate social anxiety** = 38–61

**High social anxiety** = more than 61

### References

Ye, D., Qian, M., Liu, X., & Chen, X. (2007). The revision of Social Interaction Anxiety Scale and Social Phobia Scale. *Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 15, 115–117. doi:1005-3611(2007)02- 0115-03

## DEBRIEF WITH THE GROUP

- The results of this survey are 'baseline' scores, which reflect where you are at the start of your journey to mastering social anxiety.
- You will complete these measures again near the end of the course.

*Keep these original scores safe somewhere. Facilitators can provide an envelope that each participant can seal closed and put their name on. These can be given back to participants later.*

*important note to facilitator*



## Part 9.

# Activity 4: Invisible Armour

## WHAT HAPPENS

In this activity, participants identify the situations that make them feel nervous and stressed, as well as the factors that make these situations better or worse.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Participants will receive a scenario sheet that they will use for this activity.
  - A copy is provided in the Appendices Section at the end of this book.
- As a group, participants should describe different social situations that make them feel nervous and stressed.
  - These could be in a classroom when giving presentations, at home, when out with friends, with a girlfriend or boyfriend, etc.
  - **Optional:** Write these scenarios on a flipchart or whiteboard.
- For each scenario that is mentioned, participants should write down, key words or phrases like "out on a date" or "at a job interview".
- Next to this, participants should rank each of the situations in terms of how anxious they feel about them.
  - Note that sharing these ranks with the group, can help illustrate patterns of shared concern (when the same situation is ranked high) as well as showing that some situations that challenge some the most do not faze others (high ranking variability for a situation).
- On the top of the scenario sheets are five-picture scales showing a fully suited knight (impervious to damage) at one end and a nearly naked person (feeling extremely vulnerable) at the other.
- For each scenario, participants should choose one of the pictures in the scale to represent how confident/vulnerable they would feel in it.
  - They should assign this rating to the next column on the sheet.
- Participants will be encouraged to list things that could happen in each situation which could lead them to slide down the scale and feel more vulnerable/naked (e.g., nobody laughs at a joke you make, someone yawns while you are giving a talk).
- Participants should then list things that would help them to move up the scale and make them feel more confident and protected in a situation.
  - For example, if giving a talk in front of a group, having someone else sharing the talking duties/responsibility may make the participant feel a little more secure.
- When complete, the facilitator should share one of their (facilitator's example) panels which they have created (ideally presenting in front of a group, since it is fairly normal to feel nervous in these situations, even for those who are experienced).
  - This normalises the experience and shows that although a person might appear calm and collected on the outside, inside we may feel naked and

vulnerable, which can prompt anxiety.

- Next, invite participants to share their panels with others in the group so that others can see patterns in risks (what commonly makes people feel vulnerable) but also learn how others become more 'armoured'.
- Then, ask participants what could happen if they felt more 'armoured'.
  - What specific kinds of things might happen in each of the situations?
- This promotes reflection on how they might perform better and achieve their best if they could control their anxiety.
- Participants can write down their reflections.



### Important Note to Facilitator

This session should end by sharing with participants that social anxiety is not fixed or unchangeable; it can be prevented, reduced, and, when it does occur, mastered. The objective of this course is to help participants learn how to become resilient, making them armoured and able to withstand the challenges of social situations.

Emphasize the following points:

- Social anxiety is not fixed or unchangeable; it can be prevented, reduced, and, when it does occur, mastered.
- The objective of this course is to help you learn how to do just this, making you armoured and able to withstand the challenges of social situations.
- This is achieved by becoming resilient, which the next module introduces in more detail.

## Part 10.

# Summing Up/ Looking Forwards

Facilitator reviews the main things participants learned during the module.

### Review the key messages:

1. It is normal to experience social anxiety and other types of anxiety, like academic anxiety.
  - Anxiety can help us adapt to stressful situations and avoid problems.
  - Social anxiety is about the feelings we have which are related to specific social interactions (e.g., a feeling of dread when going to meet an authority figure), and our thoughts about what could happen in the situation (e.g., being worried about being judged or looked down upon by others because of the clothes we are wearing).
2. Remember with the balance of social anxiety, a little arousal/anxiety is

**SCORING AND  
INTERPRETING**

**INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR FACILITATORS**

important, but too much anxiety prevents us from performing at our best or doing what we need or want to do.

3. One of the ways to handle social anxiety is to improve our resilience. This is the topic in the next module.

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## Part 11.

# Homework

### WHAT HAPPENS

In this final part, participants will be asked to complete a short homework assignment. Note that it will be normal for the group to have some homework after each module. These activities help participants to learn more about themselves and to strengthen their resilience.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

This week there are two activities to try before the next session.

#### 1. Focused deep breathing

Try the practice focused deep breathing once per day, every day this week. You can also try it whenever you feel anxious or stressed.

- Record your experience in the Breathing Tracking Sheet.

#### 2. Social Situation Exercise

For this activity, identify one social situation that you would like to feel more comfortable in. This should be a situation that you expect to experience (something likely to come up before the next session). When you are in that situation, or avoiding that situation, answer the following three questions, and record your responses in your workbook, on a piece of paper, their phone, or on a computer.

- *When I am in a situation like that, what am I thinking? What am I feeling?*
- *On a scale of 1–5, how vulnerable (armoured) do I feel when I'm in that situation?*
- *Using the same five-point scale, ask yourself, "To be my best, how much social anxiety would be important to feel?"*

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**NOTES ON  
MODULE 1**

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**Module 2**

# 2. RESILIENCE TO SOCIAL ANXIETY: RUGGED AND RESOURCED INDIVIDUALS

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In this module, participants will learn about resilience and the importance of being both a rugged individual and a resourced individual. They will assess their ruggedness, and the resources they have inside and out. Finally, participants will learn that the number of challenges we face changes the factors that make us resilient.



# Module Outline

## OUTCOMES

- Participants will understand what it means to be resilient.
- Participants will understand the difference between rugged and resourced individuals.
- Participants will complete two assessments of their resilience.

## MATERIALS

- The 'Rules of Engagement' from Module 1
- A 'talking stick' or other symbol of group respect
- Flipchart paper, tape and markers, or other drawing tools (a computer screen, tablet, etc.)
- A healthy snack

## SESSION MAP

90 MINUTES

1. Welcome and Review the "Rules of Engagement"
2. Awareness practice
3. Check in/Homework review from Module 1
4. Story-time
5. Discussion: Defining resilience
6. Activity 1: Assessing my ruggedness
7. Health break
8. Reflection on Activity 1
9. Activity 2: Assessing my resources
10. Reflection on Activity 2
11. Deciding if I need to be Rugged or Resourced
12. Personal Challenge
13. Homework Assignment

**Part 1.**

# Welcome and Rules of Engagement

**WHAT HAPPENS?**

Facilitator welcomes the group. One of the participants is asked to read out the 'Rules of Engagement' which were developed by the group during the first module.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Welcome participants back for Module 2.
- Refer to the Rules of Engagement, then, ask everyone to say their name (this will help everyone remember who is in the group) and say "I am committed to the rules." If someone prefers not to speak, they can say their name and sign their commitment (e.g., with a thumbs up gesture).

If there are any tensions over the rules, this is the time to discuss them.

**Part 2.**

# Awareness Practice

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Each session, participants are invited to practice a short awareness exercise. Regular practice of focused breathing will help participants learn to regulate their physiology in response to stress or anxiety.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Use the following script as a guide to lead participants through the following breathing exercise (read slowly):
  - Please find a comfortable seat, with your back straight, yet relaxed and place your feet flat on the ground.
  - Sit with your arms and legs uncrossed, with your hands resting in your lap.
  - You may close your eyes if you choose. If you are not comfortable closing your eyes, then simply have a soft gaze looking forward.
  - Now, bring your attention to your breath.
 

Pause
  - As you breathe try to focus your attention on the sensations of breathing.
  - If your mind wanders, that's okay, that's what minds do. When you notice your mind has wandered, gently bring your attention back to your breath.
 

Pause
  - Now, take a slow deep breath in through your nose.
  - Notice the sensation of the air moving in through your nose, expanding your ribcage, and travelling down to your belly. Notice your belly rise as you fill your body with air.



Pause

- Then, exhale slowly. Notice the air moving out of the body – the belly falls, the ribcage contracts, and the air leaves through the nose or mouth.

Pause

- Breathe in this way for one or two more breaths at your own pace. If your mind wanders, just gently bring it back to your breath.

Pause (allow 30 – 45 seconds)

- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any questions or comments about the Awareness Practice.

### Part 3.

## Check-in

### WHAT HAPPENS

Participants pass a “talking stick” or other symbol of respect.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- As each person receives the talking stick, they are encouraged to answer the following questions:
  - In a few words, how are you feeling about being here today? Please remember that everyone needs a turn to speak so be sure to keep your answer reasonably short.
  - Has anything ‘awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?
  - Has anything ‘not-so-awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?
- Review homework from Module 1. Using the talking stick, each participant is asked to say a little bit (if they want to) about their experience doing the homework.
  - Please share a short reflection about your homework from last week.

### Part 4.

## Story-time

### WHAT HAPPENS

The facilitator shares a popular tale of resilience that everyone in the group is familiar with.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- The story is told very quickly, highlighting all the wonderful things that happened to make the person successful.
- It should be a story about an individual in the news, and one that speaks to young people locally.
- It should be a story of an individual who has done much better than ever expected given their humble beginnings.
- Highlight both the strong character of the person being discussed, and the resources the person was fortunate enough to have.

### Story sample:

#### Humble Beginnings – The Story of CR7

*Blinded by the bright spotlights of the pitch, it is sometimes hard for us to imagine that a successful player like Cristiano Ronaldo (nicknamed CR7) grew up in poverty and struggled to realize his dream: to be the best football player in the world. Born to a working-class family on the island of Madeira, Portugal, Ronaldo's childhood was rooted in severe poverty sharing a room with his older siblings in their tin-roofed home. Having struggled to make friends, he found a football instead—a seed likely planted by his father who worked for a local team. Talent without proper application and supports will not get you far, but Ronaldo had both. At the age of eight he joined a local club which allowed him to win his first championship. Although his parents could only provide Ronaldo with a very humble childhood, they managed to give him with the most luxurious gift: the ability to dream. It is that dream combined with his mother's support that gave him the courage to accept an offer from the Sporting Club of Portugal at the age of twelve and relocate 600 miles from home. Welcomed by loneliness and bullying at school, Ronaldo lost faith in the education system and was expelled after throwing a chair at his teacher. It took one man, Leonel Pontes, who became Ronaldo's guardian and role model, to support the young talent and keep his eyes on the prize. Dedication, use of available resources from his team, and an ability to stay out of trouble allowed Ronaldo to graduate into the Sporting Club Portugal adult squad when he was just 17. Playing with his team against Manchester United, and winning, Ronaldo was later purchased by the same football club he helped beat. At the age of 34, Ronaldo holds multiple FIFA World Player of the year awards, the record for being the highest scorer in the history of Real Madrid, highest ever goal scorer in the UEFA Champions League, and is ranked as one of the highest paid athletes in the world. But maybe above all, Ronaldo holds the support of his mother who knew how to nurture his talents and strengths, allowing him to drop out of school to focus on the thing he is good at: playing the great game of football.*

- After hearing the story, ask participants to describe other people they think are doing better than expected given a difficult start in life.
- Alternative activity ideas:
  - Ask participants to describe someone in their immediate or extended family who has done much better than expected, and who they admire for their success.
  - Share a short selection of a song, movie, YouTube video, comic book or television show that shows someone being resilient and enjoying success beyond what would be expected.
    - For example, a singer from humble beginnings, or who does not look the way we expect a Star to look.

## Part 5.

# Discussion: Defining Resilience

## WHAT HAPPENS

The concept of resilience is introduced, with an emphasis on being both a rugged and resourced individual.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Use the following content to teach participants about being rugged and resourced, and what the term resilience means.
- First, ask participants to consider what they think resilience means.
  - *What do you think it means to be resilient?*
  - *What would that look like?*
- Invite participants to share their ideas with the group, or in pairs.

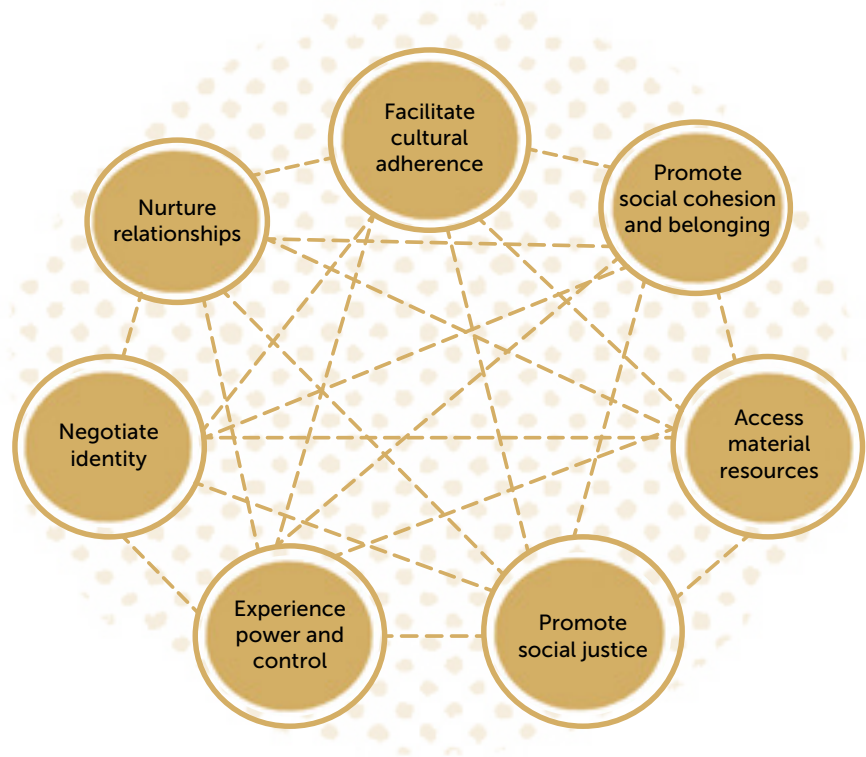
## THE SECRET OF RESILIENCE

- *In Change Your World: The Science of Resilience and the True Path to Success*, Dr. Michael Ungar showed that resilience is our ability to overcome problems in life even when those problems are bigger and more challenging than normal.
- This ability, however, depends on both how rugged we are as individuals, and how many resources (supports) we have around us.
- While we like to believe that it is the rugged individual that can overcome big problems, like social anxiety, all on their own, the truth is that resilience depends just as much on the quality of the supports we get from our families, neighbours, friends, health care providers, employers, schools, and even the government programs which are there for us in our communities.
- When the world around us helps bring out our best, and encourages us to think positive thoughts, believe in ourselves, and change our behaviours for the better, we are more likely to be bolder and more successful.

## SEVEN RESILIENCE-PROMOTING PROCESSES

- We've learned from science, though, that there are at least seven ways that the world around us can build our resilience.
- The more of these seven experiences we have, the more likely we will be strong enough, and resourced enough, to overcome even very large challenges in our lives.
- The seven experiences that we need are:
  - 1) Nurturing relationships with peers, our families, and others in your community who will be there when you need them.
  - 2) A powerful identity that is given to you by others, and reinforced through opportunities to show your skills and talents to others.
  - 3) Experiences of power and control that let you make decisions for yourself about things that are important to you.
  - 4) Fair treatment by others that makes it possible for you to be the best you can be, without fear of discrimination or bullying.

- 5) All your basic needs are met, including food, housing, safe streets, access to education, employment and all the other things we need to survive and thrive.
  - 6) A sense of belonging to a group of people who value your participation, who miss you when you are not there, and who bring meaning to your life.
  - 7) A sense of culture that reminds you of where you come from and what is special about your family, your community, and your common history, as well as what is special about others with other cultural backgrounds.
- All seven experiences are connected, as shown below.



### WHEN IS IT BEST TO BE RUGGED OR RESOURCED?

- Being both a rugged individual and a resourced individual is very important, though sometimes, when our problems are few and mostly under our control to change, we don't need many resources all.
- Just like in the drawing below (refer participants to their Participant Workbooks), when our problems are few, rugged individuals can usually overcome most of life's challenges by changing their thoughts, feelings and behaviour all on their own.



When problems are few, we can rely on ourselves to solve our own problems

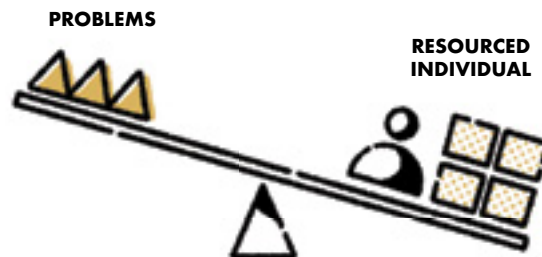


**STOP AND REFLECT**

Ask if participants have any questions.

Then, ask participants: "What qualities do you think would describe a rugged individual?"

- A rugged individual is someone who has qualities such as good problem-solving, optimism, and a self-control.
  - We're going to learn more about the qualities of rugged individuals in our next module.
- If our problems get bigger, it becomes more difficult to solve our problems on our own – even if you're relatively rugged.
- Resourced individuals, do better when they experience many problems in many different parts of their lives, then do rugged individual who have few resources (see drawing below).
- We can't always think our way out of a bad situation if that situation remains stubbornly the same over time.
- Ask the following question and invite ideas from the group:
  - What do you think it would look like to be a resourced individual?



When problems are many and complex,  
we need lots of resources to cope effectively

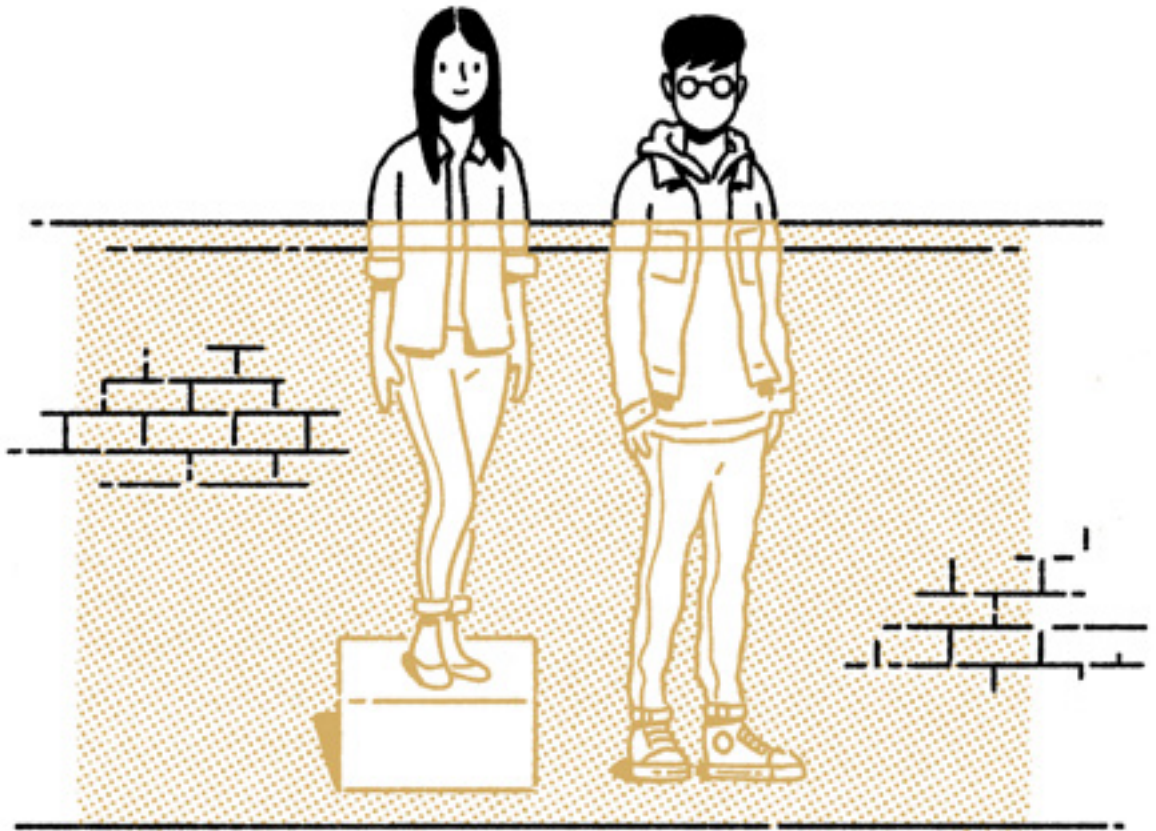
- Here's an example:
  - Imagine you do reasonably well at school and your parents are supportive.
  - They provide you with extra tutoring and your teachers see in that you have special musical talent or sporting ability.
  - You may be shy and you may not like to put your hand up in class, but you'll likely still succeed if you simply change your thinking and conquer your social anxiety.
  - After all, the only thing holding you back from success are your thoughts and the social anxiety that comes with negative thinking.
  - If you say to yourself, "I'm safe and there are plenty of good things to like about myself," a change in attitude and a bit of effort on your part to talk to your classmates, or show others your talents, is likely to conquer feelings of social isolation or low self-esteem.
  - In a supportive environment like this, one that poses few big challenges, the rugged individual can be very successful.

- The funny thing is that we often forget that many people don't just experience social anxiety in safe, secure schools, families or communities.
- Now, let's consider a different scenario:
  - Imagine that you are the same person as you were in the above example, but this time, imagine being bullied by other students who call you names.
  - Imagine your parents are very angry with you because you don't get high test scores.
  - Imagine you feel ugly because people tell you that you look funny.
  - You might still have incredible musical talent, or be good at sports, but that's not how others make you feel.
  - Instead, the world around you feels very scary.
  - Of course, changing your thinking and standing up for yourself is an important strategy for success.
  - However, in a situation like this, though, looking around for the resources you need to really do well is also going to be important for your success.
  - If your parents don't think you are trying very hard (and they refuse to admit you really do struggle with math, or languages), then maybe you can spend more time with a grandparent, or uncle who likes you for who you are.
  - If your classmates tease you at school, is there a sports club where you can go outside of school hours where a coach or your teammates see your talent?
  - If you like to play an instrument, or are an amazing online gamer, do you have opportunities to use those talents and be rewarded for what you do well?

## STOP AND REFLECT

**Ask if participants have any questions. Then, ask if anyone has other ideas/suggestions about what other resources might contribute to resilience.**

- There is plenty of evidence that shows that when we are both rugged and resourced we can be our best.
- Unfortunately, we often blame people who don't succeed for their problems when many of the reasons they fail, or feel anxious, are because the world around them is unfair, dangerous, or lacks opportunities.
- When we have the supports to do well, and those supports are meaningful to us, we are more likely to sustain changes that we make when we clear our heads and decide to be bold.
- Resilience is much like people of different heights all trying to peer over a fence to watch a sporting event.
  - Of course, each has to be motivated to stand up and watch the game.
  - But shorter people need a box to stand on while taller people, because of the advantage of their height, need nothing at all.
  - Now imagine the shorter person, standing on the box has perfect eyesight, while the taller person can't see very far at all.
  - In that case, the taller person will benefit from being given a pair of glasses to wear. We each have our own resources, and need others that we don't have.
  - Of course, we have to be motivated enough to take advantage of what we get offered, but it still comes down to the fact that no amount of ruggedness is going to help a near-sighted person see further or short person see over a fence without the right resources being provided.



- Read the statement in the box below outloud to participants:
  - Having learned about resilience, consider the following statements:



**Is this resilience?**

*“You can’t stop the waves but you can learn to surf.”*

It’s easier though, to learn to surf if you have a surfboard, a coach, and a lifeguard.

- Then ask:
  - Do you agree, or disagree? Why or why not?
  - Are you a rugged individual? A resourced individual? Or both?
- Participants can write their reflections down in their workbook.

**STOP AND REFLECT**

Ask if anyone would like to share their thoughts about the statements with the group. Alternatively, you can ask participants to share their thoughts with a partner.

- Finally, it's important to know that resilience can look very different for different people in different situations. It can mean recovery, adaptation or, even better, transformation.
  - 1) **Recovery:** You experience a big setback in life, but you return to the same level of functioning you had before you encountered problems.
  - 2) **Adaptation:** You change your thoughts, feelings and behaviour to adapt to difficult surroundings. Changing yourself helps you to deal with bad things when they happen, though doesn't mean the bad things go away.
  - 3) **Transformation:** The environment around is pressured to change so that it is easier for you to do well. In this case, new resources are found so that if you do change your thoughts, feelings and behaviours, change can be sustained. Your world has been changed and is no longer so dangerous.
- Share a final thought:
  - Sometimes it's easier, and more practical, to change the world around us than trying to change ourselves.

**Part 6.****Activity 1: Assessing My Ruggedness****WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants will have the chance to assess their ruggedness using a standardized measure of individual resilience.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Invite participants to take the time they need to respond to each question.
- You can read out each question as a way of making participants more aware of the content, or you can leave participants to read the questions themselves, depending on the literacy level of the group.
- After completing the questions, participants should add up their scores. This time, there are no reverse scored items.



**THE RUGGED INDIVIDUAL – Rugged Resilience Measure Jefferies and Ungar \*\***

For each statement below, please make one selection that best indicates how much you agree with the following statements as they apply to you over the last MONTH.

To what extent do the following statements apply to you?	Not at all [1]	A little [2]	Somewhat [3]	Quite a bit [4]	A lot [5]
<b>1</b> I believe in myself	1	2	3	4	5
<b>2</b> I can adapt to challenging situations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>3</b> I find solutions to problems I encounter	1	2	3	4	5
<b>4</b> I can keep going despite difficulties	1	2	3	4	5
<b>5</b> I can cope with competing demands (for my time or attention)	1	2	3	4	5
<b>6</b> Even when there are setbacks or obstacles, I am hopeful about my future	1	2	3	4	5
<b>7</b> I am generally in control of my emotions	1	2	3	4	5
<b>8</b> I take pride in things I have achieved	1	2	3	4	5
<b>9</b> When faced with difficulties, I rise to the challenge	1	2	3	4	5
<b>10</b> I can find meaning in my life	1	2	3	4	5
<b>11</b> I can rely on myself	1	2	3	4	5
<b>12</b> I can adjust to demanding situations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>13</b> I can solve problems I encounter	1	2	3	4	5
<b>14</b> If there is a setback, I can persevere	1	2	3	4	5
<b>15</b> I am capable of handling challenges	1	2	3	4	5
<b>16</b> I believe I can achieve my goals	1	2	3	4	5
<b>17</b> I can cope with unpleasant feelings (like anger or sadness)	1	2	3	4	5
<b>18</b> My achievements are a source of strength	1	2	3	4	5
<b>19</b> I embrace challenges	1	2	3	4	5
<b>20</b> My life has a purpose	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring: sum items 1-20 (no reverse scored items).

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## SCORING AND INTERPRETING

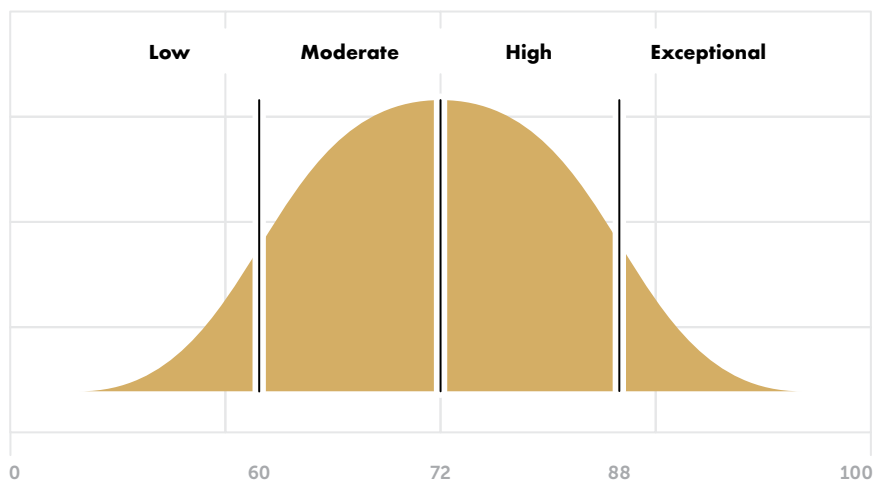
Resilience scores (both in terms of being 'rugged' and 'resourced') will vary across contexts and cultures. However, previous resilience research can help us estimate what is likely to be a 'normal' resilience score

### RUGGED INDIVIDUAL (The RRM)

Your score will fall between 20-100, where a higher score indicates stronger resilience.

Our research indicates that an average score for young people will fall around 78, with the following thresholds:

**Low resilience** = 20-60  
**Moderate resilience** = 61-72  
**High resilience** = 73-88  
**Exceptional resilience** = more than 89



## Part 7.

# Health Break

## WHAT HAPPENS

The group should take a 10-minute break to stretch their legs, relax, eat, drink, use restrooms, etc. The Health break also gives participants some informal time to talk between themselves about what they've learned so far.

Part 8.

# Reflection on Activity 1

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants will have time to think about the thoughts and behaviours that make them rugged.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Invite participants to take another look at how they answered the questions on the Rugged resilience measure, and ask them the following questions (they can write their responses in their workbook):
  - Which of these thoughts and behaviours are most useful in your life? Which are less useful?

.....

.....

.....

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- Are there different situations where different thoughts and behaviours are better than others? Which ones does an athlete need? Which ones are most useful before an important exam? Job interview?

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**STOP AND REFLECT**

After completing the questions, if participants feel comfortable sharing, you can encourage group members to talk about which items on the Rugged resilience measure are most important to them.

Alternatively, you can ask participants to share their thoughts with a partner.

## Part 9.

# Activity 2: Assessing My Resources

## WHAT HAPPENS

Participants will have the chance to assess their resourcefulness using a standardized measure of systemic resilience.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Invite participants to take the time they need to respond to each question.
- You can read out each question as a way of making participants more aware of the content, or you can leave participants to read the questions themselves, depending on the literacy level of the group.
- After completing the questions, participants should add up their scores. Once again, there are no reverse scored items on the ARM.

## THE RESOURCED INDIVIDUAL — Adult Resilience Measure (ARM)\*

To what extent do the following statements apply to you? There are no right or wrong answers.		Not at all [1]	A little [2]	Somewhat [3]	Quite a bit [4]	A lot [5]
1	I cooperate with people around me	1	2	3	4	5
2	Getting and improving qualifications or skills is important to me	1	2	3	4	5
3	I know how to behave in different social situations	1	2	3	4	5
4	My family have usually supported me through life	1	2	3	4	5
5	My family knows a lot about me	1	2	3	4	5
6	If I am hungry, I can get food to eat	1	2	3	4	5
7	People like to spend time with me	1	2	3	4	5
8	I talk to my family/partner about how I feel	1	2	3	4	5
9	I feel supported by my friends	1	2	3	4	5
10	I feel that I belong in my community	1	2	3	4	5
11	My family/partner stands by me during difficult times	1	2	3	4	5
12	My friends stand by me during difficult times	1	2	3	4	5
13	I am treated fairly in my community	1	2	3	4	5
14	I have opportunities to show others that I can act responsibly	1	2	3	4	5
15	I feel secure when I am with my family/partner	1	2	3	4	5
16	I have opportunities to apply my abilities in life (like skills, a job, caring for others)	1	2	3	4	5
17	I enjoy my family's/partner's cultural and family traditions	1	2	3	4	5

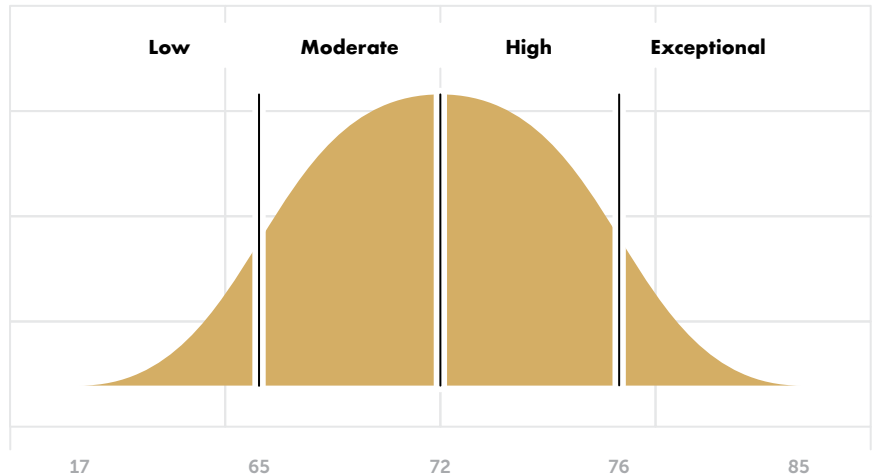
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**SCORING AND INTERPRETING**

**RESOURCED INDIVIDUAL (The ARM)**

- Your score will fall between 17–85, where a higher score indicates stronger resilience.
- From the international Pathways to Resilience Project (Ungar & Theron, 2014), data from China (n = 1,416) indicated that the average score for youth was 70 with the following thresholds:

**Low resilience** = less than 65  
**Moderate resilience** = 65–72  
**High resilience** = 72–76  
**Exceptional resilience** = more than 76



**Part 10.**

**Reflection on Activity 2**

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants will have time to think about the thoughts and behaviours that make them rugged.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Invite participants to take another look at how they answered the questions on the ARM, and ask them the following questions (they can write their responses in their workbook):
  - “Which of these thoughts, behaviours and resources are most useful in your life? Which are less useful?”

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- Are there different situations where different items on the ARM are better than others? Which ones does an athlete need? Which ones are most useful before an important exam? Job interview?

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- If participants feel comfortable sharing, facilitators should encourage group members to talk about which items on the ARM are most important to them. Was there a specific time when participants used one of the items on the ARM? Why was it useful?

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## STOP AND REFLECT

After completing the questions, if participants feel comfortable sharing, you can encourage group members to talk about which items on the ARM are most important to them.

Was there a specific time when participants used one of the items on the ARM? Why was it useful?

Alternatively, you can ask participants to share their thoughts with a partner.

## Part 11.

# Deciding if I Need to be Rugged or Resourced

## WHAT HAPPENS

In this exercise, participants will vote “on their feet” to determine whether they think they need to be Rugged or Resourced.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Read out each scenario then ask participants to get up and move themselves to different places in the room where they think being rugged or resourced, or both, is the best way to handle this situation.
- Point to opposite corners of the room.
  - One side of the room should be labelled “Rugged”, the other “Resourced”.
- After each scenario is read out, participants move to the side of the room which they think has the best approach to solving this problem.
  - If they think that being both rugged and resourced is the best strategy, then they would stand in the middle of the room equal distance between the two walls.
- Participants can arrange themselves anywhere in the room that they believe fits with how they would solve the challenge being described.
- Once participants have chosen their spot, ask three participants to explain why they chose to stand where they are standing.
  - Ideally, participant from each part of the room should be asked so a variety of opinions are heard.
  - Participants do not have to speak up if they don’t want to.
    - At any time, they can say “pass” and another participant will be given the opportunity to speak.
- Sample scenarios:
  - I am going to a job interview but don’t have the right clothing to wear.
    - Participants should be encouraged to think of both rugged and resourced strategies to cope with this situation. They could, for example, simply tell themselves that their clothing shouldn’t matter and they will still impress their future employer, or they can ask for help from friends who are there to support them when they need help.
  - I have a big exam tomorrow, but can’t sleep. If I don’t get some sleep, I won’t be able to perform at my best on the exam.
  - I am really interested in getting to know someone in my class much better, but I’m not sure he/she will like me.
- Facilitators and participants can suggest other scenarios they would like people to vote on.
- Ask participants the following reflection questions; participants can write their reflection in their workbook.
  - “For any one situation, is it better to be rugged?
  - Resourced?
  - Or both?”



**Part 12.**

# Personal Challenge

**In one word, tell the group “How I am feeling about today’s module”**

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants will share one word that summarizes how they felt about today’s group.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Invite participants to consider how they are feeling about today’s module.
  - “In one word (maximum) share your experience of the workshop today.”
- Participants might use words like “exciting”, “boring”, “confusing”, “inspiring” or any other word they can come up with.
- You may use the talking stick to ensure each participant has an opportunity to share their one-word reflection.

**Part 13.**

# Homework

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants are asked to select a question from either of the two questionnaires and try to improve their score by just ONE point.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Between now and the next time the group meets, choose one question from either of the two questionnaires you completed.
  - Ideally, choose a question where you scored lower than you would have liked to have scored because of social anxiety.
- Once a question is selected, do one small thing to increase your score by just ONE point.
  - If, for example, you don’t like challenges (item 23 on the Rugged resilience measure) then this week you need to take on a very small challenge that you hopefully will enjoy enough to complete it.
  - This could be something very simple at home, like cooking a favourite food, or maybe it’s getting up earlier than normal, or saying hello to someone, even a teacher at school, or a co-worker at your workplace.
- Remember, the goal is to increase your score but just ONE point.

**REFERENCES**

- <sup>i</sup> Jefferies, P., & Ungar, M. (2019). *The Rugged Resilience Measure. A new measure of internal resilience*. Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University: <http://cyrm.resilienceresearch.org/rrm>.
- <sup>ii</sup> Ungar, M., & Theron, L. (2014). Pathways to Resilience. <http://resilienceresearch.org/research/projects/pathways-to-resilience>

**NOTES ON  
MODULE 2**

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.



# 3.

## Module 3

# THE RUGGED INDIVIDUAL

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This module helps participants learn more about the 'rugged' individual. They will discover that being rugged involves strong internal qualities like having good problem-solving and self-regulation skills, strong self-control, an ability to learn from past mistakes, and optimism. Participants will explore these rugged qualities through activities such as 'thinking maps', which illustrate how internal voices and self-reflection relate to feelings and behaviours, and how difficulties with these can sometimes hold us back from being successful. By the end of the module, participants will have developed an awareness of their own level of ruggedness.



**DARE TO DREAM.  
DARE TO SPEAK.  
DARE TO DO.**









# Module Outline

## OUTCOMES

- Participants will develop a clear understanding of how part of being resilient to social anxiety involves being 'rugged'.
- Participants will learn how we discover our ruggedness by reflecting on internal processes like our self-talk and different responses to situations.
- Participants will discover and reflect on qualities that reflect their own level of ruggedness.

## MATERIALS

- A 'talking stick' or another symbol of group respect;
- Flipchart paper and markers, or other drawing tools (a computer screen, tablet, etc.);
- Copies of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS-16) (activity 2);
- Copies of the thinking maps (activity 3);
- Copies of the tangrams (activity 4);
- Copies of the homework form;
- A healthy snack.

## SESSION MAP

90 MINUTES

1. Welcome
2. Awareness practice
3. Talking point
4. Activity 1: A problem to solve
5. Activity 2: Emotion regulation
6. Health break
7. Activity 3: Mapping our thoughts
8. Activity 4: Is it just me, or...?
9. Summing up / looking forwards
10. Homework

## Part 1.

# Welcome

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants are welcomed back to the group and there are opportunities to reflect on events and progress since the last session.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Refer to the Rules of Engagement, then, invite each person to say their name (this will help everyone remember who is in the group) and say, "I am committed to the rules." If someone prefers not to speak, they can say their name and signal their commitment (e.g., with a thumbs-up gesture).
- As person each person receives the talking stick (or other object of respect), encourage them to answer the following questions:
  - In a few words, how are you feeling about being here today? Please remember that everyone needs a turn to speak so be sure to keep your answer reasonably short.
  - Has anything 'awesome' happened since you were last with the group?
  - Has anything 'not-so-awesome' happened since you were last with the group?

## Part 2.

# Awareness Practice

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Each session, participants are invited to practice a short awareness exercise. Regular practice of focused breathing will help participants learn to regulate their physiology in response to stress or anxiety.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Use the following script as a guide to lead participants through the following breathing exercise (read slowly):
  - Please find a comfortable seat, with your back straight, yet relaxed. Uncross your legs and place your feet flat on the ground.
  - You may close your eyes if you choose. If you are not comfortable closing your eyes, then simply have a soft gaze looking forward.
  - Let's begin by noticing how it feels to be here today.
  - Notice how your body feels sitting here in the chair.

Pause

  - Maybe you notice how the chair is supporting you as you sit.
  - You might notice points of contact where the body meets the chair – legs and back, perhaps.
  - Just notice how it feels to sit here now.

Pause

  - Now, we will spend the next few minutes scanning our body.

- This helps us to practice focusing our attention.
- I will guide you.
- Let's begin. Imagine you had a spotlight that you could shine wherever you chose onto your body.
- Begin by shining that spotlight onto your feet. Bring all of your awareness now to your feet.

Pause

- Notice how your feet feel resting on the ground.
- Notice the sensations how your feet feel in your shoes; points of contact between your toes.
- If your mind wanders, that's okay, that's what minds do. When you notice your mind has wandered, gently bring your attention back to your body.

Pause

- Next, move the spotlight of your awareness to your legs. Notice any sensations here.
- If you notice any tension, you can approach it with curiosity, and kindness.

Pause

- Next, move the spotlight of awareness to your belly. Notice any sensations that are there now. Hunger, unease, or softness, perhaps.
- Just be curious and rest your attention there for a moment.

Pause

- Next, turn the spotlight of awareness to your back.
- If you notice any tension, you can approach it with curiosity.
- You can relax any tension as much as it will, without forcing anything.

Pause

- If your mind wanders, that's okay, just gently bring your attention back to your body.
- Next, move the spotlight up to your shoulders and neck.
- Noticing any tension with curiosity, and relaxing it as much as it will, without forcing anything.

Pause

- Next, shine the spotlight down your arms, landing on your hands.
- Notice any sensations present here now.

Pause

- Now, move the spotlight of awareness back on your arms, across your neck, to rest at the top of your head.
- Notice any sensations that are present here now.

Pause

- Now slowly move the light of awareness down your face.
- Notice your eyes – are they softly closed, or tightly shut. Soften them as much as they will.

Pause

- Next, move your awareness to your jaw. Notice if there is softness, or if there is any clenching or tension.
- With kindness, soften your jaw, without forcing anything.

Pause

- Finally, bring the light of awareness to your nose.
- Rest here with the sensations of breath moving in and out of your nostrils for a few moments.



Pause (allow 30 – 45 seconds)

- Before you come back to the room, take two or three deep breaths, try to lengthen your exhale.

Pause (allow 30 – 45 seconds)

- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any questions or comments about this, or any, of the Awareness Practices.

Ask if any participants would like to comment about their experience.

- *Was it difficult to stay focused?*
- *Were there areas of the body that felt at ease, or unease?*



Give participants the following key points summarizing the purpose of the body scan:

- We just practiced a body scan awareness practice.
- The body scan can help us do a few things:
  - It allows you to practice focusing your attention (remember the prefrontal cortex!)
  - It helps you practice cognitive flexibility. You had to move your attention from one part of the body to another – this helps you to be able to shift your attention when you need to, and also hold your attention where you choose.
  - The body scan allows you to develop a greater awareness of sensations in your body, whether they are comfortable or uncomfortable. Bringing awareness to your experience will help you identify where you might feel stress or anxiety, and also allows you to experience and face it rather than attempt to avoid it. Turning towards our sensations and emotions, can actually help reduce their intensity.
- We will be practicing a related awareness activity in our next module that will further help us to do this.

## Part 3.

# Talking Point – What being Rugged Involves

## WHAT HAPPENS

In this talking point, the facilitator describes the different qualities involved in making a person rugged. These include having good problem-solving and self-regulation skills, strong self-control, and the motivation to adapt when the world around you remains stubbornly the same. A rugged individual is also one that learns from past mistakes, survives and thrives, is optimistic about the future, and has found meaning in life.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

Share the following:

### Ruggedness:

- Ruggedness is an important part of resilience to social anxiety.
- It may also be thought of as 'psychological toughness' and is a broad term for the internal qualities that help to make each of us resilient when facing challenges in life.
- Our ruggedness is also important when we face a problem like social anxiety.
- There are many qualities that make a person rugged.
- Ann Masten, a resilience researcher at the University of Minnesota in the United States, divides our internal rugged qualities into four categories :
  1. Having good problem-solving skills and knowledge;
  2. Good self-regulation skills, self-control, and executive functioning (our thoughts are clear and focused on the tasks we need to get done);
  3. Agency (a desire to change the world around us) and the motivation to adapt, learn, survive, and recover; and
  4. Hope for the future and an ability to draw meaning from our experiences, both good and bad.

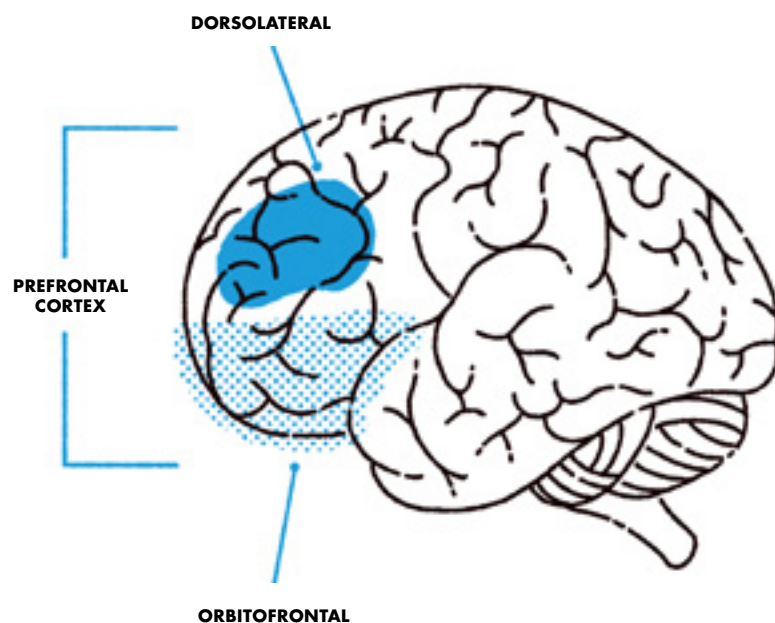
### 1. Problem-solving:

- Problem-solving means knowing what to do in uncertain or challenging situations to achieve our best results.
  - For example, if you need to complete a class assignment or a report at work but receive very few instructions, some of us will find it more difficult than others to finish the task.
- Those who succeed carefully consider a range of possible solutions and choose the one that works best.
- Our ability to problem-solve can be improved by past experiences of success, where we already know what works and what does not work.
- But it's also about being creative when we encounter new situations.
- More often than not, challenging situations arise that may look unique, but they are often not as unfamiliar as they first seem to be.
  - For example, if we are preparing a report at work, we know it probably has lots of things in common with the assignments we did in school.

- o Both use formal language, and both need to be correctly formatted and spellchecked.
- Those with good problem-solving abilities can identify these familiar elements of a new situation and think through potential solutions, drawing on what they've already learned in the past.
- And because we are often uncertain that our decisions will be the right ones, problem-solving is also about believing in ourselves and feeling confident with the decisions we make, regardless of the outcomes.

## 2. Self-regulation:

- Self-regulation is our ability to control ourselves and respond to situations in ways that we find satisfying and socially acceptable.
  - For example, a person who gets angry easily and lashes out is someone with poor self-regulation, as is someone who always speaks without thinking (saying whatever comes into their head).
  - People like this are always offering excuses for their actions: "I had to do it, I just couldn't help myself," they say.
- Studies of neuropsychology have shown that both problem-solving and self-regulation are governed by the area of the brain above our eyes, known as the prefrontal cortex.
  - Remember, we learned bit about the prefrontal cortex in Module 1.



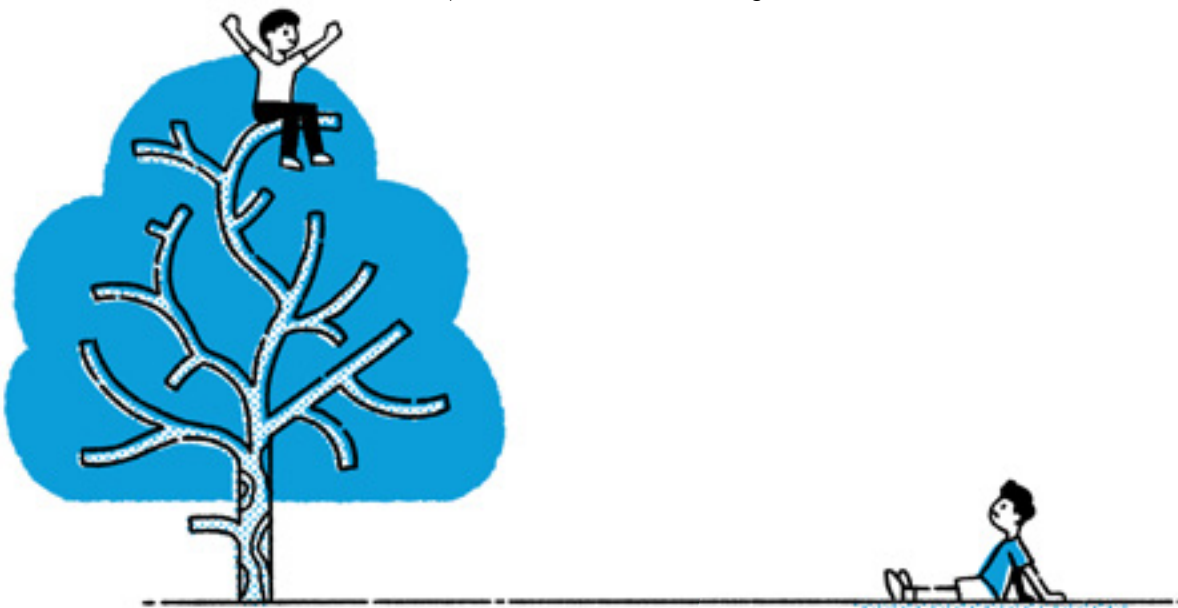
- Before we had the technology to see what was going on inside people's heads, we learned about the part of our brains involved in self-regulation from individuals who had injured their brains but survived.
- One of the most famous cases is that of Phineas Gage, a railroad construction worker who survived a horrific accident that sent an iron rod being blasted through his skull [Wikipedia image below].
- Phineas not only survived, he never lost consciousness, but the front of his brain was mostly destroyed.



- While Phineas managed to resume a normal life, his personality changed dramatically.
- Before the accident, he was a thoughtful, kind individual. After he was hurt, he was impulsive, frustrated, and aggressive, which are all qualities associated with poor self-regulation.
- In general, self-regulation is about recognising our urges and impulses that relate to things happening around us, and acting on these in positive, productive, and sociable ways.
- Like problem-solving, some people seem naturally better than others at self-regulation.
- The good news is that our brains are always growing, and improved self-regulation can come with age or be learned.
  - Our awareness practices, focused deep breathing, can help improve your self-regulation.
  - Focusing your attention, and intentionally bringing back attention each time your mind wanders, helps to develop the prefrontal cortex. A stronger, more connected prefrontal cortex helps you regulate better. We know exercise is good for the body, this is mental fitness for your brain!

### 3. Agency and motivation:

- The third aspect of ruggedness is about believing in what we can achieve.
- This is something we develop in early childhood, where children who are encouraged to try new things and be adventuresome will feel empowered by their experiences and will be more motivated to take on future challenges.
- The opposite is also true.
- Parents who do everything for their children, or who isolate them from any kind of risk or challenge, no matter how small, in order to keep them 'safe' make children feel powerless.
- These children tend to grow up being less motivated to try new things or persist in the face of challenges.





- When we believe that we can change the world around us, we are said to have what is known as 'self-efficacy', or the belief in our abilities to do the things we need and want to do.
- This quality can be nurtured.
- Like so much of our personalities, early experiences shape who we are later in life, leaving us more or less equipped for the challenges we face.

#### **4. Hope and meaning-making:**

- A strong indicator of ruggedness is how hopeful or optimistic we are about the future.
- This doesn't mean having unrealistically high hopes or expectations for ourselves.
- It means, instead, that we believe in our potential to grow and succeed despite any setbacks we experience.
  - For example, if we ask someone to go out on a date with us and they say no, being rugged means accepting what happened and remaining hopeful that the next person we ask might say yes.
- Bad outcomes like poor exam results or being let down by friends are never nice experiences, but there is an important difference between a person who dwells on these and lets past failures hold them back and others who do not.

#### **Becoming aware of our ruggedness:**

- These are some of the core qualities of being rugged, and which help us to overcome challenging experiences.

### **STOP AND REFLECT**

Ask if participants have any questions.

Then, ask what they think of this list of four key qualities associated with being rugged.

- Is there anything missing?
- Are there other ways people make themselves rugged?

- Although some people may seem naturally better in one or more of these areas, we can all improve our ruggedness by understanding where we are, where we want to be, and how to get there.
- In this module, we develop an awareness of our ruggedness.
- To do this, we will need to engage in self-reflection:
  - You will be asked to think about the sequences of events that led to previous bad experiences, and how you could act in similar situations in the future.
  - We will also introduce you to some training in how to pay closer attention to the negative self-talk that swirls in your head which leaves you anxious and unable to succeed.

## Part 4.

# Activity 1: A Problem to Solve

## WHAT HAPPENS

In this activity, participants explore challenges related to problem-solving and reflect on their thoughts and feelings in challenging situations when there are no clear solutions.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Invite participants to think about an example of a challenging situation that you share with the group. This situation should not have an obvious solution and so the main character in the story should (initially) feel very challenged. For example:
  - Xiaohui is a student in the final year of school. She is concerned about her grades – they are not as high as she would like them to be and she is worried about doing badly.
  - In the last month of school, there is a biology assignment and a math assignment that she needs to finish.
  - Knowing that she is running out of time, she has focused on the biology assignment because she feels she isn't as good at this subject and needs to spend more time and effort on it.
  - She leaves the math assignment alone, knowing it is in a subject she has done better at in the past.
  - However, when she finishes the biology assignment and begins the math assignment, she finds it is much harder than she expected.
  - She feels her heart start to race and she begins to panic.
- Ask participants:
  - What are the kinds of things you think Xiaohui is thinking right now?
  - What kinds of things could she do to solve the problem of the difficult math assignment that would help calm her feelings?
- Participants will have different ideas about how to manage the situation, but their solutions will likely fall into two categories:
  - Addressing the task itself (practical solutions), which could involve going to the library, working with a friend, asking a teacher for extra time, etc.
  - The second of the problem-solving strategies involves helping Xiaohui manage her anxiety, such as taking a short break, calling a friend for reassurance, meditating, or thinking about the worst-case scenario and realizing it isn't the end of the world after all.
- Help the group to understand the benefit of addressing both kinds of solutions: the ones that look outside for solutions and the ones that look inside.
- Anxiety can limit our problem-solving abilities, making it much more difficult to come up with new solutions and our ability to evaluate which solutions are best.

### Optional activity (time permitting):

- Next, break the group into pairs and ask each person to share a situation that they have experienced where they had to do something that made them feel stressed or worried. For example, giving a talk in front of classmates or colleagues at work, or being asked to meet with someone they don't know.

- In pairs, encourage participants to share the kinds of things that went through their heads when thinking about what could have happened.
- Ask participants to share with each other the things they could have done to make sure things went well.
- After participants have shared their ideas, encourage them to reflect on these possibilities. Did they consider all of them at the time?



#### Remind participants:

- Anxiety can dominate our thought processes.
- Stress and worry focus our attention on the outcome when we should be thinking about the many different solutions we could try.

### Part 5.

## Activity 2: Emotion Regulation

#### WHAT HAPPENS

In this activity, participants learn about their emotional self-control, impulsivity, and awareness, by completing a short survey called the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS). This survey was developed by Kim Gratz and Lizabeth Roemer at the University of Massachusetts in the United States. It helps us to understand how successful we are in regulating our emotions.

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Explain to the group that this next activity explores a quality of the second domain of ruggedness: self-regulation.
- Self-regulation generally relates to the control we have over our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, and the extent to which we can plan and execute a strategy to reach our goals.
- In this activity, we focus on one aspect of self-regulation which is important for resilience to social anxiety: the self-regulation of our emotions.
- **The DERS:** Share copies of the DERS-16 survey with participants (see next page).

**Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale**

Please circle the number to indicate how often the statement applies to you. There are no right or wrong answers.		Almost never [1]	Some-times [2]	About half the time [3]	Most of the time [4]	Almost always [5]
<b>1</b>	I have difficulty making sense out of my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>2</b>	I am confused about how I feel.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>3</b>	When I'm upset, I have difficulty getting work done.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>4</b>	When I'm upset, I become out of control.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>5</b>	When I'm upset, I believe that I will remain that way for a long time.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>6</b>	When I'm upset, I believe that I'll end up feeling very depressed.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>7</b>	When I'm upset, I have difficulty focusing on other things.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>8</b>	When I'm upset, I feel out of control.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>9</b>	When I'm upset, I feel ashamed with myself for feeling that way.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>10</b>	When I'm upset, I feel like I am weak.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>11</b>	When I'm upset, I have difficulty controlling my behaviours.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>12</b>	When I'm upset, I believe that there is nothing I can do to make myself feel better.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>13</b>	When I'm upset, I become irritated with myself for feeling that way.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>14</b>	When I'm upset, I start to feel very bad about myself.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>15</b>	When I'm upset, I have difficulty thinking about anything else.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>16</b>	When I'm upset, my emotions feel overwhelming.	1	2	3	4	5

- After participants have completed the questions, get them to sum their scores. Higher scores indicate greater difficulties with emotions (the scale goes from 16-80). When ready, get the group to share if they felt their scores were an accurate reflection of themselves.
  - *What did you think about the questions?*
  - *Were they relevant to your life?*
  - *Are there any questions missing which you think should be asked?*



### Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale

Please circle the number to indicate how often the statement applies to you. There are no right or wrong answers.		Almost never [1]	Some-times [2]	About half the time [3]	Most of the time [4]	Almost always [5]
<b>1</b>	I have difficulty making sense out of my feelings. <b>[CLARITY]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>2</b>	I am confused about how I feel. <b>[CLARITY]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>3</b>	When I'm upset, I have difficulty getting work done. <b>[GOALS]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>4</b>	When I'm upset, I become out of control. <b>[IMPULSE]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>5</b>	When I'm upset, I believe that I will remain that way for a long time. <b>[STRATEGIES]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>6</b>	When I'm upset, I believe that I'll end up feeling very depressed. <b>[STRATEGIES]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>7</b>	When I'm upset, I have difficulty focusing on other things. <b>[GOALS]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>8</b>	When I'm upset, I feel out of control. <b>[IMPULSE]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>9</b>	When I'm upset, I feel ashamed with myself for feeling that way. <b>[NONACCEPTANCE]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>10</b>	When I'm upset, I feel like I am weak. <b>[NONACCEPTANCE]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>11</b>	When I'm upset, I have difficulty controlling my behaviours. <b>[IMPULSE]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>12</b>	When I'm upset, I believe that there is nothing I can do to make myself feel better. <b>[STRATEGIES]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>13</b>	When I'm upset, I become irritated with myself for feeling that way. <b>[NONACCEPTANCE]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>14</b>	When I'm upset, I start to feel very bad about myself. <b>[STRATEGIES]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>15</b>	When I'm upset, I have difficulty thinking about anything else. <b>[GOALS]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>16</b>	When I'm upset, my emotions feel overwhelming. <b>[STRATEGIES]</b>	1	2	3	4	5

- Questions are coloured in categories and should be added up individually, e.g., Impulse is made up of questions 4, 8, 11; Goals is 3, 7, 15; Nonacceptance is 9, 10, 13; Clarity is 1 and 2; Strategies is 5, 6, 12, 14, 16.

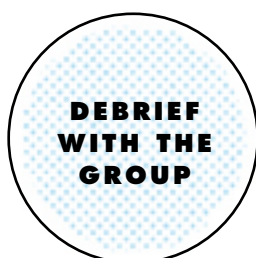
- The total score gives participants an indication of their current emotional regulation. However, they can also sum their responses for five subscales (see colour-coding below). Three of these subscales are described below: (the subscale scores range from 3-15)
  - **Impulse control difficulties:** Scores on this subscale reflect a person's ability to remain in control of their behaviour and resist urges, despite what might provoke us.
  - **Difficulties engaging in goal-directed behaviour:** This refers to a person's ability to concentrate and accomplish tasks when we experience negative emotions.
  - **Nonacceptance of emotional responses:** This subscale reflects troubles people sometimes have accepting the way they feel. Sometimes this leads to secondary emotions, like anger because we don't want to feel guilty, or frustration if we feel jealous, etc.
- Again, were some (or all) of these results surprising? Why? Ask participants:
  - *Which of these areas of emotional regulation need the most work?*
  - *What would working on these help you to achieve?*
- Our ability to manage our emotions can vary at different times in our lives and can be more difficult to do as we face more and more severe challenges.
- Sometimes our emotions may feel out of our control and we "see red" or are "overcome with emotion."
- Some people can talk themselves out of strong emotions, like anger and sadness, but for others, there are a variety of coping strategies that can help us manage our thoughts and feelings.
- These strategies can be healthy or unhealthy.
  - Examples of healthy coping strategies are talking with friends, exercise, meditation, and writing in a journal.
  - Unhealthy coping strategies include substance abuse, self-injury, avoiding or withdrawing from challenging situations, and excessive use of social media or gaming.

#### **Optional activity (time permitting):**

- Ask participants to think about what they do when they feel strong emotions.
  - What do they do to cope?
- Encourage participants to share these strategies with the group and write them on a flipchart.
- Record the strategies in two columns: Helpful and Socially Desirable vs. Helpful but Socially Undesirable.
- This will inspire participants to try new strategies to deal with troubling emotions that are good for them and others around them.

#### **Emphasize the following points:**

- Even 'unhealthy' coping strategies serve a purpose if they help us manage strong or unwanted emotions.
- However, if we can substitute strong and healthy coping strategies for those that are weak and unhealthy, we will emerge from a challenge with the skills we need to manage the next one.



**Part 6.**

# Health Break

**WHAT HAPPENS**

The group should take a 10-minute break to stretch their legs, relax, eat, drink, use restrooms, etc. The Health break also gives participants some informal time to talk between themselves about the exercises.

**Part 7.**

# Activity 3: Mapping our Thoughts

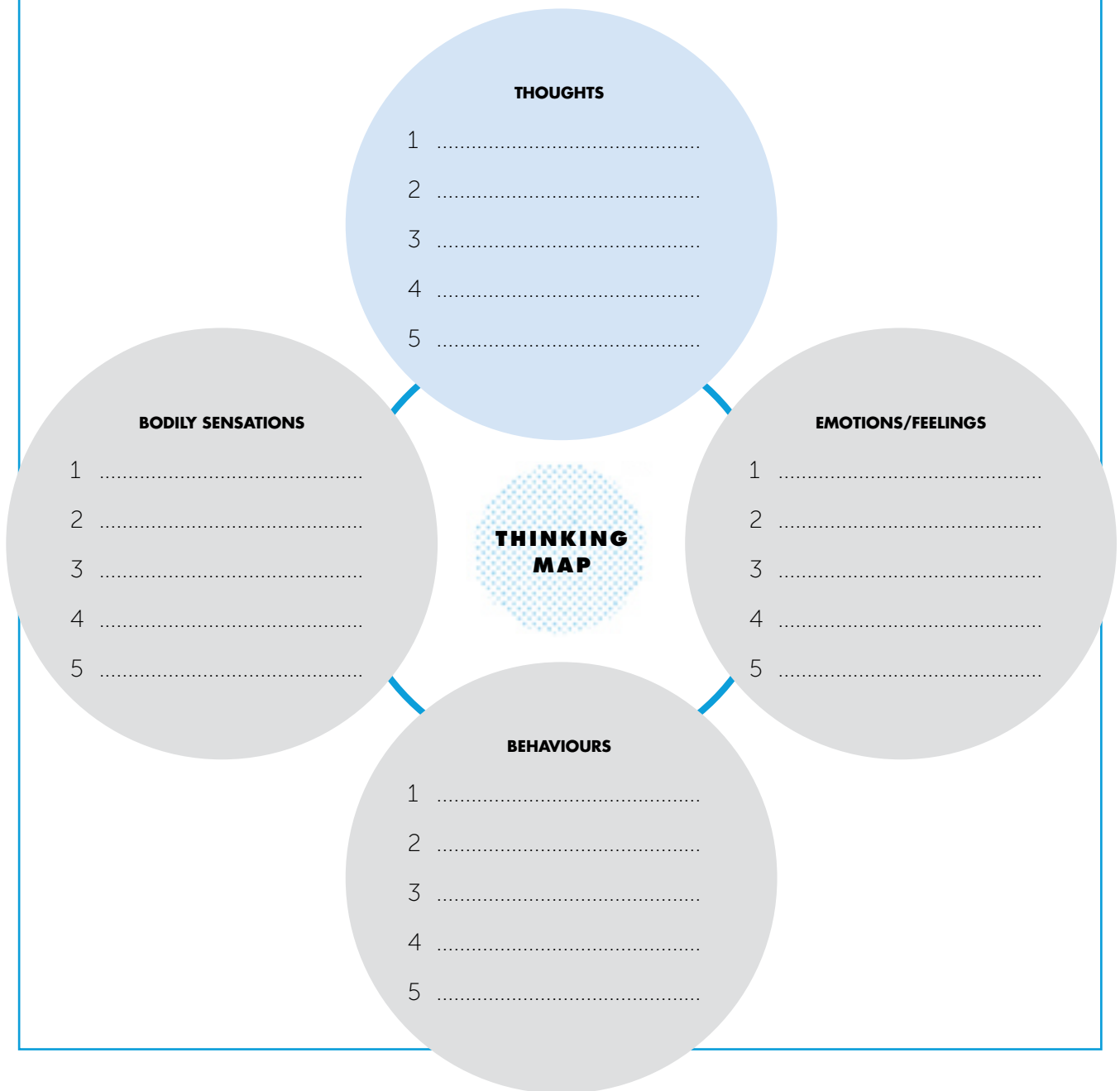
**WHAT HAPPENS**

In this activity, participants explore their 'self-talk', or the things they tell themselves. Exploring our inner monologue helps us become aware of how capable we see ourselves and how our self-talk can hold us back from being bold and successful.

**INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR FACILITATORS**

- Explain to participants that this activity involves them exploring the thoughts that go through their head about themselves in challenging situations.
- We are not always aware of these thoughts – often we feel bad in a situation and struggle to understand why.
- Sometimes this is because the thoughts are very familiar.
- As thoughts become more familiar, they become automatic, and so are harder to detect.
- The purpose of this activity is to help you identify and reflect on your thoughts – to hear your 'self-talk' – so you can develop a better understanding of what you think about yourself.
- Share with participants the situation maps.

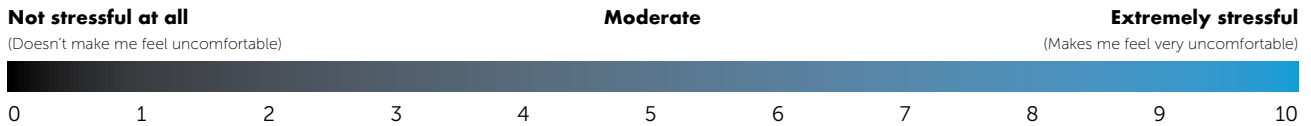
**SITUATION:**



- **The situation:** In a sentence or two, participants should briefly describe a social situation which causes them stress or worry. For example, going for a job interview, starting a conversation with someone at a party, or approaching an authority figure.

- How bad is it? Ask participants to rate how bad being in this situation would be for them.

### Where does this situation fall on your anxiety scale?



- **Automatic thoughts:** Ask participants to write down some of the thoughts that quickly come to mind about themselves in the situation. They should try to identify at least three.
  - If the situation was about taking an exam, some examples of automatic thoughts are "I'm not prepared at all" or "I'm going to struggle again".
  - Emphasise that these thoughts should begin with "I".
- **Emotions associated with thoughts:** When participants have a brief list of these automatic thoughts, ask them to identify the feelings they have that are associated with the thoughts.
  - For example: Feeling angry / anxious/nervous / ashamed / embarrassed / guilty / irritated / sad / scared.
- **Bodily sensations:** Participants should then think about any bodily sensations they feel in response to the thoughts or the emotions.
  - For example, feeling sick, hot flushes, etc.
- **Behaviours associated with thoughts:** Next, ask participants to write down the things they might be more likely to do as a result of these thoughts, feelings, and sensations.
- **Connect the process:** Get participants to think about the cause and effect processes of what they have included in the bubbles. They should draw arrows from each that show how one can lead to the other.
  - Encourage participants to think about whether individual thoughts or emotions lead to specific behaviours (or vice versa).
- **Interactions:** Participants should reflect on their Thinking Map and the links between thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, noticing how interactions often work both ways (thoughts impact feelings and feelings impact thoughts).
  - But they should also understand that the thoughts tend to come first.
  - These are the automatic thoughts that shape the way we think about ourselves and how we act (or don't act) in situations.

### Optional activity (time permitting):

- Ask participants to complete one more of these for a different situation.
  - *What might explain any similarities or differences between the maps?*





When participants complete their Thinking Maps, remind them of the following:

- Although automatic thoughts seem bad and something we want to get rid of, they are not always a problem.
  - For example, if you are going into an exam, an automatic thought like *"I am going to find this difficult..."* does not necessarily have to lead to anxiety or poor performance, especially if it is followed up by thoughts like *"...But I can handle it"*.
- These automatic thoughts that direct much of our self-talk are also normal and natural – psychologists tell us that we don't like surprises and so we try to predict what is likely to happen to us in a situation.
- Even negative thoughts have a role in our lives.
- They get us ready for action.
- Thinking the worst can happen helps remind us to protect ourselves from danger.
- But when these thoughts are routinely negative or keep us from performing well in situations where we need to do our best, we need to challenge them with positive affirmations that remind us we have what it takes to be successful.

#### **Explain to participants:**

- Addressing our self-talk is an important way to become rugged.
- The negative things we tell ourselves about ourselves may not always be true, but they can have important consequences if they have the potential to come true.
- We need to silence this negative self-talk if it holds us back.
  - For example, if we tell ourselves that we are bad at starting conversations and that others will think we are boring, the stress and worry this can cause can stop us from being able to start conversations in the first place. The sociologist Robert Merton calls this a 'self-fulfilling prophecy'.
- In the next module, we focus on how to improve our self-talk, challenging negative thoughts and creating new positive self-talk.
- You will learn strategies that replace negative self-talk that commonly starts with *"I can't", "I won't", "I'm not"* with thoughts that open us up to success, like *"I can", "I will", "I am."*
- When people believe they will succeed, they are more likely to succeed!

Part 8.

# Activity 4: Is it just me, or...?

**WHAT HAPPENS**

In this activity, participants explore the fourth domain of ruggedness, which is optimism and hope for the future.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**



- Share the tangrams with the group (see below). This is a set of paper cut-outs that can be arranged to form various shapes.
- Give half the group the first set of instructions. Give the other half the second.
- The first should have two shapes that cannot be made from the tangram set (impossible)
- The second set contains possible tangrams.
- Both sets contain the same third tangram, which can be completed using the tangram pieces (possible).

**FIRST GROUP INSTRUCTIONS**



**SECOND GROUP INSTRUCTIONS**



- Ask participants just to focus on the first tangram and to try to solve it within 30 seconds. Ask them to stop after 30 seconds regardless of whether they solved it and to do the same for the second. Do the same for the third.
- Ask participants to share with the group whether they managed to solve the third tangram (a show of hands).
- Explain to the group that half were given two impossible tangrams, while the other half received two possible tangrams.
- Everyone received the same third tangram, which was solvable (possible).
- It is likely that those with the two impossible puzzles struggled to complete the third (they did not complete it, or took longer).
- This is a classic example of 'learned helplessness' and illustrates why setbacks that we experience can leave us feeling unable and incapable of taking on future challenges.
- Researchers have found that failure can have a lasting impact on our lives and transfer from one situation to another.
  - For example, if we fail a geography exam, we may be less likely to succeed during a science or history exam.
- **Explain:** The impact of these events can be worse for some people compared to others - in the group, those who received the impossible anagrams might still complete the third anagram, while others will take longer or give up.

## ATTRIBUTION STYLE

- Two American psychologists, Therese Goetz and Carol Dweck, found that our ability to overcome rejection is related to our *attribution* style.
- Those who feel that rejection is related to their personal incompetence are more likely to withdraw from future situations where rejection is possible, and less likely to persist if they find themselves in a situation where they could be rejected.
- The researchers found that this happens regardless of how competent a person actually is.
- The thing that holds us back most is **our thoughts**.
- If we say to ourselves when we fail, '*This is all my fault*' and '*I am useless*' then an experience of failure and rejection will hold us back in the future. But if we say, '*Everyone would have found this test difficult*' and '*I'm good at lots of things, and could even be good at this if I had more time*' then you are less likely to predict failure the next time a challenging task is put in front of you.
- This pessimistic explanatory style (e.g. '*This is all my fault*') is associated with a greater likelihood of experiencing learned helplessness.
  - People with this explanatory style tend to view negative events as being inescapable and unavoidable and tend to take personal responsibility for every failure.

**Optional activity (time permitting):**

- Next, read over each of the ten situations and get participants to decide which response best suits them.
    - Read the description of each situation and try to imagine it happening to you.
    - You may not have experienced some of the situations but try to imagine them anyway.
    - There are two responses to each situation.
    - Perhaps you don't like either response, but you should choose the one you think is most like you/most likely.
- 1. The project you are in charge of is a great success.**
    1. I kept a close watch over everyone's work [I].
    2. Everyone devoted a lot of time and energy to it [E].
  - 2. You and your spouse (boyfriend/girlfriend) make up after a fight.**
    1. I forgave him/her [E].
    2. I'm usually forgiving [I].
  - 3. You get lost driving to a friend's house.**
    1. I missed my turn [I].
    2. My friend gave me bad directions [E].
  - 4. Your spouse (boyfriend/girlfriend) surprises you with a gift.**
    1. He/she just got a raise at work [E].
    2. I took him/her out to a special dinner the night before [I].
  - 5. You forget your spouse's (boyfriend's/girlfriend's) birthday.**
    1. I'm not good at remembering birthdays [I].
    2. I was preoccupied with other things [E].
  - 6. You get a flower from a secret admirer.**
    1. I am attractive to him/her [E].
    2. I am a popular person [I].
  - 7. You run for a community office position and win.**
    1. I devote a lot of time and energy to campaigning [E].
    2. I work very hard at everything I do [I].
  - 8. You miss an important engagement.**
    1. Sometimes my memory fails me [I].
    2. I forgot to check my appointment book [E].
  - 9. You run for a community office position and you lose.**
    1. I didn't campaign hard enough [I].
    2. The person who won knew more people [E].
  - 10. You host a successful dinner.**
    1. I was particularly charming that night [E].
    2. I am a good host [I].
- Add up the number of 'I' (internal attribution) responses and the number of 'E' (external attribution) responses.
  - Those with a greater number of E responses are more likely to be optimistic than those with a greater number of I responses (always assuming blame).
  - People who don't automatically blame themselves tend to be more optimistic about their futures.

- Our belief that the future will be better depends a lot on changing our thinking when bad things happen.

### Part 9.

## Summing Up/ Looking forward

### WHAT HAPPENS

Participants should review the main things they learned during the module.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Ask participants to write on a 'post-it' note two things they learned during this module, then paste their post it on the wall.
- Then read out aloud some of the statements without identifying who wrote them.
- This activity helps participants become more comfortable with speaking publicly without having to feel personally vulnerable.

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### Part 10.

## Homework

### WHAT HAPPENS

The homework for this module asks participants to develop a map of their ruggedness by reflecting on a social situation.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- This homework will help you think about your level of ruggedness and the qualities of being rugged by reflecting on an incident that happened to you which causes you stress or worry. This should be an event that happens before the next session.
- Before the next session, complete the form over the page.



**SITUATION** Describe the situation – Where was I? What was happening?

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**COGNITIVE PROMPT** What thoughts did I have about the situation?

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What thoughts did I have about myself?

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**EMOTIONAL PROMPT** How did I feel about the situation?

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**BEHAVIOURAL PROMPT** What did I do to cope with feeling this way?

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<b>EMOTIONAL PROMPT</b>	How happy am I with this way of coping?	/10
	How helpful was it?	/10
	How healthy was my coping strategy?	/10
	How socially desirable was my coping strategy?	/10
	How 'in control' did I feel?	/10

What did I learn from this situation?

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How might it affect how I behave in the future?

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How do situations similar to this affect my thoughts and feelings about myself?

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# 4.

## Module 4

# NEGOTIATING NEW MEANINGS

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This module helps participants to improve their ruggedness and develop the skills to help them cope with situations that have the potential to trigger social anxiety. By building on the previous module, where they developed an understanding of what makes an individual rugged, as well as an understanding of their own 'ruggedness', participants will learn how to challenge negative thinking and foster positive self-talk as they build their resilience.



# Module Outline

## OUTCOMES

- Participants will learn how to enhance their ruggedness by:
  - Determining biases and distortions in their thinking;
  - Challenging negative automatic thoughts;
  - Developing rugged responses to troubling thoughts;
  - Becoming understanding and accepting of themselves.

## MATERIALS

- A 'talking stick' or another symbol of group respect;
- Flipchart paper and markers, or other drawing tools (a computer screen, tablet, etc.);
- Copies of the challenge form (activity 1 / 2);
- Copies of the homework forms;
- A healthy snack.

## SESSION MAP

90 MINUTES

1. Welcome
2. Awareness practice
3. Talking point
4. Activity 1: Distorted thoughts
5. Activity 2: The challenge
6. Health break
7. Activity 3: Cleaning up emotions
8. Activity 4: Feeling out sensations
9. Summing up / looking forward
10. Homework

## Part 1.

# Welcome

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants are welcomed back to the group and there are opportunities to reflect on events and progress since the last session.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Refer to the Rules of Engagement, then, invite each person to say their name (this will help everyone remember who is in the group) and say, "I am committed to the rules." If someone prefers not to speak, they can say their name and signal their commitment (e.g., with a thumbs-up gesture).
- As person each person receives the talking stick (or other object of respect), encourage them to answer the following questions:
  - In a few words, how are you feeling about being here today? Please remember that everyone needs a turn to speak so be sure to keep your answer reasonably short.
  - Has anything 'awesome' happened since you were last with the group?
  - Has anything 'not-so-awesome' happened since you were last with the group?

## Part 2.

# Awareness Practice

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Each session, participants are invited to practice a short awareness exercise. Regular practice of focused breathing will help participants learn to regulate their physiology in response to stress or anxiety.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Use the following script as a guide to lead participants through the following breathing exercise (read slowly):
    - Today, we'll begin with a short breath practice. We will be practicing a couple of awareness practices for this module, so for now, we will just take a few moments to arrive and check in with our body and breath.
    - Please find a comfortable position.
    - You may close your eyes if you choose.
    - Let's begin by noticing how it feels to be here today.
    - Check in with how your body feels sitting here now.
    - There's no need to do anything special, or change anything, just notice.
- Pause
- Now, bring your attention to your breath.

Pause

- Rest with your breath for the next few moments.
- If your mind wanders, that's okay, that's what minds do. When you notice your mind has wandered, gently bring your attention back to your breath.

Pause (allow 30 – 45 seconds)

- Before you come back to the room, take two or three deep breaths, try to lengthen your exhale.

Pause (allow 30 – 45 seconds)

- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.
- Remind participants that the awareness activities are practices. Practice means it's not perfect! The practice of noticing when our mind has wandered, and then gently bringing our focus back to our chosen place strengthens our attention and ability to regulate.
    - If you notice that your mind wanders a lot – that's okay. That is just what minds do!
    - The first step is noticing your sensations, thoughts, and feelings.
    - When you're more aware, you are better able to self-regulate.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any questions or comments about this, or any, of the Awareness Practices.

### Part 3.

# Talking point – Getting Rugged

## WHAT HAPPENS

This session begins with the facilitator recapping the main qualities of being rugged, which are having good problem-solving skills, having good self-regulation, a strong sense of agency (the belief in the possibility that we can achieve what we want to achieve), and having hope and finding meaning. Participants will then learn that this module is about improving these skills in order to build our resilience.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Briefly recap the main qualities of being rugged (see previous module). Then explain:
- This module aims to improve your ruggedness by helping you to discover ways in which we can improve these individual rugged qualities. The activities and the homework are designed to improve awareness and build skills that help us manage the challenges we face like social anxiety.
- Share the spiral of social anxiety (see over).



- This spiral shows the example of someone having difficulty in a social situation.
  - In this example it could be meeting up with a friend, a superior, or a potential partner, but the spiral applies to other situations too. When we're not rugged, we are at risk of sliding down the spiral, with things getting seemingly getting more and more out of control.
- In this example, something mildly troubling like not knowing what to say spirals down to the conclusion that the person feels useless and no good at these kinds of situations.
- You can imagine that the next time this person is faced with a similar situation, they may it will also go badly.
- In contrast, a rugged individual is better equipped to deal with the challenges and setbacks we all experience. They can challenge the problem and stop it leading them down the spiral. For example, a rugged individual might stammer or stutter, like we all are prone to now and then, but they stop this from making things worse. They might recognise they are a little nervous or that they haven't spoken up until this point, so stuttering or stammering is normal and to be expected. They might also think how stuttering isn't going to define how other people view them.
- These are rugged responses and ensure individuals stay high up the spiral. They might slip down from time to time, but they don't allow things to get out of control.
- However, not all of us have the good fortune to naturally know how to be rugged.
- Also, some of us will have experienced setbacks that mean we are at risk of sliding down the spiral faster than others.
- The purpose of the following modules is to introduce strategies that will help you avoid sliding down the spiral by learning how to become more rugged.

## Part 4.

# Activity 1: Distorted Thoughts

## WHAT HAPPENS

In this activity, participants learn about automatic thoughts that occur when facing situations that cause stress and worry and how to raise these thoughts into conscious awareness. They also learn about cognitive distortions which can hold us back and stop us from achieving our potential. By learning to raise these automatic thoughts to awareness and then identifying biases in our thinking, participants set the stage for developing rugged responses.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Explain to participants that part of developing a rugged mindset involves exploring and challenging some of the thoughts they have when facing situations that cause them stress and worry.
- Share with participants the challenge form.
- **The situation:** Ask participants to think about a social situation which makes them feel uncomfortable. This could be a situation they have experienced from time to time, like meeting new people, or giving a presentation at school or work.
  - It could also be a situation they have not experienced but which could happen in the future, like meeting their girlfriend or boyfriend's family, or giving a performance on stage.
- In a sentence or two, ask participants to briefly describe this situation which causes stress or worry.
- **How bad is it?** Ask participants to rate how uncomfortable the situation is for them.

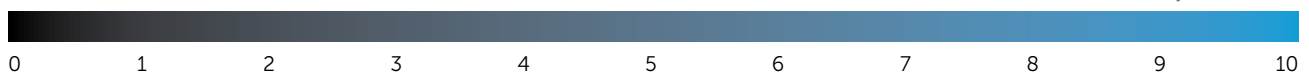
**Not stressful at all**

(Doesn't make me feel uncomfortable)

**Moderate**

**Extremely stressful**

(Makes me feel very uncomfortable)










- **Automatic thoughts:** Next, ask participants to write down the thoughts they have about this situation that come quickly to mind.
- These are thoughts about what being in the situation will be like for them, and how it will go.
- Remind participants that these thoughts are sometimes hard to identify.
- This is because they are automatic – they often stay below our conscious awareness because they are so familiar and seem normal and natural.



- We take their presence for granted and they make no demands for our attention. They also pop up and disappear quickly. In general, automatic thoughts have the following characteristics; they are:
  - **Automatic:** They arise without obvious conscious deliberation;
  - **Habitual:** We accept them as normal thoughts and so rarely pay direct attention to them;
  - **Rapid/fleeting:** They come and go quickly;
- Thinking about the situation that led to the unpleasant feeling can help with identifying these thoughts.
  - For example, a situation could be described as: ‘I was at work and I made a mistake’. An automatic thought about this could be ‘I felt like a failure’.

Some other examples are:

SITUATION	AUTOMATIC THOUGHT(S)	COGNITIVE DISTORTION(S)
		
I wanted to ask someone for coffee at work today, but in the end, I chickened out.	I'm a coward. I'm always putting things off.	
I had to give a presentation in class but I froze up.	Everyone thought I was no good. I can't give presentations.	
I knocked over a colleague's drink at work.	I'm a disaster. This is typical of me.	
I saw people talking together and wished I had a good friend.	I should be able to make friends. Something is wrong with me.	

- Automatic thoughts can be single sentences, but they might also be made up of multiple statements that link together. Participants should write down everything they feel important and relevant.
- Participants should try to describe at least three of these thoughts.

- **Emotions associated with thoughts:** Ask participants to write down the feelings they have about these thoughts.
  - Ask them whether they feel: Angry / Anxious/nervous / Ashamed / Embarrassed / Guilty / Irritated / Sad / Scared / or something else.
- Ask participants to check the automatic thoughts they created, and to write them out again on a slip of paper, without names or other identifying details, so they can be shared with the group anonymously. For example:
  - *I embarrassed Zhou and Liu -> I embarrassed my colleagues at work*
- Ask participants to share the automatic thoughts with you (the facilitator).
  - These should be written up on a whiteboard/flip chart so the group can see the thoughts.
  - If some of the thoughts are similar, they can be combined and a number or symbol next to the thought can be used to show the group that this is a common thought.
- **Distortions:** Automatic thoughts help us to quickly understand a situation and prepare us for what might happen, or help prepare us for future encounters.
- However, some are what psychologists call 'cognitive distortions', because they are ways of seeing or thinking about the world that are not accurate.
- These distortions are like defence mechanisms that have gotten out of hand.
  - What was once a mechanism designed to keep us safe has become something that keeps us so safe, it now actually holds us back and stops us from achieving our potential.
- Share with the group the list of common cognitive distortions below.
  - Each should be explained



- A. All-or-nothing thinking** – This kind of polarised thinking involves seeing the world in extremes.
- Everything is black or white and there is no room for shades of grey.
  - Things are either great or they are terrible, with nothing in between.
  - For instance, a person might think they will either succeed or they will fail; they don't consider that they could do well, and this might still be a very good outcome.



- B. Catastrophising** – This involves thinking that the very worst will or has happened.
- A person catastrophising expects disaster to occur at any moment.
  - This is also known as magnifying, when a person thinks about a small issue, but imagines the consequences to be dramatic.
  - For example, a person who fails an exam who then thinks this means they are a failure.



- C. Disqualifying the positive** – This distortion involves rejecting positive experiences instead of embracing them.
- Anything good that happens 'doesn't count' or wasn't due to their efforts.
  - For example, if a person reflects on a good conversation they had recently, someone who disqualifies the positive might not think about how they helped this conversation to flow, and instead think it was just chance they didn't screw up.



- D. Emotional reasoning** – This involves accepting feelings as fact, e.g., 'If I feel that way, it must be true'.
- For example, a person who feels stupid or boring and reasons using their emotions believes that they must be stupid and boring.



- E. Fortune telling** – Sometimes known as jumping to conclusions, fortune telling involves making predictions based on little or no evidence.
- For example, someone who has struggled with a past relationship may think that the next time they are in a relationship this will also fail.



- F. Mental filtering** – Someone who mentally filters focuses on a single or a few negative details at the expense of those that are positive.
- For example, a person who has been on a date might focus on one or two moments that did not go well, and agonise over these afterwards, despite it going very well overall.



- G. Mind reading** – This involves assuming what another person might think, often negatively.
- For example, if we are meeting with someone and we see them trying to subtly check their phone, we might think they are checking the time and are bored of us or what we might be saying.



- H. Overgeneralising** – Like catastrophising, this involves blowing things up out of proportion, but based on a pattern that might not exist.
- For instance, if a person gets turned down for a date twice in a row, they might think that this will happen every time they try.
  - Or if a person's boss at work tells them their work is no good, they think that this will continue to happen.
  - A single event can be seen as a pattern of failures.



- I. 'Should' statements** – These are made-up rules we create for ourselves and others around us that cause us distress when they are violated.
- For example, 'I should be stronger' or 'They should allow me to speak.'
  - When these rules are broken it can cause anger, sadness or frustration.

- Ask participants to review this list of distortions.
- There are many kinds of cognitive distortions and the group may identify important others.
- In general, cognitive distortions twist our perceptions of reality so that our interpretation of what has or could happen paints a picture of a negative future.
- Next, look to the list of automatic thoughts shared by the group.
  - Which cognitive distortions apply to which thought?
- Instruct participants to put the corresponding letter/badge for each distortion where they think it applies.
  - Some automatic thoughts may involve multiple cognitive distortions.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any questions.

Then, ask what they think of the list of cognitive distortions.

- Does anyone need any clarification?
- Are there particular cognitive distortions that are familiar?



### Review the key points:

- This activity illustrates how much of our thinking can be biased and distorted.
- While these thoughts can keep us safe because they prepare us for the worst, distorted thoughts are a problem when they push us to avoid situations or stop us from recognising or appreciating our successes.
- Distortions tend to reinforce negative thinking and keep us feeling bad about ourselves.
- Part of becoming rugged involves raising these twisted and biased perceptions of reality to conscious awareness and calling them out for the distortions that they are.

Part 5.

# Activity 2: The Challenge

## WHAT HAPPENS

In this activity, participants continue to challenge troubling automatic thoughts, using a form of Socratic dialogue with themselves to think about them critically. This conversation with ourselves helps us to develop a rational rebuttal to troublesome thoughts.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Ask participants to return to their list of automatic thoughts they came up with in the previous activity.
- Get participants to identify the automatic thought(s) they find most troubling.
- Using the challenge forms, get participants to investigate the accuracy of their thoughts by answering the following questions:

1. How sure are you that this is true/will happen? \_\_\_\_\_%

2. What evidence do you have that this bad thing is true/will happen?

.....  
.....

3. What evidence do you have that this bad thing is false/won't happen?

.....  
.....

4. What is the source of this belief? Does it come from a specific situation or person? (It's ok not to be sure where it comes from, but sometimes we might know: e.g., 'I can hear my parents saying I'm a failure', 'when I was younger I used to do this')

.....  
.....

5. What is the worst that could happen in this situation?

.....  
.....



6. How bad would it be if the thing you are worried about actually happened?

.....

.....

7. Is there another explanation for why this bad thing could happen?

.....

.....

8. Does this thought have to lead to a very bad outcome? Y / N

9. Is there another way you can think about this?

.....

.....

- When the group has finished answering these questions, share with them the following sheet (see below).
- This contains a list of some automatic thoughts that might make us feel anxious.
- These can be rebuffed by thinking about whether they involve one or more of the cognitive distortions, and also using the questions the group just worked through.

Automatic thought	Rugged response
This course is too hard. I want to leave.	I'm on a demanding course where expectations are high, but I'm getting an amazing education. I've done ok so far so I should consider sticking at it.
I'm going to fail.	I might not get the top score, but maybe I'll do ok.
I won't have anything interesting to say.	There are lots of things I could say. Other people aren't going to find everything I say fascinating, but that's ok because they will still probably think some of the things I say are interesting.
They will think I'm not good enough.	I don't know for sure what will happen. Some people have high standards and others do not. If I'm able to keep calm and show my strengths I will have given it my best shot, and although I want them to think I'm good enough, there will always be other opportunities.
I'm always embarrassing myself.	I've made mistakes in the past, but that doesn't mean I will keep making them in the future.
I'm a bad person.	If I'm worried about being a bad person, I'm probably not a bad person. Bad people don't care. I might have done bad things in the past, but I can do good now.

**Optional activity (time permitting):**

- The table below gives five more of these automatic anxious thoughts.
- As a group, see if they can come up with rugged responses to these thoughts. Remember the list of common cognitive distortions and use the challenge questions above.
- Five more spaces are also given below. Get the group to share suggestions for more automatic anxious thoughts.
- Participants should write these down on a slip of paper and pass them to the facilitator, so suggested ideas are anonymous and the participants feel more willing to share thoughts that may be relevant to them.
- Follow these up with rugged responses from the group.

Automatic thought	Rugged response
I never do things right	
I'll always be lonely	
I'm going to make a fool out of myself	
I feel hopeless	
This relationship is sure to fail	

**Continuation of main activity:**

- Next, ask participants to pass their challenge sheets to the facilitator.
- These should be shuffled and shared back with the group so that a person has a completed sheet from someone else in the group.
- Their task now is to summarise the responses that have been given to the questions and to create rugged statements.
- These statements should involve as much of the information provided on the challenge sheet as possible, summarising this to create a positive response to the original automatic thought.
  - An example of a brief rugged statement might be "The things I'm most worried about are not likely to happen, and even if they do, the consequences are pretty short-term."



- At the end of the session, participants should collect their responses so they can read the statements given to them.

#### Emphasize the following points:

- Automatic thoughts tend to be negative because we always try to protect ourselves and avoid feeling uncomfortable.
- This is a natural defence mechanism which helps us avoid harm. Of course, sometimes this goes too far and we need to do things that make us feel uncomfortable rather than avoiding these situations altogether.
- Our negative thinking is often reflected in the emotions that go along with these thoughts – remember, thoughts and emotions often influence each other.
- We can challenge these automatic thoughts by identifying common errors in our thinking –cognitive distortions.
- We all make these errors from time to time but it's important to catch them and call them out for what they are: preventing us from living our lives boldly.
- A powerful way to overcome these troubling thoughts is to put forward new statements about situations that scare us and about our ability to handle them.
- These are rugged statements that challenge negative thinking and help make you the best you can be.
- This process is called cognitive restructuring.
- It helps us challenge unhelpful thinking with reason and strong positive statements which we know to be true.
- These form your rugged response and allow you to break the cycle of unnecessary concern and worry.

#### Part 6.

## Health Break

#### WHAT HAPPENS

The group should take a 10-minute break to stretch their legs, relax, eat, drink, use restrooms, etc. The Health break also gives participants some informal time to talk between themselves about the exercises.

## Part 7.

# Activity 3: Cleaning Up Emotions

## WHAT HAPPENS

Part of being rugged is accepting that some of the difficulties we face can't or should not be challenged. So rather than always striving to overcome and eliminate anything we don't like, a rugged approach also involves learning to accept and live more harmoniously with some challenges. In this activity, participants will learn how to identify difficulties that should not be struggled with, in turn recognising and becoming more accepting of themselves.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Explain to participants the rationale for acceptance. This can be explained by describing four ways we can approach challenging situations (see image below):
  1. **Avoiding/exiting:** The first is to leave the situation, or to avoid it in the first place.
    - So, if we are asked to meet a friend for lunch and think this will be stressful, we can either make excuses not to go or we can go and then leave very early.
    - Sometimes avoiding or leaving a situation is not always possible or preferable, like if your boss summons you to their office for a meeting, or if you want to make new friends despite the thought of this being stressful.
  2. **Problem-solving:** The second option is to engage a challenging situation but change whatever we can to make it better.
    - This is something we will focus on in the next module.
    - However, sometimes there are things we can't change, and so the experience will always be uncomfortable.
    - For example, most people find their driving test very stressful – so it's normal to find this very challenging and unreasonable to think that this could be a stress-free experience.
    - If we want to be able to drive, we need to put ourselves in a situation that will make us feel stressed and nervous.
  3. **Enduring:** The third approach involves asking participants to put themselves into these important situations and endure them.
    - If these situations are rare or once-off, like taking a driving test or attending a funeral, then at least they are over relatively quickly.
    - But if these are recurrent situations, like answering the phone at work or presenting reports to superiors, and we know we struggle with these, then we may be pushed rely on things that make us feel better after, like drinking or escapism like watching TV or playing video games.
    - These are 'emotional control strategies' because they help us to cope with the challenging emotions that follow challenging situations.
    - They can be harmless, but because they don't address the issue, they can cause problems in the future – like turning into addictions and harming relationships.

- 4. Accepting:** The fourth approach is what we focus on in this activity. This is also about engaging important situations where we may not be able to change things to make it a stress-free experience.
- The difference in this approach is that we practise acceptance, which makes being in the situation much easier.
  - The strategies we use in this activity help us develop these skills.



- Russ Harris, an English therapist and coach who originally trained as a doctor, shares a good story that helps understand the importance of this fourth approach .
- He describes the scene of an old movie, where one of the characters falls into quicksand.
- The more the person struggles, the quicker they sink into the quicksand.
- Most of us know that the important thing to do if you ever get caught in quicksand is to keep calm – struggling is the worst thing you can do.
  - The more you struggle, the quicker you sink under the surface (the trick is to lie back and spread your arms, distributing your weight and staying still - you won't necessarily be able to get free, but it might buy you time for someone to find and help you).
- Russ shares this story as a metaphor for how some situations provoke instinctual actions, like struggling, yet the best thing to do is to keep calm and not to struggle.
  - Often, struggling actually makes things worse.
- This applies to difficult feelings we may have, like stress or worry towards social situations.



- The more we try to suppress and fight these feelings, the more they consume and challenge us.
- Russ shares another metaphor that helps to explain why this is the case: the 'struggle switch'.
- When this switch in our minds is switched 'on', it means we will struggle against any discomfort – physical or emotional – we'll try to get rid of it or get away from it. This includes anxiety. So, when the switch is on, we believe that feeling anxious is unacceptable, and this causes us difficulties.
  - As an example, ask participants to imagine that their struggle switch is turned on. This can cause *secondary emotions* (feelings about feelings).
  - Ask participants to suggest some of these secondary emotions that they might experience, e.g., How do they typically feel when they realise that they are anxious? This can be prompted by thinking about specific thoughts associated with reflections on anxiety, e.g., *'I'm so disappointed with myself'* (sadness), *'how dare they make me feel this way'* (anger), or *'I shouldn't have let myself feel like this again'* (guilt).
- These secondary emotions are draining, because they cause us fatigue and additional stress and worry. On top of this, we might feel angry, stressed, or upset about feeling fatigued or stressed or worried (*'I'm sad about feeling sad, which makes me sad'*). And so, the vicious cycle continues.
- But if the struggle switch is off, then whatever emotion we encounter, no matter how unpleasant, we don't struggle with it.
  - So, if we feel anxious, that's unpleasant, but it's not terrible and we don't have to be so bothered by it.
  - Our anxiety can be high and low and change as a situation develops, and sometimes it can be gone altogether.
  - But importantly, we're not wasting our time and energy struggling with it.
- Without the struggle, we are left with a natural level of physical or emotional discomfort, depending on who we are and the situation we are in.
- In Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, this is called "clean discomfort."
  - Clean discomfort is something we all face now and again in life. But once we start struggling against feelings like anxiety, our discomfort levels rapidly rise and cause additional suffering. This is what is known as "dirty discomfort".
- The struggle switch amplifies our emotions when it's on. We can get angry about being angry, sad about being sad, or feel worried about being worried. And we can get angry about being sad about feeling sad, and so on.
- But a bigger problem is that with the switch on, we are unwilling to accept the presence of these feelings, meaning that not only do we get distressed, we unnecessarily invest time and energy (and sometimes money) into ways to get rid of them or distract ourselves from them.
- Instead, it is important to try to limit ourselves to just the "clean discomfort" by accepting feelings and sensations we have from time to time that may be unpleasant.
  - And as a bonus, researchers have found that the more accepting people are of troubling emotions, the less likely they are to occur in the future .
- What we focus on now is how to be less challenged by unpleasant feelings.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Now, we're going to work on accepting our emotions.
    - The first step is to identify a challenging emotion.
  - Invite participants to think about a challenging situation they have experienced which led to some troubling feelings.
    - If more than one emotion comes up, just pick one of them.
  - If a participant is having difficulty identifying an emotion, ask everyone to sit for a moment with eyes closed (if they are comfortable), focusing on physical sensations and thoughts.
  - Think about the situation and see if there is a name that can be given to what is being felt (e.g., anger, sadness, guilt).
  - Ask participants to write the name for the emotion on a slip of paper.
    - They should place this, face down, a few feet in front of them.
    - In this process, they are channeling the emotion out of themselves and temporarily down onto the paper.
  - Next lead the following visualization using the following guiding script:
    - Please find a comfortable seated position.
    - You may close your eyes if you choose, or have a soft gaze ahead of you.
    - Now, please bring to mind the slip of paper in front of you.

Pause

  - Notice the distance between yourself and this emotion.

Pause

  - If the emotion had a size, what would it be?
  - Is it huge, as big as you, bigger than you?
  - If it had a shape, what would it be like?
  - If it had a colour, what colour would it be?

Pause

  - Now, imagine the emotion rising out of the slip of paper in front of you, with the size, shape and colour you have just given it.
  - Take a few moments to look at this emotion, seeing it for what it is.
  - There might be extra details that weren't there before, like new colours or movements.
  - Perhaps you can turn it, inspecting it from different sides or listen to it or look out for changes.

Pause

  - Now that you've gotten an opportunity to better understand your emotion, you may to gently absorb the emotion back inside yourself.
  - When you are ready, you may open your eyes.
- Ask participants to take back the slip of paper in front of them and write down answers to the following:
  - How did you feel about this emotion?
  - What size and colour did you give it?
  - Was there any change in the emotion when you got a little distance from it?
  - How did it feel when the exercise was over?



### Remind participants:

- Becoming more aware of how we are feeling and encouraging distance helps us to reduce our 'dirty discomfort'.
- Our next activity, Feeling out Sensations, will help you foster greater awareness to promote acceptance.

## Part 8.

# Activity 4: Feeling out sensations

### WHAT HAPPENS

In this activity, participants engage in a similar activity involving introspection (looking in on ourselves). While the previous activity was about creating some distance between the participant and a challenging emotion, this activity promotes a different kind of distancing, where individuals learn to notice and think about sensations within themselves that accompany challenging situations. By analysing and exploring themselves, the activity fosters a healthy means to recognise and cope with difficult sensations.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS



*This activity may be challenging for some participants. Try to normalize this by naming the challenges and objectives.*

- The objective is to observe the sensation, not to think deeply about it. If participants start to think about what's happening (like 'I'm finding this really hard'), just encourage them to thank their mind for the thought and to gently bring their attention back to observing.
- This exercise can be challenging. Some may feel a strong urge to fight with the sensation or to push it away. Tell participants to acknowledge this urge without giving in to it (acknowledging is like nodding your head in recognition, as if to say, 'there you are, I see you'). Once any urges are acknowledged, go back to the sensation itself.
- Instruct participants not to try to get rid of the sensation or alter it. If it changes by itself, that's ok. If it doesn't change, that's ok too. Changing or getting rid of it is not the goal.
- Giving up the struggle can take anywhere from seconds to minutes. Patience is important. Encourage participants to take as long as they need.

- Use the following guiding script to lead participants through the activity. Allow several seconds between prompts.

- Find a comfortable seated position.
- You may close your eyes, if you wish.
- Begin with a few slow, deep breaths.

Pause

- Now, bring to mind a challenging situation.
- This could be the same challenging situation from before, or it could be something else.
- Take a moment with this situation – notice any emerging thoughts or feelings.

Pause

- For the next few moments, you will 'scan' their body from head to toe, looking out for sensations in the body.
- Begin with your feet and move your awareness up through your body, and pause when you notice a strong or uncomfortable sensation.

Pause

- You may notice several uncomfortable sensations. Try to focus on the strongest sensation - the one that bothers you the most.
- For example, it may be a lump in your throat, a tightness in your stomach, or an ache in your back.
- Focus your attention on that sensation.

Pause

- Try to observe it curiously, as if you are a friendly scientist discovering something new for the first time.

Pause

- Observe the sensation carefully. Notice where it starts and where it ends.
- Try to learn as much about it as you can.
- If you had to draw a line around the sensation, what would the outline look like?
- Is it on the surface of the body, or inside you, or both?
- How far inside you does it go?
- Where is the sensation most intense? Where is it weakest?
- How is it different in the centre than around the edges?
- Is it moving or still? Is there any pulsation, or vibration within it?
- Is it light or heavy?
- What is its temperature?

Pause

- Now, take a few more deep breaths, then let go of any struggle with that sensation.
- See if you can breathe into it
- Imagine your breath is flowing in and around it.

Pause

- See if you can make room for it
- See if you can relax or loosen up around it, as much as it will.

Pause

- Allow it to be there.
- You don't have to like it or want it.
- Simply let it be.
- This might feel challenging – that is okay.

Pause

- You might notice thoughts that pull you away from the sensation.
- You can acknowledge the thought, and then gently bring your attention back to the sensation.
- Just notice what is happening now.

Pause

- Allow the sensation to be there. Turn towards it, not trying to change it.
- You may notice it changes; you may notice it does not.
- Either is okay.
- All you need to do is bring awareness to it.

Pause

- Take time allowing this sensation to be here now.
- When you are ready, you can return your attention to your breath for a few moments.

Pause

- Take two deep breaths at your own pace, and then you may return to the room.

### **Optional activity (time permitting): Repeat the Practice**

- Once this activity has been completed, ask participants to scan their bodies again to see if there's another strong sensation that is bothering them.
- If so, repeat the procedure with that sensation.
- If some of the participants only have one main sensation that is troubling them, get them to repeat the activity to see if things have changed.
- Thinking about different challenging situations can lead to different sensations.



### **Remind participants:**

- These exercises can be repeated for as many feelings (emotions and sensations) that you struggle with.
- As you repeat the activities, either their feelings will change, or they won't.
- Although changing feelings and sensations might be a welcome accomplishment, these activities aren't focused on total elimination (we want to avoid the struggle to change), instead they are about acceptance.
- By avoiding the struggle with our feelings – both physical and emotional – we gain more freedom and control over ourselves.
- We learn not to be so controlled by our own feelings, but rather to recognise them without getting caught up in their content.
  - When experiencing challenging feelings, some people find it helpful to silently say to themselves, 'I don't like this feeling, but I have room for it,' or, 'it is unpleasant, but I can accept it.' Acceptance lets us do more.
- This process also sets us up to be more rugged in the future when encountering new situations that provoke strong feelings. By learning how to observe feelings in a distanced and non-judgemental way (the curious scientist), we don't allow them to control us.
- These activities should be practised once a day for a month.



- They can be done quickly at some point during your day, like in bed just after waking, in a quiet space at lunchtime, or just before sleep. After a month, see if you notice any change in how you feel about these emotion(s) and sensation(s).

### Part 9.

## Summing up/ looking forward

### WHAT HAPPENS

Participants should review the main things they learned and experienced during the module.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Ask participants to write on a 'post-it' note two things they learned during this module, then past their post it on the wall.
- Then read aloud out some of the statements without identifying who wrote them.
- This activity helps participants become more comfortable with speaking publicly without having to feel personally vulnerable.

### Part 10.

## Homework

### WHAT HAPPENS

The homework involves completing a good practice record, and rugged response record.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

For this week, you will have two activities to practice regularly before our next session.

1. Good Practice Exercise
2. Rugged Response Record

Practice activities 3 (Good Practice) and 4 (Rugged Response Record) from this session every day between now and the next session. Please use the accompanying tracking sheets below.

You can also continue to practice focused the awareness practices regularly.

**1. Exercise: Good practice**

Practice activities 3 and 4 from this session every day between now and the next session. Use the form below to record and reflect on your experiences.

Time and date	Activity/ technique	Where did you practise?	What feeling (emotion/sensation) did you focus on?	How did you find this activity?
7pm Monday 7th December	Accepting...	In my bedroom	Feeling guilty	Quite hard
10pm Monday 7th December	Feeling out...	In my bedroom	Feeling tight in my stomach	OK

**2. Exercise: Rugged response record**

When you are thinking about your rugged response, remember:

- What evidence is there for the automatic thought(s)?
- How bad would it really be if it was true?
- Is there another way of thinking about this?

Situation	Automatic thought(s)	Emotion(s)	Cognitive distortions	Rugged response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happened that led to the unpleasant emotion/thought/sensation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What automatic thoughts did you have?</li> <li>• Rate your belief in these thoughts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you feel?</li> <li>• Can you explain why?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What cognitive distortions apply to your thoughts?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your rugged response to these thoughts?</li> <li>• Rate your belief in this response</li> </ul>
<p><i>I was in a store and the cashier smiled at me, but instead of smiling back I just looked away.</i></p>	<p><i>I should have smiled back. I'm such an idiot. They will think I'm so rude. This is why I can't make friends.</i> Belief: 80%</p>	<p><i>Sad and angry. Because I wished I had smiled back and am disappointed with myself.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Should statements</i></li> <li>• <i>Catastrophising</i></li> <li>• <i>Mind reading</i></li> <li>• <i>Overgeneralising</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Looking back, I wish I had smiled back. I can remember to try next time and could practice this with someone or just in the mirror. Not smiling at someone doesn't make me an idiot though. Everyone makes mistakes and this doesn't prove that I can't make friends either. I also don't know for sure that they think I was being rude, and if I see them again I will smile first.</i> Belief: 60%</p>

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**NOTES ON  
MODULE 4**

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# 5.

## Module 5

# FOSTERING RUGGED RESILIENCE

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This module continues the process of developing participants' 'ruggedness'. Participants develop additional skills and gain knowledge which enhances their rugged resilience, thereby helping them to overcome difficulties associated with social anxiety and enabling them to be the best they can be.



# Module Outline

## OUTCOMES

- Participants will develop their ruggedness by:
  - Reconnecting with prior achievements in order to recognise their strengths and their ability to succeed in the future;
  - Envisioning appropriate goals and the steps necessary to work towards them;
  - Developing their problem-solving skills, including the identification and analysis of issues and the generation and evaluation of potential solutions.

## MATERIALS

- A 'talking stick' or another symbol of group respect;
- Flipchart paper and markers, or other drawing tools (a computer screen, tablet, etc.);
- Copies of the rugged roots (activity 1);
- Copies of the changing paths form (activity 2);
- Copies of the homework form;
- A healthy snack.

## SESSION MAP

90 MINUTES

1. Welcome
2. Awareness practice
3. Talking point
4. Activity 1: Rugged roots
5. Activity 2: Pushing forward
6. Health break
7. Activity 3: The incomplete story
8. Activity 4: Changing paths
9. Summing up / looking forwards
10. Homework

**Part 1.****Welcome****WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants are welcomed back to the group and there are opportunities to reflect on events and progress since the last session.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Remind participants of the Rules of Engagement, then, invite each person should say their name (this will help everyone remember who is in the group) and say, "I am committed to the rules". If someone prefers not to speak, they can say their name and signal their commitment (e.g., with a thumbs-up gesture).
- As person each person receives the talking stick (or another object of respect), encourage them to answer the following questions:
  - In a few words, how are you feeling about being here today? Please remember that everyone needs a turn to speak so be sure to keep your answer reasonably short.
  - Has anything 'awesome' happened since you were last with the group?
  - Has anything 'not-so-awesome' happened since you were last with the group?

**Part 2.****Awareness Practice – Thoughtful De-fusion****WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants are invited to practice an acceptance exercise for working with troubling thoughts. Thoughtful de-fusion is an important exercise that is often used in different forms in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. It helps individuals to develop more distance between themselves and troubling thoughts by helping to foster the non-judgemental 'curious scientist' approach. This space created by 'de-fusion' allows us to live with challenging thoughts and feelings and not allow them to consume or control us.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Introduce the activity:
  - The following exercise will help you to gain awareness of your thoughts, and give you an opportunity to practice letting them go.
  - By becoming aware of our thoughts, and letting them go, we are able to manage negative thinking patterns when they emerge.
- Use the following script as a guide to lead participants through the following breathing exercise (read slowly):

- Find a comfortable seated position with your back straight and feet flat on the floor.
- Sit with your arms and legs uncrossed, with your hands resting in your lap.
- Slowly, allow your eyes to close, if it feels comfortable to do so.
- Take a moment to get in touch with the physical sensations in your body.
- Feel where your body connects to the chair, feel your feet on the floor and your hands as they rest against your legs.

Pause

- Feel your chest rise and fall with each breath.

Pause

- Now, imagine that you are sitting next to a stream. Look at the scene around you.
- Perhaps this is a familiar place, or somewhere you have dreamt up. What does it look like?

Pause

- Look at the stream. Notice that there are some leaves floating slowly past you. Watch the leaves float down the stream as they move with the current.

Pause

- For the next few minutes, take each thought that enters your mind and slowly place it on a leaf. Let the leaf float down the stream.
- Do this for any thought that comes into your mind, positive or negative.
- Place each on a leaf and watch them drift downstream and out of sight.

Pause

- Return to watching the stream while you wait for any further thoughts.
- When it comes, put it on a leaf and watch it drift by.

Pause

- If your mind says, 'this is stupid' or 'I can't do this', take those thoughts and place them on leaves too, and let them pass.

Pause

- If a leaf gets stuck, let it hang around until it's ready to float by.

Pause

- If a difficult or painful thought arises, simply acknowledge it. Say to yourself, 'I notice this challenging thought'. Place it on a leaf and allow it to float by.

Pause

- When you are ready, watch the last leaf float past and prepare to return to the room.

Pause

- Take a moment to bring your attention back to where you are, your breathing, any sounds you can hear, and when you are ready, open your eyes.

- After the awareness practice, ask participants to consider the following questions. They can write their thoughts down on paper, or in their workbook.
  - Do you feel better or worse now than you did before this activity? Try to explain why.
  - Were there some thoughts that were harder to release than others? Try to explain why.

- Remind participants these awareness activities are opportunities for practice, rather than striving for perfection.
  - It is the practice of awareness, and gently bringing our focus back that strengthens our attention and ability to regulate.
  - If you notice that your mind wanders a lot – that’s okay. That’s just what minds do!
  - The first step is noticing the mind.
  - When you’re more aware of your thoughts, you are better able to manage them.

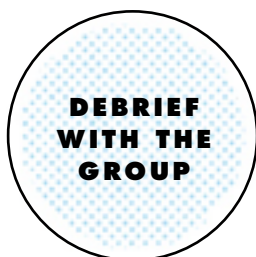
### Part 3.

## Talking point – Reflections on the homework

Facilitators should explain that this module closely follows the last one and continues to focus on developing participants’ ruggedness. However, before new activities are introduced, this discussion time should be used to find out how the participants got on with the homework activities set in the last module. This involved practising techniques that reduce difficulties associated with anxiety such as troubling feelings and thoughts. They also involved directly challenging negative automatic thoughts by developing rugged responses.

### WHAT HAPPENS

- Explore any challenges and successes related to experiences undertaking the homework activities.
  - *Did participants notice a change in themselves since the first time they tried the acceptance strategies?*
  - *Were some activities harder than others?*
  - *How easy did they find it was coming up with the rugged responses?*
  - *What made these rugged responses more / less believable?*



#### Debrief with the Group:

- Encourage participants to continue to practise the acceptance strategies.
- Continuing the rugged response record is part of the homework for this module.
- Participants can also practice Thoughtful de-fusion is a helpful strategy to develop awareness thoughts. When we are aware of our thoughts, we can better understand the nature of our mind, and catch negative thinking patterns before they become entrenched.



## Part 4.

# Activity 1: Rugged roots

## WHAT HAPPENS

Most of us are unfairly hard on ourselves. We tend to focus on our failures more than we do our successes, and we do this even more when facing adversity like social anxiety. When we focus on the negative events in our past, the things we have achieved are easily overshadowed, and it can be challenging to have a positive view of ourselves and the future. Instead, recalling our strengths can help when we face challenges that can make us feel bad about ourselves, like the stress and worry caused by particular social situations. The psychologist David Creswell and his colleagues in the United States found that positive reminders of ourselves help to reduce the effects of negative emotions and protect against stress<sup>1</sup>. They can also help to restore balance in our mental health after experiencing a stressful event<sup>ii</sup>. Therefore, in this activity, we draw out past successes and think about our role in them to remind ourselves of our abilities and that the foundations of our ruggedness are already within us.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS



- Share the rugged roots outlines (see below).
- Around these outlines, ask participants to make a list of the things they have achieved in life.
  - Big or small, list them all using short phrases or sentences.
- For example, if the group are university students, getting onto their course is a clear achievement. But think about ordinary everyday successes too, like a time when they were able to cheer someone up, or if they surprised a friend or family member with something.
- Encourage the group to think about different kinds of achievements.
  - Try to balance academic successes with thinking about successes in other areas, like with family or other kinds of activities like sports or gaming.
- We are often more capable than we realise, and our successes can be hard to identify.
- Sometimes it helps to think about these in a different way.
- Think back to difficulties, obstacles, or other kinds of challenges and how we overcame or recovered from these.
  - For example, if there was a particularly challenging assignment at school or a tough day at work, what did you do to get through it? Even these minor achievements are evidence of our rugged capabilities.
- When the participants have a selection of varied achievements written around the outside of the body outlines (see example over the page), get them to pass their outline to the person next to them.

Looked after my brother when he was sick

Helped a friend out when they were sad

Won a league match

Saved up for a holiday

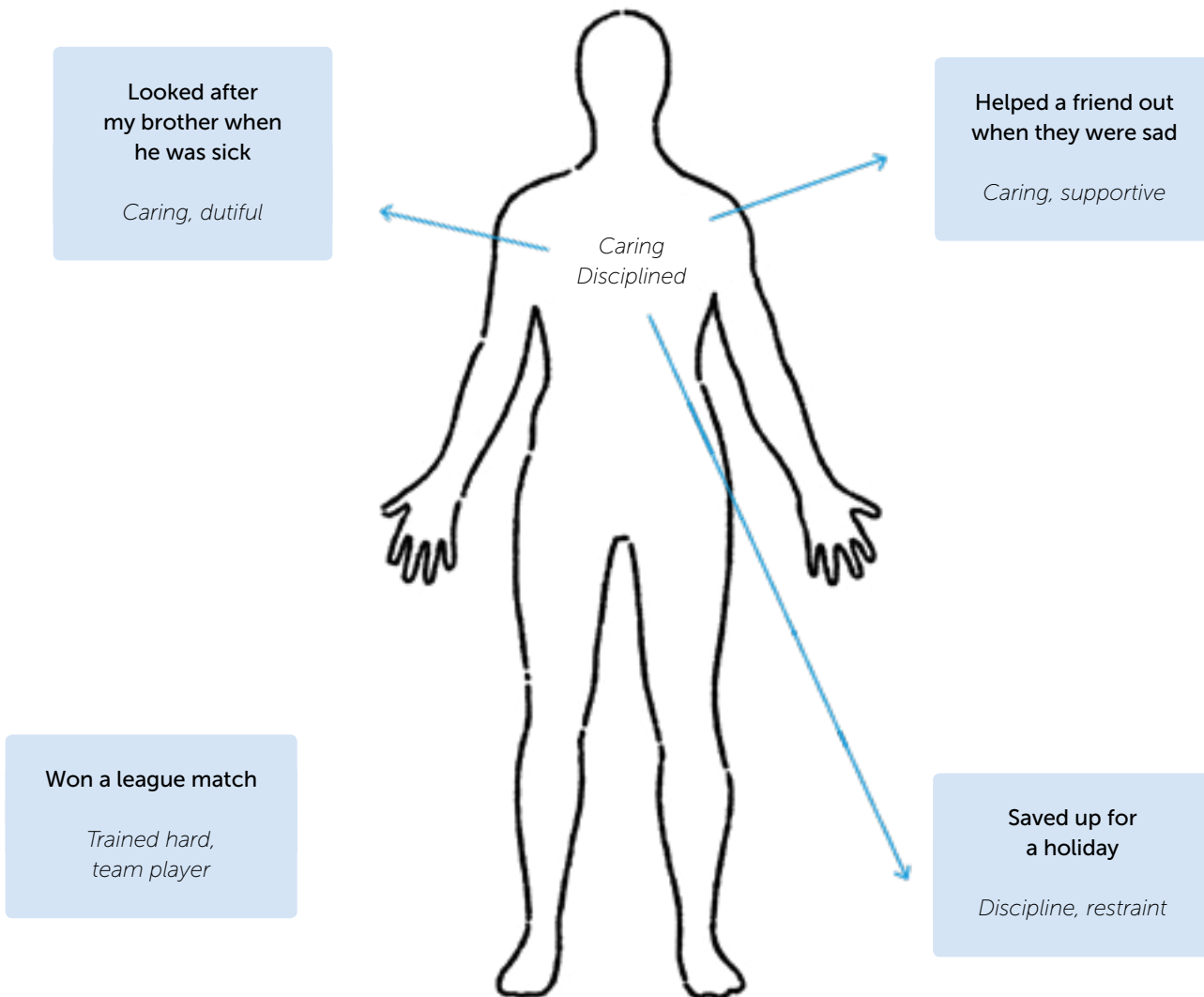
- This person should look through the list of achievements and think about the positive personal qualities that could have contributed to their success.
  - Try to come up with simple adjectives or descriptive phrases to indicate what helped the person.
  - Write these below the achievement.
- For instance, passing exams could be because the person is 'hard-working', 'diligent', or a 'good planner', and helping a friend to get through a difficulty could be because they are 'supportive', 'caring', 'dutiful', etc. Encourage participants to think of multiple options for each. The same descriptions might apply to many different achievements (see example below).

Looked after my brother when he was sick  
*Caring, dutiful*

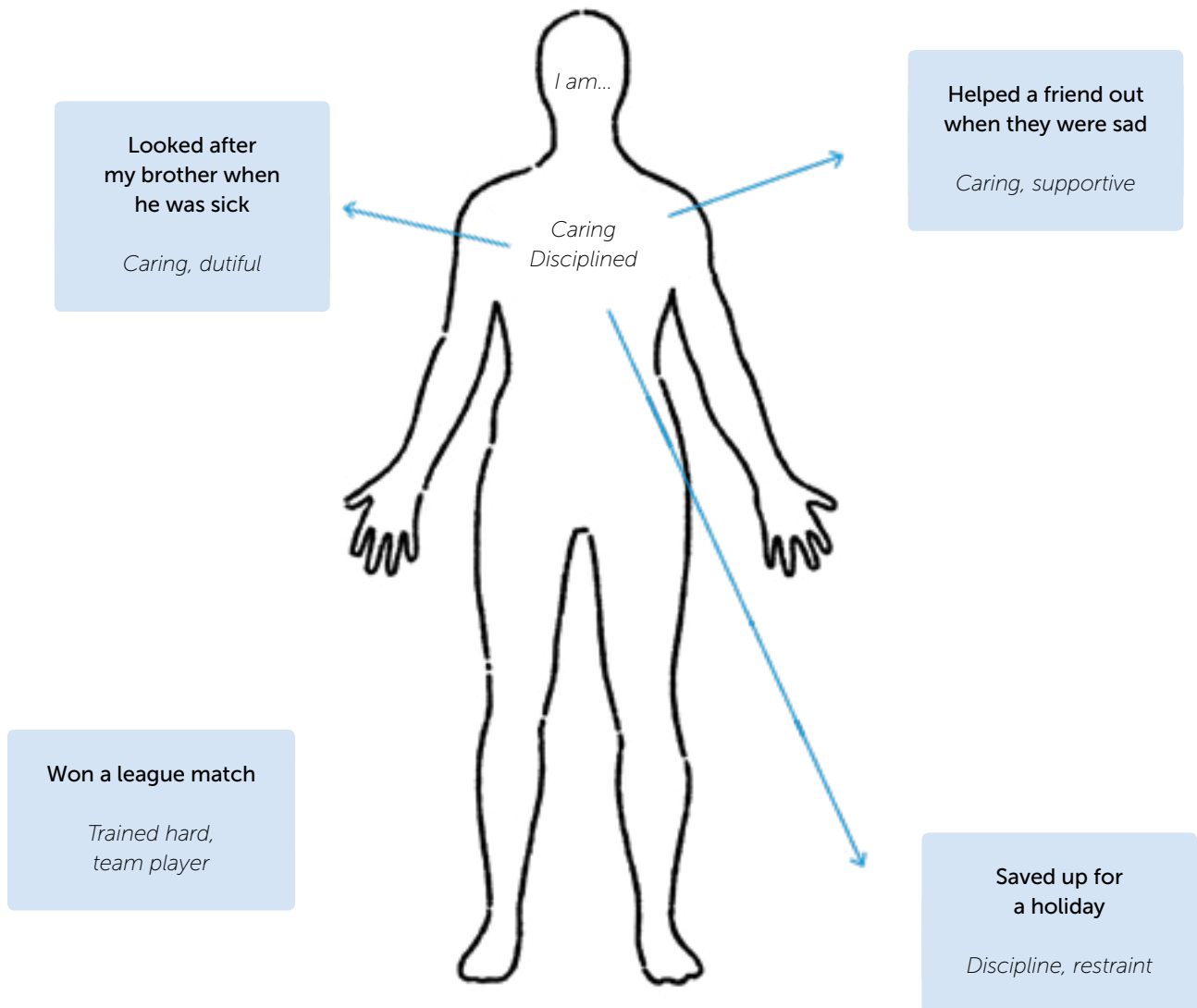
Helped a friend out when they were sad  
*Caring, supportive*

Won a league match  
*Trained hard, team player*

Saved up for a holiday  
*Discipline, restraint*



- This list of positive qualities is not exhaustive and there are probably other qualities that we have not included.
- If there are any others, get participants to write them inside the body and then write outside the body an example of a time when they demonstrated this (e.g., 'dependable' – 'when I stuck up for my friend in class').
  - Join both with a double-headed arrow.
- Some qualities might be more believable than others.
  - For example, if we kept a secret for someone, this might demonstrate trustworthiness, but we might not feel it does a good job of proving we are very trustworthy individuals. That's ok, it still shows some evidence of our trustworthiness.
- When this is done, inside the head, write: 'I am...' (see over the page).



- Ask participants to silently read their list of personal positive qualities – the words within the body outline (e.g., 'I am caring. I am trustworthy. I am dependable. I am supportive', etc).

This activity helps to provide participants with a quick reminder of their positive qualities and the evidence for these (the surrounding achievements).



#### Summarize the points:

- Thinking about our strengths and achievements can help when we face challenges like social anxiety.
- In addition, a positive reminder of the past (our achievements), coupled with the reflection of how we are now (the 'I am...' statements), enables us to more easily imagine a positive future for ourselves.
- Encourage participants to keep this sheet somewhere close by, and to add to it when they remember past successes or when new successes occur.

## Part 5.

# Activity 2: Pushing Forward

## WHAT HAPPENS

In the previous module, participants worked through challenges relating to difficult thoughts and feelings (emotional and physical). A holistic approach to becoming rugged therefore puts the focus of this activity on behaviour. In this activity, participants are encouraged to think about their goals and where they would like to get to live boldly. This involves thinking about what matters to them (their values) and identifying and setting realistic and achievable goals.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

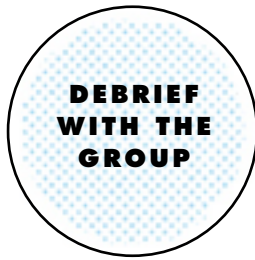
- When thinking about goals, some participants may want to set a goal of 'not being anxious'.
- Recall the earlier modules where we discussed how some anxiety is normal and natural; also, we don't want to struggle, so encourage participants not to aim to get rid of anxiety altogether.
- Besides, not feeling anxious is a big goal. What we want to do first is decide what is achievable to us now – something close by but that we still have to put work in for.
- An achievable goal should involve a behaviour related to a situation that participants have felt challenged by.
  - For example, if they have felt stressed or worried at the thought of attending a party, an appropriate behaviour could involve going to an event similar to a party, but not quite as intense, like a small social gathering.
- Focusing on a behaviour means the goal is something that someone else can see and confirm that the person has done.
  - The following is a comparison of behavioural goals and non-behavioural goals to illustrate this difference:

Behavioural goals	Non-behavioural goals
Start a conversation with 3 strangers	Feel good about myself
Give a performance on stage	Don't disappoint my parents
Go out for after work drinks	Make my friends think I'm interesting
Ask a friend to go for coffee	Feel confident

- Most of us can agree whether a behavioural goal has been met when we see something happening, whereas non-behavioural goals are more open to interpretation.
  - For instance, if a person's goal is to appear confident and they give a talk at the front of a class to try to achieve this, some people might think that they appear confident, but others may not agree.



- Behavioural goals like starting a conversation or asking a friend to go for coffee are objective and under our control, so we can be sure of our success.
- Share the story below, which illustrates something that happens to a lot of people challenged by social anxiety:
  - *Xueting has always known that she is shy. Her friends at school always seemed to have something to say, but she feels she never knows what to say to other people. She says that she can't start conversations, and when someone asks her something, she feels her heart beating faster and her face getting hot. She has a hard time concentrating on the other person because she is busy worrying what they will think of her, which she assumes is that they think she is weak or stupid. This makes her feel more stressed and makes concentrating even harder. All she can think about is getting away. On her phone, things are easier. She messages her few close friends from home and doesn't feel stressed about it. But since she has started university, things have gotten worse for Xueting. She has started to avoid people in daily life, eating her lunch alone and turning down chances to meet up with people. She ignores her phone when it rings and has started to skip classes. On top of this, her long-standing history of being uncomfortable with authority figures has stopped her from talking to her teachers about what is going on and seeking support.*
- As a group, decide what would make a good ultimate or 'big goal' for Xueting.
  - This should be something related to getting 'back on track' and a way in which she is able to show the best of herself, rather than something unrealistic or uncharacteristic (e.g., she may want to feel good about attending classes and meeting new people, rather than being the centre of attention or the most popular person in her year).
- Ask participants to think of an achievable behavioural goal for Xueting that could help her get started. There are many possibilities to choose from.
- The most appropriate will be manageable and focused.
- List the possible goals on the board.
  - Encourage participants to explain how these goals would be achievable – not too difficult but still involving some challenge.
  - If Xueting finds this goal too easy or too challenging, how could it be made easier or harder?
- Next, in pairs, ask participants to describe a type of social situation they have experienced in the past that they have struggled with.
  - They should leave out specific and identifying details and just focus on sharing a general picture of the situation. For example, being at a party, going to social events with people from work, or going on a date, etc.
- Between the two, they should try to come up with an achievable behavioural goal that relates to this situation that they could work towards over the course of one week.
  - Try to come up with three new goals for three more weeks, so there are weekly goals over the course of a month.
  - Participants should record their goals and related strategies in their workbook.
  - The pairs should negotiate how challenging these goals should be, and how they could be stepped up or down depending on how the participant finds them.
- For example, if the individual finds that starting a conversation with someone they are attracted to is too stressful, they could practice talking to other people they are not attracted to, where the pressure could be lower.



### Summarize the key points:

- Identifying achievable goals helps us to progress towards where we want to be.
- These behavioural goals ensure we can clearly monitor achievements and plan our next steps – whether raising the bar and pushing us further out of our comfort zone and towards success, or taking a step back to succeed at something less demanding first.

## Part 6.

# Health Break

### WHAT HAPPENS

What happens: The group should take a 10-minute break to stretch their legs, relax, eat, drink, use restrooms, etc. The Health break also gives participants some informal time to talk between themselves about the exercises.

## Part 7.

# Activity 3: The Incomplete Story

### WHAT HAPPENS

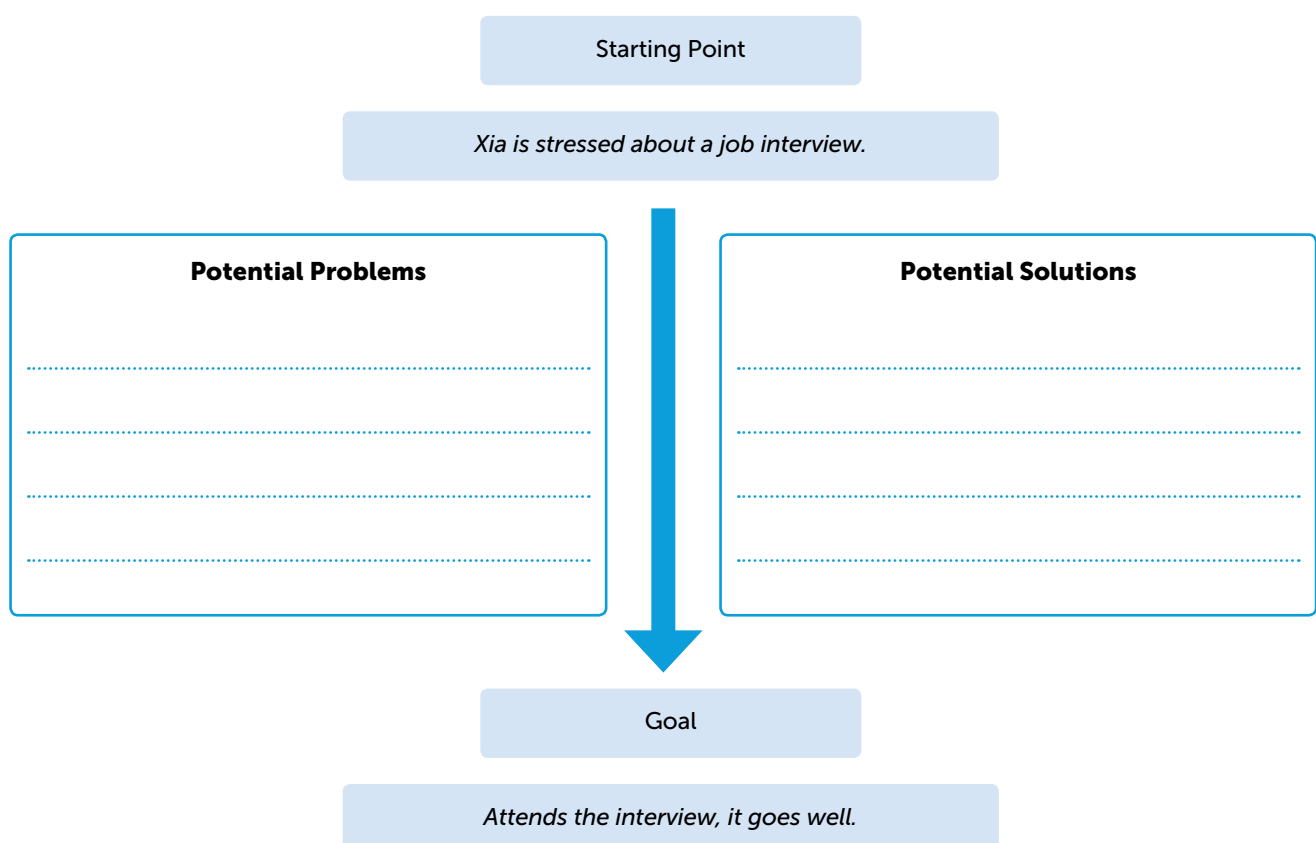
In this activity, participants develop their problem-solving skills as part of their journey to becoming more rugged. These skills help participants to overcome difficulties that hold them back, enabling a clearer path to their goals. This involves participants working with incomplete stories, where the path to the goal is unclear and requires thinking about potential solutions.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Share with participants the incomplete story of Xia:
  - *Xia applies for a job at a major IT company. The next week, she gets an email inviting her to an interview for the job. However, the thought of the interview causes her a lot of stress and worry. She decides that when she goes home that day, she will turn down the interview. ... But, in the end, she attends the interview. It is mildly stressful and she feels a little uncomfortable at the start. She forgets one of the interviewer's names, and one of the questions she can't answer, but overall it goes well. A week later she is offered the job.*
- This is an incomplete story.
- Xia was stressed and worried about a bad outcome, which was not only

about not getting the job, but also enduring a potentially stressful and painful experience during the interview.

- This led her to consider avoiding the situation entirely by turning the interview down.
- However, the story jumps forward in time and we discover that Xia has attended the interview, and despite some challenges, it goes well.
  - She is even offered the job.
- On a whiteboard or flip chart, at the top, under the heading 'starting point', summarise where Xia is at the start of her journey (contemplating a job interview) (see example below).
- At the bottom, under the heading 'goal', summarise the outcome (attending the interview; it goes well).
- The task is to fill in the gap between start and finish to identify what Xia might have done to achieve her goal.
- As a group, on the left side and between the starting point and goal, list the reasons why Xia might have been stressed or worried about the interview going badly.
  - These are the concerns which Xia may have felt were obstacles to her goal of attending the interview and it going well.
- For example, she might have thought the interviewers would think she isn't smart enough, or she might have felt that she would embarrass herself.
- On the right side, the group should then brainstorm potential ways in which Xia could have made it more likely she would achieve her goal.



- Remind the group that there are many solutions to different problems, and that the same solution may work for different problems too.
  - For example, if the group thinks that Xia could be worried about her embarrassing herself in the interview, such as by stuttering or stammering because of nervousness, then she could try techniques that calm and regulate herself to reduce the likelihood of stuttering or stammering, like taking two slow and deep breaths before answering a question in the interview, or by doing vocal warm-up exercises just before.



After the page is filled with potential challenges and solutions, remind participants of the following points:

- This process of thinking through difficulties and the ways in which they can be addressed is an important step toward developing your ruggedness.
- Problem-solving skills like these are honed by thinking clearly and analytically about an issue.
- When facing a difficult situation, ask yourself:
  - What is the general problem?
- This might be just feeling unable to take part in an important social situation, like going to a party or joining a club, or in this example, attending a job interview.
  - Then ask yourself, what is the goal?
- This can be closely related to the problem, like having a good experience during an interview, or meeting interesting people at a party.
- Or it might be something beyond the problem, like getting a good job or having good friends you can rely on.
- Being clear about where we want to be or what we want to achieve makes this more of a possibility for us.
- It also helps us discover the kinds of things that might stand in our way, rather than getting stuck in a negative looping thought like, 'I just can't do it'.
- Rather than assuming things will go bad, or that we can just avoid the situation and keep ourselves safe, visualising the goal opens this pathway up to us and helps motivate thinking about ways to get there.

**Optional activity (time permitting):**

- Ask participants to visualise three different goals that relate to different social situations.
  - Take a moment to imagine what successfully achieving each of them might look like.
  - Ask participants to describe which of these is harder to visualise than others. Why might this be?

Part 8.

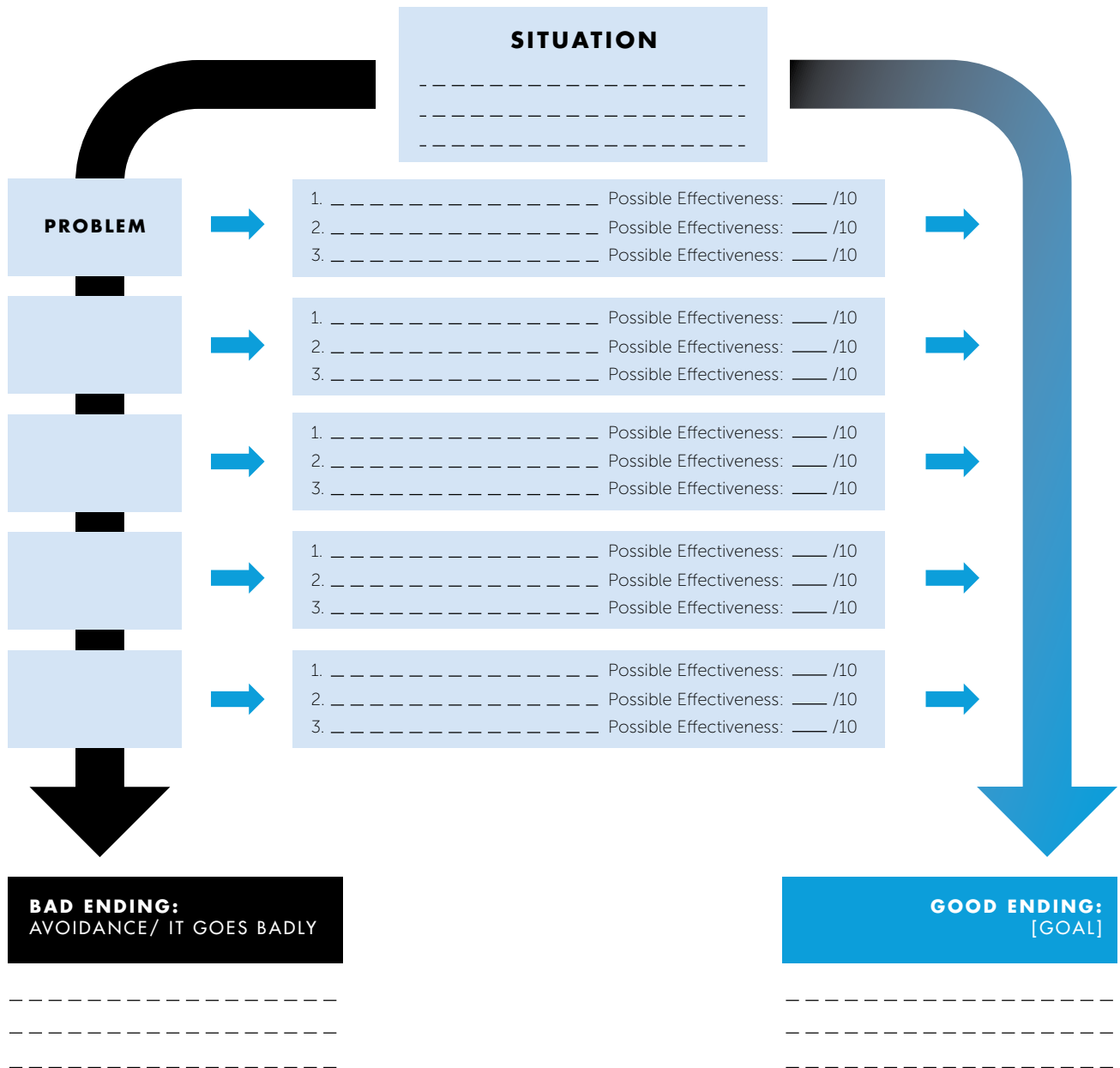
# Activity 4: Changing paths

**WHAT HAPPENS**

This activity continues the ideas of the incomplete story and problem-solving by taking a closer look at different problems and thinking through potential solutions that can help us on the way to achieving our goals.

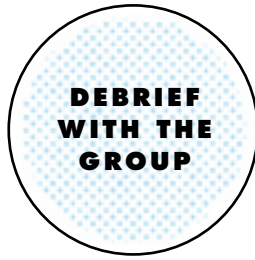
**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Share with participants the changing paths forms (see below).





- Ask participants to think of a situation that would cause them stress or worry.
  - This should be a situation that the participant feels is important to take part in (it is something they want or need to take part in, or it is expected of them).
- Describe this situation in a brief sentence or two at the top of the form.
- In the bottom right box, participants should briefly describe the goal of the situation.
  - This should be the outcome they desire (e.g., making a new friend, having a good time at a party, successfully asking for a pay rise at work).
- The path to this goal may not be easy and there may be different challenges that provoke stress and worry.
- These issues might lead to a bad outcome (e.g., fear of saying the wrong thing stops us from saying anything at all) or might lead to us avoiding the situation altogether.
- In each of the boxes on the left, participants should describe a specific worry or concern related to the situation that they believe could lead to the bad outcome (e.g., 'I will say the wrong thing', 'I will forget to...', 'They will think I am...', etc).
- Participants may have general or vague concerns relating to the situation which feel like they dominate and guarantee the bad outcome (e.g., 'I just can't do it'). However, encourage them to break these down into the specific problems that lead to this belief or concern.
  - Each of these problems could begin with '...because:' (e.g., I can't do it because I can't hold a conversation, or because I can't maintain eye contact, or because I always say the wrong thing).
- The order of the problems is not important, but encourage participants to consider writing about the one they feel they have the most difficulty with first.
- For each problem, participants should brainstorm potential solutions. Ask them to think about what they could do to manage these problems (that do not include avoiding the situation). These potential solutions increase the likelihood of a good outcome.
  - Remember to encourage participants that neither outcome is guaranteed – we can do our best to overcome difficulties but things beyond our control might stop us from achieving our goals, just as the things that we think could lead to bad outcomes might not either (remember the cognitive distortions).
  - But rather than leaving everything to fate, this activity is about taking control and giving ourselves the best chance of success.
- For each solution, participants should rate how effective they think they might be, on a scale of 1-10 (where 1 = very unlikely to work and 10 = very likely to work).
  - The same solution might apply to different problems. When this happens, add extra arrows to show this link.



This activity helps participants to develop their agency – the sense of what they can achieve. Emphasize the following points:

- By visualising successful outcomes and realising where you are starting from, you can begin to fill in the gaps of how to get to where you want to be.
- This process also involves thinking about specific potential challenges rather than getting stuck in a vague negative loop ('I just can't do it', 'I'm not good enough').
- In turn, this encourages thinking about potential solutions and evaluating the accessibility and effectiveness of each.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any questions or comments about the Changing Paths activity.

## Part 9.

# Summing up / looking forward

## WHAT HAPPENS

Participants should review the main things they learned during the module.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Ask participants to write on a 'post-it' note two things they learned during this module, then past their post it on the wall.
- The facilitator will then read aloud some of the statements without identifying who wrote them.
- This activity helps participants become more comfortable with speaking publicly without having to feel personally vulnerable.

**Part 10.**

# Homework

The homework for this module involves participants exploring their goals and the challenges.

**1. Exercise: Branching out**

Every day until the next session, add to your rugged roots sheet by adding one thing you did that day that reflects one or more of your internal qualities. For example, calling your parents (dutiful), writing in your diary (reflective), wishing a friend a happy birthday (caring).

When you have you done this, find a private space and read the messages inside the body out loud (e.g., 'I am caring', 'I am honest').

At the end of the week, using a mirror, look yourself in the eye and repeat each of these statements again, reminding yourself of the evidence so you can say them with confidence.

**2. Exercise: Rugged response record part two.**

Continue to complete your rugged response record until the next session.

- Do you notice any change in your thoughts or your belief in them?
- Is a pattern emerging in terms of your cognitive distortions?

**3. Exercise: Comparing paths**

Between now and the next session, identify two different situations that you perceive as stressful or challenging, and think about what you would like to happen (the goal). These can be about situations that you encounter over the next few days or situations you realise that you have some difficulty with and want to address.

Using copies of the changing paths sheet, describe the situation and describe your goal. Using the steps in activity 4, describe each individual problem chapter and list and evaluate potential solutions.

When both your changing paths forms are complete, compare them to each other.

- Do some of the same problems appear on both forms?
- Do some of the same solutions appear on both forms?
- Is there a pattern regarding the solutions you believe are more effective?

**REFERENCES**

- i Creswell, J.D., Dutcher, J.M., Klein, W.M., Harris, P.R., & Levine, J.M. (2013). Self-affirmation improves problem-solving under stress. *PloS one*, 8(5), e62593. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0062593.
- ii Taylor, S.E., & Sherman, D. K. (2008). Self-enhancement and self-affirmation: The consequences of positive self-thoughts for motivation and health. In J.Y. Shah & W.L. Gardner (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation science* (pp. 57-70). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.





# 6.

## Module 6

# THE RESOURCED INDIVIDUAL

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In this module, participants will learn about the many resources they have available, and which resources matter the most in which situations. They will identify resources that bring out their best, and resources that they wish they had had earlier in their life. Participants will also have a chance to “map” their resources to see if they have the right ones for the challenges they face now, including those they need to be bold and successful.



**MY FEET ARE  
HEAVY WITH  
UNCERTAINTY.  
BUT IF I DON'T  
MOVE, I AM  
ALREADY LOST.**

**CRISTIANO RONALDO**  
PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER  
CLEAR AMBASSADOR









# Module Outline

## OUTCOMES

- Participants will discover how resources changes people's likelihood of being bold and successful.
- Participants will explore how our life stories change when our external resources change.
- Participants will review their own resources (a self-audit), identifying those that are more or less helpful.
- Participants will revisit a stressful period in their lives and consider which resources they would have liked to have had to cope better.

## MATERIALS

- The 'Rules of Engagement' from Module 1
- A 'talking stick' or other symbol of group respect
- Flipchart paper and markers, or other drawing tools (a computer screen, tablet, etc.)
- A healthy snack

## SESSION MAP

90 MINUTES

1. Welcome
2. Awareness practice
3. Story-time
4. Discussion
5. Activity 1: Strategies to build resilience
6. Health break
7. Lessons Learned
8. Activity 2: Practice makes perfect
9. Activity 3 (optional): "If I were a boy//If I were a girl"
10. Personal Challenge: How optimistic am I about my future?
11. Homework Assignment

## Part 1.

# Welcome

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants pass a “talking stick” or other symbol of respect.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Refer to the Rules of Engagement, then, invite each person to say their name (this will help everyone remember who is in the group) and say, “I am committed to the rules.” If someone prefers not to speak, they can say their name and signal their commitment (e.g., with a thumbs-up gesture).
- As each person receives the talking stick, they are encouraged to answer the following questions:
  - In a few words, how are you feeling about being here today? Please remember that everyone needs a turn to speak so be sure to keep your answer reasonably short.
  - Has anything ‘awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?
  - Has anything ‘not-so-awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?

## Part 2.

# Awareness Practice

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants are invited to practice a short awareness exercise. Regular practice of focused awareness will facilitate participant’s awareness of sensations, thoughts, and feelings – a prerequisite for self-regulation.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Introduce the activity:
  - For the next few moments, we’ll simply practice paying attention to the sensation of our feet touching the ground.
- Use the following script as a guide to lead participants through the following breathing exercise (read slowly):
  - Please find a comfortable seat, with your back straight, yet relaxed and place your feet flat on the ground.
  - Sit with your arms and legs uncrossed, with your hands resting in your lap.
  - You may close your eyes if you wish. If you are not comfortable closing your eyes, then simply have a soft gaze looking forward.
  - Now, bring your attention to your breath.
    - Pause
    - As you breathe try to focus your attention on the sensations of breathing.
      - Pause
      - Now, turn your attention to the soles of your feet.
      - Notice the sensation of your feet touching the ground.

Pause

- If your mind wanders away from the soles of your feet, that's okay, that's what minds do. When you notice your mind has wandered, gently bring your attention back to your breath.

Pause

- Notice your feet rooted, here now, to the ground beneath you.

Pause

- Spend a few more moments with your awareness on the soles of your feet.

Pause (allow 30 – 45 seconds)

- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.
- After the awareness practice, share the following:
  - This practice can be very helpful when you're experiencing a moment of anxiety.
  - By focusing your attention on your feet, you engage the thinking part of the brain, the prefrontal cortex. Remember, the prefrontal cortex helps you to regulate the emotional centre of your brain, the amygdala.
  - This, with deep breathing, can help you calm your brain and body, and help you to manage your anxiety.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any questions or comments about this, or any, of the Awareness Practices.

*Have any of you been using the practices (outside of homework) day-to-day?*

*What have you noticed?*

## Part 3.

# Story-time

## WHAT HAPPENS

The facilitator shares a popular children's story, one that everyone in the group is familiar with.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- The story is told very quickly, highlighting all the wondrous things that happen and the resources the main character needed to succeed.
- Then the story is retold without the resources the main character needs, with a different outcome, usually one that is disastrous or funny.
- Story sample:
  - *Cinderella* is a fairy tale about a child whose mother and father die when she is young, leaving her to be raised by her evil stepmother and evil step-sisters. She lives deep in the basement of a wealthy home, toiling away cooking and cleaning, always dirty and constantly bullied. All that changes,

though, when her fairy godmother arrives and helps Cinderella attend a beautiful ball at the Palace. The fairy godmother gives Cinderella a beautiful gown to wear and glass slippers, a golden carriage, and everything else she needs to dazzle the Prince who falls in love with her. At the stroke of midnight, though, Cinderella must run from the palace as all her fine clothing and carriage will soon disappear. All she leaves behind is a glass slipper, which the Prince uses to find Cinderella whose foot is the only foot that fits the slipper perfectly. They marry and live happily ever after.

- Now imagine, for a moment, the story of Cinderella without her fairy godmother.
  - She is traumatized by the death of both her parents. Then she is forced to toil away endlessly for her evil stepmother and evil step-sisters. Of course, since there is no fairy godmother (a resource if ever there was one!), Cinderella never gets to the ball or meets the Prince. Instead, she reaches the age of 16 and runs away from her abusive family, surviving on the street by stealing food and money, or worse, is kidnapped by child traffickers.
- Participants can suggest other endings to the story as well. What else could happen to Cinderella without her fairy godmother?
- Alternative activity ideas:
  - Facilitators and participants can share other stories, as long as the story is well-known to everyone in the group.
  - The group can read a comic or watch part of a movie where the character shows signs of being well-resourced. Afterwards, suggest other endings for the story that are likely to happen if the main character's resources were changed.

## Part 4.

# Discussion

### WHAT HAPPENS

Participants reflect on the availability and accessibility of resources.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Participants are asked to name all the resources in the story.
  - Which resources are available?
  - Which can actually be used (even if they are available somewhere, are they accessible when needed)?
- Which resources are needed, but neither available, nor accessible?



**Part 5.**

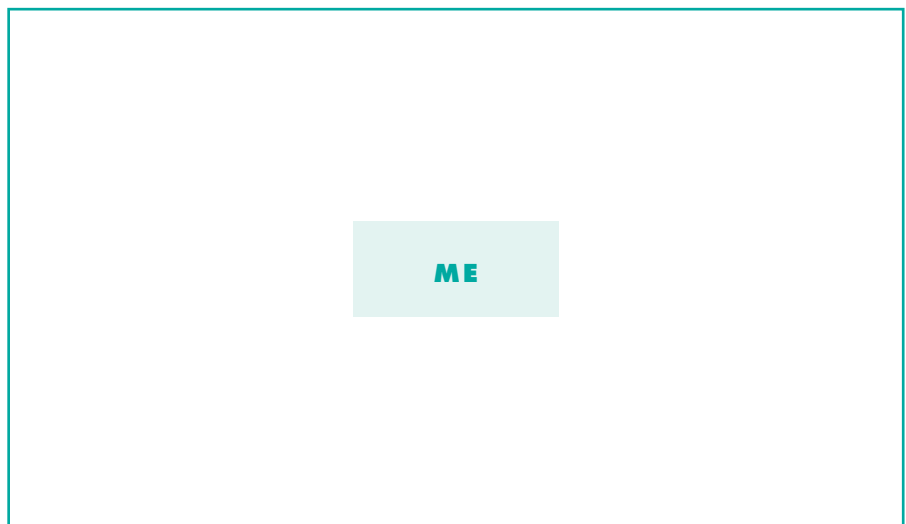
# Activity 1: Resource Mapping

**WHAT HAPPENS**

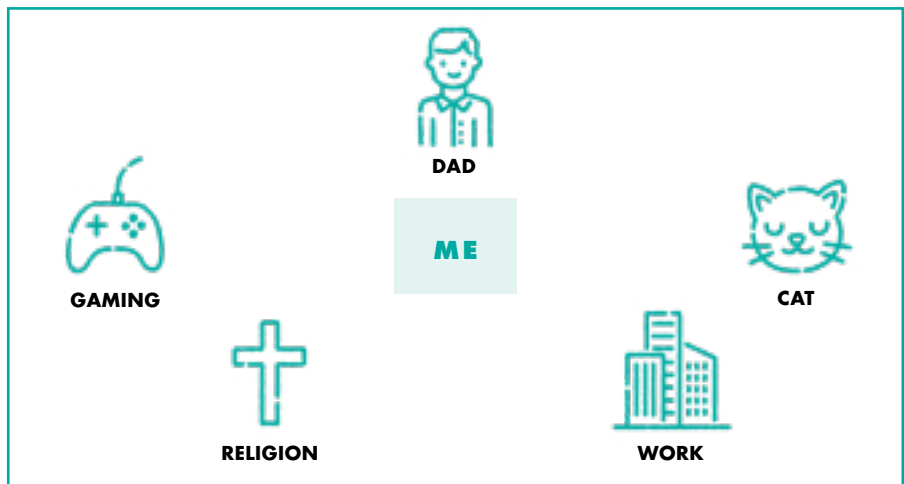
Participants will have the chance to work on their own to map their resources. They will discover which are the most useful, which hold them back from being bold and successful, and what resources they need but don't yet have.

**INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR FACILITATORS**

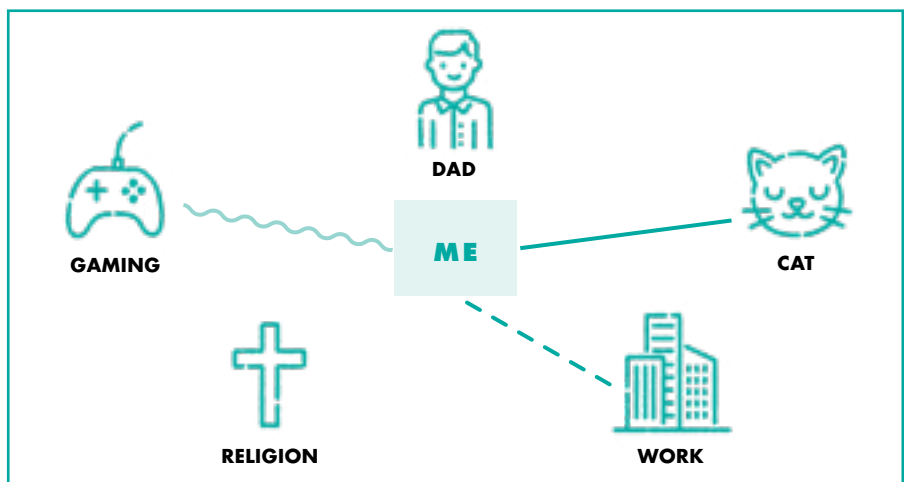
- Part of being resilient is about knowing the resources you need to be bold and successful.
- In this exercise, participants discover the resources that can promote and sustain their resilience.
  - To do this, participants are going to map their resources, identifying those that are helpful and unhelpful, and those they need but don't yet have.
  - Be sure that participants complete the exercise as honestly as possible.
  - A debrief is included at the end.
- To begin, invite participants to take a sheet of paper and markers or coloured pencils, or open a new image on their computer, tablet, or phone, and put their name in the middle of a blank page.



- One by one, participants should name resources and write these down (or use a word or symbol) until each participant has a map of the many different resources in their life.



- As participants place each resource on their map, they will need to draw lines between themselves and their resources. Use different colours or lines (e.g., straight, zigzag, dashed) to represent the participant's experience with each resource. For example, a straight solid line could be used to show a helpful, secure relationship with someone like a parent or friend. A wavy or dashed line could represent a conflicted, weak, or negative relationship. Some resources will have multiple lines which means the relationship is complex, or has changed over time.



- To identify their first resource, participants ask themselves what has been one of the most significant relationships in my life? It could be with a person, like their mother or father, brother, aunt, grandfather, or it could be with a group of people, like a football club, a group of childhood friends, or a musical band. A particularly special resource could also be an institution, like a school or workplace. It could even be a pet, or someone who has passed away but whose memory remains a very big part of the participant's life. Draw this first resource somewhere on the map. Participants should now answer the following questions to decide what kind of line they want to draw between the resource and themselves at the centre of the map.



- Participants should consider, in their experience, has this relationship been a source of support? Or has it been harmful or stressful? Or both? Draw the line(s) to represent the relationship.
  - Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. Even if other people think a resource is not good for the participant, but they disagree, then they can still label their relationship with that resource as positive. This is their map and their resources. Each participant gets to decide what goes on it and how their resources are represented.
- Participants should now think about another significant relationship in their life. It can be helpful and supportive, or a source of conflict or stress (or both). They should put this resource on their map, too, and draw a line, or lines, to represent how they experience that relationship.



**SCHOOL TEACHER**

- Repeat this task for **three more** relationships, so that each participant’s map has at least five resources drawn on it.



**GRANDPARENTS**



**FRIEND**



**MOTHER**

- Now thinking beyond people, ask participants if there are other sources of support or stress in their life? These can be places they spend time, like school or work. Participants should try to name at least three of these and draw the connecting lines.



**SCHOOL**



**HOME**



**WORK**

- Next, participants are asked to think about activities in their life that bring them support or cause them stress. These can be a sport they play, or online gaming, or habits like smoking or drinking. Do these activities add positively to their life, or do they create more stress? They should try to name at least three activities.



**SPORTS**



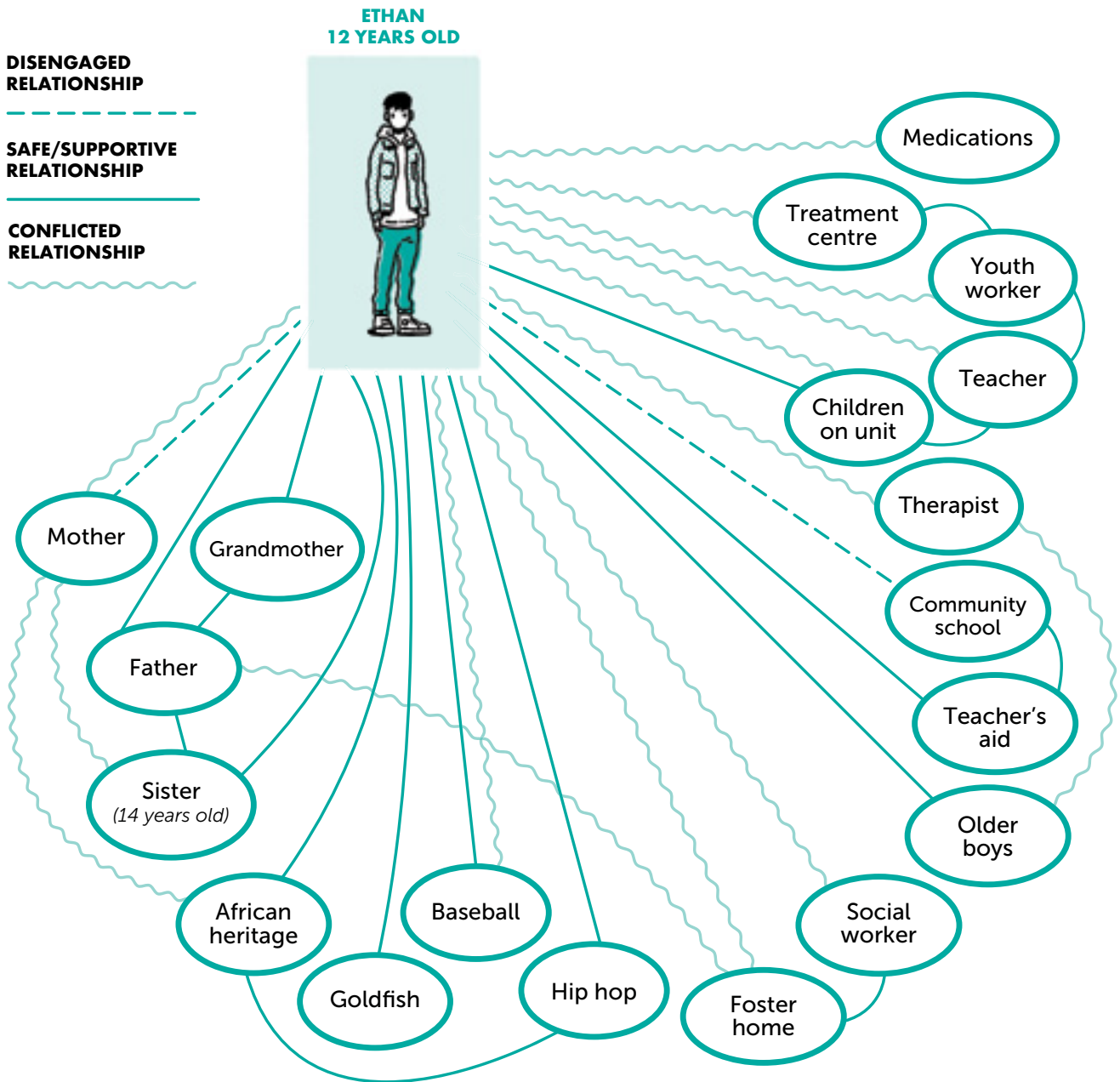
**SMOKING**



**GAMING**

- Now think about how all these people, places, and activities, participants are asked to think about how they are related to each other? Do some resources make other resources more (or less) available and accessible? Draw lines between the different resources to show which links are useful and which create barriers in life.

- Here’s an example of what a map could look like when it’s done. Everyone’s map will, of course, look very different. [Note: this is being redone for this exercise]



**Part 6.**

# Health Break

The group should take a 10-minute break to stretch their legs, relax, eat, drink, use restrooms, etc. The Health break also gives participants some informal time to talk between themselves about the exercises.

Part 7.

# Reflection on Activity 1

WHAT HAPPENS

Participants will have time to think about their maps and what they tell them about the resources that matter most to them.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

Participants are asked to look at their map and answer the following questions.

- "Are there important resources you haven't included?" These may come to you later, so add them whenever you remember them.
- "On your map, is there anything that catches your attention the most? Does anything surprise you?" Answer the question in the space provided.

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.....

- "Are there more or less positive supports than what you expected?" Answer the question in the space provided.

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- "How do you think your map compares to someone else's map?" (If that other person has less social anxiety, how do the resources on their map help them maintain a sense of wellbeing?) Answer the question in the space provided.

.....

.....

.....

- If another group member is willing to share their map, you can show each other your maps and talk about the similarities and differences.
- Thinking about your own map again, "Which resources have you depended on the **most** to cope with challenges in your life?" Put a star next to these.



HOME



- “How **available** have different resources been when you have had challenges?” Put a number next to each resource, from 1-5, where 1 means rarely available and 5 means always available.



HOME

- “How **helpful** have these resources been?” Choose a symbol to put next to each resource, where -- means very unhelpful and ++ means very helpful.



HOME

- Participants should now have lots of information that they can use to decide which resources to make use of more often, and which resources they need to get rid of or change.



### Lessons Learned

Emphasize the key take-away messages from the mapping activity:

- In this exercise, you each created a map of all of your resources.
  - These are examples of the resources that can support us and help us to manage challenges, and perhaps some that cause difficulties for us from time to time.
- Creating a map like this helps us to take stock of what we have that is available to draw on when times are tough.
- Depending on the number of resources on our map, and the lines that attach us to those resources, we may need to look for new resources.
- Your map will be used in the next module to explore resources you don't have access to, as well as thinking of ways to strengthen those you currently do have.
- Your map is the start of your journey towards becoming more resourced – a key part of being more resilient, bold and successful.

**Part 8.**

# Activity 2: What I really needed (but didn't have) at school

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants get a chance to time travel, remembering a stressful time during their years of schooling and the power of supportive resources.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

This is a small group exercise. Give the following directions to participants.

**Step 1:**

- Find two other people, then take turns describing briefly an episode from your past when going to school was really stressful.
  - The stress may have come from academic problems like a failed exam or too much pressure from parents to succeed, or social problems like being teased by classmates or feeling terribly alone.
- Once you have each shared an example of a "bad time at school" ask each other the following questions;
  - *"Since you are here now, one way or the other you got through that episode. How did you manage to survive? If the problem got resolved, then who or what helped you?"*
  - *"If the problem didn't get solved (and badly affected you for a long time), what resource, or resources, would you have needed to fix the problem?"*
  - *Now that you've thought about the problem, and what you needed, "What did you learn about yourself? If you had a similar problem today, how would you handle it? Who or what would you like to have around you that would be helpful?"*

**Step 2:**

- Since most people, despite all the setbacks they experience, finish their schooling (or at least complete the year that the bad thing happened), they usually have some internal strengths and external resources.
  - Ask yourselves, *"How similar, or different, were the strategies and resources each group member used to get through their crisis?"*
  - Share your answers with each other.
  - If you like, you may even want to help each develop strategies to find resources that are missing (this will be the focus of the next module).

**Part 9.**

# Personal Challenge

## “What I now know that I didn’t know before today.”

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants will name one thing they learned that was new while doing this module.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Invite participants to consider one thing they learned that was new while doing this module.
  - *In three words (maximum) identify something new that you didn’t know before.*
  - It can be difficult to express our thoughts succinctly, but it is an important skill to develop in social situations where we sometimes have very little time to express ourselves.
- You may use the talking stick to ensure each participant has an opportunity to share their one-word reflection.

**Part 10.**

# Homework

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS****1. Resource Map Contribution**

Between now and the next time the group meets, identify one new resource to add to your map. If that is not possible, you could also identify a resource already on your map that you are not making use of and strengthen the time you spend with that resource (e.g., if there is a sport you like to play, but haven’t played in while, it would be a good week to participate in the sport at least once).



**Module 7****7.****BECOMING RESOURCED:  
NAVIGATING TO NEW  
RESOURCES**

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In this module, participants will develop new strategies to find and use the resources they need to cope better with social anxiety and build resilience. Participants will discuss in detail the seven experiences (introduced in Module 2) that are known to build resilience.





# Module Outline

## OUTCOMES

- Participants will increase the number of strategies they have to cope with social anxiety.
- Participants will understand better how and why the seven experiences that build resilience are important.

## MATERIALS

- The 'Rules of Engagement' from Module 1
- A 'talking stick' or other symbol of group respect
- Flipchart paper and markers, or other drawing tools (a computer screen, tablet, etc.)
- Activity 1 one-page handout of the seven experiences that build resilience and the potential strategies that can help.
- Activity 2 two panel drawings
- A healthy snack

## SESSION MAP

90 MINUTES

1. Welcome
2. Awareness practice
3. Story-time
4. Discussion
5. Activity 1: Strategies to build resilience
6. Health break
7. Lessons Learned
8. Activity 2: Practice makes perfect
9. Activity 3 (optional): "If I were a boy/If I were a girl"
10. Personal Challenge: How optimistic am I about my future?
11. Homework Assignment

## Part 1.

# Welcome

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants pass a “talking stick” or other symbol of respect.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Refer to the Rules of Engagement, then, invite each person to say their name (this will help everyone remember who is in the group) and say, “I am committed to the rules.” If someone prefers not to speak, they can say their name and signal their commitment (e.g., with a thumbs-up gesture).
- As each person receives the talking stick, they are encouraged to answer the following questions:
  - In a few words, how are you feeling about being here today? Please remember that everyone needs a turn to speak so be sure to keep your answer reasonably short.
  - Has anything ‘awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?
  - Has anything ‘not-so-awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?

## Part 2.

# Awareness Practice

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Each session, participants are invited to practice a short awareness exercise. Regular practice of focused breathing will help participants learn to regulate their physiology in response to stress or anxiety.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Use the following script as a guide to lead participants through the following breathing exercise (read slowly):
  - Today, we’ll begin with a short practice that checks in with sensations in the body, our thoughts, and our feelings.
  - Let’s begin by finding a comfortable position.
  - You may close your eyes if you choose.
  - Now, bring your attention to your breath.

Pause

  - Rest with your breath for the next few moments.
  - If your mind wanders, that’s okay, just gently bring your attention back to your breath.

Pause

  - Now, shift your awareness to your body.
  - Check in with how your body feels sitting here now.

Pause

- There's no need to do anything special, or change anything, just notice.
- Notice if there are any areas that feel uncomfortable.
- Notice if there are any areas that feel at ease.
- If there is tension present, you can relax it as much as it will, without forcing anything

Pause

- Now, check in with your mind.
- Notice if any thoughts are present now.
- As you notice a thought, see if you can let it pass by.
- If it helps, you can visualize yourself placing it on a leaf, and letting the leaf float down the stream.
- Do this for any thought that comes into your mind, positive or negative.
- Watch them drift downstream and out of sight.

Pause

- Now, notice if any feelings are present.
- If you can, name them – calm, restless, frustrated, hopeful...whatever the emotion might be.
- Is there a connection between a feeling and a thought?
- Or a connection to a sensation?

Pause

- Now, bring your awareness back to breath.
- Rest with your breath for the next few moments.

Pause

- Before you come back to the room, take two or three deep breaths, try to lengthen your exhale.

Pause (allow 30 seconds)

- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any questions the awareness practice.

*Did you notice any connections amongst thoughts, feelings, and sensations?*

**Part 3.****Story-time****WHAT HAPPENS**

One participant is asked to tell a story of a person they've seen on television or viewed on the internet who shows resilience.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- If possible, participants should share a picture or video of the person they want to discuss.
- The facilitator asks the participant, and other members of the group:
  - "Why is this person able to cope with stress?"
  - "What strategies do they use when life gets difficult?"
  - "What personal and social resources do they rely on?"
  - "Do these change over time, and are they different depending on the kinds of stress they experience?"

**Part 4.****Discussion****WHAT HAPPENS**

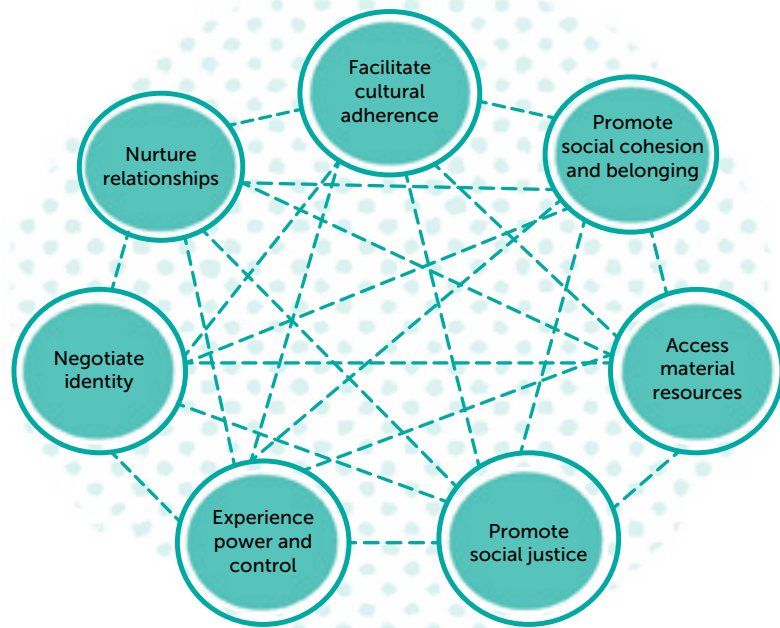
Participants will learn about the seven experiences that build resilience and the many strategies that can be used to enhance each experience.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

Explain the following content to participants, using flipcharts to emphasize the key points.

- In Module 2, participants were introduced briefly to the seven experiences that we need to build resilience. These were:
  - 1) Nurturing relationships with peers, our families, and others in your community who will be there when you need them.
  - 2) A powerful identity that is given to you by others, and reinforced through opportunities to show your skills and talents to others.
  - 3) Experiences of power and control that let you make decisions for yourself about things that are important to you.
  - 4) Fair treatment by others that makes it possible for you to be the best you can be, without fear of discrimination or bullying.
  - 5) All your basic needs are met, including food, housing, safe streets, access to education, employment and all the other things we need to survive and thrive.
  - 6) A sense of belonging to a group of people who value your participation, who miss you when you are not there, and who bring meaning to your life.
  - 7) A sense of culture that reminds you of where you come from and what is special about your family, your community, and your common history, as well as what is special about others with other cultural backgrounds.

## SEVEN RESILIENCE- PROMOTING PROCESSES



- Here's a few things that researchers have discovered about these seven resilience experiences.

### **One resilience experience can trigger others**

- The more of these experiences you have, the more likely you are to be successful in life, especially when bad things happen or you are burdened with troubling thoughts and feelings.
- Resilience experiences show a pattern of positive "feedback".
- Each experience can potentially trigger others which means resilience can build over time and become better and better resourced.
  - For example, learning about your culture from your elders and grandparents means more time spent with family and friends, which means more relationships to support you during a crisis.
- It also means a better sense of identity, one that connects who you are today to something special about your ancestors (*"Our family has always been good at ...."*).
- It can also make it easier to find the practical resources you need to succeed, like a job or housing.
- After all, many young people find their first job, or get good advice about which college to attend, from family members.
- When resilience experiences are working well, they are like rivers joining.
  - Each smaller river adds to a raging torrent of water that makes us bold and successful.

### **All seven resilience experiences are equally important**

- It doesn't matter which of the seven experiences you begin with, they are all important.



- Whether you manage to have just one experience, or all seven, each experience is just as important to your success as the next.
- Though we often think relationships are critical to our success, other resources can be just as crucial in some circumstances.
  - For example, if you live in a dangerous neighbourhood, having a basic need met like safe streets and good policing can mean you are able to take advantage of educational and work opportunities.
  - The same goes for a public transit system (buses and trains) that can bring you to school or work.
- Put these everyday supports in place, and people are likely to be much more successful.
- It the same for each of the seven experiences.
- Any one of them can be extremely important depending on the challenges being faced.
  - Too anxious to go out with friends?
  - Finding something powerful to say about yourself (a powerful identity) is likely to give you the confidence to talk to people your same age.

#### **The more stress we experience, the more we need resilience experiences**

- The more difficult and stressful one's life is, the more influence these seven experiences have on outcomes like success at school, finding work, or maintaining a close relationship with someone special.
- As our lives become more and more stressful, and social anxiety builds, each of these seven experiences becomes more and more important to our success.
- If you have a loving family, lots of talent, and great opportunities for schooling and work, then these seven resilience-building experiences won't add much to your life. You already have the resources you need for success. But change communities, or suddenly find yourself in a situation without money, and healthy relationships, or fair treatment will become much more important.

#### **Our culture shapes our experience of resilience**

- What each of these seven experiences looks like always depends on a person's culture, and the things they value and the everyday activities they are involved in.
  - Even something as simple as where you eat breakfast, and with whom, can be an example of your culture.
- When we are under stress, the things we need are always shaped by our culture and the expectations of others in our families and communities.
  - A good example of this is education.
  - How far one goes in school, and what is called "success" is very much influenced by what others expect of us.
- Those expectations change depending on where you grow up and who is supporting you to become your best self.

## **STOP AND REFLECT**

Ask if participants to reflect on what they have just learned.  
Can they see these patterns in their own lives?

**Part 5.**

# Activity 1: Strategies to Build Resilience

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants will learn new strategies to build resilience and think about how to make these happen in their lives.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS****Step 1**

- Each of the seven experiences that build the resources we need for resilience can be created using many different strategies.
- In this first part of this exercise, ask participants to agree on one of the seven experiences that they most want to discuss.
  - This will be the first one the group focuses on, but eventually all seven will be talked about.
- Next, starting with the examples from the drawing of the seven resources, identify strategies that participants can use to become bolder and more successful.
- Each strategy should rely on resources that the participants either already have or will need to find.

**Step 2**

- After reviewing the strategies already listed, participants should brainstorm other strategies that could improve their access to resources.
- After discussion of one resource is complete, move back to Step 1, and repeat both steps with another resource, then another, until a list of strategies has been generated for all seven resources.

See handout over the page:

**Nurture Relationships**

- Find people to whom you matter
- Show love for others and let others love you
- Demonstrate selflessness and giving
- Make and keep commitments to others
- Be accountable to others
- Create a family (whatever that looks like)

**Facilitate Cultural Adherence**

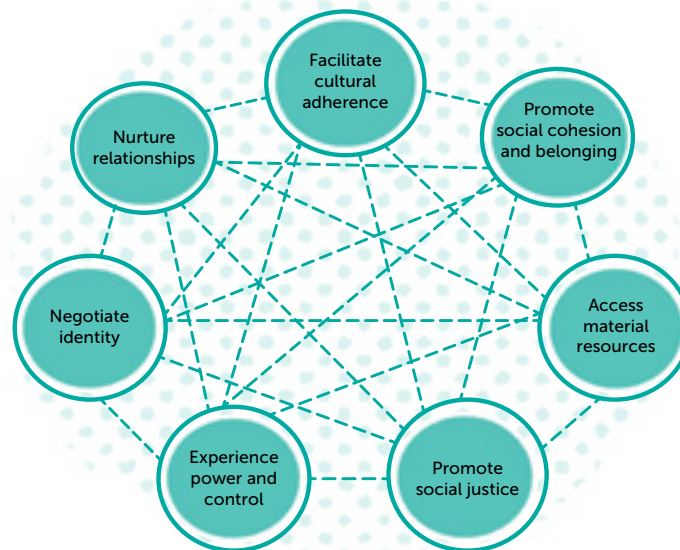
- Learn your family's history
- Show pride in your cultural heritage
- Celebrate your traditions
- Connect the generations together
- Keep your family's and community's stories alive
- Perform your culture – show it!

**Promote Social Cohesion and Belonging**

- Participate in a club
- Become part of a peer group
- Spend time in an online community where people are just like you
- Participate in a religious organisation
- Spend time with your extended family
- Give back to your community (help others)
- Make others proud of you

**Negotiate identity**

- Find places to experience self-esteem/self-worth
- Find opportunities to show others what is special about you
- Get others to rely upon you for your contribution
- Find ways to show your talents

**Access Material Resources**

- Make yourself feel safe at home and in your community
- Take advantage of opportunities to access schooling and employment or training
- If possible, save some money
- Take time to keep physically and mentally healthy coverage

**Experience Power and Control**

- Find places in your life where you can make decisions
- Insist people respect your right to decide things for yourself
- Participate in making decisions at the level of your school, workplace, community, country, family; Get your voice heard
- Work with others to make changes at school, work and in your community

**Promote Social Justice**

- Find places in your life where you are treated fairly
- Whenever possible, trust authority figures
- Have contact with people who are not from your ethnic or racial group
- Find an advocate, access allies, or learn to advocate for yourself
- Advocate for fair treatment when needed

**Part 6.**

# Health Break

**WHAT HAPPENS**

The group should take a 10-minute break to stretch their legs, relax, eat, drink, use restrooms, etc. The Health break also gives participants some informal time to talk between themselves about the exercises.

**Part 7.**

# Lessons Learned

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants reflect on how the strategies explored in the first activity can increase their access to resources, and make links to the resource maps created in Module 5.

**INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR FACILITATORS**

Guide participants through the following reflective discussion:

- In the first activity, we explored the many strategies that we can use to become better resourced and have more of the seven experiences that build resilience.
- Remember, these strategies can increase our access to resources and help us overcome social anxiety and other mental health challenges.
- Let's now think about the resource maps we created in Module 5. (Ask the following questions for a group share, or ask participants can discuss these questions in pairs).
  - "If you used these strategies more often, how would these experiences change your resource map?"
  - "Which resources would you most need in which situations?"
- At home? At school? Or at work?"

## Part 8.

# Activity 2: Practice Makes Perfect

## WHAT HAPPENS

In this activity, participants will have an opportunity to practice using their strategies to handle different situations that can trigger social anxiety.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Participants are shown two "before" and "after" pictures with captions.



BEFORE

AFTER



- Ask participants to review each pair of images.
- Then, ask the following questions:
  - "What strategies did the main character in the drawing use to feel less anxious in social situations?"
  - "What change in thinking did it take for the main character to use these strategies?"
  - "How did a change in the character's behaviour change the world around the character?"



- “What would you expect to happen in the future, now that the world around the main character has changed?”

### Part 9.

## Activity 3 (optional): “If I were a boy/ If I were a girl”

### WHAT HAPPENS

This activity can begin with a piece of music or a piece of writing that talks about different opportunities for boys and girls. (for example, the song, If I were a boy by Beyoncé.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AWpsOqh8q0M>

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Using two pieces of flipchart paper, draw a symbol for a woman on one and a symbol for a man on the other.
- Next, give participants two colours of post-it notes, or pieces of paper with tape.
- Ask them to:

#### Step 1

- On separate pieces of paper of one colour, write all the unique things that make women and men experience social anxiety.
  - Some of these will be the same, some different (e.g., men are criticized for not being strong; women are criticized more for their looks; etc.).
- Then, stick these pieces of paper to the labelled (man/woman) pieces of paper, clustering them to one side of each piece of paper.

#### Step 2

- Next, on separate pieces of different coloured paper, write all the unique resources that help women and men tackle social anxiety.
  - Some of these will be the same, some different (e.g., men are more likely to play sports; women are more likely to spend time with other women; etc.).
- Then, stick these pieces of paper to the labelled pieces of paper, clustering them to the other side of each piece of paper so that there are two lists: things that create social anxiety, and the resources that help decrease social anxiety and make men and women more resilient.

#### Step 3

- Open a discussion about both lists.
  - *Is it fair that men and women have different lists?*
  - *Are there any resources on the men’s list that women could also use?*
  - *Are there items on the women’s list of resources that could also be useful for men?*

**Part 10.**

# Personal Challenge: How optimistic am I about my future?

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants use their bodies to show how optimistic they are about the future.

**INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR PARTICIPANTS****Step 1**

- Have participants use their bodies to show how optimistic they are now that things will be better in the future.
- If they are not optimistic at all, they should sit on the floor, or even lie on the floor.
- If they are mildly optimistic, they might sit on a chair.
- If they are very optimistic about their futures, they should raise their hand and reach up high, or stand on a chair or table.
- Note that participants should put themselves into a position that represents their optimism about the future all at the same time so no one is doing the exercise alone.

**Step 2**

- After participants have shown their positions, ask them to say why they put themselves in the positions they did.
  - Only participants that want to speak should be asked to talk. Be sure to make the exercise safe for everyone.

**Part 11.**

# Homework

**INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR FACILITATORS**

Between now and the next time the group meets, choose a strategy from those in Activity 1 and commit to using it at least once before the next group meeting. Record when you used the strategy, why you chose that strategy, and what happened when you used the strategy.

**NOTES ON  
MODULE 7**

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.

**Module 8****8****THE NOVICE MENTOR:  
HELPING OTHERS TO  
HELP OURSELVES**

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This module is about helping participants to become resilience experts, who can refine their skills while helping others to become more resilient. Participants will learn about and practice positive mentorship, where both mentor and mentee build their resilience together.



**YOU BECOME  
WHAT YOU  
OVERCOME.**









# Module Outline

## OUTCOMES

- Participants learn how to assist others and help them to manage their social anxiety;
- Participants learn how helping others fosters important life skills that help us tackle our own social anxiety.
- Participants discover that positive mentorship helps both mentor and mentee to become more resilient.

## MATERIALS

- A 'talking stick' or another symbol of group respect;
- Flipchart paper and markers, or other drawing tools (a computer screen, tablet, etc.);
- Copies of the activity 2 form;
- Copies of the homework form;
- A healthy snack.

## SESSION MAP

90 MINUTES

1. Welcome
2. Awareness practice
3. Talking point
4. Activity 1: How would you help?
5. Activity 2: Someone I know
6. Health break
7. Activity 3: The meeting
8. Activity 4: The agreement
9. Summing up / looking forwards
10. Homework

## Part 1.

# Welcome

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants pass a “talking stick” or other symbol of respect.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Refer to the Rules of Engagement, then, invite each person to say their name (this will help everyone remember who is in the group) and say, “*I am committed to the rules.*” If someone prefers not to speak, they can say their name and signal their commitment (e.g., with a thumbs-up gesture).
- As each person receives the talking stick, they are encouraged to answer the following questions:
  - *In a few words, how are you feeling about being here today? Please remember that everyone needs a turn to speak so be sure to keep your answer reasonably short.*
  - *Has anything ‘awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?*
  - *Has anything ‘not-so-awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?*

## Part 2.

# Awareness Practice

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Each session, participants are invited to practice a short awareness exercise. Regular practice of focused breathing will help participants learn to regulate their physiology in response to stress or anxiety.

As participants become more familiar with practicing awareness, facilitators will reduce the amount of guidance they offer, as reflected in the script.

- Use the following script as a guide to lead participants through the following breathing exercise (read slowly):
  - Please find a comfortable position.
  - You may close your eyes if you choose.
  - Now, bring your attention to your breath.
  - Pause
  - Rest with your breath for the next few moments.
  - If your mind wanders, that’s okay, just gently bring your attention back to your breath.
  - Pause
  - Now, shift your awareness to your body.
  - Check in with how your body feels sitting here now.

Pause

- Notice if there are any areas where there is ease or unease.
- If there is tension present, you can relax it as much as it will, without forcing anything.

Pause

- Now, check in with your mind.
- Notice if any thoughts are present now.
- As you notice a thought, see if you can let it pass by.

Pause

- Now, notice what feelings are present.
- If you can, name them.

Pause

- Is there a connection between a feeling and a thought?
- Or a connection to a sensation?

Pause

- Now, bring your awareness back to breath.
- Rest with your breath for the next few moments.

Pause

- Before you come back to the room, take two or three deep breaths.

Pause (allow 30 seconds)

- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any comments about their experience with the awareness practice.

## Part 3.

# Talking point – Positive Mentoring

## WHAT HAPPENS

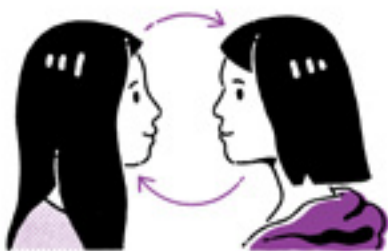
Becoming resilient and dealing with the challenges of social anxiety is a journey that participants have undertaken together. As a group, they have supported each other during their participation in the course. The sessions have been led by an expert facilitator, but participants themselves are on their way to becoming experts too. This session reminds participants of how far they have already come and explains the importance of sharing these skills and experiences with others who are further behind through a process of 'positive mentorship'. Participants learn about the value of mentoring and how helping others to become resilient also helps them to become more resilient.

Even if participants do not enter formal mentor-mentee relationships, the skills in this module help them to become stronger 'self-mentors' and to be more aware and capable of supporting those around them that might be struggling with social anxiety.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Ask participants to explain what they think a mentor is.
  - Traditionally, this is someone who is older and more experienced, but a mentor can be anyone who is more *knowledgeable* and *experienced* in a specific area.
  - They are individuals who are willing to share their expertise with someone else to help them out.
  - In terms of resilience and managing social anxiety, this definition of a mentor means that participants are the knowledgeable and experienced individuals compared to those who have just started this course or have not yet started it.
- Ask participants about their ideal mentor:
  - *If you had the chance to go from the start of this course and to be mentored, what would your ideal mentor be like?*
  - *What would you want from a mentor?*
- Explain that participants are in a great position to be mentors, and that by learning about how to mentor others who are doing less well, they will continue to grow and become more resilient to things that could hold them back, such as social anxiety.
  - One of the simple ways this works is through 'social comparison theory'.
  - Leon Festinger, an American social psychologist, proposed social comparison in the 1950s. He suggested that we often evaluate our opinions and our abilities by comparing ourselves to others .
  - This helps us to reduce uncertainty about whether we are right or doing ok.
  - 'Downwards comparisons' are a specific kind of social comparison where we think about individuals or groups that are worse off than ourselves, and this helps us to feel better about ourselves .
  - In a similar way to how role models inspire us to improve ourselves (upwards comparisons), thinking about those who may be struggling with social anxiety (people who we might mentor) helps us to see the difference between us and them and recognise how far we have come





- In addition, the more we help others around us, the more this helps us practice and refine our own resilience-related skills.
- In this way, both mentor and mentee become more resilient – this mutually beneficial process has been called ‘growth for both’ .

## Part 4.

# Activity 1:

## How would you help?

### WHAT HAPPENS

Participants consider different scenarios that describe individuals struggling with social anxiety. These encourage thinking about how to approach and support others in ways that are sensitive and compassionate.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Have participants break into pairs to discuss the following scenarios.
- Share the three scenarios with each pair.
  - These scenarios should be culturally appropriate examples of individuals struggling with anxiety related to social situations, and where it would be appropriate for someone else to help out.
- For example:
  1. You are meeting up with some friends from home. One of your friends brings their cousin along, who does not know anyone in the group. They seem shy and don't join in with much of the conversation. When you ask them a question, you notice that their hands are trembling, and they struggle to maintain eye contact.
    - *How could you try to make the meeting less stressful for this person?*
    - *How could you try to make them feel more relaxed / at ease?*
  2. You and a friend from home have started attending different universities. While you are managing to meet people and get to grips with your course, they are having a tough time. They tell you they haven't made any friends, and this is probably because they think other people think they are boring or stupid. You notice they are spending more and more time gaming and on social media. Most recently they have told you they are thinking about quitting their course and going home.
    - *What could you ask to try to learn more about their situation / what is going on?*
    - *How could you try to support them?*
    - *What else could you do to try to help them out?*
  3. You are part of an instant messaging group of people you work with. One day, a member of the group sends you a direct message and you start chatting with them. As the conversation develops, they tell you they are struggling with social anxiety but that you are really helping them by talking to them. However, as the conversation continues over the weeks the messages become more numerous, until the point that it seems they are messaging you all the time. You begin to realise that they may be becoming dependent on you.
    - *What could you say / do to help the person become less dependent, in a kind and compassionate way?*



**Optional activity (time permitting):**

- *In each of the scenarios, what could you do if the person did not respond well to your actions? (The things you would do, say, or ask).*

**Highlight the key points:**

- This activity helps you think about ways in which you could help others.
- The challenge is to consider what might be involved in a kind and supportive approach that is not intrusive or overbearing.
- These are important considerations in mentoring but also help you to be more aware of others around them that may also be facing difficulties (e.g., friends, colleagues).

**Part 4.**

# Activity 2: Someone I Know

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants are asked to share the story of someone they know that they feel could have been struggling with social anxiety (anonymously). They are encouraged to think about this person and the ways in which they could become more *rugged* and more *resourced*.

**INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR FACILITATORS**

1. Share the *thoughts about others* form.
2. Ask participants to think about a person they know that they think might also be challenged by social situations. This person might be someone they knew from their home town, or from school, or someone they know now.
3. Encourage participants to complete the following questions on the form (see over):

1. Without naming them, or including any identifying details, how do you know this person?

.....

.....

.....

2. What makes you think they might be challenged by social anxiety? If you can, describe any specific events which have led you to this belief.

.....

.....

.....

3. From what you know about this person, how *rugged* do they seem?  
\_\_\_\_\_/10  
(on a 1-10 scale, where 10 is 'very rugged' and 1 is 'not rugged at all').

4. What might they need to become more *rugged*?

.....

.....

.....

5. If you could give one piece of advice to this person, what would you say to them to help them become more *rugged*?

.....

.....

.....

6. From what you know about this person, how *resourced* do they seem?  
\_\_\_\_\_/10  
(on a 1-10 scale, where 10 is 'very resourced' and 1 is 'not resourced at all').

7. What might they need to become more *resourced*?

.....

.....

.....

8. If you could give one piece of advice to this person, what would you say to them to help them become more *resourced*?

.....

.....

.....



### Optional activity (time permitting):

- As a group, ask participants to share their suggestions for how the person could become more rugged and more resourced, asking them to explain why they feel this would be appropriate for the person.

### Review the key points:

- This activity helps you think about what being rugged and resourced might look like in other people, as well as where their deficits may lie.
- Thinking about areas where others could improve also helps us to be more aware of our own areas for improvement.

## Part 6.

# Health Break

### WHAT HAPPENS

The group should take a 10-minute break to stretch their legs, relax, eat, drink, use restrooms, etc. The Health break also gives participants some informal time to talk between themselves about the exercises.

## Part 7.

# Activity 3: The Meeting

### WHAT HAPPENS

In this activity, participants consider a hypothetical scenario where they are supporting someone who is struggling with social anxiety. Even if participants are still experiencing significant challenges themselves, this imagined mentee is doing more poorly, making the participant the person in the situation who can play a supportive role.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Ask participants to imagine that they are starting to mentor a person who is struggling with social anxiety. This person is someone they have met with once before when they briefly introduced themselves to each other. They have since exchanged messages and are planning to meet up.
- Knowing the mentee struggles with social situations, ask participants to imagine they have invited this person out somewhere to learn more about them and to help them start to improve.



- Ask participants to work through the following questions:

**[Prelude: The preparation]**

- *What kinds of places could you suggest as locations for the meeting? Suggest two to give the mentee a choice of destinations.*
- *What are the qualities about these places that make them suitable for a meeting like this?*
- *What would be a good safety mechanism (a way out of the situation) just in case things go very badly?*

**[Act 1: The beginning]**

- Share the following scenario with participants:

You arrive early to make sure they aren't waiting around. When you see them arrive, they don't look particularly happy to be there. They look tense and upset.

- *What could you do as a first greeting to put them more at ease?*
- *What could be the first thing you say to them to encourage a warm and friendly atmosphere?*

**[Act 2: The conversation]**

- *What kinds of things could you ask to learn more about them?*
- *What kinds of follow-up questions could you ask for things they might say?*
- *How could you prepare for awkward silences?*

- Share the scenario:

— *As you continue to talk, you learn that they broke up with their partner not long ago and this has added to their distress. They say they don't really have anyone to talk to now and they don't know how to meet new people. They seem very despondent.*

- How would you respond to this?

- *As the meeting goes on, how would you check whether things are going well?*
- *If you sense things are getting worse, or something upsets or distresses the mentee, what could you do to try to make things better?*

**[Act 3: The finale]**

- *At what point would it be an appropriate time to end the meeting?*
- *What would be a good way to end the meeting?*

**Optional activity (time permitting):**

- If the group is comfortable with role-playing, ask them to break into pairs and act out this situation, taking it in turns to play the mentor and the mentee.



**Review the take-away messages:**

- This activity helps you think about the challenges of being around others who may be struggling with social anxiety.
- It helps to foster social skills that are involved in attending to the needs of others and helps to reduce stress and worry through planning ahead.

## Part 8.

# Activity 4: The Agreement

## WHAT HAPPENS

In this fourth activity, participants develop a plan for mentoring. This draws on insights and reflections from the previous activities as participants think about important considerations for relationships between a person who is more skilled and experienced at managing social anxiety and a person who may be struggling.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

As a group, work together to devise a mentoring strategy that each participant can use with someone they know (or self-mentor). Together as a group, work through each section:

Thinking about someone each participant wants to help develop resilience and overcome social anxiety, consider the following questions and write down the group's answers.

**Objective: What is the purpose of the mentoring?**

- Are there specific goals to achieve?
- How would you come up with and agree on appropriate goals?
- How would you check on progress?

**Time:**

- How long should the relationship last?
- If there are specific goals, when should these be met by?
- How much of a mentor / mentee's time should be given to this relationship? (e.g., the time spent communicating, meeting up, etc.)

**Communication:** How should the mentor and mentee communicate? (Email? Texting?)

- What boundaries should be set? When should communication happen? Not happen?

**Ground rules:** What other important rules should be put in place for the conduct for both mentor and mentee? (e.g., how to talk to each other, when and when not to get in touch, etc.).

- Rules for the mentor: What in particular should a mentor pledge to do / not do?
- Rules for the mentee: What in particular should a mentee pledge to do / not do?

**Problems:** What steps could you come up with in case problems arise in the relationship? (What would you do? Who could you go to?)

- What should happen if any of the rules/pledges are broken?



Ensure participants review the key points from the exercise. The Facilitator can develop all of these instructions into a simple one page “manual” that participants receive during the next session. This is their guidebook to being a good mentor.

### Part 9.

## Summing up / looking forward

### WHAT HAPPENS

Participants should review the main things they learned during the module.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Ask participants to write on a ‘post-it’ note two things they learned during this module, then past their post it on the wall.
- Then, read aloud some of the statements without identifying who wrote them.
- This activity helps participants become more comfortable with speaking publicly without having to feel personally vulnerable.

### Part 10.

## Homework

### WHAT HAPPENS

Facilitators should decide whether a participant is ready to mentor another person. This decision can be informed by the facilitator’s assessment of how the participant has progressed with the course and therefore how they are managing their social anxiety. It should also be informed by thinking about whether they believe the participant would cope well in a mentoring role.

- If the person is suitable for being a mentor, they can complete the following activity (see below).
- If they are not yet ready to be a mentor, or cannot find a person to mentor, they can continue the resilience-building homework activities of modules 4 and 6.

Option A: Continue the resilience-building homework activities of modules 4 and 6. Record you experience on paper, with tablet, or computer.

Option B: Making a Mentee

- Find a person that could be suitable for mentoring (this could be a friend or someone you know who has not taken this course or is at an earlier stage in the course).
- Using the results of activity 4 in this module, work out a mentoring strategy. "How exactly am I going to be a good mentor?"
- Meet at least once with your mentee. If the meeting goes well, think about how you can arrange a further meeting with specific achievable behavioural goals.

**REFERENCES**

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<sup>ii</sup> Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. Human Relations, 7(2), 117–140. doi:10.1177/001872675400700202

<sup>iii</sup> Wills, T.A. (1981). *Downward comparison principles in social psychology*. Psychological Bulletin, 90(2), 245–271. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.90.2.245.

<sup>iiiv</sup> Gibbons, F.X. (1986). *Social comparison and depression: company's effect on misery*. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51(1), 140–148. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.51.1.140.

<sup>v</sup> Hudson, P. (2013). *Mentoring as professional development: 'growth for both' mentor and mentee*. Professional Development in Education, 39(5), 771-783. DOI: 10.1080/19415257.2012.749415.

**NOTES ON  
MODULE 8**

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**Module 9****9.****MAINTAINING  
RESILIENCE  
IN THE FUTURE**

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In this module, participants will learn ways to keep themselves motivated to use the strategies they've developed to cope better with social anxiety and build resilience. Participants will be encouraged to accept themselves as they are so that change, when it's necessary, is easier. Participants reflect on the tools they have acquired to continue to cope with social anxiety after the program ends, being both rugged and resourced.





# Module Outline

## OUTCOMES

- Participants will understand the value of acceptance (being truly themselves and living their lives as an expression of what they value).
- Participants will have strategies to maintain the changes they have made in areas of their lives that were holding them back from being bold and successful.

## MATERIALS

- A 'talking stick' or other symbol of group respect
- Flipchart paper and markers, or other drawing tools (a computer screen, tablet, etc.)
- A list of possible personal characteristics
- A target to write personal characteristics on
- Stepping stones handout sheets and pencils/pens
- A healthy snack

## SESSION MAP

90 MINUTES

1. Welcome
2. Awareness practice
3. Story-time
4. Discussion
5. Activity 1: Keeping our head clear
6. Activity 2: My rugged statements
7. Health break
8. Activity 3: Finding our allies
9. Reflection
10. Reassessment
11. Staying connected
12. Closing

## Part 1.

# Welcome

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants pass a “talking stick” or other symbol of respect.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Refer to the Rules of Engagement, then, invite each person to say their name (this will help everyone remember who is in the group) and say, “*I am committed to the rules.*” If someone prefers not to speak, they can say their name and signal their commitment (e.g., with a thumbs-up gesture).
- As each person receives the talking stick, they are encouraged to answer the following questions:
  - *In a few words, how are you feeling about being here today? Please remember that everyone needs a turn to speak so be sure to keep your answer reasonably short.*
  - *Has anything ‘awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?*
  - *Has anything ‘not-so-awesome’ happened since you were last with the group?*

## Part 2.

# Awareness Practice

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Each session, participants are invited to practice a short awareness exercise. Regular practice of focused breathing will help participants learn to regulate their physiology in response to stress or anxiety. As participants become more familiar with practicing awareness, facilitators will reduce the amount of guidance they offer, as reflected in the script.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

- Use the following script as a guide to lead participants through the following breathing exercise (read slowly):
  - Please find a comfortable position.
  - You may close your eyes if you wish.
  - Now, bring your attention to your breath.
  - Pause
  - Rest with your breath for the next few moments.
  - Pause
  - Now, shift your awareness to your body.
  - Check in with how your body feels sitting here now.
  - Pause
  - Notice if there are any areas where there is ease or unease.
  - If there is tension present, you can relax it as much as it will.

Pause

- Now, check in with your mind.
- Notice if any thoughts are present now.
- As you notice a thought, see if you can let it pass by.

Pause

- Now, notice what feelings are present.
- If you can, name them.

Pause

- Notice if there are any connections amongst sensations, thoughts, and feelings.

Pause

- Now, bring your awareness back to breath for the next few moments.

Pause

- Before you come back to the room, take two or three deep breaths.

Pause (allow 30 seconds)

- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

## STOP AND REFLECT

Ask if participants have any comments about their experience with the awareness practice.

### Part 3.

## Story-time

### WHAT HAPPENS

One participant is asked to tell a story of how their life is different now then compared with how their life was when they first began the program.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Invite one participant to share how their life has changed since beginning the program.
- If possible, participants should share details of a very specific moment in their life that would not have occurred before they began the program.
- Ask the other participants to give encouragement to the participant who is telling their story. As the facilitator, model how to be supportive of another's success.

## Part 4.

# Discussion

## WHAT HAPPENS

Participants will learn about acceptance as a strategy to cope long-term with social anxiety and make themselves resilient to future challenges.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Explain the following content to participants, using flipcharts to emphasize the key points.
- Being rugged and resourced well into the future takes some work. To continue building and maintaining resilience to social anxiety requires you to do two things:
  1. *Show acceptance for who you are and control negative thoughts.*
  2. *Find allies to help you have more and more of the seven experiences that create resilience.*
- Social anxiety and the troubling thoughts that go along with it can be controlled if you remember a few basic principles:
  1. Anxiety is a normal, even healthy, part of our lives. It keeps us safe from danger. Too much anxiety, though, compromises our ability to be bold and successful. You can't extinguish all anxiety (you wouldn't want to!) but you can see it for what it is: thoughts in our head that we can talk back to and push aside.
  2. Changing how we cope and the strategies we use when we feel anxious is going to make us feel uncomfortable. Some discomfort is normal, even if it feels scary. It is, though, temporary. Once we develop new patterns of behaviour, our discomfort and anxiety will lessen.
  3. We should strive to live in ways that fit with our values. What we value should be reflected in how we live our lives.
  4. Talk back to those who put us down. Even better, find others who remind us we have something special to offer.
  5. Find allies who can help us feel bold and make us more successful.
- There are four ways we can change:
  1. *Change ourselves.* Put as much effort as we can into calming our thinking, changing our behaviour and controlling our emotions. This can be exhausting, but will work as long as the world around you isn't too dangerous.
  2. *Take advantage of the resilience-promoting experiences you already have.* Notice, and make use of, all the opportunities that surround you to decrease social anxiety and become bolder and more successful. Spend more time with supportive relationships, show others your many talents, navigate your way to where you feel you belong, and make decisions for yourself that matter.
  3. When these resilience-promoting experiences are few and far between, or non-existent altogether, *look for new sources of support.* This means changing yourself a little, becoming motivated to seek out new people, new places, and new activities that make you feel bolder and more successful.
  4. When all else fails and your life remains stubbornly the same, *change your expectations.* Accept that sometimes, in some situations, we will not succeed. At least for now. Time is on our side. As we get older, as the world around us changes, look for new opportunities to succeed.

**STOP AND REFLECT**

Ask participants to reflect on what they have just learned. Are they optimistic, or pessimistic, about their future?

**Part 5.**

# Activity 1: Keeping Our Head Clear

**WHAT HAPPENS**

Participants will explore ways to both accept themselves and commit to making changes in the parts of their lives they want to change.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS**

Explain the following:

- A big part of sustaining our motivation to change is, ironically, accepting ourselves for how we already are.
- Remember, our past has shaped us. We are not anxious, flawed, or weak.
- Those are labels we've adopted, names we have given to our experience that have been handed to us by others.
- Still, we have to accept that these are ways we think about ourselves for now, and that these ways of thinking about ourselves protect us from psychological and physical harm.
- Next, ask participants to reflect on the following question:
  - *"What would I give up if I changed and stopped being socially anxious too fast, too soon?"*

Now that participants have thought about acceptance, shift their thinking to their commitment to change.

- Ask them to list five personal characteristics they really value in themselves or in others.

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....

Here is a short list of possible values. Participants may hold many other value not on this list.

- Accepting (of myself and others)
- Adventurous (to seek out new experiences)



- Assertive (to stand up for myself)
- Caring (to show compassion towards others and my environment)
- Connected (to have relationships with others that matter to me)
- Contributing (to help make others' lives better)
- Conformity (to obey the rules and fit in)
- Courageous (to be brave and face my fears)
- Creative (to be innovative and develop new ways of seeing the world)
- Fair (to treat others justly and promote social justice)
- Fitness (to keep physically and mentally healthy)
- Flexible (to adapt to changing circumstances)
- Friendly (to support and get along with others)
- Honesty (to tell the truth and be sincere in my interactions with others)
- Humility (to be humble and let my achievements speak for themselves)
- Industrious (to work hard and achieve my goals)
- Independent (to rely on myself whenever I can)
- Intimacy (to be open to emotional connections with others)
- Loving (to show affection for others)
- Organized (to create order from chaos)
- Patience (to pace myself and wait for the right time to act)
- Power (to be strong and wield influence wisely)
- Respect (to show tolerance for myself and others)
- Responsible (to be accountable to other for my actions)
- Self-control (to regulate my emotions and act according to what I value)
- Tolerant (to support others to be their best selves)
- Trustworthy (to be reliable)
- Now have participants record their five most important personal characteristics on a target.
- The closer to the center that participants place a personal characteristic, the more it means the participant feel that that characteristic is a part of their life every day.
- The further from the center they write the characteristic, the less it is experienced day-to-day.



### Highlight the key points:

- Sustaining resilience requires that our lives reflect the values we hold most dear.
- These values are embodied in the characteristics we express throughout our lives.
- If we value helping other people (we see ourselves as someone who contributes), and our social anxiety prevents us from being helpful when a friend or neighbor is in trouble, then we need to remind ourselves to push beyond our comfort zone and find places and opportunities to be helpful.
- The more we show others the personal characteristics we most value the more resilient we will be.

### Part 6.

## Activity 2: My Rugged Statements

### WHAT HAPPENS

Participants get a chance to review strategies they used before and see how well they are working.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

- Facilitators ask participants to return to their list of rugged statements that they created in Module 4.
- After reading these over and entering them into a simple grid, ask participants:
  - *“How useful have these been in the last month?”*
  - Rate each from 1-5 where 1 is most unhelpful and 5 is most helpful.
- Under each number, participants should explain their answer.
- Was a statement not useful because they didn’t have an opportunity to use it, or is there another reason?

Rugged Statement	How Useful Has It been?

**Part 7.**

# Health Break

**WHAT HAPPENS**

The group should take a 10-minute break to stretch their legs, relax, eat, drink, use restrooms, etc. The Health break also gives participants some informal time to talk between themselves about the exercises.

**Part 8.**

# Activity 3: Finding Our Allies

**WHAT HAPPENS**

In this activity, participants will discuss who they need in their lives to maintain the changes that they've made.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS****Part A: Energizer****Step 1:**

- Ask participants to form pairs.
- Each pair chooses one participant to be the leader, the other the follower.
- Explain that the group is going to play a game of "mirrors".
- Participants should sit, or stand, facing each other, with their hands raised, palm to palm with their partner (their palms do not have to touch, but they need to be up and facing one another).
- The "leader" in each group is instructed to move for 10 seconds in any way they want (they can stand up, crouch down, smile, walk, etc.) and the follower must do exactly the same movement as the leader.

**Step 2:**

- After 10 seconds the exercise ends, and the roles of leader and follower switch.
  - Now the new leader leads the game of mirrors for 10 seconds.

**Step 3:**

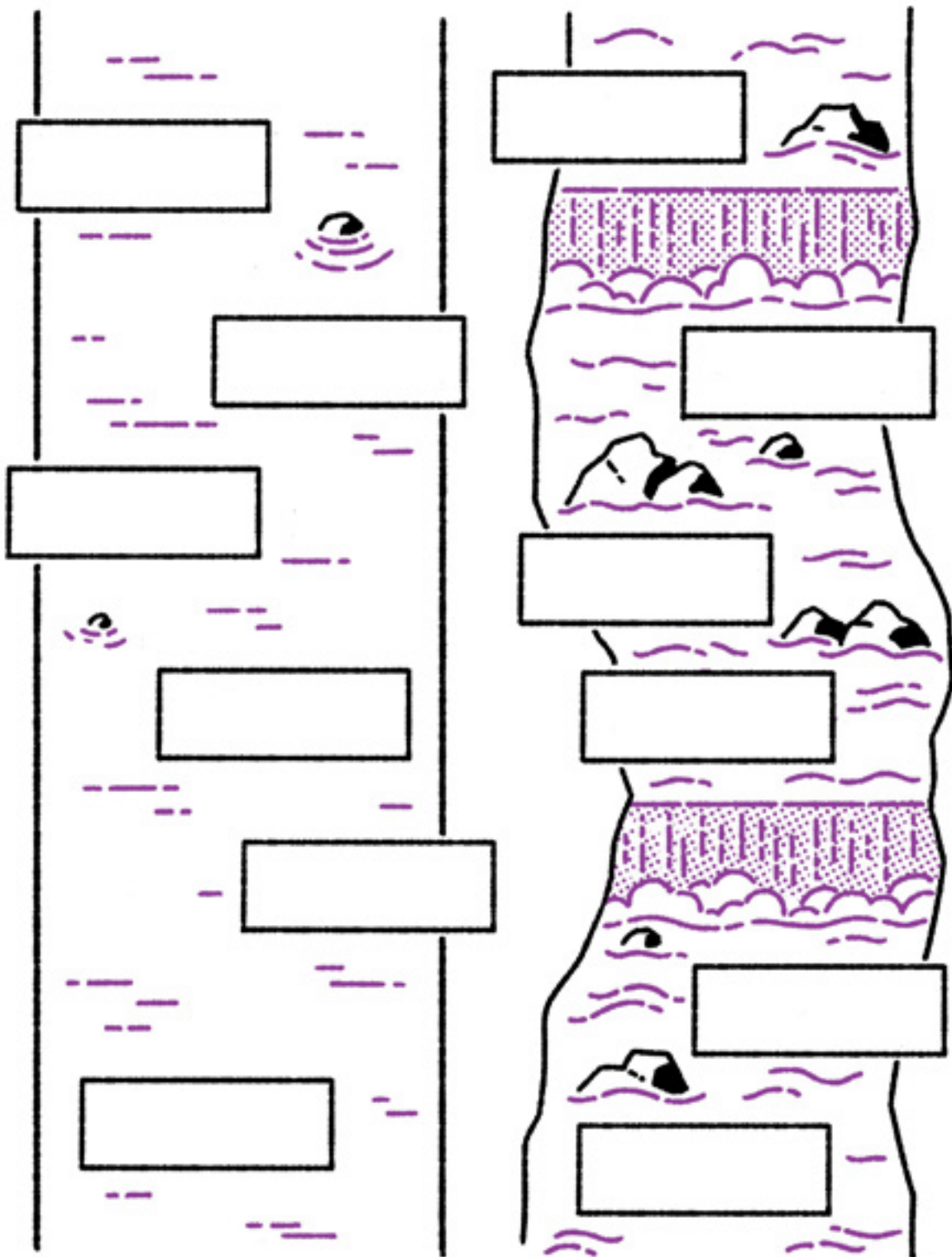
- Ask participants which felt better, being the leader or the follower?
  - If the leader asked you to move in a way that you didn't want to move, what were your choices?
- The exercise can help to start a conversation about how our families, schools, workplaces and communities force us to act in ways we don't want to act.
- It is sometimes important to "leave the game" and do things that you find helpful even if others try and make you behave differently.

**Part B: Finding allies**

In this exercise, participants are encouraged to lessen contact with people who put them down and increase contact with people who support them. The more support we receive, the more we will have the seven experiences that build resilience.

**Step 1:**

- Ensure each participant is given a drawing with two paths, represented by stones across a river.
- One path takes the participant downstream through dangerous rapids, the other upstream through calm water.



- Ask participants to think about an everyday pattern in their life that makes them anxious.
- This could be going to school, spending time with their family, or being at work.
- Our anxiety seldom occurs instantly. Instead, it builds as we encounter more and more stress.



- Instruct participants to *“Think about a stressful day you’ve recently had.”*
- In the first blank space, put “Waking up in my bed” to indicate the start of your day, then on the very far side of the page at the end of the stone path through the rapids, write a few words that describe what happened that made your day such a disaster (*“My mother yelled at me at dinner”, “My co-workers teased me about being late”, etc.*).
- Being our boldest, most successful selves requires support from others.
- Becoming stressed and anxious is what happens when we are put down by others or we obsess about failure.
- Both good days and bad days, though, often depend on who we had supporting us.
- Using the diagram of the stones, fill in all the events, small and big, that occurred between you getting out of bed and arriving at that bad event.
- Focus on both the actions you took (*“I ate breakfast”, “I ran to catch my bus and missed it”*) and the people you encountered and how they treated you (*“Sat on bus and everyone looked at me funny”, “My father called to tell me I should try harder at school”, “The other kids in my class laughed at me”*).

### Step 2:

- Now think about a different day that you felt successful.
- Write on the stone at the end of the stone path that goes through calm water what happened to make the day feel so good (*“My grandmother cooked my favourite dinner for me”, “My friend called me and invited me to help them with an assignment”*).
- Once again, fill in all the events and describe your interactions with people step-by-step throughout the day.

## Part 9.

# Reflection

### WHAT HAPPENS

Facilitators remind participants that keeping ourselves resilient requires supports. We need allies who can help convince us we are valued and that we have something special to offer. Whether we experience resilience or social anxiety depends a great deal on who we encounter and the supports they provide.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Have the participants put their completed exercises on the wall.
- Then, looking back at the stones across the river exercise, have participants answer the following questions, sharing their answers with others in the group if they feel comfortable:

- *Bad days don't just happen. What events, and which relationships, are more likely to occur on days that go bad?*
  - *Which events and which relationships are likely to be a part of your life when days go well and you feel bolder, more successful?*
  - *On good days, who are your allies? Who helps you have experiences that build resilience?*
  - *Looking at the bad day and the path into the dangerous rapids, were there people you could have spoken with, places you could have gone, or events you could have experienced, which would have changed the direction of the path, directing you away from the rapids and instead into calmer waters?*
- Next, explain to participants that sustaining our resilience and avoiding social anxiety is about finding paths through our day that bring us opportunities for more support.
  - We need to avoid people, places and events that make us feel uneasy and instead seek out those where we have experiences that make us more resilient.
  - We need:
    1. Relationships
    2. A powerful identity
    3. Power and control
    4. Social justice and fair treatment
    5. Everyday supports like food and clothing
    6. A sense of belonging
    7. Pride in our culture and heritage

## Part 10.

# Reassessment

### WHAT HAPPENS

Participants are given a chance to reassess their level of social anxiety and their ruggedness and resources using three standardized measures.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

- Facilitators provide participants with three assessment tools:
  - The Social Interaction Anxiety Scale; The Rugged resilience measure; and the CYRM.
- Participants should take ten minutes to complete all three measures, then tally their scores to see if they have changed since they last did these exercises.

**Part 11.**

# Staying Connected

**INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR FACILITATORS**

- Have participants share their contact information with one another (those that want to).
- Brainstorm how participants can remain in touch and support each other as they continue to break free of social anxiety and build resilience.

**Part 12.**

# Closing

**INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR FACILITATORS**

- Share with each participant before the group ends a small reminder of the group.
  - This can be a certificate of completion, or a small token (a stone, a piece of the talking stick, etc.) to remind participants of what they have learned in the group.
- Invite the group to participate in a closing circle. Ask participants to share one thing they are committed to doing to continue to build their resilience.
- Remind participants that building resilience takes effort, and that there will be good days, and bad days. The important thing is consistent effort to build the seven contributors to resilience.
- As each person receives the talking stick, they are encouraged to answer the following question:
  - *In a few words, can you share one thing you're committed to do to continue to build your resilience?*
- Close the group by thanking the group for their participation and willingness to try new things throughout the course.

# APPENDICES

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**SCENARIO SHEET**

Social situation	1	2	3	4	5



## TANGRAM EXERCISE

### FIRST GROUP INSTRUCTIONS



### SECOND GROUP INSTRUCTIONS



**DISTORTED THOUGHTS**





CLEAR