

# First Aid for Anxiety

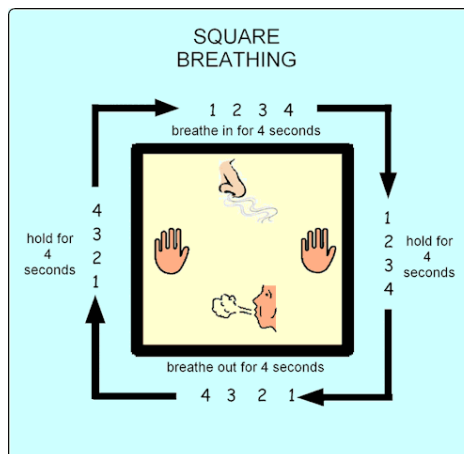
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Last month we started to look at anxiety. We learned that some anxiety is essential in helping us to protect ourselves from danger – it is our early warning system to take action to keep safe. But sometimes this system can be triggered at the wrong time, or in a more extreme way than is needed. The physical feelings of anxiety can be really unpleasant so what can you do to manage this?

Learning to control your breathing is key. When our threat system is triggered the levels of carbon dioxide and oxygen in our blood become imbalanced. This is partly why we feel the unpleasant physical symptoms associated with anxiety. If you can get the balance back to normal levels then you can often prevent the physical symptoms of anxiety from getting worse.

A simple technique is **square breathing**. This produces amazing positive results whenever you are feeling anxious, nervous, excited or fearful and you would like to calm yourself. You need to do it for at least 3 minutes for it to be effective.

Imagine a square in your head. With each breath, imagine you are moving along the sides of the square. You can do this wherever you are and nobody will know what you are doing!



It may sound simple because it is!

***Tip: Like anything else, it is helpful to practise this skill regularly so that you are able to use it when you need it.***



Uffculme School Student Welfare Services  
Looking out for our students