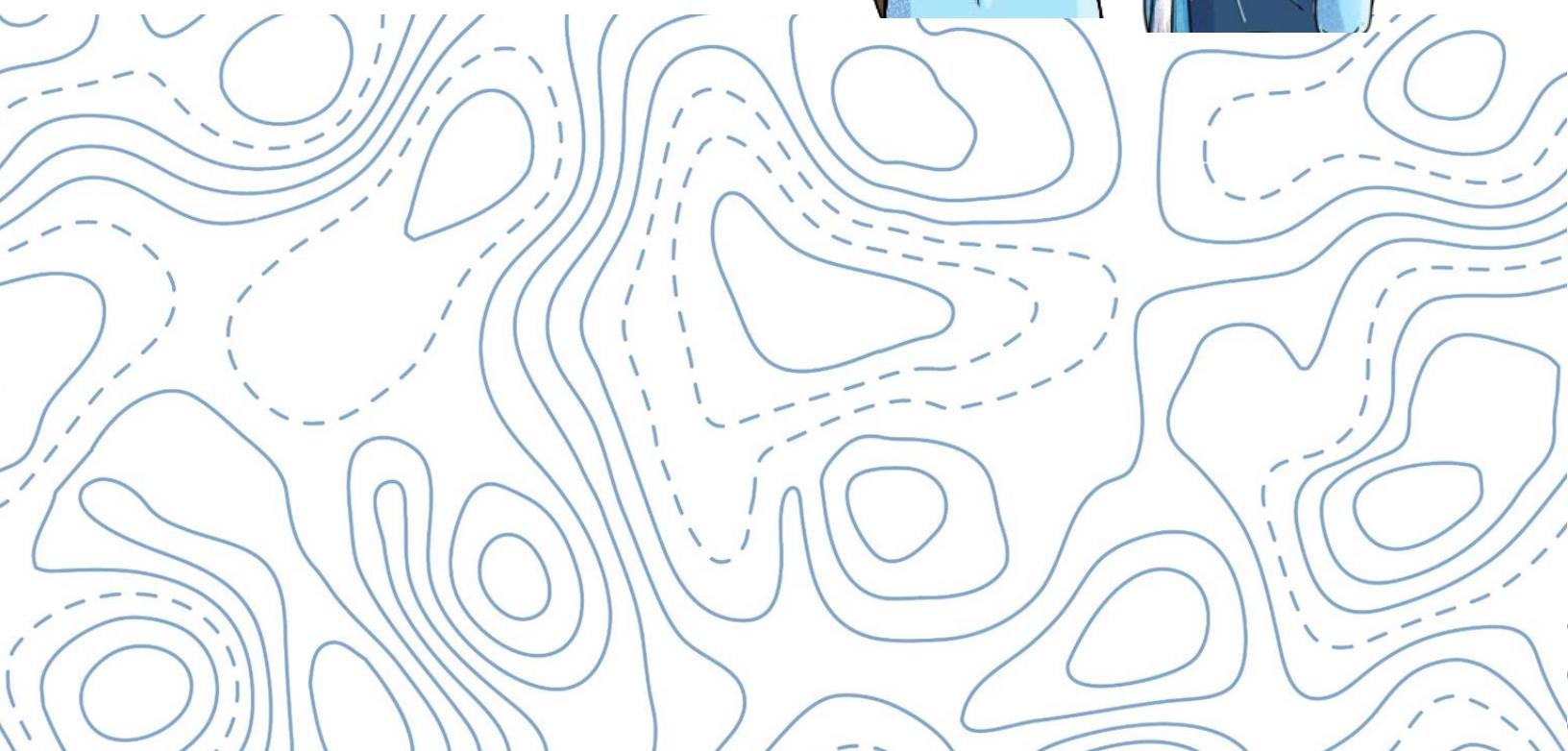




Talking About Anxiety Without Stress

Animation Guide
Expedition Program – High school
September 2025



Document created by the Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale, intended for children, adolescents, and young adults.

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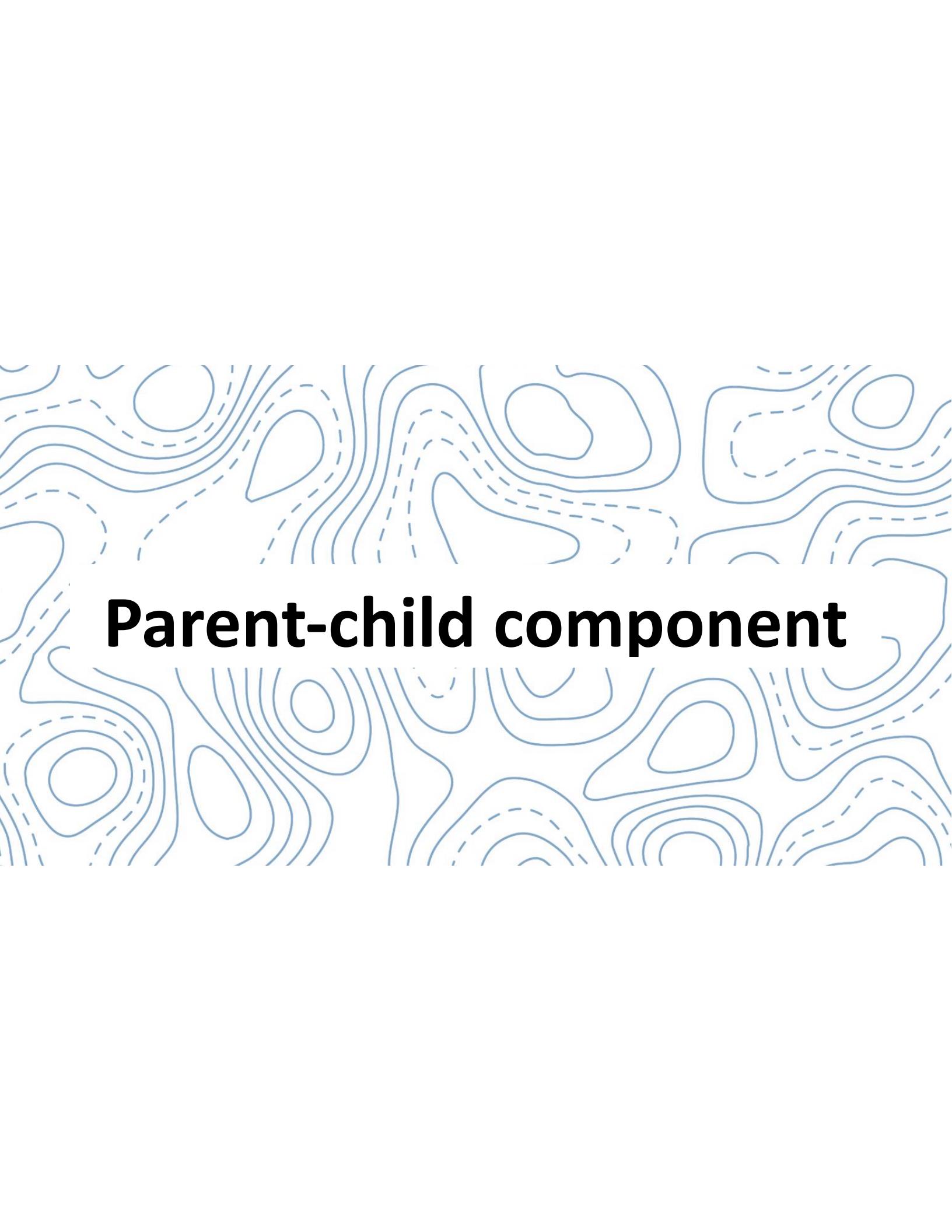


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Parent-child component



PARENT-CHILD PREPARATORY MEETING

Specific meeting objectives

At the end of the meeting, the parent and child will:

- Be familiar with the facilitators who will lead the program;
- Know the conditions and objectives of the program;
- Be able to express their issues related to anxiety;
- Be able to set a personal objective.

Materials and preparation

You will find all the necessary documents to implement the HORS-PISTE - Expedition program at the following address: <https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/hors-piste/programme-secondaire/> (Section Expedition component - Implementation Tools - Implementation Document).

- Include the correct information in the *HORS-PISTE - Expedition program* worksheet and print it (1 per family)
- Print *The face of stress and anxiety* worksheet

Meeting agenda

A. Greeting, presentation of the meeting objectives (5 min.)

1. Hand out the *HORS-PISTE - Expedition program* worksheet and present the meeting objectives.

B. Presentation of the specific intervention program (10 min.)

1. Present the point of the program. This program aims, on the one hand, to help students develop the competencies needed to deal with anxiety-provoking situations and, on the other hand, to equip their parents with ways to help them develop these new competencies. Research has shown the significant impact of parental participation in the program, in that this allows for consistent adjustments to the family dynamic and greater generalization of the students' learning (Barrett *et al.*, 1996).
2. Present the program objectives



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Objectives for the student:

By participating the HORS-PISTE - Expedition program, the student will find out how to expand their comfort zone by learning to:

- Reformulate their thoughts into helpful ones;
- Manage their emotions to better cope with them;
- Adopt new behaviours (take action!);
- Adopt positive lifestyle habits;
- Use stress management strategies;
- Nurture and properly use their social network;
- Draw on their strengths to help other group members progress.

Objectives for the parents:

By participating the HORS-PISTE - Expedition program, the parents will have the opportunity to:

- Understand anxiety and recognize its effects on their child;
- Develop tools to help their child expand their comfort zone;
- Adopt new behaviours to reduce accommodation;
- Discuss their experiences and draw on their strengths to help other group members progress.

C. Presentation of the program (10 min.)

1. Present how the program works:

- 8 weekly 60-minute group meetings for students;
- 3 group meetings of 90 minutes for parents;
- 1 parent-child review meeting
- Start and end dates of group meetings;
- Location and time of meetings for students and parents;
- Names and contact information of the facilitators for each group;
- Winning conditions:
 - Attendance;
 - Punctuality;
 - Personal involvement;
 - Involvement in the group, sharing experiences;
 - Communication with the team: needs, discomforts, absences, etc.



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D. Discussion on difficulties encountered and individual expectations (20 min.)

1. Now ask the student to tell you about their issues with anxiety (their most common anxiety-provoking situations and the impacts these situations have on them).
2. Then ask the parents to tell you about their experiences with their child's anxiety.
3. You can make links to the results of the pre-test questionnaire, where applicable.
4. Ask the student what they expect from their parents, from you as the facilitator, and from the program. Then ask the parents tell you what they expect from their child, you, and the program.

E. Setting an objective (5 min.)

1. Finally, ask the student and their parents to each set an objective they would like to achieve during the program. Write these objectives down and remind them during the first workshop.

F. Conclusion (5 min.)

1. Conclude by asking each of them how they feel after the meeting. Give the parents the worksheet entitled "*The face of stress and anxiety*" and ask them to read it before the first group meeting.



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The face of stress and anxiety

Is anxiety a concern?



As a parent, you know that your teen, like all their peers, is going through some challenging times related to their development. During their teenage years, children undergo many transformations—to their body, mind, family dynamic and social circle. It's a stage characterized by a string of changes that can spark concerns, stress and anxiety, for both you and your child. For all these reasons, adolescence is an opportune and crucial time to learn how to deal with uncertainty, especially since it corresponds to the time when anxiety disorders begin to develop (Claes, 2003).

Anxiety disorders are among the most common mental health disorders in teens (Costello, 2011). They appear during early childhood or adolescence, causing a range of functional difficulties that can worsen over the course of a lifetime (Piché *et al.*, 2017).

What about stress?

Stress is an alarm reaction to a real, concrete situation. It triggers an activation reaction (fight, flight, or freeze) that is essential to our survival. When we're faced with a situation we perceive as dangerous, our brain triggers the physiological reactions needed to confront it (Lupien, 2019; Marchand *et al.*, 2018). For example, if you're hiking on a wooded trail and come face to face with a bear, the stress you feel in that moment is justified, useful and essential. It gives you the energy needed to either run away or defend yourself. On the other hand, if you don't feel stress and you simply continue on your way without worrying about the bear, then you'll be in danger. The same goes for the stressful situations you encounter on a daily basis. However, if you react the same way to an ant as you do to a bear, you'll be wasting a lot of energy for nothing!

So, in reasonable amounts, stress can boost your performance. Just think about athletes who perform at their peak in major competitions. However, cumulative stress, prolonged stress or too much stress can affect your performance, cause you to waste energy and even burn out. Too much stress can also cause you to develop other health problems, and make you angry, emotionally unstable or irritable. The opposite is also true. No stress or too little stress can cause you to underreact, lower your energy level, or fail to see the danger in a given situation (Shih and Lin, 2017; Strack *et al.*, 2017).



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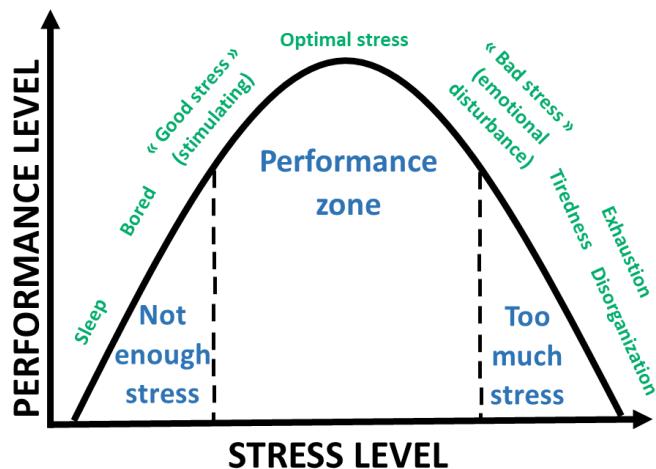
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The inverted stress curve (Yerkes and Dodson, 1908) shows how stress is necessary when it's well controlled (Palazzolo and Arnaud, 2013).



But what's the difference between stress and anxiety?

While stress is an alarm reaction to a real, concrete situation, anxiety is worrying about a situation that hasn't happened yet (Lupien, 2019). A situation doesn't have to be real to trigger an anxiety reaction. For example, your child may be stressed about an oral presentation they have to give the next day. But if they're worried about failing their year because of this presentation that they haven't even given yet, that's anxiety. In this situation, your child is dreading a situation that isn't real, because they haven't yet done badly on their oral presentation, let alone failed their year.

When does anxiety become a problem?

Everyone is likely to experience anxiety at some point in their life, especially when confronted with change. Anxiety becomes problematic when it causes a person to feel distressed or unable to function properly. Anxiety can manifest in many ways and very differently from one person to the next (Dumas, 2013). Anxiety can appear as catastrophic, negative or rigid thoughts, physical symptoms (heart palpitations, stomachache, etc.), avoidance behaviours such as fleeing anxiety-provoking situations or talking a lot as a distraction, and safety-focused behaviours such as always having a phone handy to call for help (Neil *et al*, 2016). If your child has anxiety, that doesn't mean they have an anxiety disorder. But, if you can teach them how to cope better with their anxiety, this will serve them well for the rest of their life and possibly prevent the anxiety from escalating.

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PARENT-CHILD REVIEW MEETING

Specific meeting objectives

At the end of the meeting, the parent and child will be able to:

- Assess their progress;
- Discuss each person's perceptions of their path;
- Prepare to continue the transformations already underway;
- Evaluate the need for additional support;
- Provide feedback on the program and identify areas for improvement.

Materials and preparation

- Together (both facilitators), prepare the comments you would like to make to the participants;
- Make a list of resources available in their community.

Meeting agenda

A. Greeting, presentation of the meeting objectives (5 min.)

1. Present the meeting objectives.

B. Discuss the progress made and each person's perceptions (25 min.)

1. Remind each person of their original objective; first ask the student, then the parents, where they are today in terms of that objective. What have they learned and what changes have they noticed? What are the main tools they have used?
2. Ask the student what they think about what their parents said, and vice versa.
3. Then tell them what you've noticed, pointing out the changes, strengths, and contributions of each person. You can also mention any challenge you foresee for the student and their parents and talk about ways they could overcome these challenges.



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C. Program debriefing (20 min.)

1. Ask the student and their parents how they see the future, what things they're worried about, and how they plan to continue the changes underway.
2. Use the metaphor of a highway and a forest trail: Avoidance behaviours can be like highways when you're anxious. Like your comfort zone, highways are familiar, even comfortable, territory, but they often lead you to the same place. You've started clearing a trail through the forest; it's rough going and full of obstacles, but it could lead you to new and exciting places!
3. Ask the student:
 - What are the warning signs that you're drifting back onto your highway or slipping back into your comfort zone?
 - How will you remember some of the tools?
 - What do you expect from your parents?
4. Ask the parents:
 - What are the warning signs that you are reverting to accommodating behaviours?

D. Evaluate the need for additional support (5 min.)

1. Ask the student, and then the parents, about their need for additional support.
2. Remind them about the resources available in their community or tell them how to formally ask for help, as needed.

E. Feedback and improvements (5 min.)

1. Ask the student and their parents for their feedback on the program and what improvements could be made.



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Child component



1. ME, ANXIOUS...?

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Get to know the facilitator and the other group members;
- Understand the concept of comfort zone and make a connection with their personal objective.

How the workshop works

Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. A picture that represents me (15 min)

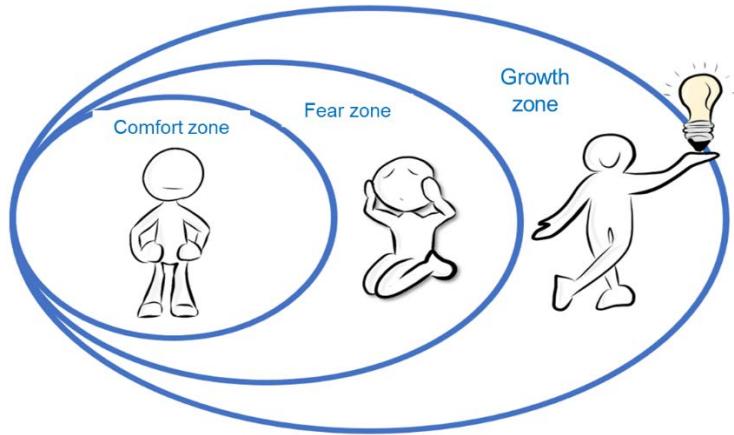
1. Ask the students to look carefully at the pictures in their *Handy student guide*. Each student must identify a picture that represents them and then introduce themselves to the group based on that picture. The pictures can represent one or more aspects of the student.
2. On the board, write the name of each student and a few main points from their presentation. Try to identify each person's strengths.

For example: Rosalie chooses the picture of a group of friends because she enjoys spending time with her friends. You can ask her if she thinks she's a good friend and what people like about her. On the board, list some characteristics of a good listener.

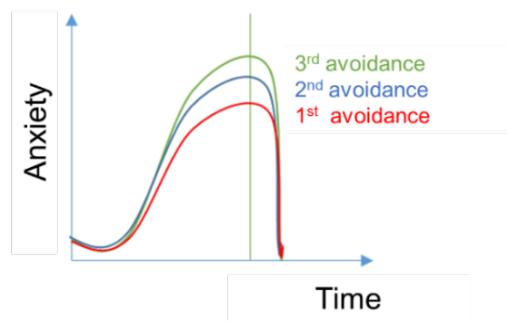
B. Expanding my comfort zone (30 min)

1. Now, present the concepts of comfort zone, avoidance and exposure using the diagrams in the *Handy student guide* and the following explanations:

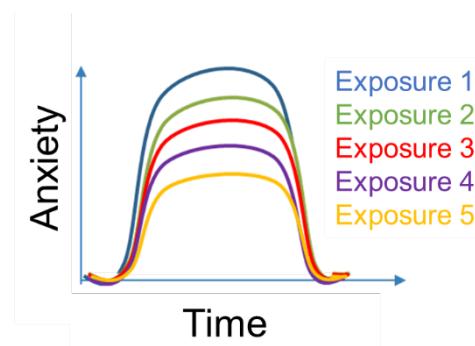
Your comfort zone is those parts of your life where you feel good or on familiar territory. It's the relationships, events, and environments where you know the routine and don't need to ask too many questions. In short, you're comfortable. Or so you think! ... (White, 2009)



Anxiety can often happen when you step outside of your comfort zone or think about situations that are outside of your comfort zone. That's when you step into the fear zone. You don't know how to react, you're afraid of the unknown, and you don't feel well. You're tempted to avoid these situations and retreat back into the cozy familiarity of your comfort zone. This is called avoidance. Avoidance feels good in the short term because it instantly lowers your anxiety levels.



The problem with avoidance is the more you avoid a situation, the more frightening it becomes. Your comfort zone shrinks and you start to feel trapped inside it, or you begin to feel more uncomfortable each time you step outside it. You then need to face your fears, knowing that by facing them, they will diminish and even disappear. This is called exposure. Exposure can be very uncomfortable in the short term because facing the scary situation will cause your anxiety levels to rise. Remember that anxiety isn't dangerous; it's temporary and it eventually goes away. The more you expose yourself to a situation, the less anxious you'll feel about it (Forsyth and Eifert, 2007; Gosselin *et al.*, 2019; Harvey and Ilic, 2014).

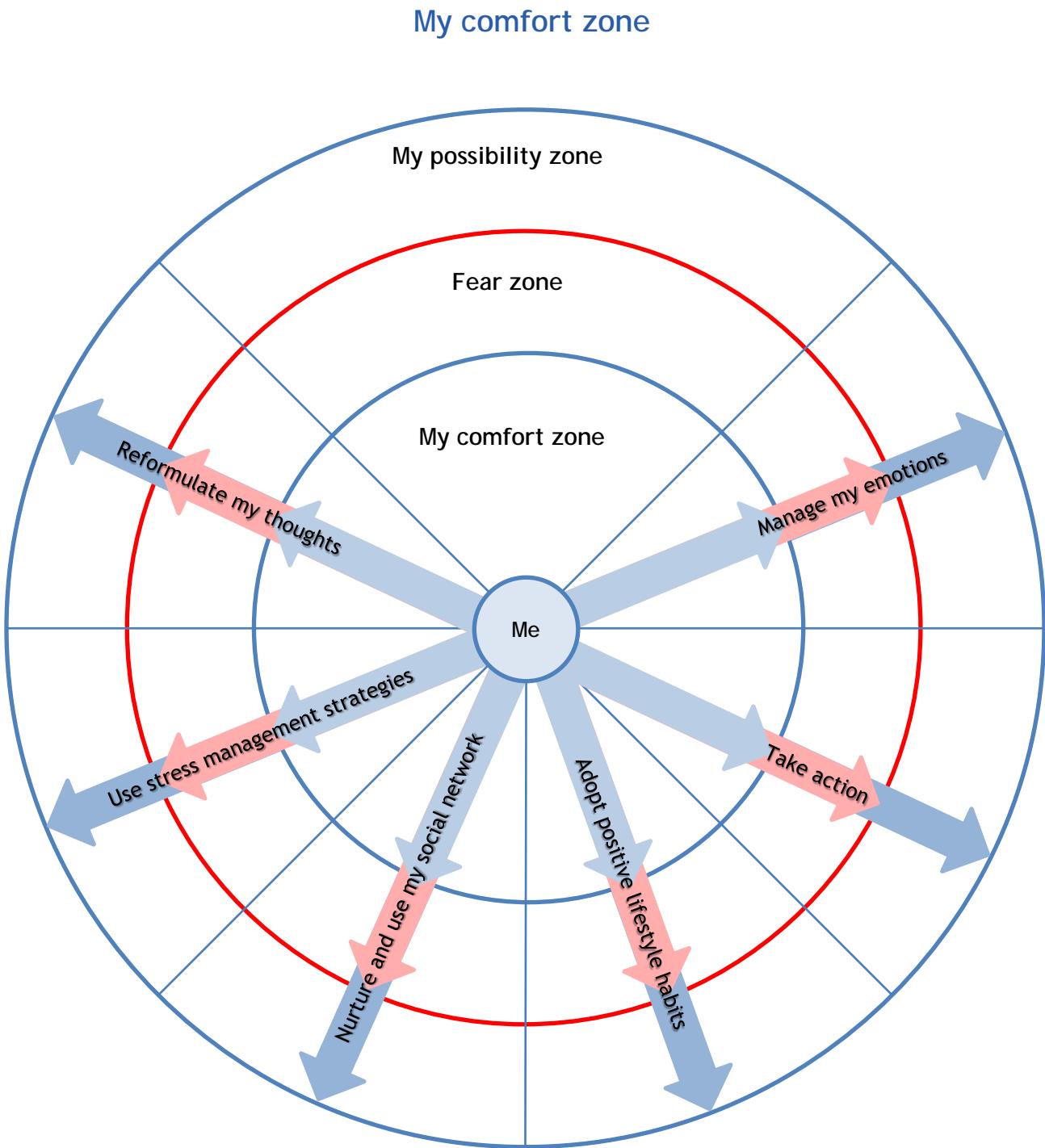


You will become more comfortable, more confident and freer. Stepping outside of your comfort zone is therefore a great learning opportunity.

Remind the students that the goal of the program is to help them expand their comfort zone so they'll feel more relaxed—and less anxious—in the situations they've identified as anxiety-provoking.

2. Use the comfort zone diagram to explain to the students that in order to expand their comfort zone, they will need to gradually expose themselves to anxiety-provoking situations, by learning to:

- Reformulate their thoughts into helpful ones;
- Manage their emotions to better cope with them;
- Adopt new behaviours (take action!);
- Adopt positive lifestyle habits;
- Use stress management strategies;
- Nurture and properly use their social network.



3. Now, ask the students to answer these questions individually.

- What is my objective for this program? An objective needs to be specific and concrete. It helps to ask the following question: "What would I like to be able to do at the end of this program that I can't do now because of my anxiety?" This corresponds to my new comfort zone.

For example: Instead of saying to myself, "I'd like to be less shy," I should say, "I want to be able to assert myself in a group."

- What are the seven small steps I can take to get closer to my objective? The idea is really to take it one step at a time. The first step (1) needs to be easy, and the others more and more anxiety-provoking (7) ... for now.

For example:

1. Say hi to a classmate when I walk into class
2. Ask a classmate a question during group work
3. Ask the teacher a question at the end of class
4. Start a conversation with a friend
5. Share my opinion during a family discussion
6. Share my opinion during group work
7. Raise my hand in class to give my opinion on a topic



- What are the obstacles I might encounter? What thoughts and emotions do I feel when I imagine myself acting?

For example: I'm too shy. No one is interested in me. I'm scared people will laugh at me.

4. Ask each student what they wrote down. Some may have a hard time answering the questions. Ask the others for suggestions about how their classmates could reach their objectives and overcome the obstacles they're facing.

C. My contract (10 min)

Present the contract in the *Handy student guide* and ask the students to sign it.

Student contract

To make the workshops fun and helpful, here are some basic rules to follow:

1. I will respect others. That's it. It's non-negotiable.
2. I will keep everything I hear confidential. In other words, what's said in the workshops stays in the workshops.
3. I will use "I" statements. I. That's you. Not the others. Talk about your experiences, your feelings.
4. I will only talk about the things I feel comfortable sharing. Basically, no one is forcing you to say anything. (But, trust us, it feels good to talk.)
5. I will listen to others, without judging. That's expert-level respect.
6. I will wait my turn before speaking. Once again, that's just a given.
7. I will help others express and share their opinions.
8. I will participate in the workshops. Otherwise, what's the point? No, but really?
9. Between meetings, I will practise the tips I've learned. I will continue to think about the topics discussed and try new things.
10. I will remember that I am surrounded by friends, family, counsellors, and teachers I can confide in and ask for help.

By participating in the HORS-PISTE Expedition program workshops, you commit to following—to the best of your ability—these 10 basic rules.

(Signature)



D. This week's challenge (5 min)

1. Explain that this week's challenge (also in their *Handy student guide*) is to try to recognize situations they tend to avoid. Explain and give examples, as needed.



2. WHAT IF I THOUGHT ABOUT IT DIFFERENTLY...

Specific objectives of the workshop

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Identify their thoughts and their impact using the cognitive-behavioural model;
- Identify the main negative thoughts that emerge when faced with an anxiety-provoking situation;
- Understand the impact of their thoughts on their sensations and emotions;
- Reformulate negative thoughts into more helpful ones;

How the workshop works

Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. Mindful listening (10 min)

1. Before beginning this activity, make sure to read the complementary sheet on mindfulness at the end of this workshop.
2. Begin the activity by asking the students: "What do you think mindfulness is?" Complete using the information on the complementary sheet.
3. Suggest that the students try a mindfulness exercise. Ask them to find a place where they can sit comfortably with their eyes closed without being disturbed. They can sit on the floor or on a chair, whichever they prefer. Ask them to close their eyes if they want to. Ask them to pause for a minute and pay attention to the little things they overlook when they're operating on autopilot, when they're stressed, or when they're on their devices, for example.
4. Now, ask them to take a few deep breaths to settle down and focus their attention on the air flowing in and out of their body.



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5. After the students have taken a few breaths, and once they've anchored themselves to their breathing, ask them to turn their attention to the sounds they hear. Start playing this piece of music: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toJf4_dvwSQ (Tiersen, 2001).
6. Then ask them what they heard (the number of instruments, the different sounds, their intensity, etc.). Ask them how they feel after this exercise. Explain that they can use this exercise in their daily lives to calm down. To do this, suggest that they focus on music or sounds that they find soothing.
7. Now, tell them you will spend a few minutes together in silence. Before beginning, ask them to pay attention to the silence and to all the noises they hear in the quiet. Ask them to pay attention to the noises in the room, the sound of their breathing, the noises in the background, etc. Also tell them that it's perfectly normal for their thoughts to drift or their mind to wander. Mindfulness helps us realize that our thoughts tend to scatter and that our mind is naturally restless. With practice, it becomes easier to refocus on the present moment. Don't feel bad if your thoughts are all over the place; you're not failing at mindfulness! It's completely normal. As soon as you become aware of it, simply focus your mind on the next sound you hear.
8. You can also mention that they shouldn't classify sounds as pleasant or unpleasant, but simply listen to them.
9. Once you're done explaining, spend a few minutes in silence, letting the students focus on the sounds around them. Then, gently lead them into the next part of the activity.
10. Tell the students they can also do this activity when walking in the woods, in a pet store, at the beach, or in an especially stimulating or relaxing sound environment.
11. You can finish the mindful listening activity by pointing out that when they are anxious, when their thoughts are racing, when they are worrying about something, it can help to remember to stay focused on the *here and now*. This mindful listening activity will help the students to focus on the little details and stay in the moment, by being more attentive to their surroundings.
12. Remind the students that they will get the most out of mindfulness if they practise it in their daily lives. There are several apps out there to help them master the practice. Suggest they try a few and tell them that many of them are free.
 - Headspace (<https://www.headspace.com>)
 - Petit Bambou (<https://www.petitbambou.com/en/>)

B. The week in review (10 min)

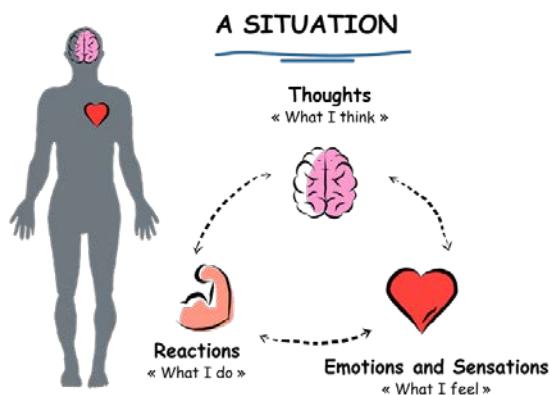
1. Now, ask the students how their week went. Ask them: How did you feel in general? Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, in which situations? If not, why? Did you notice any situations that you tend to avoid?



- If you want to go into more detail, you can ask the following questions:
 - Did you learn anything new about yourself?
 - Did you notice anything different about the way you perceive or react to certain situations?
 - Did you learn anything about your comfort zone and your personal objective?

C. What's going on inside me: My thoughts (10 min)

- Explain that they can use the diagram of the cognitive-behavioural approach, found in their *Handy student guide*, to better understand what is going on inside them. This approach helps them become aware that their thoughts have an influence on their emotions, their sensations, and ultimately, their behaviours in a given situation. Physical sensations also feed emotions, thoughts, and behaviours. All these elements interact with each other (Beck, 2011).



- Give the following example: You're asleep in your bed. You hear a noise. You think to yourself: "It's a robber!" What's going on inside your body (sensations)? What are you feeling (emotions)? What do you do (reactions)?
- Repeat the scenario but change the students' interpretation of the noise. You're asleep in your bed. You hear a noise. You think to yourself: "Oh, no! The cat knocked something over again!" What's going on inside your body (sensations)? What are you feeling (emotions)? What do you do (reactions)?
- Explain that the way they interpret the situation (their thoughts) will completely change their emotions and sensations and their reaction to the situation (their behaviours). And yet, it's basically the same situation. Explain that this mechanism is constantly "on" and that to control their stress or anxiety, they need to learn how to recognize the thoughts, emotions, and sensations that are triggered by the stressful situation; sometimes, they also need to learn to see things differently.

D. Are my thoughts helpful? (25 min)

1. Ask the students to write down on a piece of paper a real-life or anticipated situation that's causing them anxiety; reassure them they will remain anonymous. They can use a real-life situation. They should also write down the thoughts, sensations, and emotions associated with the situation. During this time, reproduce the following table on the board. Randomly choose a situation and read it out loud. Write it in the first column of the table.

Description of the situation	Thoughts	Emotions and sensations	Reformulating thoughts into realistic, helpful, positive ones	Emotions and sensations
"Teamwork... I don't know anyone"	"No one will want to be my partner"	"Fear, shame, pounding heart"	"Maybe there's someone else who's just as shy as me, and they'd be happy if I suggested we team up"	"Courage, stand up straight"

2. Ask the students what they would think if they were in this situation. This question can bring out different reactions to the same situation. Write them down in the right-hand column and ask the students to do the same in their *Handy student guide*.
3. Go back to the first unhelpful thought listed. Ask the students to identify the physical sensations they'd feel if they thought about the situation this way; then ask them to draw these sensations on the figure of the human body in their *Handy student guide*. Then ask them to write the physical sensations and emotions they'd feel in the correct column in their table.
4. Now, ask the students the following list of questions, which are also in their *Handy student guide*. These questions can help to transform their unhelpful thoughts into helpful ones. Ask the students to choose the three questions that resonate most with them and to write them down in their *Handy student guide*. They can rewrite them in their own words.

List of questions:

- Am I certain of what I think? What makes me perceive the situation that way?
- Am I able to give less importance to what others will think?
- Am I too quick to conclude that something is wrong?
- Is it realistic to expect perfection in everything I do?
- What is the worst thing that can happen? What could I do to prepare for it? And if the worst did happen, would it be so bad?
- How much will it affect my life? And a year from now, will I remember it?
- Would there be another way to look at the situation? Is there anything positive? What

can I learn from this situation?

- What do I have power over in this situation? How do I get power?
 - What similar situation have I experienced in the past that ended well? What strategies did I use?
5. Ask the students to use the three questions they chose from the list to transform the thought written on the board into a more helpful, realistic, or positive one. Once the students have finished, ask them to share their answers (new helpful thought) and write them down in the table. Once you're done, ask them to close their eyes and notice how they are feeling (emotions and sensations) about this new way of interpreting the situation.
 6. Depending how much time you have, you can repeat the exercise using one or more of the other situations listed by the students.
 7. Wrap up the activity by emphasizing that our thoughts influence our emotions. Remind the students that one of the objectives of the program is to become aware of the unhelpful thoughts that paralyze or discourage us—and try to challenge them.

E. This week's challenge (5 min)

1. Explain that this week's challenge (also in their *Handy student guide*) is to try to use one of the questions from the workshop to reformulate an unhelpful thought into a helpful one. Ask the students to pay attention to how they feel when they reformulate their thoughts.

Tell the students that they will need pencil for the next workshop.



Complementary sheet

What is mindfulness and how does it work?

Mindfulness is paying close attention to your sensations, thoughts, or emotions, without labelling them as good or bad, wanted, or unwanted. In other words, we don't judge them, we simply observe them. Mindfulness allows us to get in touch with what's going on inside us and around us; over time, it helps us to be less critical. In general, we tend to regularly criticize and judge our environment, our family, and friends, and ourselves (Baer, 2003; Broderick and Metz, 2011).

Mindfulness can be practised formally, using meditations such as body scanning, or informally, through activities such as mindful walking. There are different types of informal meditation or activities that allow you to tap into the different spheres of mindfulness (senses, emotions, perceptions, presence, etc.) (Kaiser Greenland, 2016).

Mindfulness, whether practised formally or informally, is a way to be in the present moment, to better understand what's going on inside you, and to find an anchor point, which is often your breathing. It can be a powerful tool for regulating stress (Holzel *et al.*, 2011). The important thing about mindfulness is to choose methods that you enjoy, that you're comfortable with, and that feel good.

During the workshops, the students will have the opportunity to experiment with the many forms of mindfulness, after which they can choose the ones best suited to their personal journey.

Mindfulness can have the following benefits (Keng *et al.*, 2011):

- Improve communication;
- Develop and master the senses;
- Manage stress and emotions;
- Calm the mind to become more open to learning;
- Maintain quality relationships with oneself, others, and the environment.

Are there any precautions when it comes to mindfulness?

As with any activity, some people may love it and others may hate it. Some students may embrace it quickly and others, much later in life or never. Research shows that mindfulness can have beneficial effects in most people (Felver *et al.*, 2016; Zenner *et al.*, 2014). Conversely, other people may find it unpleasant, uncomfortable, painful, even harmful (Dobkin *et al.*, 2012). There can be risks associated with the intensity of the activity, the person's vulnerability, or the way the information is conveyed. Some of your students' risk experiencing negative effects. Unfortunately, the literature doesn't let us clearly identify which students are most at risk. However, you can take some precautions. If possible, find out which students are most sensitive, emotionally, and cognitively. And pay attention to the students' body language as you lead the activity:



- Let the students know that they may feel uncomfortable. This is usually temporary and doesn't mean that mindfulness isn't right for them;
- Be prepared (you or another facilitator) to provide support to students who express discomfort or simply need to talk;
- Let the students know they can stop if they start to feel uncomfortable or uneasy. At this point, you can suggest that they refocus their attention on something else, doodle, or even read;
- Mindfulness is a lifestyle that not everyone has to follow. It's completely voluntary and can't be forced;
- Activities that involve focusing on their breathing may be uncomfortable for some students with anxiety or depression. If the students still want to learn about mindfulness or participate in the activity, they can instead focus on their heartbeat, or sounds or objects in the classroom. Gradually, they may be able to shift their focus back to their body and breathing;
- Let the students know that mindfulness leads to pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral experiences. They may experience feelings of calm, relaxation, happiness, and well-being, just as they may feel physical discomfort, sadness, agitation, and sleepiness; these are all perfectly normal;
- Remind the students that they are the best judges of what's good and not good for them. They are responsible for their own well-being—in the present moment and in the long term.

In short, your role as facilitator includes watching for the students' reactions and being aware that these can be positive, negative, or neutral, depending on the students' personalities, tolerance, and receptiveness. These reactions are all a normal part of a mindfulness practice.





3. WHAT'S GOING ON INSIDE ME?

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Recognize their emotions related to certain situations;
- Identify the needs behind the emotions;
- Use emotion regulation strategies.

How the workshop works

Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

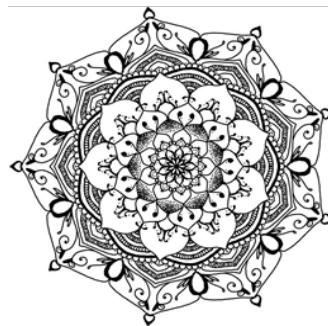
A. The week in review (10 min)

1. Now, ask the students how their week went. How did you feel in general? Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, in which situations? If not, why? Did you identify other situations that make you feel good or increase your anxiety? If yes, which ones?
2. If you want to go into more detail, you can ask the following questions:
 - Did you learn anything new about yourself?
 - Did you notice anything different about the way you perceive or react to certain situations?
 - Did you learn anything about your comfort zone and your personal objective?

B. Mindful drawing (15 min)

1. Ask the students to take the *Mandala* in their *Handy student guide* and get out their colored pencils.

2. Tell them they will be practising mindful drawing for the next activity. Explain that drawing not only engages their senses, but also teaches them how to follow their intuition and trust themselves. There is no right or wrong—they can draw anything and use any colours. The drawing reflects what's going on inside them. You can point out that doing art, in all its forms, creates a path to mindfulness, since it immerses them fully in the present moment. Mindfulness and art therapy both focus on the means as well as the end, without judgment (Willard and Salzman, 2017).
3. Now ask the students to colour their mandala. Explain that mandalas are generally circular forms that aid with meditation. The mandala becomes a sort of channel for mindfulness, allowing the person to settle their thoughts and deepen their breathing as they colour. Like a traditional drawing, the person focuses on the colours, pencil lines, texture of the paper, shapes, etc. (Faucher, 2016).
4. Explain that the most important part of this activity is to stay focused on creating and observing their work, rather than worrying about "doing it right." You don't have to be an artist to participate in this activity. Describing the drawing as nice or not nice is pointless here, since the drawing is only a means for connecting with the present moment.
5. Give the students about five to ten minutes to draw mindfully. You can play some soft music if you think it's appropriate.
6. At the end, briefly recap the activity as a group: "How did you feel during the activity?" "Did you notice certain sensations, emotions, or thoughts emerge?" Remind them that practising mindfulness allows us to settle into the present moment by being more attentive to what's going on around us and inside us.



C. What's going on inside me: My emotions (30 min.)

1. Now ask the students to take out the *My emotions, needs and strategies* sheet (Ciarrochi *et al.*, 2014; Conover and Daiute, 2017; Gouvernement du Québec, 2019; Rottenberg and Gross, 2007; Silk *et al.*, 2003; The Centre for Nonviolent Communication, n.d.) from their *Handy student guide*.

My emotions, needs and strategies



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confidence• Anger• Disappointment• Anxiety• Discouragement• Sadness• Panic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concern• Happiness• Surprise• Confidence• Optimism• Gratitude
--	--

(Inspired by The Centre for Nonviolent Communication, n.d.)



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Freedom, independence• Security• Balance• Time• Justice• Trust• Help, listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Affection• Recognition• Comfort• Relaxation, rest• Understanding• Fun, entertainment
---	---

(Inspired by The Centre for Nonviolent Communication, n.d.)



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seeing the situation differently• Expressing my emotions• Accepting the situation• Comparing the situation to something worse• Taking action• Being kind to myself	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asking myself what I can learn from the situation• Distracting myself• Asking for help• Taking deep breaths• Remembering my values and goals• Using a stress management strategy
---	---

(Inspired by Ciarrochi *et al.*, 2014; Conover & Daiute, 2017; Rottenberg & Gross, 2007; Silk *et al.*, 2003).

2. Explain that it's normal and human to experience all kinds of emotions. Furthermore, during adolescence, teens' emotional and affective balances are disrupted (Discour, 2011). Intense emotions are characteristic of this important period of development (Holzer, Halfon and Thoua, 2011). The ups and downs can be like riding a roller coaster!
3. Point out that it's often hard to understand *why* they're experiencing all these emotions, or to know *what to do* with them. The *My emotions, needs and strategies* sheet, which is in their *Handy student guide*, will help them learn to identify the emotions they're experiencing, along with the underlying needs. This sheet also contains strategies to help them figure out how to handle difficult emotions.
4. Explain that identifying the need behind the emotion can seem tricky at first. It gets easier with practice, but more importantly, it empowers us to meet our needs. Give some examples of needs related to emotions:
 - When I'm afraid, I might need help, reassurance, or understanding.
 - When I'm angry, I might need alone time or justice in a situation that's upsetting me.
5. Now, give them an individual exercise. In their *Handy student guide*, ask them to write down a situation that causes them anxiety, along with their typical thoughts when faced with this situation. To help them, go back over the events of the last week. (e.g., the events reported in their Expedition journal).

Using the sheet, ask the students to identify the emotions they experience in this situation and write them down in their *Handy student guide*.

For example: "When I THINK that no one wants to be around me because I'm boring and have nothing interesting to say, I FEEL ashamed and embarrassed."

6. Then ask them to write down their need(s) in this situation and some strategies for better managing the emotions that arise. Tell them that sometimes, just acknowledging the need can feel good, make them feel better, or help them find strategies to address it.

For example: "I might need help figuring out how to reach out to others. I could talk to my brother about how he makes friends and get some advice from him."

7. Reconvene as a group to listen to everyone's situations. After listening to a student's situation, you can ask the other students for their input. Remind them that it's not always easy to identify emotions and needs. This is a good opportunity to help each other as a group. Several different strategies can also be applied.
8. Encourage the students to keep the emotions sheet in their agenda, pencil case, or school bag and to use it when needed. Remind them that it's normal to experience a wide range of emotions and not always understand them. By taking the time to notice what's going on inside us, welcoming our emotions with kindness (i.e., without judgment), and handling them with care, we're able to know ourselves better, act appropriately, and meet our needs instead of ignoring them or letting them pile up.

D. Challenge of the week (5 minutes)

1. You explain that this week's challenge (also found in their *Handy student guide*) is to try to identify their emotions, identify what need is behind them and use a strategy. You explain as needed.

You tell students that for the next workshop they will need a camera (e.g., camera, cell phone, tablet, etc.) to take pictures.



4. HORS-PISTE ACTIVITY - PHOTOS

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Identify the situations that make him feel good and those that generate anxiety;
- Step outside of their comfort zone in a non-school group activity;
- Expose themselves "*in vivo*" to more anxiety-provoking situations;
- Experiment with the concepts learned in previous meetings;
- Create ties with the other participants.

How the workshop works

Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. The week in review

1. Explain to the students that you will review the challenge during the next workshop.

B. Mindful eating (10 min)

** If necessary, you can keep as much time as possible for the photo activity and not do the mindful activity.*

1. Explain that they will now experience tasting a food mindfully. They will have to pay careful attention to their physical sensations as they try to eat mindfully. Explain that we rarely take the time to slowly taste our food and that when we eat mindfully, we sometimes realize that a particular food tastes much sweeter than we thought or that a food we eat without thinking has a pleasant texture and a taste we particularly enjoy.



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2. Pass out a food of your choice, such as popcorn, gumdrops, or dried fruit. Observations can involve many senses: what we see, what we hear, what we touch, what we smell and... what we taste.
3. Guide the students with these statements:
 - Pick up the food and observe its weight and size, shape, and colour; smell it and think about what the smell reminds you of.
 - Can you feel your saliva and taste buds kicking in?
 - Take a bite of the food, leaving half between your fingers, and pay attention to your teeth as they cut through the food; take the time to chew and fully taste that half of the food. Feel that same half slide down your throat as you swallow it.
 - Smell the other half; chew and taste it, paying attention to the various sensations it produces. Close your eyes and try to remember all the pleasant or unpleasant sensations triggered by the tasting, without judging yourself for any of them.
4. Explain that mindful eating can transform the simple act of eating into a rich sensory experience if we take the time and effort to tap into all the sensations. Wrap up the activity by reminding the students about the importance of the following points, emphasizing the need to not judge themselves:
 - Before I start eating, I take the time to appreciate the smells and colours of the food.
 - I try to focus more on the action of eating, instead of doing something else at the same time.
 - I stop eating when I'm full, even if I'm eating something I really like.
 - I take my time while eating; I taste and savour each food.

C. Photos that speak for themselves! (25 min)

1. You invite students to walk around the school and take pictures of what makes them anxious and what makes them feel good. They can represent directly or indirectly what they want to demonstrate. They can also do the exercise in pairs. You give them 20 minutes to walk around the school. However, they should be careful not to disturb other students if the activity takes place during school hours.
2. You explain to them that they may be anxious about the activity. This is a good time to capture their thoughts and emotions. They can try to see the situation differently and observe what happens when they approach an anxiety-provoking situation.
3. You can walk around with them or stay in the classroom.

D. What did I get out of it? (15 min)

- A. You ask students to take a moment to look at the pictures taken.

B. You then ask them to choose two that they would like to share with the rest of the group. Allow time for them to think about what they would like to share about these photos. You encourage them to use the following questions:

- What do you see in this picture?
- What does it make you feel?
- Why does this place or situation make you feel this way?

C. You then invite students to take turns sharing their photos with other group members.

D. You then ask students about their experiences during the activity. How did you feel? You lead the discussion as needed.

E. And my parents, what are they learning? (5 min)

1. You explain to the youth that their parents will see a new concept in their workshop called accommodation. You explain to them what accommodation is:

Accommodation is the modification of parental behavior in an effort to prevent or decrease the child's distress associated with anxiety. All parents use accommodation, and this is normal. But while accommodation decreases anxiety in the short term, it increases anxiety in the long term, mainly because it promotes avoidance. Accommodation may include allowing you to miss a social activity or time off school, doing things or responding for you, changing family routines, or adhering to your rituals.

2. You explain to them that their parents will be invited to discuss with them the changes they will make to accommodate you less. You make them aware that less accommodation by their parents may cause them to feel fear, fright, or all sorts of emotions. You name that it is important to understand that their parents are doing this to help them reduce their anxiety.
3. You conclude by mentioning that, through the program, they and their parents will learn new tools to help them cope with anxiety-provoking situations. Their parents should remain present and attentive to accompany them in the use of these tools.

F. Challenge of the week (5 min)

1. You explain that this week's challenge to them (also found in their Handy student Guide) is to try to notice other situations that make them feel good or increase their anxiety. You explain as needed.





5. A HELPING HAND

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Identify the habits and activities that make them feel good;
- Identify the habits and situations that affect their anxiety;
- Learn different strategies for dealing with anxiety-provoking situations;
- Take steps to use these stress management strategies.

How the workshop works

Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. The week in review (10 min)

1. You briefly review the Workshop 3 challenge. You ask the students if they have tried to identify their emotions, identify the need behind them and use a strategy.
2. Ask the students how their week went. How did you feel in general? Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, in which situations? If not, why? Did you experience a particular situation this week that made you feel emotional? Which emotion was it? Did you identify the need behind it? Did you try applying a strategy to manage it? Did it help?
3. If you want to go into more detail, you can ask the following questions:
 - Did you learn anything new about yourself?
 - Did you notice anything different about the way you perceive or react to certain situations?
 - Did you learn anything about your comfort zone and your personal objective?

B. The WOW! effect (10 min)

1. Start the exercise with this introduction. The Wow! effect is the wonder and awe you feel when you think about your place in the world compared to something or someone impressive. The Wow! effect brings new perspective to your everyday worries and concerns. The Wow! effect creates a sense of greatness and a flood of positive emotions that stimulate creativity and the desire to take on challenges. It increases the desire to engage in or explore your surroundings and strengthens bonds between individuals (Rudd *et al.*, 2012).
2. Ask the students to take a few breaths, with their eyes closed if they prefer, to calm down. Ask them to get into a comfortable position and remind them to pay attention to the emotions and sensations that come up during the activity. Play the *Yosemite* video (Neil and Delehanty, 2013) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6-2fVsFV8E&t=1s>). You can also find other videos that show the beauty of nature.
3. After the video, ask the students how they felt. Suggest they embrace the Wow! effect by marvelling over the little things in their daily lives that make them feel good.

C. My lifestyle habits: How can I make the soil more fertile? (20 min)

1. Use the metaphor of a plant and its soil to talk to the students about lifestyle habits. Explain that soil is the plant's living environment, which allows it to grow. For the soil to be fertile, it needs nutrients, water, and sunlight. Conversely, if the plant's soil is low in nutrients or is constantly lacking water and light (which creates stress on the plant), it will have a harder time growing and may wilt. You're making them aware that, much like the plant, the way they take care of themselves influences their emotional state and their anxiety.
2. Point out that, like the plant, they may not necessarily have control over all the external conditions they're exposed to (e.g., lack of nutrients), but they do have some power over the lifestyle habits they themselves decide to put in place to take care of themselves. So, being aware of what's good and bad for them can help them to change things.
3. To help them find out more about positive and negative lifestyle habits, have the students play Snakes and Ladders, HORS-PISTE version, on lifestyle habits. This version of the popular board game introduces them to the lifestyle habits that promote good mental health and help reduce anxiety and those that are negative and anxiety-provoking. Give them the game board, tokens, a die, and the playing cards. The game involves rolling the die and moving their token the corresponding number of spaces. When the player lands on a "rappelling" square or a "ladder" square, they pick a card from that category and read it aloud to the group. They must then answer the question before moving up or down. As you go along, make connections with the ideas given during the previous activity.
4. If you don't feel the game is appropriate for your group, simply have them pick cards and make connections with the ideas given during the previous activity.
5. Then, invite the students to identify two lifestyle habits they want to develop or change.



6. Reconvene as a group to discuss each student's answers.

D. Stress management strategies that can make a difference (15 min)

1. Explain to the students that some of the positive habits listed earlier can also be used as concrete strategies to better manage stress and anxiety. These strategies are things they can do to help cope better with stressful or anxiety-provoking situations. These concrete methods can help them calm down and deal better with challenging situations.
2. Together, look at the following list of strategies (*Mouvement Santé mentale Québec*, 2014):
 - Ask for help, talk about it, get support from their friends or parents;
 - Do relaxation, breathing, yoga, and mindfulness exercises;
 - Get plenty of sleep, pamper themselves, show affection, take it easy, disconnect;
 - Try to see things differently;
 - Practise gratitude;
 - Live in the moment;
 - Reformulate negative thoughts into more realistic, helpful ones;
 - Laugh, have a good time, throw a party, have fun;
 - Write down or draw their emotions and thoughts;
 - Spend time with an animal that makes them feel good;
 - Play sports, or do fun or creative activities:
 - Sports, exercise, walking, martial arts, combat sports, etc.;
 - Drawing, writing, art, drama, dance, music, singing, crafts, reading, photography, etc.
 - Go on a cultural outing;
 - Get in touch with nature: go for a walk in the forest, do some gardening.



Tip for facilitators

To deepen the students' understanding of the benefits of physical activity, summarize the following concepts in your own words.

"The consensus, among the population and the scientific community, is that physical activity is the natural method with the strongest impact on well-being and mental health (Biddle, 2006: INSER, 2008: Mammen and Faulkner, 2013). The literature reveals two main streams of research on the psychological benefits of physical activity: 1) Research on the immediate or temporary effects of a single session of physical activity, independent of physical fitness; 2) Research on the effects of regular physical activity on improving physical fitness.

An activity of moderate intensity (50 - 70 % of the person's maximum heart rate) for a minimum of 20 minutes, or the equivalent of a brisk walk with mild shortness of breath, produces a positive psychological effect that can last between two and seven hours.

The psychological benefits of regular physical activity have also been demonstrated (INSERM, 2008). For example, Folkins and Sime (1981) identified 65 studies, 47 of which demonstrated effects on various dimensions of mental health and cognitive performance. An improvement was seen in the feeling of competence and self-esteem (6/8 studies), as well as affects such as mood, well-being, anxiety and depression (13/14 studies), along with cognitive functions such as memory, reaction time, problem-solving and concentration (9/13 studies). People who exercise regularly have better tolerance to everyday stress than people who are less active. They are more optimistic and positive about life experiences and less likely to be anxious."

(Poirel, 2017)

Tip for facilitators

Some students might name video games as an activity that makes them feel good and helps them manage their stress.

“The danger with video games is that they create a parallel universe in which the child can take refuge. They can end up investing so much time and energy in that universe that it becomes real to them. Even after the video game is turned off, it’s the only thing the child can think about. This starts to border on a video game addiction. The child spends more time in their parallel universe than in the real world. But at some point, when they need to face the real world, they find themselves unable to cope. It’s much more frightening than their fantasy world, where they’re a powerful superhero.” Partial quote by neuropsychologist Benoît Hammarrenger, on the show *Les Francs-Tireurs* (panel on youth and anxiety), September 18, 2019, on Télé-Québec.

The idea is to make the students aware of this issue. Of course, video games can be fun and relaxing, but their use needs to be supervised and governed by strict rules.

3. Then ask the students to answer the following questions individually in their *Handy student guide*:
 - What activities or strategies do I already use, and which ones could I try?
 - How can I use these strategies more when I am faced with a more difficult situation?
4. Ask the students to think about how they will implement some of the strategies over the coming week.

E. This week's challenge (5 min)

1. Explain that this week's challenge (also in their *Handy student guide*) is to try to use one of the strategies to deal with a stressful situation. Explain, as needed.



<p>HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS</p> <p>Maintaining healthy relationships with others and having a caring, supportive network contributes to good mental health!</p> <p>Having healthy relationships with loved ones where you can share your thoughts and emotions is a way to get to know yourself better and figure out who you are as a person.</p> <p>Are you satisfied with your network of friends? Why?</p> <p>(Claes, 2003)</p>	<p>SLEEP</p> <p>To be able to do the things you enjoy and feel good, you need enough sleep!</p> <p>Getting enough sleep can help you feel better, manage your emotions better, and have a better quality of life.</p> <p>Do you generally sleep well? How many hours a night do you sleep?</p> <p>(Public Health Agency of Canada, 2018; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>HEALTHY EATING</p> <p>A healthy diet is essential to good health!</p> <p>Eating a balanced diet will help you grow and give you the energy you need to get through your day. It will also help you do better in sports or school.</p> <p>Do you think you eat a balanced diet? Is this important to you?</p> <p>(Government of Canada, 2019; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>EXERCISE</p> <p>Exercise can be a great way to take care of yourself every day!</p> <p>For example, sports can be an opportunity to make new friends, improve your self-esteem, lower your stress, and improve your concentration.</p> <p>How many times a week do you play sports?</p> <p>(Public Health Agency of Canada, 2019; Simon <i>et al.</i>, 2005; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>
<p>FUN</p> <p>Taking care of yourself every day also means taking time to have fun and do things you love—alone or with family and friends!</p> <p>For example, this can include spending time on a favourite hobby or simply relaxing. Having fun with loved ones is just as important as taking time for yourself.</p> <p>What makes you happy? Why?</p> <p>(Québec government, 2018)</p>	<p>BALANCE</p> <p>A healthy balance between the different areas of your life (family, friends, sports, school) is good for you!</p> <p>In fact, having a good balance lets you focus on all the important parts of your life and pay attention to your needs.</p> <p>Do you think you have a good balance in your life? Why?</p> <p>(Tel-Jeunes, 2019; Université de Montréal, 2015)</p>	<p>COMPASSION</p> <p>To feel more comfortable with others and enjoy more positive energy, you need to be compassionate with others and with yourself!</p> <p>For example, avoid having prejudices and making assumptions about other people. You can also do good deeds, truly listen to other people, or simply be kind to people.</p> <p>How do you show compassion for other people?</p> <p>(Lyubomirsky and Layous, 2013; Neff, 2003)</p>	<p>MINDFULNESS</p> <p>Practising mindfulness can help you manage your stress!</p> <p>Mindfulness is a way to help you manage your emotions and resolve problems, because it teaches you to pay closer attention to the signals your body is sending you. It helps you to make links between your sensations, thoughts, emotions, etc.</p> <p>When do you practice mindfulness? Why?</p> <p>(Gosselin and Turgeon, 2015)</p>



SELF-ESTEEM

Nurturing your self-esteem helps to increase your sense of well-being and gives you a more positive self-image!

To nurture your self-esteem, identify one of your strengths that you apply in your daily life. Your self-esteem improves each time you think of yourself in a positive light.

How do you nurture your self-esteem on a daily basis?

(Neff and Vonk, 2009; Neff, 2011; Seligman *et al.*, 2005)

SPIRITUALITY

Nurturing your spirituality is good for your mental health!

Spirituality can help you maintain a positive attitude about the things that happen to you and help you manage your stress. Spirituality isn't the same thing as religion! It's a way of connecting with yourself, listening to your needs, honouring your beliefs, etc.

Do you consider yourself a spiritual person? Why?

(Simard, 2006)

<p>SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE Being sedentary and not getting enough exercise has an impact on your physical and mental health! Exercise is a good way to manage your stress on a day-to-day basis, among other reasons because it lets you blow off steam. It also has an impact on your self-image, health, and well-being. When you exercise, do you notice any benefits? What are they? (Simon <i>et al.</i>, 2005; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>INTERNET ADDICTION Spending too much time on the Internet can become a problem and even get out of control! If you find that you're using the Internet and social media to forget about your problems, that you're not sleeping at night because you're staying up late online, or that you're spending too much time alone, talk to someone you trust about the situation. Do you feel the need to spend time on the Internet or social media to be happy? (Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>CONFLICTUAL RELATIONSHIPS Arguing with loved ones can be bad for you! When faced with a conflict, you can decide to react or respond. You can use problem-solving strategies to work through it: assess the conflict, consider different solutions before choosing one, then take action. How do you typically manage your conflicts? (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Rubenstein <i>et al.</i>, 2019)</p>	<p>LACK OF SLEEP Frequent sleep deprivation can have a negative effect on your health and the way you handle stress! If you don't get enough sleep or don't sleep well, you won't have the energy for all your activities. When you're sleep deprived, it's also harder to manage your emotions. Do you ever have trouble sleeping? Why? (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2018; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>
<p>SUBSTANCE USE Drinking alcohol or using drugs often or excessively has a major impact on your physical and mental health! These substances alter your perception of reality, which can increase your stress levels. Drugs and alcohol affect your behaviour and sleep, and also put you at risk of developing an addiction. Do you ever drink or use drugs? Why? (Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>ISOLATION Feeling isolated and unable to rely on support from family and friends increases your stress levels and makes you feel bad! To get out of this situation, you might decide to talk to someone you trust or hang out with a different circle of friends. Do you ever feel isolated? How does this affect you? (Claes, 2003; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>BURNOUT Burnout can increase your stress levels and make you feel bad! To feel good, you need to try to find a balance and avoid taking things to the extreme. Focusing all your energy in one place is unhealthy. You need to do different activities to avoid burning out. Have you ever had a burnout? When? (Tel-Jeunes, 2019; Université de Montréal, 2015)</p>	<p>SMOKING Smoking can be very bad for your health and your stress levels! You might smoke as a way to cope with stress, but this is only a short-term fix; smoking actually makes your stress worse in the long term. At first, you may feel more in control, but it won't take long before you develop an addiction that's extremely hard to break. Have you ever wanted to smoke? Why? (Conseil québécois sur le tabac et la santé, n.d.; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>



6. GLASSES THAT DISTORT REALITY

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Better understand the concept of intolerance and identify its different types
- To recognize situations to which it is particularly sensitive
- To deal more consciously with their intolerances
- Become aware of the importance of the social support network

How the workshop works

Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. The week in review (10 min)

1. Now, ask the students how their week went. How did you feel in general? Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, in which situations? If not, why? Did you identify other situations that make you feel good or increase your anxiety? If yes, which ones?
2. If you want to go into more detail, you can ask the following questions:
 - Did you learn anything new about yourself?
 - Did you notice anything different about the way you perceive or react to certain situations?
 - Did you learn anything about your comfort zone and your personal objective?

B. The mountain meditation (10 min.)

1. Tell the students they are going to do the mountain meditation. Ask them to find a place where they can sit comfortably with their eyes closed without being disturbed. They can sit on the floor or on a chair, whichever they prefer. Ask them to close their eyes if they want to.
2. You can use the script at the end of this workshop to lead the meditation yourself, or

you can use the audio at this link (duration: 8 min. 23 sec.): <https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Mountain-meditation-1.mp4>
(Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale, n.d.).

3. If time permits, once the meditation is finished, talk about it as a group. For example, ask the students how they feel now, what they remember from the mountain meditation, if there was a passage that stood out for them, etc.
4. Tell the students they can access the audio at the address indicated in their *Handy student guide*.

C. Outside of my comfort zone, what things make me react most? (25 min)

1. You divide the class into groups of 2 or 3 students. Give them the titles, definitions, and scenarios for different types of intolerance (see the worksheets at the end of the workshop), along with sticky tack. Each group must work together to match the correct title to its definition, scenario, and picture. They must then stick them to the wall.

Title: Intolerance to uncertainty: I worry about everything!

Definition: An intolerance of potential danger, change, and anything new.

Scenario: Valerie is very excited this morning. It's the end-of-year field trip. She spent hours last night getting ready to make sure she didn't forget anything. When Valerie gets to school, the teacher announces that they won't be able to go to the waterslides as planned because of an equipment breakdown at the park. She tells them they'll be going indoor climbing instead. Valerie panics. She's never climbed before. She thinks to herself: "What if something happens? What if the others laugh at me because I'm terrible at it? What if I panic halfway up the wall and freeze?" etc.

Picture:



Title: Perfectionism: I'm not satisfied unless it's perfect.

Definition: An intolerance of the risk of error, an intolerance of things not being perfect, a tendency to criticize your own achievements and self-blame.

Scenario: Charles is invited to an advanced video game design camp for teens. Everyone attending the camp is talented and skilled. At camp, Charles is trying to design a game prototype. After working on it for 20-30 minutes, he realizes it's not quite up to par because of some technical issues. He decides to start over. Thirty minutes later, he again decides his prototype isn't good enough. He decides to start over again. Time goes by. He realizes he has only 30 minutes left to complete his prototype. He becomes super anxious.

He doesn't know how he'll produce a prototype that will meet his standards in such a short time. He panics to the point that he can't function anymore.

Picture:



Title: Excessive responsibility: I feel guilty all the time.

Definition: An intolerance of the fact that bad things might happen to others, and that it will be your fault because you didn't do anything to prevent them.

Scenario: Before leaving for school in the morning, Marie notices that her dog threw up his breakfast. She starts to worry. She remembers giving him a treat the night before. She thinks it might be her fault that the dog is sick. She calls her mom to ask what she should do. Her mother tells her not to worry and they'll deal with the situation that evening. Marie runs to catch her bus, still worried about the dog. She thinks about him all morning. At lunch, she decides to go home to check on her dog. But that means she

won't have time to eat. When she gets home, she finds her dog asleep. She offers him food, but he refuses. She calls her mom again. Her mother is angry that Marie left school to check on the dog. She tells her to stop worrying and that she'll take care of it when she gets home. Marie goes back to school, still worried. She's very concerned about her dog. The situation weighs on her mind all afternoon.

Picture:



Title: Fear of being judged by others: I know they're judging me.

Definition: An intolerance of possibly being judged and criticized by others, of being laughed at and ridiculed.

Scenario: During math class, right before lunch, Julien asked a question that made everyone laugh. It was a really dumb question that clearly showed he wasn't following and didn't understand the material. At the end of the class, the teacher made fun of Julien by repeating his question in a mocking voice. Julien is embarrassed and doesn't want to eat lunch with the others. He walks past the lockers and thinks he hears his classmates whispering behind his back. He passes two teachers, who look at him. He wonders if they know what happened to him in class. He decides to hide out in the library for the entire lunch hour. He finally comes out for the first afternoon class. He's the last one to get there and sits at the back of the class. He'd like to disappear for the rest of the day.

Picture:



Title: Intolerance of negative emotions and unpleasant physical sensations: Something's wrong with my body!

Definition: A tendency to worry excessively about the physical sensations and symptoms caused by anxiety.

Scenario: Julie is having trouble concentrating in French class this morning. She can't stop thinking about the stomach-ache that started just after she got to school. It's not that bad, but she's worried about what's causing it. The more she thinks about it, the worse she feels. And then she starts to feel a little queasy. What if she gets sick and must go home? What if she throws up in front of everyone?

Picture:



2. When both groups have finished sticking the title, definition, scenario, and picture for each type of intolerance to the wall, review their answers with them and make corrections, as needed.
3. Ask the students to rate, on the scale from 1 to 10 in their Handy student guide, how much they identify with each of the intolerances. This exercise illustrates how they can be more sensitive to and tend to avoid certain types of situations. By being aware of this, they can pay closer attention to this type of situation in their daily lives and try to adopt strategies for dealing with it. Intolerances are like glasses that distort reality. When you're aware of them, you can try to remove them and see the situation differently.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
It doesn't sound like me at all		It sounds a bit like me				It really sounds like me			

4. Ask them to identify which type of intolerance they identify with the most, write it down in their *Handy student guide*, and share their thoughts with the group.

D. The importance of my social support network (10 min)

1. Ask the students why they think it's important to surround themselves with supportive people they can trust. Complete with the following explanations:

Having a social support network is a protection factor in coping with stress and life events. It helps meet various personal and social needs, including support for self-esteem (through the appreciation that others feel for us), the feeling of usefulness (by feeling useful to others, which increases our self-esteem), emotional support (by providing comfort, listening, and understanding), concrete help in terms of favours and occasional financial assistance, relevant information (by giving relevant advice, information about opportunities), academic support, support for social integration (helping to make new friends, meet new people), etc. This social support network can also help when it comes to dealing with the developmental stages of adolescence. Being able to rely on different people is reassuring (Pauzé , 2019).

During adolescence, it's important that a teen's social support network include both adults (parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, teachers, coaches) and peers (friends, classmates, teammates, cousins). A balanced network is therefore made up of adults and young people (Pauzé *et al.*, 2019).

What matters most is not the number of people in the social support network, but the satisfaction derived from this support and the quality of the relationships. Having friends who are arguing with each other can be more stressful than comforting (Claes, 2003).

When you are feeling stressed or dealing with an anxiety-provoking situation, the main role of the people in the social support network is to provide support by being present, understanding and available, and listening without judging, while providing support and relevant information (Pauzé *et al.*, 2019).

Reciprocity is also important in a social support network. You may have friends who ask for a lot but give little in return. Over time, these friends can become a source of stress in your life. On the other hand, if you take a lot from certain relationships but give little in return, these people may burn out, or you may end up feeling like you owe them something.

2. Ask students how they feel about their social support network and how they could improve it or develop it.

E. This week's challenge (5 minutes)

1. Explain that this week's challenge (also in their *Handy student guide*) is to try to identify their emotions and the need behind them and to apply a strategy. Explain, as needed.



COMPLEMENTARY SHEET

The mountain meditation

(Bell, chime, or sound of Tibetan singing bowl)

Get into a comfortable position. Close your eyes and simply observe your breathing, without trying to change it. Observe the movement of air through your body as you breathe in and out.

Now imagine a beautiful mountain, one that you like to visit or that is just a figment of your imagination. Focus on the image of this mountain by imagining its shape, summit, nature and colours. Let the image of the mountain become clearer and clearer in your head. It doesn't matter what it looks like—just let the mountain draw clearly into focus. Observe it in detail.

Look at the stillness of the mountain. Admire how solid and magnificent it is, from near and far. This mountain represents strength and confidence.

When you feel ready, imagine that this mountain is you. The mountain and your body, both motionless, are one. Try to feel the grounding effect of the mountain. Feel its strength and force becoming yours, little by little, even though you're sitting right here. Like the mountain, you are becoming unshakeable.

With a sense of calm, you observe the changes of your environment, the movements of the sun, the passing of the seasons and, like the mountain, you simply stand there. It absorbs the warmth of the sun and tracks the movements of the clouds, but it remains there, completely still. It bears witness to all these changes.

The mountain receives visitors and listens to them marvel at its beauty or complain about the bad weather. Nothing affects the mountain; it always remains profoundly itself. The strength and beauty of the mountain never change, whether or not people see it, whether or not they pay attention to it, whether or not clouds blanket its summit.

Day or night, rain or shine, alone or crowded with visitors, the mountain remains itself, solid and still. Sometimes, the mountain experiences howling winds or raging thunderstorms. But it remains standing, traversing every ordeal, impervious to the weather.

In the same way, try to channel the mountain's strength and power in your own body. Bear witness to the changes in your environment, good and bad. Welcome this strength and allow it to move inside you.

If you want, you can now take the time to reactivate your body by stretching gently, yawning if needed, and coming back to your surroundings by slowly opening your eyes.

(Bell, chime, or sound of Tibetan singing bowl)





7. HORS-PISTE ACTIVITY

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Step outside of their comfort zone in a group activity;
- Expose themselves “*in vivo*” to more anxiety-provoking situations;
- Experiment with the concepts learned in previous meetings;
- Create ties with the other participants.

How the workshop works

Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. The week in review

1. Explain to the students that you will review the challenge during the next workshop.

B. Mindful breathing (10 min)

If the Hors-piste activity you are organizing is in the classroom, it is recommended that you maintain mindfulness activity. On the other hand, if you are organizing an outdoor activity, you can keep the maximum amount of time for the outing and not do mindfulness activity.

1. Tell the students you are going to give them a breathing exercise that will calm them down. You can use the attached script.
2. Read the text slowly, pausing frequently and keeping your voice soft and low.

C. Time to think outside the box! (35 min)

1. Do the chosen activity using the complementary sheet.

D. What did I get out of it? (10 min)

1. Ask the students about their experiences during the activity. How did you feel about the activity? You can ask some of the questions below to get them talking. Keep the discussion moving by telling the students what you observed as they were doing the activity:
 - Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, in which situations?
 - How did it make you feel? What things did you observe about yourself (emotions, sensations, thoughts, behaviours)?
 - Did you try new things? Or how could you do this the next time?
 - Did you think about the situation differently, less dramatically, less judgmentally? If not, how could you reformulate some of the thoughts that overwhelmed you, held you back, or prevented you from trying?
 - Did you reach out to other people? If not, were there opportunities when you could have done so?
 - Were you proud of yourself for any reason?
 - Did you learn anything today?
 - Did you observe any strengths or positive qualities in yourself or the other students?
 - Did you feel more comfortable, less nervous, more confident? How do you explain this?
 - Did you have fun? Were you fully present? What helped you?
 - Would you be willing to take the next step, another challenge?

E. This week's challenge (5 min)

1. Explain that this week's challenge (also in their *Handy student guide*) is to notice situations where their parents might have tended to accommodate them but didn't. Ask them how this made them feel. Explain, as needed.

Tell the students they will need to dress for outside for the next workshop.



COMPLEMENTARY SHEET

Breathing exercise

Sit in a comfortable position.

Now focus your attention on your breathing.

(PAUSE)

Breathe normally, without forcing or trying to change anything about your breathing.

Pay attention to the movement created by the air entering and leaving your body.

Notice your stomach and chest rising when you inhale.

(PAUSE)

Now shift your attention to your stomach and chest falling as you exhale.

Pay attention as you inhale and exhale a few times.

(PAUSE)

If you feel comfortable, you can try inhaling and exhaling for one or two seconds longer, to try to take deeper breaths and increase your sense of calm.

(PAUSE)

Now go back to your normal way of breathing.

Take as much time as you need to inhale and exhale, without any extra effort.

If your thoughts wander, simply refocus them on your next inhale.

Take the time to take two or three more deep, calming breaths.

(PAUSE)

Now open your eyes and reconnect with your surroundings.

If you feel calm, try to hold onto the feeling for as long as possible, focusing on your breath as needed.





COMPLEMENTARY SHEET

HORS-PISTE activities

What's the point?

The main objective of the HORS-PISTE activities is to allow the students to try new things, with your guidance, outside of their normal environment, hence the name HORS-PISTE. These activities will allow them to:

- Step outside of their comfort zone in a non-school group activity;
- Expose themselves *“in vivo”* to more anxiety-provoking situations;
- Experiment with the concepts learned in previous meetings;
- Create ties with the other participants.

During the program, students are required to step outside of their comfort zone, learn new behaviours, and expose themselves to anxiety-provoking situations. These activities are an opportunity for them to safely test out new situations, with your guidance and with support from the other students.

It's not always easy for young people to recognize the situations that make them anxious or the behaviours they adopt in these situations. These activities are an opportunity for you to observe them, in order to then help them become more aware of their reactions and ultimately improve their capacity for introspection and self-awareness.

The HORS-PISTE activities give you materials and concrete examples that you can use during the workshops. Through their interactions, body language, and behaviours, the students will often reveal more about themselves than during most discussions.

These activities are an opportunity to test the concepts seen during the workshops, which significantly increases the chances that the students will adopt these new behaviours after the program (Furman and Sibthorp, 2013).

Since each student is different, with unique challenges, it's important to identify in what way the experience challenges them. For example, it may seem more obvious to challenge students who are more socially anxious. Simply being in a group provides opportunities. A student with performance anxiety, but who is very comfortable trying new things, for example, will need to think about their quest for perfection, their fear of being judged when seen with others, and their ability to experience things for enjoyment versus results.



It's also an opportunity to encourage mutual support, since not everyone has the same challenges. Experiencing something together builds relationships, and these relationships lead to mutual support and possibilities. During reviews, encourage the students to interact with each other.

These activities will allow the students to experience successes, as well as learn about themselves, learn to observe themselves, and learn to recognize and welcome their experiences without judgment. As Nelson Mandela said: *"I never lose. I either win or learn."*

Reviewing, reflecting on, and discussing the experiences are the keys to getting the students to learn from the experience. It's an opportunity for them to reflect on what they've learned and the challenges they encountered, to identify areas for improvement, and to rethink things to deepen their understanding of certain concepts (Chapman *et al.*, 1995). To help you with your observations and review, here are some sample questions you can ask the students.

- Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, in which situations?
- How did it make you feel? What things did you observe about yourself (emotions, sensations, thoughts, behaviours)?
- Did you try new things? If not, how could you do this the next time?
- Did you think about the situation differently, less dramatically, less judgmentally? If not, how could you reformulate some of the thoughts that overwhelmed you, held you back, or prevented you from trying?
- Did you reach out to other people? If not, were there opportunities when you could have done so?
- Were you proud of yourself for any reason?
- Did you learn anything today?
- Did you observe any strengths or positive qualities in yourself or the other students?
- Did you feel more comfortable, less nervous, more confident? How do you explain this?
- Did you have fun? Were you fully present? What helped you?
- Would you be willing to take the next step, another challenge?

What is it?

There are a few options you can choose from, but you're also free to create or adapt your own activities. The possibilities are endless. It all depends on how willing and open you are. The HORS-PISTE activities can be very straightforward, but if they get you, as the facilitator, to step outside of your comfort zone, then you'll also find it much easier to work with the students.



The key to the HORS-PISTE activities is that they all share the same objective: to create informal situations where the students can observe each other and expose themselves to potentially anxiety-provoking situations.

Examples of activities:

- Do an outdoor activity such as a hike or a snowball fight;
- Watch a short news report and then talk about the topic and their impressions;
- Make a short video featuring a message of encouragement for future Expedition program participants or describing the experience to family or friends;
- Play a board game that involves little or no sharing of materials;
- Organize a “show and tell” session; each student will have to introduce the others to a favourite object or experience, for example, their favourite music, book, or hobby. You can also introduce a theme, such as “something I’m proud of” or “my biggest dream.”





8. WOW! GREAT PROGRESS!

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Review their progress and accomplishments;
- Identify the warning signs of a relapse;
- Implement strategies to prevent a relapse.

How the workshop works

1. Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.
2. If all the students or their parents have consented to the research component, explain that a part of the workshop will be recorded for program evaluation purposes. It's important to remind them that it's the program impacts that are being evaluated and not them. Tell them you'll let them know when you start recording. Encourage them to be themselves—open and honest—and to talk about both the good things and the bad. Their feedback will help to improve the program.

A. The week in review (10 min)

1. You briefly review the Workshop 6 challenge. You ask the students if they paid attention to the situations that made them react the most.
2. Ask the students how their week went. How did you feel in general? Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, in which situations? If not, why?
3. Then ask the question of the week: What did you do this week to maintain or expand your social support network? Did you take any concrete actions?
4. If you want to go into more detail, you can ask the following questions:
 - Did you learn anything new about yourself?
 - Did you notice anything different about the way you perceive or react to certain situations?
 - Did you learn anything about your comfort zone and your personal objective?



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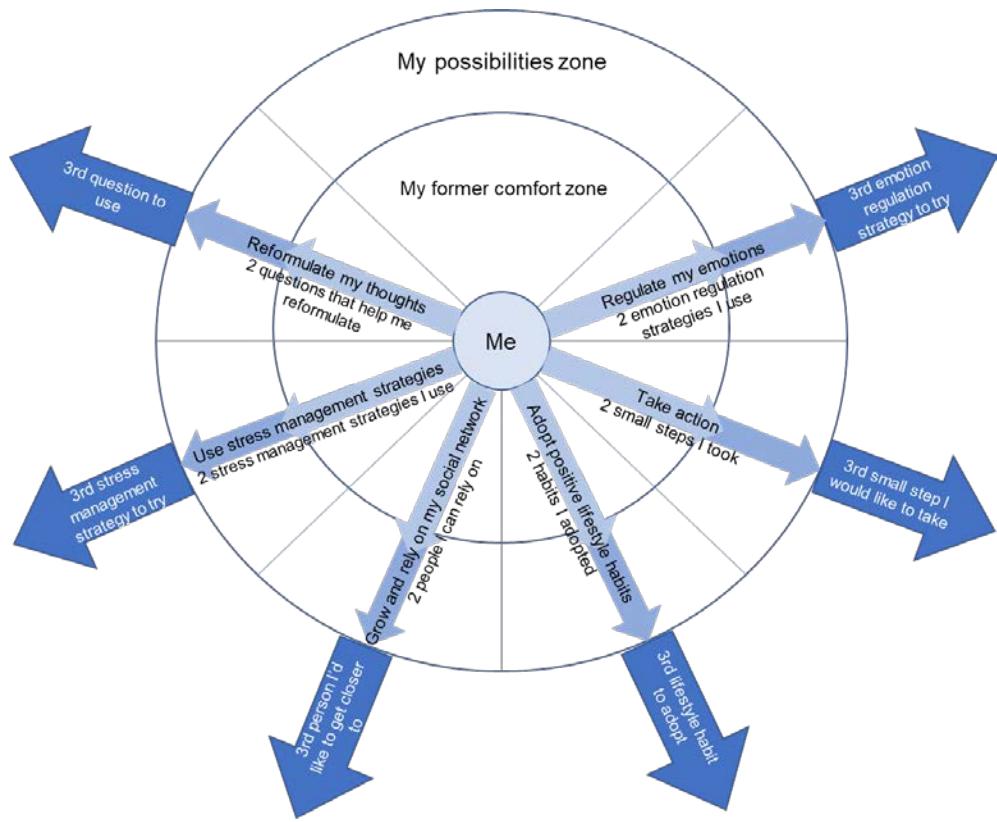


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B. Summary based on the portrait of my comfort zone (30 min)

1. Explain to the students that they'll now review their progress in the program, by reflecting on the changes in their comfort zone, fear zone and possibility zone.
2. Ask them to turn to the *My possibility zone* page in their *Handy student guide* and answer the following two questions individually.
 - For each category of strategies, identify two ways that you have implemented so far that have helped you expand your comfort zone.
 - Outside of this new comfort zone, add a third way that you would like to experiment with to continue the work you have started.



3. Go around to each student to make sure they answered all the questions. As needed, ask the other students to make suggestions.
4. Explain that this portrait will be used during the parent-child meeting. So, it will be important to bring their *Handy student guide* to that meeting.
5. Tell them this exercise will help them see how far they've come. This will be the topic of the next discussion.
6. Sum up by asking the students the following questions.

- Which tools or information do you find most useful?
- Which strategies do you apply in your daily life?
- What things are you proud of?
- What changes have you noticed in the way you deal with anxiety-provoking situations?
- Name three program activities you liked and three you liked less.
- Name a strength or accomplishment you noticed in another group member.
- How has your relationship with your parents changed?
- Have you noticed any changes in your parents?
- How do you see yourself after the program?

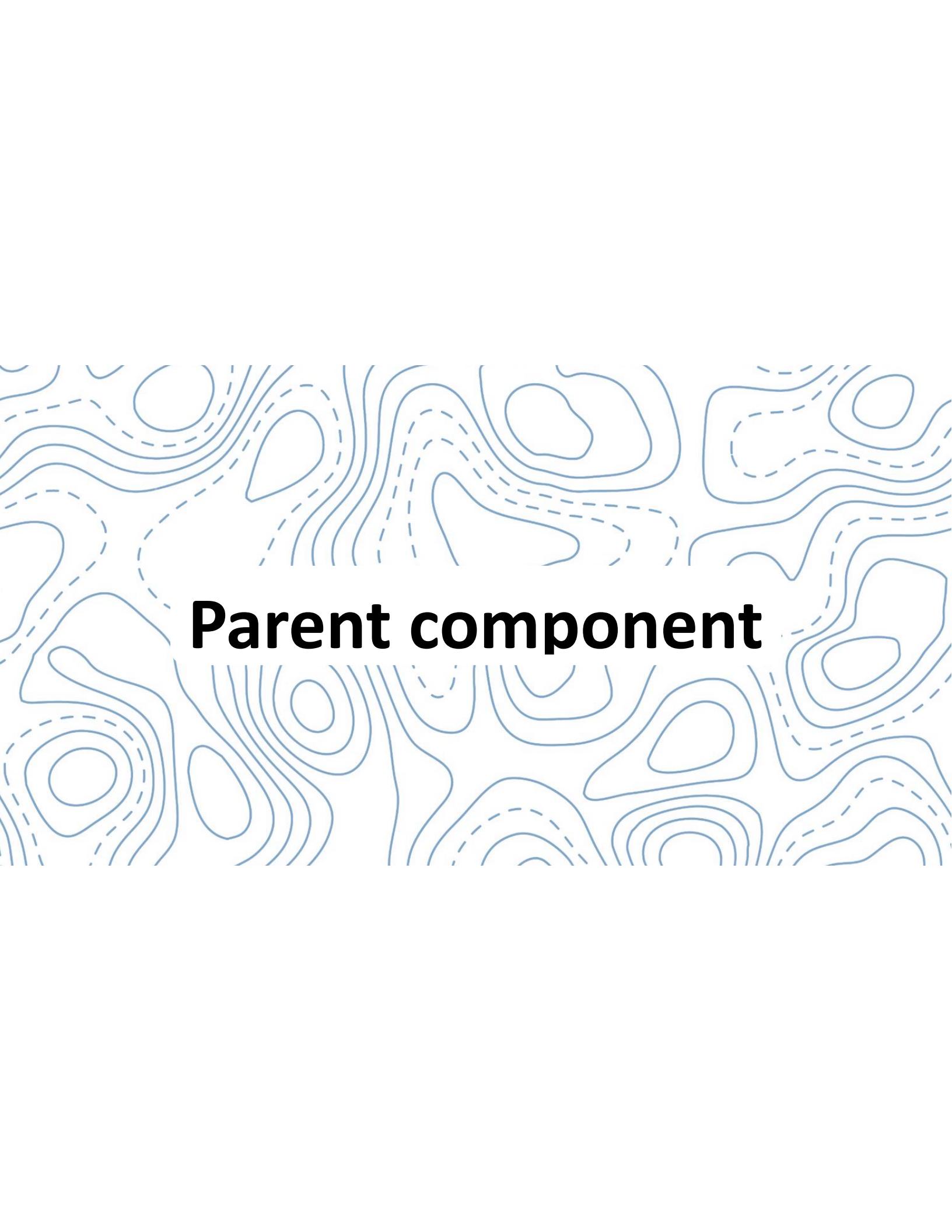
C. What next? Placing inukshuks along your path (20 min)

1. Explain to the students what inukshuks are.

"Inukshuks are placed throughout the Arctic landscape and act as "helpers" for the Inuit. Among their many practical functions, they are used as navigation and hunting aids, as coordination points, as indicators of all kinds and as message centres (for example, to mark a food cache) (Hallendy, 2015)."

2. Referring to the last question in the previous review about the post-program period, tell the students they're going to do an exercise to prepare for the more challenging times ahead. Ask them to write down, on the inukshuk rocks in their *Handy student guide*, the answers to these questions:
 - Which of my strengths can I rely on?
 - Which mindfulness exercise makes me feel good?
 - Which emotion regulation strategy?
 - When I find myself avoiding a certain situation, what saying can I repeat to myself?
 - Who makes me feel good and could support me if I needed it?
 - What place or activity makes me feel good?
3. Then ask the students, from among the inspirational sayings in their *Handy student guide*, to choose five that inspire courage and compassion and that can serve as beacons on their journey, much like an inukshuk.
4. Then ask them to copy these sayings into their agenda. These sayings are there to remind them of the tools they've learned, the courage they've gained to take things one step at a time, to face their fears, and to ask for help when they need it.
5. Take a few minutes to congratulate each student and to tell the group how much you enjoyed your experience together.
6. Ask them each to share with the group why their chosen saying resonates with them. You can now conclude the program at your personal preference and with your heart.





Parent component



1. MY CHILD'S ANXIETY: HOW CAN I HELP THEM STEP OUTSIDE OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE?

Introduction

This workshop should take place between the first and the third student workshops. The objective of this meeting is to give parents insight into what the students are doing.

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the parents will be able to:

- Get to know the facilitator and the other group members;
- Understand the program objectives and the concept of comfort zone;
- Target avoidance behaviours in their child;
- Understand the link between thoughts, emotions, sensations, and behaviours;
- Help their child reflect on certain thought patterns by asking them questions.

How the workshop works

Welcome the parents and present the workshop objectives and how it will work. Make sure each parent has their *Handy parent guide*.



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January 2023

A. Presentation of the program (10 min)

1. Thank parents for attending and remind them of the importance of participating in their child's well-being.
2. Present the workshop objectives and talk about what the *Handy parent guide* will be used for.
3. Reiterate that everything said in the parent group will remain confidential. This is essential to create a sense of trust and security.

Their mutual exchanges are an integral part of the program. Point out that when they are willing to share their experiences, they help others work through their own issues. By the same token, listening with empathy to the other parents is sometimes what they need most. Everyone is encouraged to share their experiences, while leaving room for others to express themselves.

4. Next, review the material provided during the preparatory meeting. What did they learn? Do they have any questions?

B. Icebreaker: A picture that represents me (15 min)

1. Ask them to look at the pictures in their *Handy parent guide*. Ask everyone to choose a picture that represents them. The pictures can represent one or more aspects of their personality or state of mind.
2. Ask them each to introduce themselves to the group based on that picture.

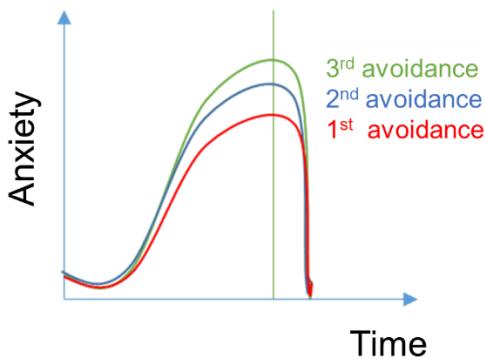
C. Comfort zone (20 min)

1. Ask them to go to the first workshop in their *Handy parent guide*.
2. Using the diagram in the workshop, introduce the concept of the comfort zone.

The comfort zone is those parts of their life where they feel good or on familiar territory. It's the relationships, events, and environments where they know the routine and don't need to ask too many questions. Basically, they're comfortable, or at least they think they are (inspired by White, 2009).

Anxiety can happen when they step outside of their comfort zone, or even when they think about situations that are outside of their comfort zone. This means having to enter the fear zone. They don't know how to react, they're afraid of the unknown, and they don't feel good. They're tempted to avoid these situations and retreat back into

the cozy familiarity of their comfort zone. This is called avoidance. Avoidance feels good in the short term because it instantly lowers their anxiety levels.

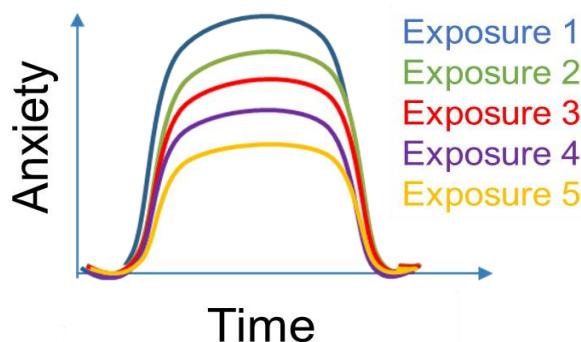


The problem with avoidance is that the more they avoid a situation, the more frightening it becomes. Their comfort zone shrinks, and they start to feel trapped inside it, or they begin to feel more uncomfortable each time they step outside it. At that point, they need to face their fears, which will help them to cope better or even get over their fears completely. This is called exposure. Exposure can be very uncomfortable in the short term because facing the scary situation will cause their anxiety levels to rise. Remember that anxiety isn't dangerous; it's temporary and it eventually goes away. The more they expose themselves to a situation, the less anxious they'll feel about it.

3. Make the connection between the concept of comfort zone and their child's situation.

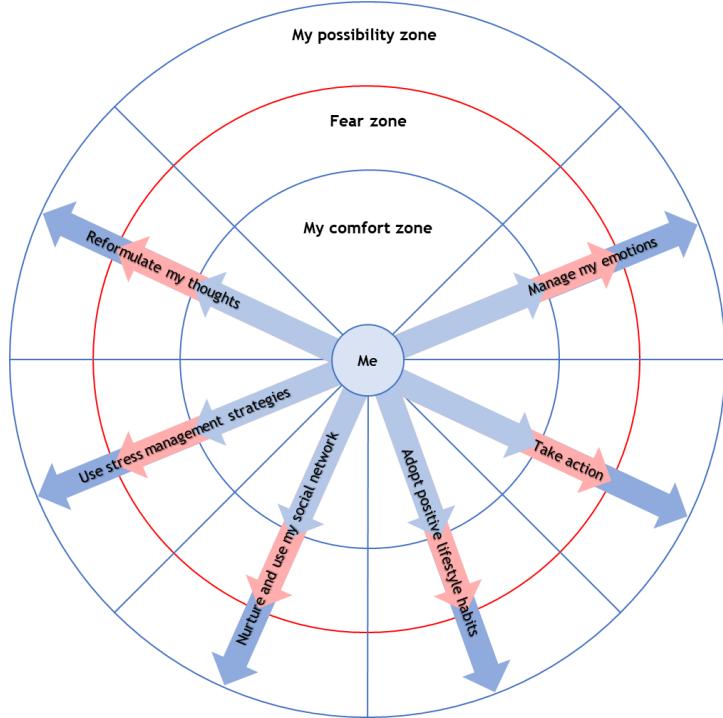
However, your child isn't always able to recognize that it isn't dangerous, because it's the opposite of what they're feeling: "It's dangerous!" It's therefore important to listen to them, understand what they're going through, and encourage them to step outside of their comfort zone, one small step at a time. Trivializing or downplaying what they're feeling won't help. By stepping outside of their comfort zone, your child will become more comfortable, more confident, and freer. Stepping outside of their comfort zone is also a great learning opportunity (Forsyth and Eifert, 2007; Gosselin *et al.*, 2019; Harvey and Ikic, 2014).

The objective of the program is to help your child expand their comfort zone so that they're more comfortable and less anxious in situations that they've identified as anxiety-provoking.



4. Using the diagram, explain to the parents that, in order to expand their comfort zone, their child will learn to:

- Reformulate their thoughts into helpful ones;
- Manage their emotions to better cope with them;
- Adopt new behaviours (take action!);
- Adopt positive lifestyle habits;
- Use stress management strategies;
- Nurture and properly use their social network.



5. Finally, remind parents that their child set a goal for themselves during the preparatory meeting. This objective answers the question: "What would I like to be able to do at the end of this program that I can't do now because of my anxiety?" This will become their new comfort zone. They were also asked to identify seven small steps that will bring them closer to their objective. These are their baby steps: When situation 1 becomes easy, it's time to move on to situation 2, etc.



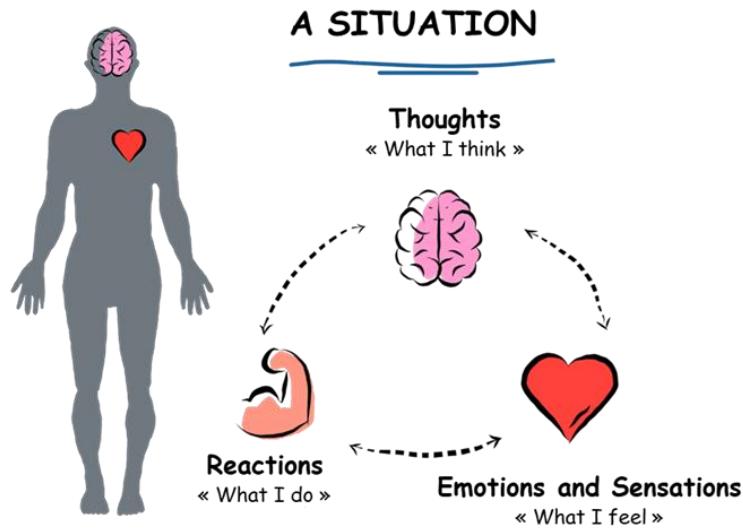
6. Remind the parents that it's important to celebrate all their child's baby steps, even if it's just a different way of looking at things, as this will help set them up for success. This is how they will gain confidence and be able to continue on the path to achieving their objective. Give an example.
7. For example, if the child's objective is: "I want to be able to assert myself in a group," the 7 small steps to get there might be:
 1. Say hi to a classmate when I walk into class
 2. Ask a classmate a question during group work
 3. Ask the teacher a question at the end of class
 4. Start a conversation with a friend
 5. Share my opinion during a family discussion
 6. Share my opinion during group work
 7. Raise my hand in class to give my opinion on a topic.

D. Discuss your experience (20 min)

1. Now ask the parents to introduce their child, talk about one of their strengths, describe how their child's anxiety manifests, and how this makes them feel as a parent. Lead a discussion on the topic by asking the following questions:
 - Do they know what objective their child set for themselves during the preparatory meeting?
 - Do they notice avoidance behaviours in their child?
 - What is the most difficult thing for their child? And for them?
2. To wrap up, ask them what they expect from the program and from you, as the facilitator. ☐

E. What's going on inside me? (20 min)

1. Ask the parents to turn to the diagram of the cognitive-behavioural approach in their *Handy parent guide* and introduce the diagram. The diagram shows that thoughts, emotions, sensations, reactions, and behaviours are intimately linked. The way a person interprets a situation will influence their emotions and sensations, not to mention their reactions to the situation (Beck, 2011).



2. Give the following example: You are home at night by yourself. You hear a noise, which you interpret as someone trying to break in. What sensations and emotions are you experiencing? What do you do? Repeat the scenario but change the interpretation: The cat probably knocked something over. What sensations and emotions are you experiencing? What do you do?
3. Explain that, depending on how we interpret a fact (our thoughts), we will experience different emotions and react differently. Explain that this mechanism is constantly "on" and that to control stress or anxiety, we sometimes need to learn how to see things differently.
4. Explain to the parents that it's important to remain empathetic, to listen to their child, and not to make fun of their thoughts, feelings, or behaviours. The child's distress is real. They're stuck in their perception of things, and their emotions and sensations are validating their interpretation of the situation. Often, their thoughts aren't entirely wrong, but they are overblown and not very helpful.
5. Show the parents a list of questions that can help their child reformulate their thoughts into more helpful, useful, and realistic ones. These questions can be found in their *Handy parent guide*. They can also use their own questions.
6. Tell them that their child has identified three questions to help them challenge their way of thinking. Urge the parents to help their child use these questions whenever they feel their child is engaging in unhelpful thinking.
 - Am I sure about what I'm thinking?
 - Does what other people think really matter?
 - Am I jumping to conclusions in deciding that this is a disaster?
 - Do I tend to exaggerate?
 - Is it realistic to expect everything I do to be perfect?

- What's the worst thing that can happen? What can I do to prepare myself? If the worst happened, would it really be that terrible?
- How would this situation affect my life?
- Would I remember it a year from now?
- Is there another way of looking at the situation? Is there anything positive about it? What can I learn from this situation?
- Do I have control over any part of this situation? How could I gain control?
- Have I experienced a similar situation in the past that turned out well? What strategies did I use?
- Do I tend to use extreme words like always, impossible, never, or forever?

F. Conclusion and invitation (5 min)

1. Wrap up the workshop by asking the parents what they learned. Encourage them to start talking to their child about their comfort zone and their thoughts, in order to help them understand them better. For now, it's important to listen and observe. End by reminding them of the importance of small steps.



2. THE ACCOMMODATION TRAP

Introduction

This workshop should ideally be held between workshop 3 and 5 in the student component.

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the parents will be able to:

- Understand mindfulness and its benefits;
- Identify their child's type of intolerance;
- Understand the concept of accommodation;
- Target accommodating behaviours that they use;
- Replace their accommodating behaviours with new solutions;
- Discuss the necessary changes with their child.

How the workshop works

1. Welcome the parents and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. Introduction to Mindfulness (15 min)

1. In preparation for the workshop, first read the complementary sheet on mindfulness at the end of this workshop.
2. Using the following link, play this video for parents to help them better understand mindfulness (André, 2018): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_NC86pJWA7k (time: 2 min. 26 sec.). Make sure you activate the English subtitles available for this video. Ask the parents what they learned from the video. Ask them if they have any questions about mindfulness, if they've ever heard of it, and if they have any concerns. Complete the explanations about mindfulness using the complementary sheet.
3. Then suggest that the parents try a mindfulness exercise based on breathing. Ask them to sit comfortably and close their eyes if they want to. Remind them that if they feel uncomfortable during the breathing exercise, they can always open their eyes and shift their focus to another part of their body.



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4. Play this recording: https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Medit_Mindful-Breathing.mp3. (Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale, n.d.).
5. At the end, ask parents how they felt during the exercise and how they feel now. Tell them they can find the recording at the address in their *Handy parent guide*.
6. Remind them that their child is also doing mindfulness exercises during the workshops. To increase the benefits of mindfulness, their child is encouraged to practise the exercises at home. As parents, they can encourage them to practise and even do some of the exercises with them, if they want. The best results are seen with time and practice.
7. Tell them about the different mindfulness apps that are available: *Headspace* or another app you know about. Take some time to demonstrate them and install them on the parents' phones. Let them know about the many meditation videos on YouTube; they and their child can choose the ones they like best.

B. Intolerances (10 min)

1. Continue on the theme of intolerances. Share the video called *Intolerances: lenses that distort reality* <https://vimeo.com/1113621854>.
2. Lead a discussion about the video. Use the following questions as a guide:
 - What did you learn from this video?
 - Do you recognize your child in any of the intolerances mentioned?

C. The accommodation trap (30 min)

1. Now introduce the concept of accommodation. As you give the following explanations, remember to pause occasionally to let the parents react. Give them a chance to express what they think or feel about the content and give examples.
2. Introduce the parents to the definition of accommodation: Accommodation consists in altering your parenting style to prevent or lessen the discomfort your child feels because of their anxiety (Thompson-Hollands *et al.*, 2014).

Tip for facilitators

Some parents use accommodation a lot, and have done so since their child was very young, often without being aware of it. Others are anxious themselves and project this onto their child. Regardless, it's important that they don't blame themselves too much or judge the other parents. Many parents feel terribly guilty once they realize that their accommodating behaviours may have had negative consequences on their child or perpetuated their anxiety. So, you're encouraged to normalize this phenomenon.

3. Point out that accommodation is normal, because one of their jobs as a parent is to care

for their child, meet their needs, and protect them from harm. For that reason, most parents manipulate or adapt certain situations to help their child cope better. It's actually hard to avoid completely: When the counter's too high, we pull up a footstool so our child can cook with us.

4. However, point out that by being overly accommodating, they can actually make their child more anxious, since this is a form of avoidance. Remind them of the consequences of avoidance behaviours and the importance of helping their child to step outside of their comfort zone instead. Extensive research involving children with anxiety has shown that while these accommodating behaviours may lessen the child's discomfort in the short term, they actually maintain and even increase it in the long term (Ginsburg *et al.*, 2004). Accommodation can also send an implicit message to your child that they are incapable of doing things on their own or that they are right to be worried. So, it's important to be aware of the harmful effects of resorting to accommodation too often.
5. Even though accommodating behaviours maintain and worsen anxiety in the long run, explain to the parents that forcing the child into scary situations too soon, without guidance, and without respecting their boundaries, is equally harmful and can also make their anxiety worse. Remind them of the importance of small steps.
6. Ask the parents to give examples of accommodating behaviours from their own lives. Finish with the following examples (inspired by Benito *et al.*, 2015; Lebowitz *et al.*, 2012):
 - Changing the family routine and making exceptions;
 - Providing too much security: phone calls, hovering, asking questions, etc.;
 - Enabling the child when it comes to avoiding anxiety-provoking situations (school, social situations);
 - Speaking or acting on the child's behalf;
 - Following strict rules and rituals;
 - Limiting their responsibilities and independence.
7. Explain to them that easing up on their accommodating behaviours is likely to force them outside of their own comfort zone. These changes may even seem counterintuitive, because they cause the child to feel uncomfortable in the short term. Remind the parents that while they are responsible for protecting their child, they also have a role to play in developing their child's independence, and to do this, they will need to work on accommodation.
8. Make them aware that these accommodating behaviours are usually a deep-seated part of the family dynamic. Their child may react to this change, momentarily becoming more anxious, angry, or sad. They will need to remember that they're doing this for their child's own good and tell their child that they trust them and believe in them and their abilities. This may be harder on some days, but it's important to stick with it (inspired by Lebowitz *et al.*, 2011a; Lebowitz *et al.*, 2011b)

9. Tell the parents that the first step will be having a conversation about this with their child. Let the parents know that their child will have already heard about accommodation in their workshop, along with the possible changes in how they will deal with their child's behaviour. It's important that this conversation take place when everyone is calm and receptive. If the child is anxious or the parent is feeling very emotional, it's best to postpone it. If possible, it's a good idea for both parents to discuss the issue and the necessary changes beforehand; they can then speak to the child together.
10. Introduce the parents to some strategies to help them adopt behaviours that are more helpful for their child (Masia *et al.*, 1999). These strategies can be found in their *Handy parent guide*:
 - Listen carefully and be empathetic;
 - Remind the child that you trust them;
 - Encourage them to be independent and self-sufficient;
 - Model and encourage brave behaviours;
 - Do breathing or visualization exercises with the child;
 - Plan opportunities for exposure (baby steps);
 - Provide opportunities for exposure;
 - Be positive and supportive: celebrate all efforts;
 - Remind them about emotion management strategies;
 - Help them reformulate their thoughts using specific questions;
 - Pay attention to your own emotions, which can influence accommodating behaviours;
 - Seek help.

D. Accommodation at home (30 min)

1. Now ask the parents to take a moment to reflect on their accommodating behaviours. Give them about 10 minutes to answer the following questions, which are in their *Handy parent guide*:
 - Do I tend to use accommodating behaviours? If so, in which situations? If not, do I tend to push my child into scary situations too quickly?
 - Which new strategies could I use to help my child manage their anxiety better?
2. Once the exercise is over, reconvene as a group and talk about the parents' answers.
3. Then, ask the parents to individually write down a few sentences of the conversation they plan to have with their child. They can use this script for inspiration:

"I know how hard it is for you to [fill in the blank]. I understand it scares you or makes you feel really anxious. I want you to know this is completely normal and that everyone gets scared sometimes. But I also want you to know that it's my job, as a parent, to help you do better at the things you find hard, which is exactly what I've decided to do. We'll be working on this for a while, and I know it'll probably take some time, but I love you too much not to help you. We'll talk about this again soon, and we'll come up with ideas to help you cope better. I'm really proud of you!" (Lebowitz *et al.*, 2014).

4. Also ask the parents to identify strategies to use in situations where their child is anxious, and they tend to accommodate them. Ask them to draw up a short personal action plan of the behaviours they could adopt to help their child achieve their goal. Remind them of the importance of small steps.

For example, if their child wants to hang out with kids their age but tends to stick close to their parents at social events because they're shy, the parents can step away for a certain period of time; they could also avoid answering questions for the child, let the child answer the phone, suggest a fun activity they can invite friends to, etc.

5. When the parents are finished, lead a group discussion on their action plans. Ask them to specifically describe some of the things they could do. Encourage the parents to share their ideas, which could help them to solidify their own action plans.

E. Conclusion and invitation (5 min)

1. Encourage the parents to follow their action plan once they've had a conversation with their child. Ask them to pay attention to any changes or problems they may notice, which they will discuss at the next workshop.



Complementary sheet

What is mindfulness and how does it work?

Mindfulness is paying close attention to your sensations, thoughts, or emotions, without labelling them as good or bad, wanted or unwanted. In other words, we don't judge them, we simply observe them. Mindfulness allows us to get in touch with what's going on inside us and around us; over time, it helps us to be less critical. In general, we tend to regularly criticize and judge our environment, our family and friends, and ourselves (Baer, 2003; Broderick and Metz, 2011).

Mindfulness can be practised formally, using meditations such as body scanning, or informally, through activities such as mindful walking. There are different types of informal meditation or activities that allow you to tap into the different spheres of mindfulness (senses, emotions, perceptions, presence, etc.) (Kaiser Greenland, 2016).

Mindfulness, whether practised formally or informally, is a way to be in the present moment, to better understand what's going on inside you, and to find an anchor point, which is often your breathing. It can be a powerful tool for regulating stress (Holzel *et al.*, 2011). The important thing about mindfulness is to choose methods that you enjoy, that you're comfortable with, and that feel good.

During the workshops, the students will have the opportunity to experiment with the many forms of mindfulness, after which they can choose the ones best suited to their personal journey.

Mindfulness can have the following benefits (Keng *et al.*, 2011):

- Improve communication;
- Develop and master the senses;
- Manage stress and emotions;
- Calm the mind to become more open to learning;
- Maintain quality relationships with oneself, others, and the environment.

Are there any precautions when it comes to mindfulness?

As with any activity, some people may love it and others may hate it. Some students may embrace it quickly and others, much later in life or never. Research shows that mindfulness can have beneficial effects in most people (Felver *et al.*, 2016; Zenner *et al.*, 2014). Conversely, other people may find it unpleasant, uncomfortable, painful, even harmful (Dobkin *et al.*, 2012). There can be risks associated with the intensity of the activity, the person's vulnerability, or the way the information is conveyed. Some of your students risk experiencing negative effects. Unfortunately, the literature doesn't let us clearly identify which students are most at risk. However, you can take some precautions. If possible, find out which students are most sensitive, emotionally and cognitively. And pay attention to the students' body language as you lead the activity:

- Let the students know that they may feel uncomfortable. This is usually temporary and

doesn't mean that mindfulness isn't right for them;

- Be prepared (you or another facilitator) to provide support to students who express discomfort or simply need to talk;
- Let the students know they can stop if they start to feel uncomfortable or uneasy. At this point, you can suggest that they refocus their attention on something else, doodle, or even read;
- Mindfulness is a lifestyle that not everyone has to follow. It's completely voluntary and can't be forced;
- Activities that involve focusing on their breathing may be uncomfortable for some students with anxiety or depression. If the students still want to learn about mindfulness or participate in the activity, they can instead focus on their heartbeat, or sounds or objects in the classroom. Gradually, they may be able to shift their focus back to their body and breathing;
- Let the students know that mindfulness leads to pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral experiences. They may experience feelings of calm, relaxation, happiness, and well-being, just as they may feel physical discomfort, sadness, agitation, and sleepiness; these are all perfectly normal;
- Remind the students that they are the best judges of what's good and not good for them. They are responsible for their own well-being—in the present moment and in the long term.

In short, your role as facilitator includes watching for the students' reactions and being aware that these can be positive, negative, or neutral, depending on the students' personalities, tolerance, and receptiveness. These reactions are all a normal part of a mindfulness practice.



3. PREVENTING ANXIETY ON A DAILY BASIS

Introduction

This workshop should ideally be held between workshops 5 and 8 of the *student* component.

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, parents will be able to:

- Identify positive and negative lifestyle habits;
- Identify stress management strategies;
- Take steps to help their child apply their lifestyle habits and stress management strategies;
- Assess their learning and achievements;
- Implement strategies to prevent their child from relapsing.

How the workshop works

Welcome the parents and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. Discussion about your experience (10 min)

1. Ask the parents about their day-to-day life with their child: How did the past few weeks go? Are they seeing any changes in their child or themselves?
2. Come back to the concepts seen during the last workshop: Did they have a conversation with their child about accommodation? Did they notice their own accommodating behaviours? Did they try to adopt new, more helpful behaviours with their child? How did that go? Did they encounter any problems or obstacles? Did they have any successes?



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Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

January 2023

Public Health
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B. Positive lifestyle habits: How can I make the soil more fertile?

(30 min)

**This activity was also done with the students. This will allow the parents to better identify their child's potentially positive and negative lifestyle habits.*

1. Use the metaphor of a plant and its soil to talk to the parents about lifestyle habits. Explain that soil is the plant's living environment, which allows it to grow. For the soil to be fertile, it needs nutrients, water, and sunlight. Conversely, a plant that's growing in poor-quality soil or that lacks water and light (which creates stress on the plant) will struggle to grow and may even wilt. Make them aware that, much like the plant, the environment in which the child lives (their soil) and the way in which their needs are met (by themselves and their environment) influence their emotional state and their anxiety.
2. Point out that, like the plant, their child may not necessarily have control over all the external conditions they're exposed to (e.g., lack of water or sunlight), but they do have some power over the lifestyle habits they themselves decide to put in place to take care of themselves. So, being aware of what's good and bad for them can help them to change things. Make them aware that, as parents, they too can have an impact on their child's lifestyle habits by providing an environment that promotes positive habits.
3. To find out more about positive and negative lifestyle habits, ask them to take turns reading the lifestyle habits cards in their *Handy parent guide* (attached to this workshop). After each card, ask the parents if they have any questions or thoughts about what they just heard.
4. Then ask them to take a few minutes to write down their thoughts about their child's lifestyle habits in their *Handy parent guide*. Did they identify any areas for improvement? How can they help their child to improve their lifestyle habits? Which lifestyle habit(s) could they change themselves in order to be a good role model for their child?
5. Review their thoughts as a group.

C. Stress management strategies (15 min)

1. Explain to the parents that some of the healthy lifestyle habits listed above can also be used as concrete strategies to better manage stress and anxiety. These strategies are things they can do to help their child cope better with a stressful or anxiety-provoking situation. They are concrete ways to calm down and better deal with a difficult situation.
2. Together, look at the following list of strategies:
 - Ask for help, talk about it, get support from peers or parents;
 - Do relaxation, breathing, yoga, and mindfulness exercises;
 - Get plenty of sleep, pamper themselves, show affection, take it easy, disconnect;



- Try to see things differently;
 - Practise gratitude;
 - Live in the moment;
 - Reformulate negative thoughts into more realistic, helpful ones;
 - Laugh, have a good time, throw a party, have fun;
 - Write down or draw their emotions and thoughts;
 - Spend time with an animal that makes them feel good;
 - Play sports, or do fun or creative activities;
 - Go on a cultural outing;
 - Get in touch with nature: go for a walk in the forest, do some gardening.
3. Once this step is completed, ask the parents to identify the three strategies they feel would work best for their child in an anxiety-provoking situation. Encourage them to write these strategies down in their *Handy parent guide*. Inform the parents that their child has also identified strategies that could help them to cope with difficult situations. Encourage the parents to talk to their children about the strategies the child chose and about the ones the parents think would help them.

Tip for facilitators

Some parents might name video games as something that makes their child feel good and helps them manage their stress.

"The danger with video games is that they create a parallel universe in which the child can take refuge. They can end up investing so much time and energy in that universe that it becomes real to them. Even after the video game is turned off, it's the only thing the child can think about. This starts to border on a video game addiction. The child spends more time in their parallel universe than in the real world. But at some point, when they need to face the real world, they find themselves unable to cope. It's much more frightening than their fantasy world, where they're a powerful superhero." Partial quote by neuropsychologist Benoît Hammarrenger, on the show *Les Francs-Tireurs* (panel on youth and anxiety), September 18, 2019, on *Télé-Québec*.

The idea is to make parents aware of this issue. Of course, video games can be fun and relaxing, but their use needs to be supervised and governed by strict rules.

Tip for facilitators

To deepen the parents' understanding of the benefits of physical activity, summarize the following concepts in your own words.

"The general consensus, among the population and the scientific community, is that physical activity is the natural method with the strongest impact on well-being and mental health (Biddle, 2006; INSER, 2008; Mammen and Faulkner, 2013). The literature reveals two main streams of research on the psychological benefits of physical activity:

1) Research on the immediate or temporary effects of a single session of physical activity, independent of physical fitness; 2) Research on the effects of regular physical activity on improving physical fitness.

An activity of moderate intensity (50 % - 70 % of the person's maximum heart rate) for a minimum of 20 minutes, or the equivalent of a brisk walk with mild shortness of breath, produces a positive psychological effect that can last between two and seven hours.

The psychological benefits of regular physical activity have also been demonstrated (INSERM, 2008). For example, Folkins and Sime (1981) identified 65 studies, 47 of which demonstrated effects on various dimensions of mental health and cognitive performance. An improvement was seen in the feeling of competence and self-esteem (6 over 8 studies), as well as affects such as mood, well-being, anxiety and depression (13 over 14 studies), along with cognitive functions such as memory, reaction time, problem-solving and concentration (9 over 13 studies). People who exercise regularly have better tolerance to everyday stress than people who are less active. They are more optimistic and positive about life experiences and less likely to be anxious."

Excerpts from Poirel (2017)

D. Review of meetings (20 min)

1. Lead a group discussion by asking the following questions:

- What have you learned about yourself and your role as a parent?
- Which tools or information do you find most useful?
- Which strategies do you apply in your daily life?
- What changes have you noticed in the way your child deals with anxiety-provoking situations?
- Name a strength or accomplishment you noticed in another group member.
- Name three program activities you liked and three you liked less.
- How has your relationship with your child changed?
- How do you see yourself after the program?



E. And after...? (15 min)

1. In reference to the last question in the previous review about the post-program period, explain that it's important to be prepared for more difficult times that potentially lie ahead. Ask the parents to answer the following questions, which are in their Handy parent guide:

- What are some signs that your child isn't doing well?
- What are some signs that you're dealing with a lot of emotions?
- What tools do you want to remember when things aren't going so well?
 - Mindfulness exercise;
 - Strategies to replace accommodation;
 - Questions to help you reformulate thoughts;
 - Positive lifestyle habits and stress management strategies.

2. Reconvene as a group to discuss each parent's answers.

3. Lastly, take a look at the resources available in their region:

- CLSC;
- Community organizations;
- School; · Parent help line: <https://www.ligneparents.com/LigneParents>.

F. Closing statement

1. Take a few minutes to congratulate each parent and to tell the group how much you enjoyed your experience together.

2. Give everyone the chance to share something with the group, if they want to.



<p>HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS</p> <p>Maintaining healthy relationships with others and having a caring, supportive network contributes to good mental health!</p> <p>Having healthy relationships with loved ones where you can share your thoughts and emotions is a way to get to know yourself better and figure out who you are as a person.</p> <p>Are you satisfied with your network of friends? Why?</p> <p>(Claes, 2003)</p>	<p>SLEEP</p> <p>To be able to do the things you enjoy and feel good, you need enough sleep!</p> <p>Getting enough sleep can help you feel better, manage your emotions better, and have a better quality of life.</p> <p>Do you generally sleep well? How many hours a night do you sleep?</p> <p>(Public Health Agency of Canada, 2018; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>HEALTHY EATING</p> <p>A healthy diet is essential to good health!</p> <p>Eating a balanced diet will help you grow and give you the energy you need to get through your day. It will also help you do better in sports or school.</p> <p>Do you think you eat a balanced diet? Is this important to you?</p> <p>(Government of Canada, 2019; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>EXERCISE</p> <p>Exercise can be a great way to take care of yourself every day!</p> <p>For example, sports can be an opportunity to make new friends, improve your self-esteem, lower your stress, and improve your concentration.</p> <p>How many times a week do you play sports?</p> <p>(Public Health Agency of Canada, 2019; Simon <i>et al.</i>, 2005; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>
<p>FUN</p> <p>Taking care of yourself every day also means taking time to have fun and do things you love—alone or with family and friends!</p> <p>For example, this can include spending time on a favourite hobby or simply relaxing. Having fun with loved ones is just as important as taking time for yourself.</p> <p>What makes you happy? Why?</p> <p>(Québec government, 2018)</p>	<p>BALANCE</p> <p>A healthy balance between the different areas of your life (family, friends, sports, school) is good for you!</p> <p>In fact, having a good balance lets you focus on all the important parts of your life and pay attention to your needs.</p> <p>Do you think you have a good balance in your life? Why?</p> <p>(Tel-Jeunes, 2019; Université de Montréal, 2015)</p>	<p>COMPASSION</p> <p>To feel more comfortable with others and enjoy more positive energy, you need to be compassionate with others and with yourself!</p> <p>For example, avoid having prejudices and making assumptions about other people. You can also do good deeds, truly listen to other people, or simply be kind to people.</p> <p>How do you show compassion for other people?</p> <p>(Lyubomirsky and Layous, 2013; Neff, 2003)</p>	<p>MINDFULNESS</p> <p>Practising mindfulness can help you manage your stress!</p> <p>Mindfulness is a way to help you manage your emotions and resolve problems, because it teaches you to pay closer attention to the signals your body is sending you. It helps you to make links between your sensations, thoughts, emotions, etc.</p> <p>When do you practice mindfulness? Why?</p> <p>(Gosselin and Turgeon, 2015)</p>

SELF-ESTEEM

Nurturing your self-esteem helps to increase your well-being and create a more positive self-image!

To nurture your self-esteem, identify one of your strengths that you apply in your daily life. Your self-esteem grows each time you think highly of yourself.

How do you nurture your self-esteem on a daily basis?

(Neff and Vonk, 2009; Neff, 2011; Seligman *et al.*, 2005)

SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is good for your mental health!

It can help you manage your stress and view the things that happen to you with a positive attitude. Spirituality isn't religion! It's a way of connecting with yourself, listening to your needs, honouring your beliefs, etc.

Do you consider yourself a spiritual person? Why?

(Simard, 2006)

<p>SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE Being sedentary and not getting enough exercise has an impact on your physical and mental health!</p> <p>Exercise is a good way to manage your stress on a day-to-day basis, among other reasons because it lets you blow off steam. It also has an impact on your self-image, health, and well-being.</p> <p>When you exercise, do you notice any benefits? What are they?</p> <p>(Simon <i>et al.</i>, 2005; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>INTERNET ADDICTION Spending too much time on the Internet can become a problem and even get out of control!</p> <p>If you find that you're using the Internet and social media to forget about your problems, that you're not sleeping at night because you're staying up late online, or that you're spending too much time alone, talk to someone you trust about the situation.</p> <p>Do you feel the need to spend time on the Internet or social media to be happy?</p> <p>(Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>CONFLICTUAL RELATIONSHIPS Arguing with loved ones can be bad for you!</p> <p>When faced with a conflict, you can decide to react or respond. You can use problem-solving strategies to work through it: assess the conflict, consider different solutions before choosing one, then take action.</p> <p>How do you typically manage your conflicts?</p> <p>(Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Rubenstein <i>et al.</i>, 2019)</p>	<p>LACK OF SLEEP Frequent sleep deprivation can have a negative effect on your health and the way you handle stress!</p> <p>If you don't get enough sleep or don't sleep well, you won't have the energy for all your activities. When you're sleep deprived, it's also harder to manage your emotions.</p> <p>Do you ever have trouble sleeping? Why?</p> <p>(Public Health Agency of Canada, 2018; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>
<p>SUBSTANCE USE Drinking alcohol or using drugs often or excessively has a major impact on your physical and mental health!</p> <p>These substances alter your perception of reality, which can increase your stress levels. Drugs and alcohol affect your behaviour and sleep, and also put you at risk of developing an addiction.</p> <p>Do you ever drink or use drugs? Why?</p> <p>(Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>ISOLATION Feeling isolated and unable to rely on support from family and friends increases your stress levels and makes you feel bad!</p> <p>To get out of this situation, you might decide to talk to someone you trust or hang out with a different circle of friends.</p> <p>Do you ever feel isolated? How does this affect you?</p> <p>(Claes, 2003; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>	<p>BURNOUT Burnout can increase your stress levels and make you feel bad!</p> <p>To feel good, you need to try to find a balance and avoid taking things to the extreme. Focusing all your energy in one place is unhealthy. You need to do different activities to avoid burning out.</p> <p>Have you ever had a burnout? When?</p> <p>(Tel-Jeunes, 2019; Université de Montréal, 2015)</p>	<p>SMOKING Smoking can be very bad for your health and your stress levels!</p> <p>You might smoke as a way to cope with stress, but this is only a short-term fix; smoking actually makes your stress worse in the long term. At first, you may feel more in control, but it won't take long before you develop an addiction that's extremely hard to break.</p> <p>Have you ever wanted to smoke? Why?</p> <p>(Conseil québécois sur le tabac et la santé, n.d.; Tel-Jeunes, 2019)</p>



HORS-PISTE program – Exploration

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