

A fun way to ease anxiety

Group activity worksheet



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Written by teachers for teachers

A fun way to ease anxiety



You will need:

- Pieces of paper for students to write down their worries.

When making boxes:

- to ask students to bring in a small plain box or envelope
- also ask students to bring in things in order to decorate their receptacle
- have glue, scissors, glitter, ribbons, coloured paper, felt tips etc, to hand for decorating the receptacle.

The purpose of this activity is to offer students one way of dealing with anxieties. It doesn't make problems disappear or belittle them but it does help keep them in perspective.



Worry Boxes

This works well with any age group. You can do this with a whole class or as an exercise with one, two or more students.

So often, anxieties replay themselves round and round in our minds. This rarely *solves* our problems; it just makes life rather miserable at times.

One way to deal with this is to have a box (or an envelope) in which to place our worries so that they can wait until we are properly able to look at them or they solve themselves. This can be done physically or as a visualisation.

A fun way to ease anxiety *continued*

How this works

It can be fun to create our own worry box or envelope. Explain to the students that using the boxes can help them to put the anxiety to one side while they get on with life. It doesn't make problems disappear but can make them more manageable.

Often we will find ourselves worrying about something we have no control over and this is no help to anyone. Placing the worry in the box enables us to be aware of the problem without sinking into a downward emotional spiral.

If we are worrying about something we do have control over, we can open the box and look at the issue when we have time and space to consider a course of action.

Actions:

1. Make your own worry box or envelope

Ask students to bring in a small plain box or envelope, explaining what it is going to be used for and that they are going to decorate their own. They can bring in bits to decorate their box/envelope; anything will do: ribbon, coloured paper, glitter, shells, felt tips and so on.

Either: ask students to write down something that is worrying them on a piece of paper. It can be scribbled, written beautifully, painted, on parchment – whatever they like. They then place the worry in their box and put it away until they have the time and inclination to look at it properly. The physical act of doing this helps to end the awful worry loop in which so many of us find ourselves caught, on a daily basis.

Or: students can take the boxes home and have them ready for when they are needed.



A fun way to ease anxiety *continued*

2. Visualising a worry box or envelope

If you are unable to make a worry box or don't want to, you can use visualisation instead. You may wish to show students the attached pictures of boxes so that they can see a variety. Explain the purpose of a worry box and tell students they are going to create one with their minds.

Make sure that the students are sitting comfortably and relaxed with their eyes closed. Ask them to take 3 slow, deep breaths to aid relaxation then explain that, in their imagination, they are going to design their own worry box. It can be made of anything they like. Students first visualise what the box is like on the inside – wood (colour?), metal (Silver? Gold? Platinum? Iron? Velvet lined? Material lined? Wicker? Other?) Then ask them to imagine closing the lid and decide what the box looks like on the outside, giving similar prompts.

They then visualise writing something that is worrying them on a piece of paper. Ask them to fold the paper, put it in the box and close the lid. They can look at it again at a later date.



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