

Module 3: Graded Exposure

Wellbeing Team

Delivered by Harriet Jones

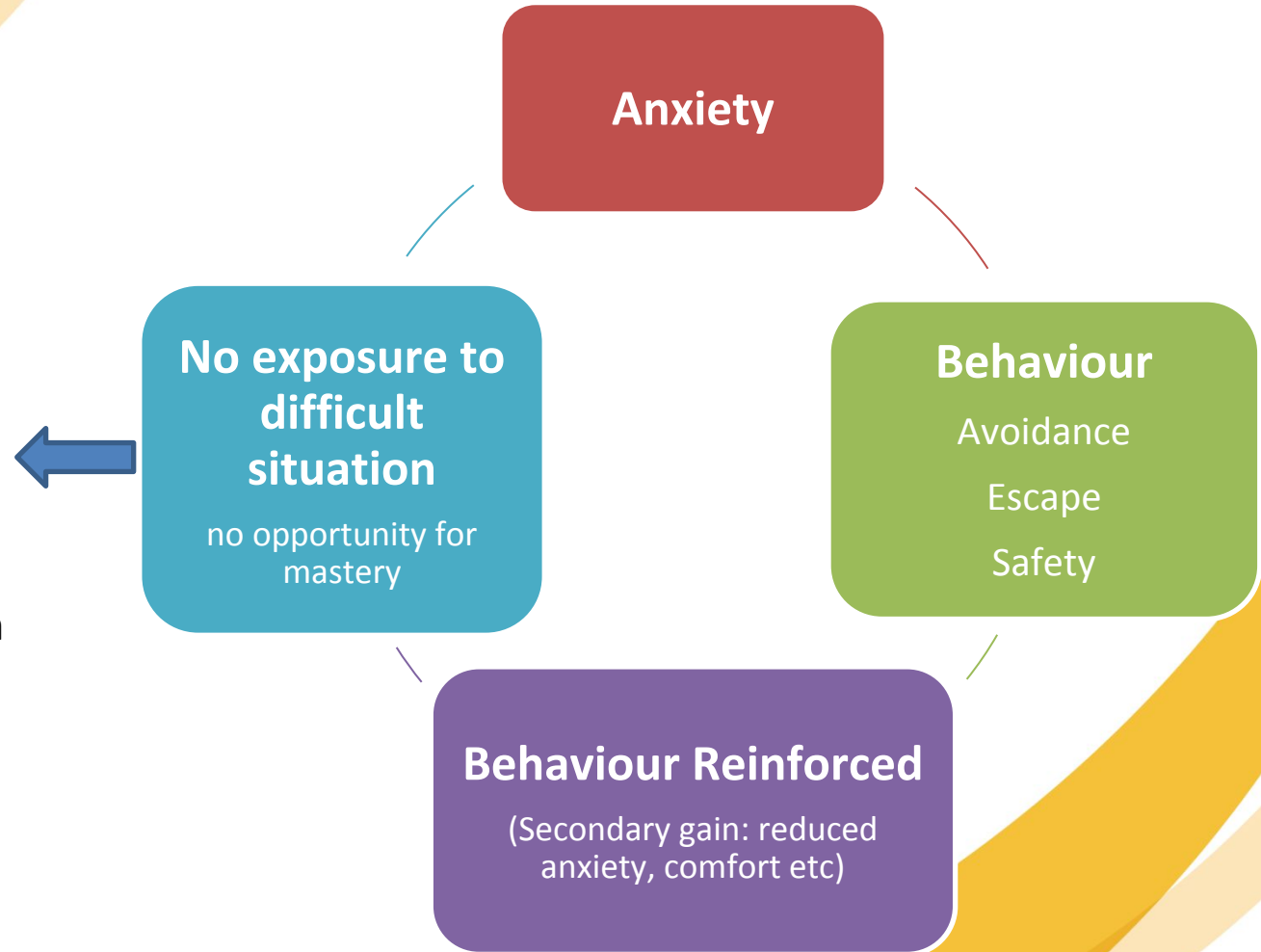


achieving
for children



Vicious Cycle of Anxiety

- Child never gets to discover whether the feared situation is as bad as he/she thinks
- Child never gets to experience that he/she can cope with the situation



Need to face fears and test out beliefs in order to break the cycle

Graded Exposure

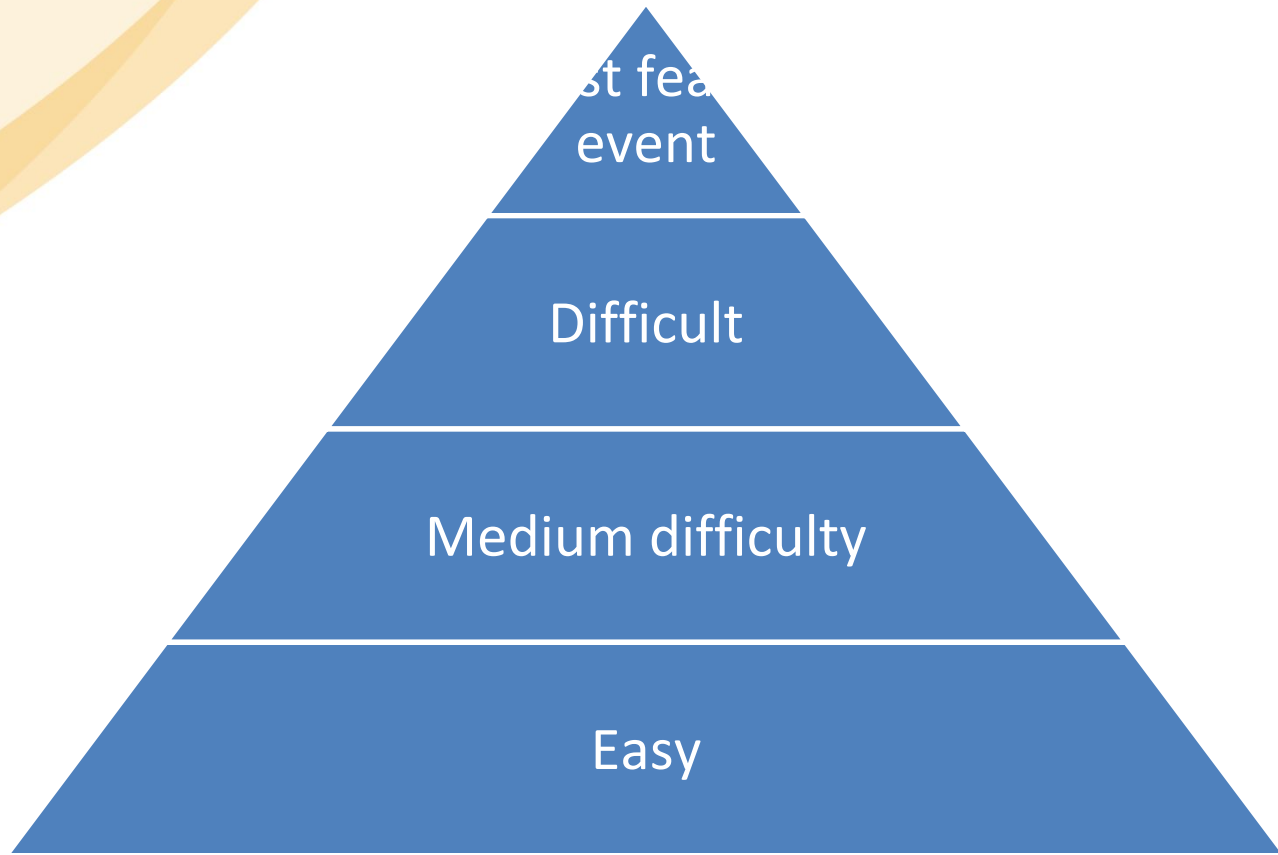
- = Gradually facing fears
 - Identify final goal and break it down into small, manageable steps
 - Decide on a reward for each step and a final reward for achieving the overall goal
 - Start with a step that you know your child can achieve in order to increase motivation
 - Reward straight after your child has completed the step
 - Give praise for every effort made
 - Practice daily, in order to continually overcome fears
 - Rate anxiety before, during and after activity
 - Stay in situation until anxiety has dropped by 50%
 - When anxiety has reduced move to next step
 - Go at child's pace – don't move to next step before child feels fully confident
 - Break down steps into smaller ones if child finds it too difficult
 - Continually review, revise and reward!

Remember: Embedding new patterns takes time

Motivating your child to face their fears.

- Creativity with the exposure plan.
- Concrete steps and rewards for each step.
- Explaining the rationale for doing the plan and the importance of facing our fears to overcome anxiety.
- Promoting a “having a go” attitude to facing fears.
- Modelling “brave behaviour” yourself, i.e. showing your child you are prepared to face something you are anxious about.
- Being aware of your own anxiety about your child facing their fears (this is natural).

1. Graded



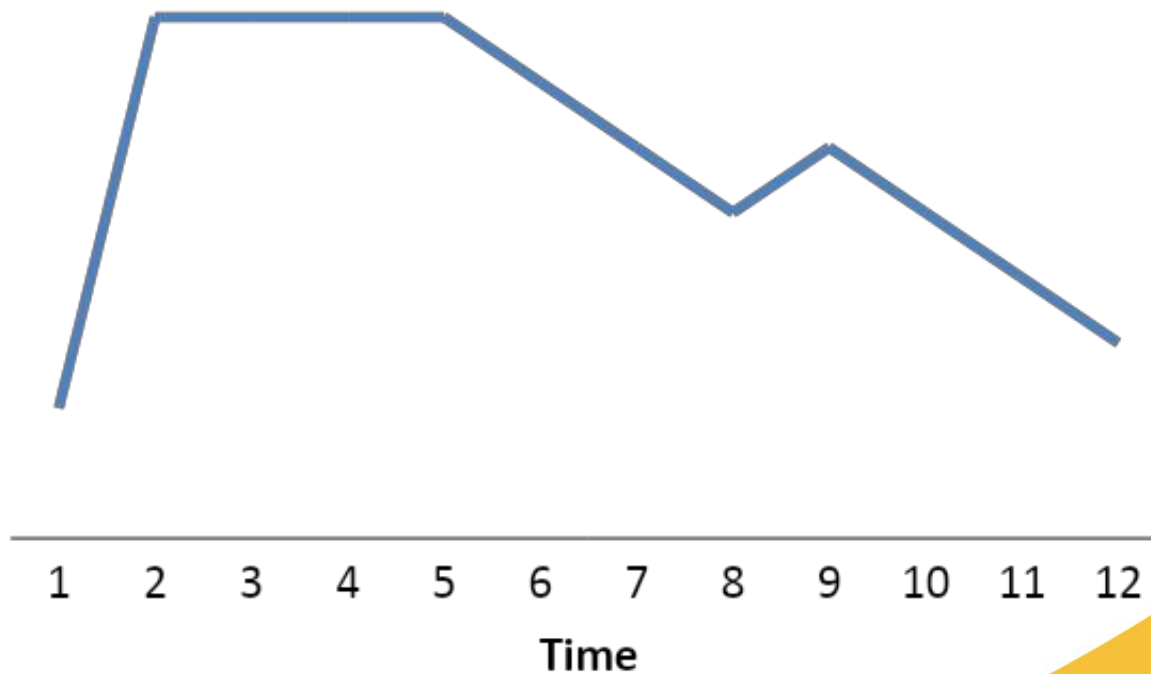
Example.....

6. Ultimate Goal: To hold a spider.
5. To sit next to a spider which is on the table.
4. To sit next to a spider contained within a glass.
3. To be in the same room as a real spider.
2. To handle a fake spider.
1. To see a photo of a spider.

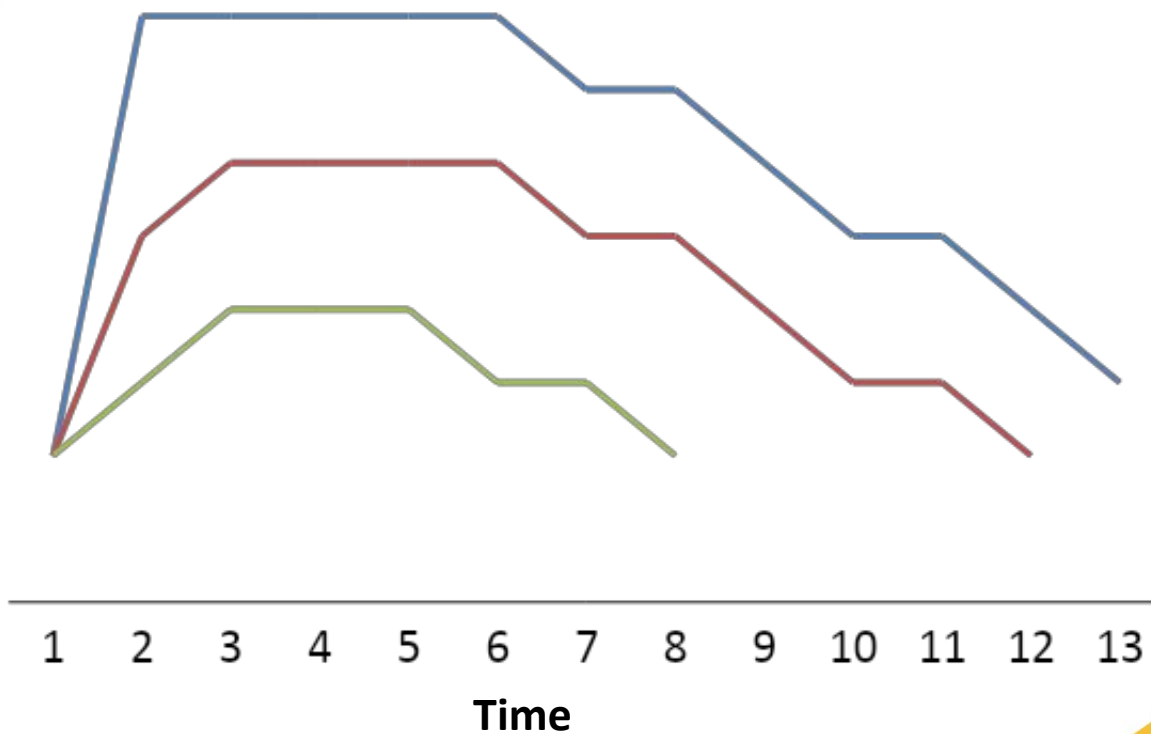
2. Prolonged

Habituation: Staying with the anxious feeling until it naturally comes down.

Natural Course of Anxiety



3. Repeated



4. Without Distraction

- Allowing anxiety to arise
 - Avoiding distraction



Child gets to experience that the anxiety will reduce over time



Child learns that he/she CAN cope with the situation



Sense of mastery

Homework Tasks for this week.....

- Read Chapter 9 Step 3- Encouraging Independence and “having a go” (if you haven’t already).
- Read Chapter 10 Step 4- A step by step approach to overcoming fears and worries.
- Read Chapter 14: Additional Strategies 3: Managing your own anxiety.
- Have a go at creating a graded exposure plan with you child.