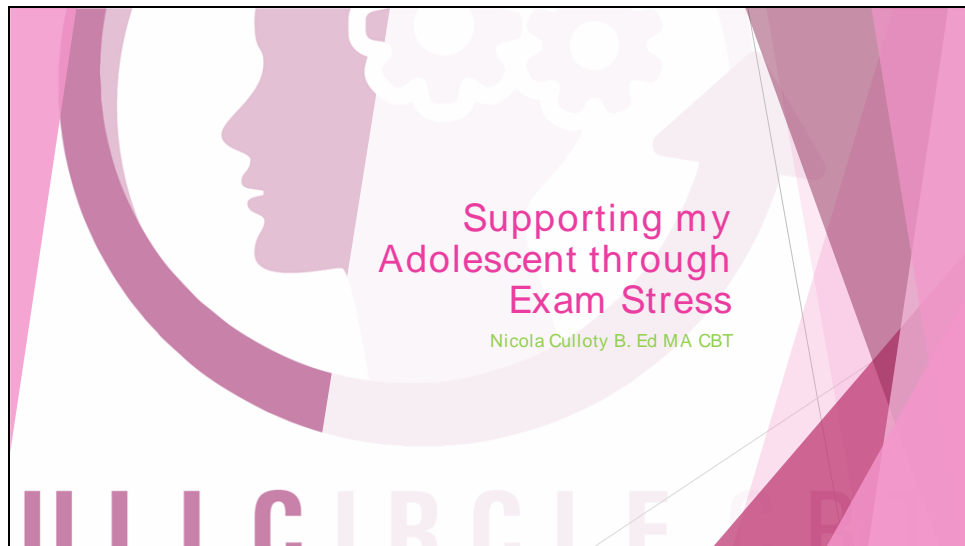
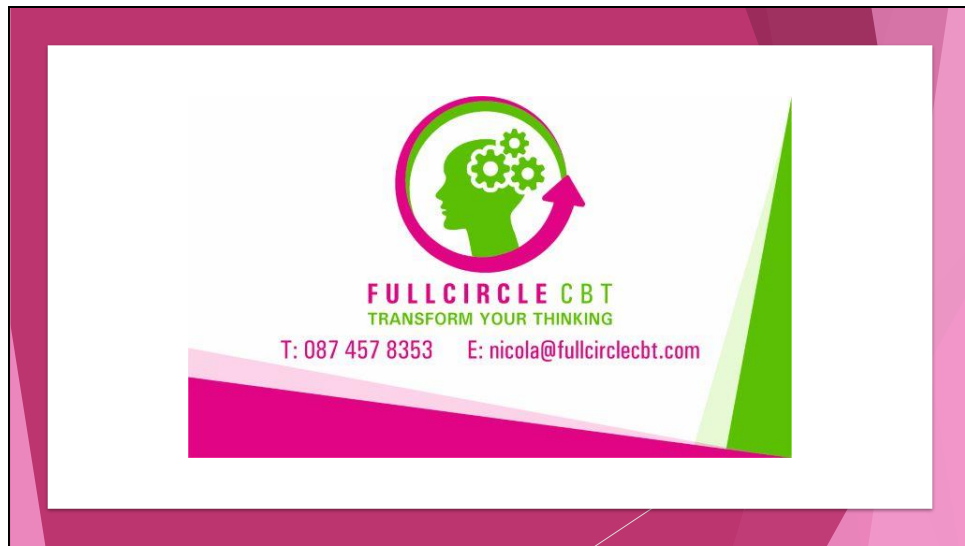


Slide 1



Slide 2





Full Circle CBT

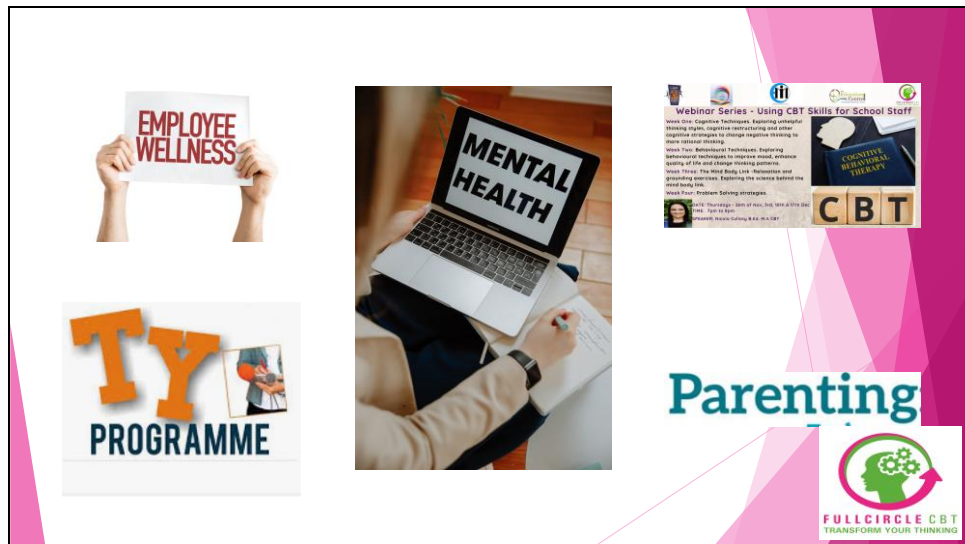
Nicola Culloty is a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist. Nicola provides cognitive behavioural therapy to children, teenagers and adults. She also provides support to schools, agencies and industries in the area of mental health and the promotion of wellbeing practices within the workplace.



Webinar Suite

- ✓ An Introduction to CBT (90 minute)
- ✓ Using CBT Skills for Well-Living (4 hours)
- ✓ CBT Skills for Children (2 hours)
- ✓ Finding a Balance (90 minute)
- ✓ Parenting Support Webinars (1 hour each)
- ✓ Cognitive Flexibility (1 hour)
- ✓ Brain Based Learning (1 hour)
- ✓ Can be delivered as part of Croke Park hours.






- ▶ It really is ok to ask for help.
- ▶ Supports are there.
- ▶ Speak to a friend, family member, your G.P.
- ▶ This webinar is not a substitute for therapy and participants are advised to seek support if feeling overwhelmed.



Overview
Symptoms of Exam Stress
Using CBT to help with Exam Stress
Routine
The Internal Workings
Unhelpful Thought Patterns
Listening and Problem Solving
Managing Expectations
Motivation
Practical Help



Symptoms of Exam Stress



“

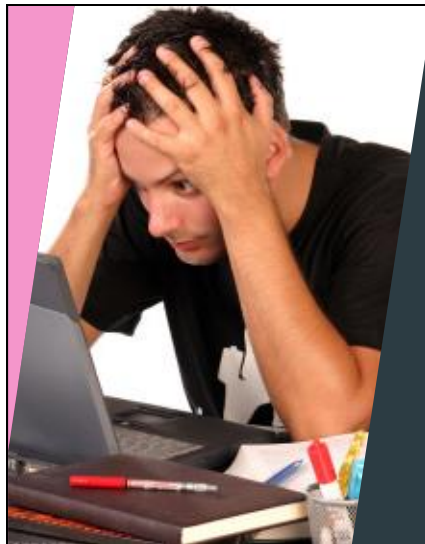
Perceived pressure exceeds
one's ability to cope'

”




(Palmer, Cooper and Thomas, 2003).





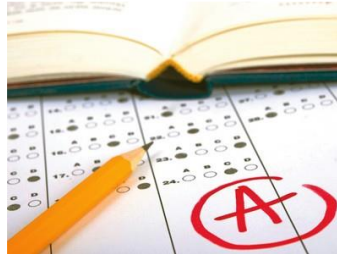
Exam Stress Symptoms

- ▶ Feelings of not being able to cope with revision
- ▶ Feeling pressure
- ▶ Fear of failing/not getting the grades needed
- ▶ Negative self-talk
- ▶ Loss of perspective
- ▶ Fear of letting people down
- ▶ Physical symptoms:
 - ▶ Inability to sleep
 - ▶ Headaches
 - ▶ Loss of appetite



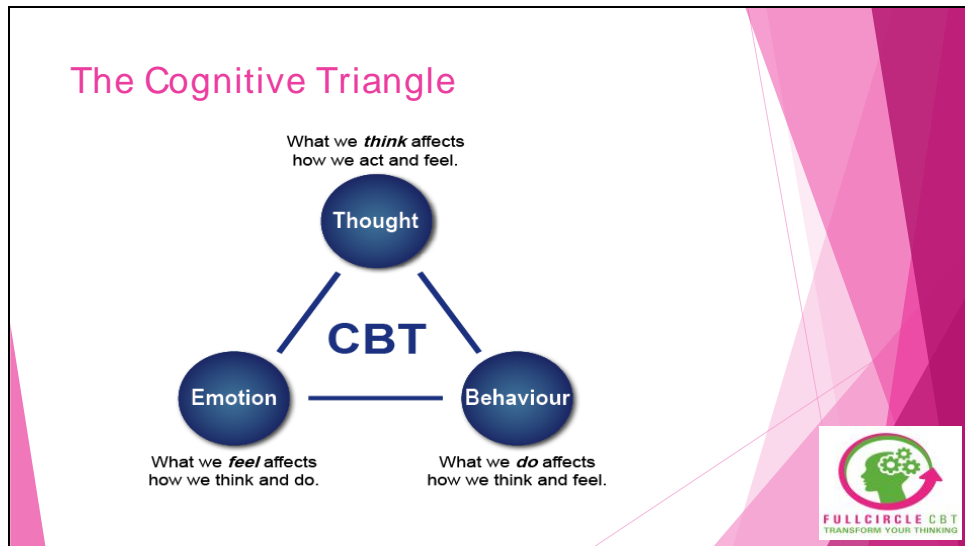
FULLCIRCLE CBT
TRANSFORM YOUR THINKING

- ▶ Research in Canadian University.
- ▶ High stress:
- ▶ 40%
- ▶ No stress
- ▶ 0%



Using CBT to help with Exam Stress





CBT for Stress Management

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

- ▶ provides a new perspective on a situation
- ▶ enables someone to regain control
- ▶ reduces the intense physiological and emotional symptoms
- ▶ helps someone to adopt effective strategies that help deal with a stressful situation.



Normalisation

- ▶ Normalisation is a central process within CBT.
- ▶ If we understand the cognition we can make sense of the emotion and the behaviour.
- ▶ Feeling anxious before an exam is normal.
- ▶ Help them to normalise what they go through before, during and after the exam.



- ▶ I am anxious.
- ▶ 'The emotion is the data source,' Susan David.
- ▶ 'I am feeling anxious'.
- ▶ 'I notice that I am feeling anxious'.
- ▶ 'This creates critical space between you and the emotion,' Susan David.



Routine

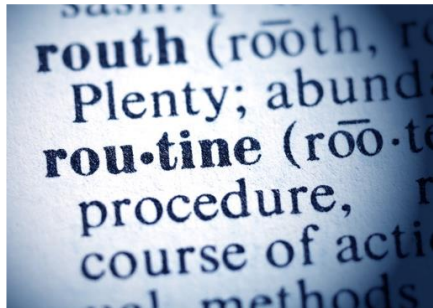




A clock face is shown, divided into five segments. The segments are labeled: 'WORK' (top, red), 'LUNCH' (top-right, yellow), 'MORE WORK' (right, red), 'STUDY' (bottom, orange), and 'LIFE' (bottom-left, yellow). The clock hands are black. The clock is set against a background of overlapping pink and purple geometric shapes.

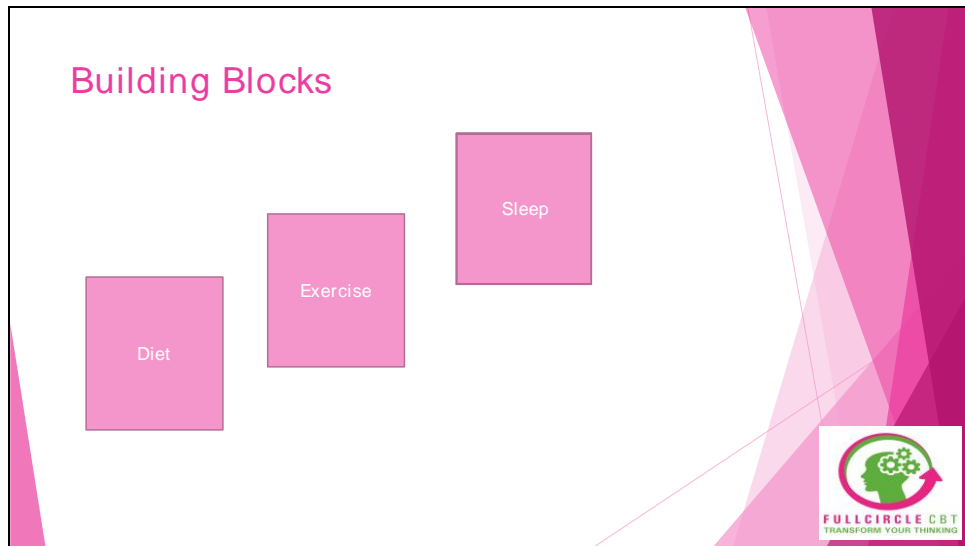
- ▶ Help your teenager to learn how to manage their stress.
- ▶ This may involve helping them to manage their workload.
- ▶ It may also involve developing and maintaining a healthy work-life balance.


Routine



- ▶ Our bodies and minds love routine.
- ▶ It allows us to gain a level of control.
- ▶ Keep routines to the same time each day.
- ▶ Especially morning and night!








Diet

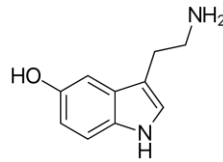
- ▶ Don't skip meals.
- ▶ Snack healthy.
- ▶ Eat fresh.
- ▶ Stay hydrated.



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The Brain and the Gut

- ▶ 95% of serotonin is produced in the gut.
- ▶ Serotonin is a neurotransmitter (chemical messenger). It plays a role in emotions and happiness.
- ▶ Research has shown that people who have healthy diverse gut microbes are less likely to suffer from anxiety and depression. (Newport Academy).



Physical Activity

- ▶ Relieves muscle tension.
- ▶ Deepens breathing.
- ▶ Releases endorphins.
- ▶ Increases blood flow to the brain.
- ▶ Oxygenates the brain.



Sleep

- ▶ Best brain 'food' is sleep.
- ▶ 17-19 hours without sleep leads to poorer accuracy and slower reaction times on cognitive tasks.



CBT Techniques to enhance sleep

- ▶ Sleep Restriction Therapy
 - ▶ Reduction of time spent in bed awake by eliminating naps and staying up past bedtime.
- ▶ Stimulus Control Therapy
 - ▶ Identifying and changing sleep habits to prevent you from sleeping well.
 - ▶ Maintaining consistent sleep-wake times.
- ▶ Sleep Environment and Sleep Hygiene
 - ▶ Dark, cool, quiet and comfortable environment.
 - ▶ Unwinding at night.
 - ▶ Daytime routine.
- ▶ Relaxation Training
 - ▶ Breathing exercises.
 - ▶ PMR



Other Tips

- ▶ Cover clock.
- ▶ Don't check phone if you wake.
- ▶ Set alarm so no need to check phone.
- ▶ Read, paint, focus on relaxing not sleeping.
- ▶ Don't compensate for sleep loss.



The Internal Workings




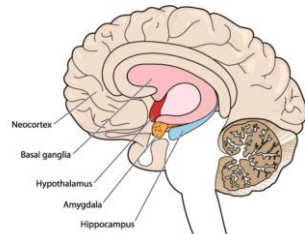


- ▶ Stress starts with your hormones.
- ▶ Fight or flight response.
- ▶ Good thing when needed.
- ▶ But needs management.



- ▶ High stress levels can affect cognition, memory and ability to complete a task.
- ▶ Chronic high stress levels can impair ability to form new memories.
- ▶ Mild stress though has been shown to boost cognitive function.

An illustration of a person with dark hair and a red shirt sitting at a desk, covering their face with their hands in a gesture of stress or frustration. A laptop is open in front of them. The background is a light blue wall with various floating icons: a puzzle piece, a lightbulb, a checkmark, a scribble, a heart, a speech bubble, a calendar page showing '3', a thumbs up, a camera, a dollar sign, and a yellow tag with an '@' symbol. The right side of the image transitions into a pink and purple geometric pattern.




- ▶ Hypothalamus: bridge between emotions and physical sensations. Linked with endocrine system. Hormones.
- ▶ Hippocampus: memory. Learning and retrieval of facts.
- ▶ Prefrontal Cortex: working memory. Impulse control. Decision making. Rational.





Why does my mind goes blank?



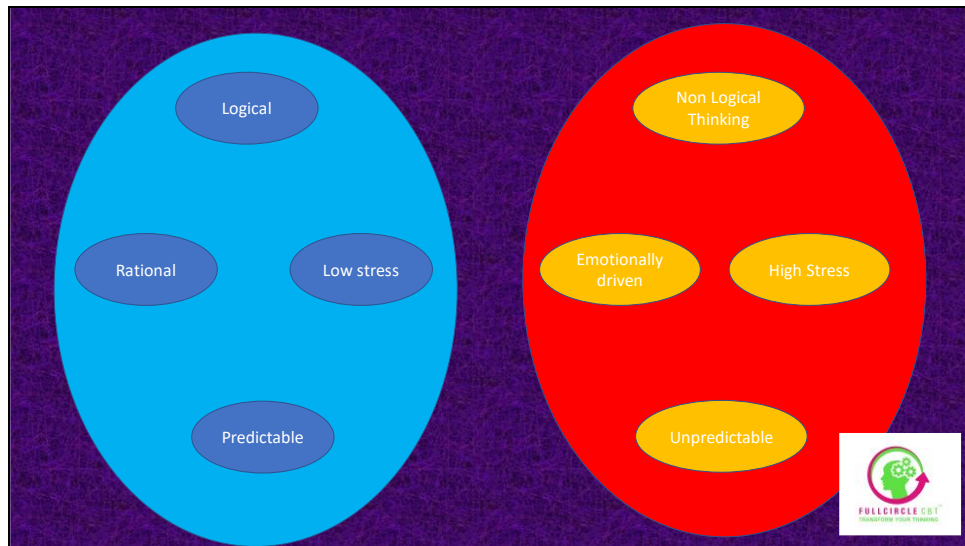
Cold Cognition



Hot Cognition



Slide 33



What helps?

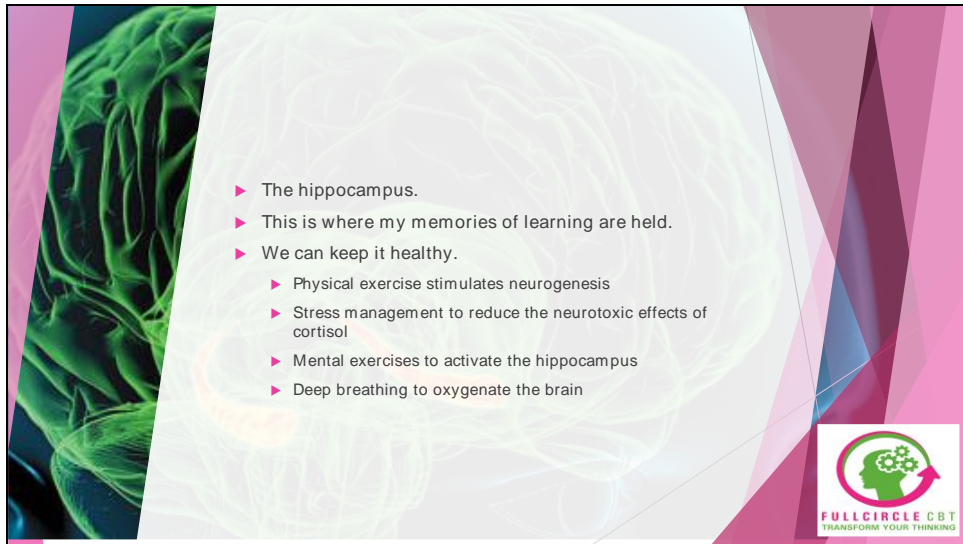
- ▶ Reframe thoughts.
- ▶ Relaxation techniques.
- ▶ All to abate the perceived stress response.






- ▶ Our brains work best when they are given time to do other things.
- ▶ Rest and re-charge.
- ▶ Taking breaks actually makes the time spent studying more effective.



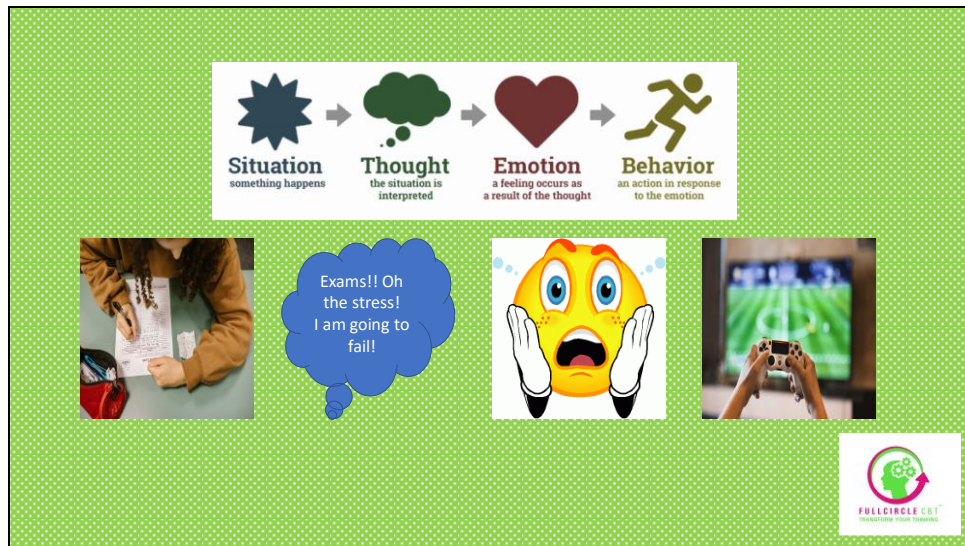


- ▶ The hippocampus.
- ▶ This is where my memories of learning are held.
- ▶ We can keep it healthy.
 - ▶ Physical exercise stimulates neurogenesis
 - ▶ Stress management to reduce the neurotoxic effects of cortisol
 - ▶ Mental exercises to activate the hippocampus
 - ▶ Deep breathing to oxygenate the brain



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Unhelpful Thought Patterns



- Some of the connections we use like thoughts, feelings and behaviours are strong. They can be positive or negative.



I am going to fail this exam. I should have studied more.

I am going to fail this exam. I should have studied more.

I am going to fail this exam. I should have studied more.

I am going to fail this exam. I should have studied more.



Challenging Negative Thinking

The 3 C's of Cognitive Therapy


- atch
Identify the thought that came
before the emotion
- heck
Reflect on how accurate and useful
the thought is
- hange
Change the thought to a more
accurate or helpful one as needed



Slide 41

Situation	Thoughts	Alternative Thoughts
	I don't have enough time.	I will make the best use of the time I have. Maybe I could make a study plan.
	This is just impossible.	What would help make it more possible?

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Unhelpful and unrealistic thought	More realistic and balanced thought
I always screw things up. I'm such a loser. What's wrong with me?	Everyone makes mistakes, including me – I'm only human. All I can do now is try my best to fix the situation and learn from this experience.
I can't do it, I feel way too anxious. Why can't I control my anxiety?	It's OK and normal to feel anxious. It's not dangerous, and it doesn't have to stop me. I can feel anxious and STILL go to the party.



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Catastrophising

What if I fail this exam?

What if I fail all exams?

What if I fail all my subjects?

And that will be the end of my future!

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Reality Check

- ▶ What is the likelihood of failing?
- ▶ Has anyone ever failed a subject and ended up failing all their exams?
- ▶ Has anyone ever not completed their studies and went on to be successful?



Listening and Problem Solving



Active Listening

Hearing

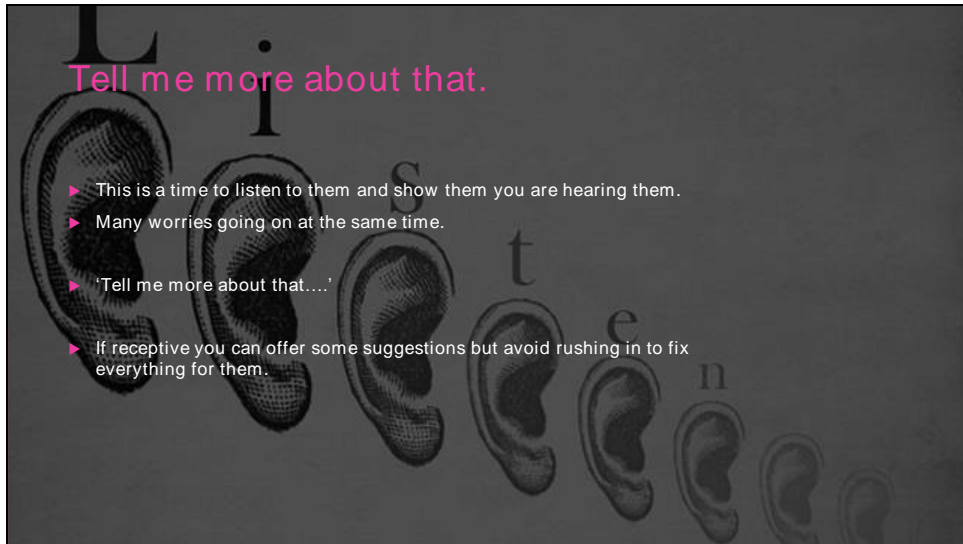
- Accidental
- Involuntary
- Effortless

Listening

- Focused
- Voluntary
- Intentional

- ▶ Complements assertive verbal communication
- ▶ Prevents the relational style from becoming aggressive
- ▶ Feedback: head nodding, minimal verbalisations
- ▶ Summarising and reflecting back without judgement: 'so you what you are saying is....'





Tell me more about that.

- ▶ This is a time to listen to them and show them you are hearing them.
- ▶ Many worries going on at the same time.
- ▶ 'Tell me more about that....'
- ▶ If receptive you can offer some suggestions but avoid rushing in to fix everything for them.

