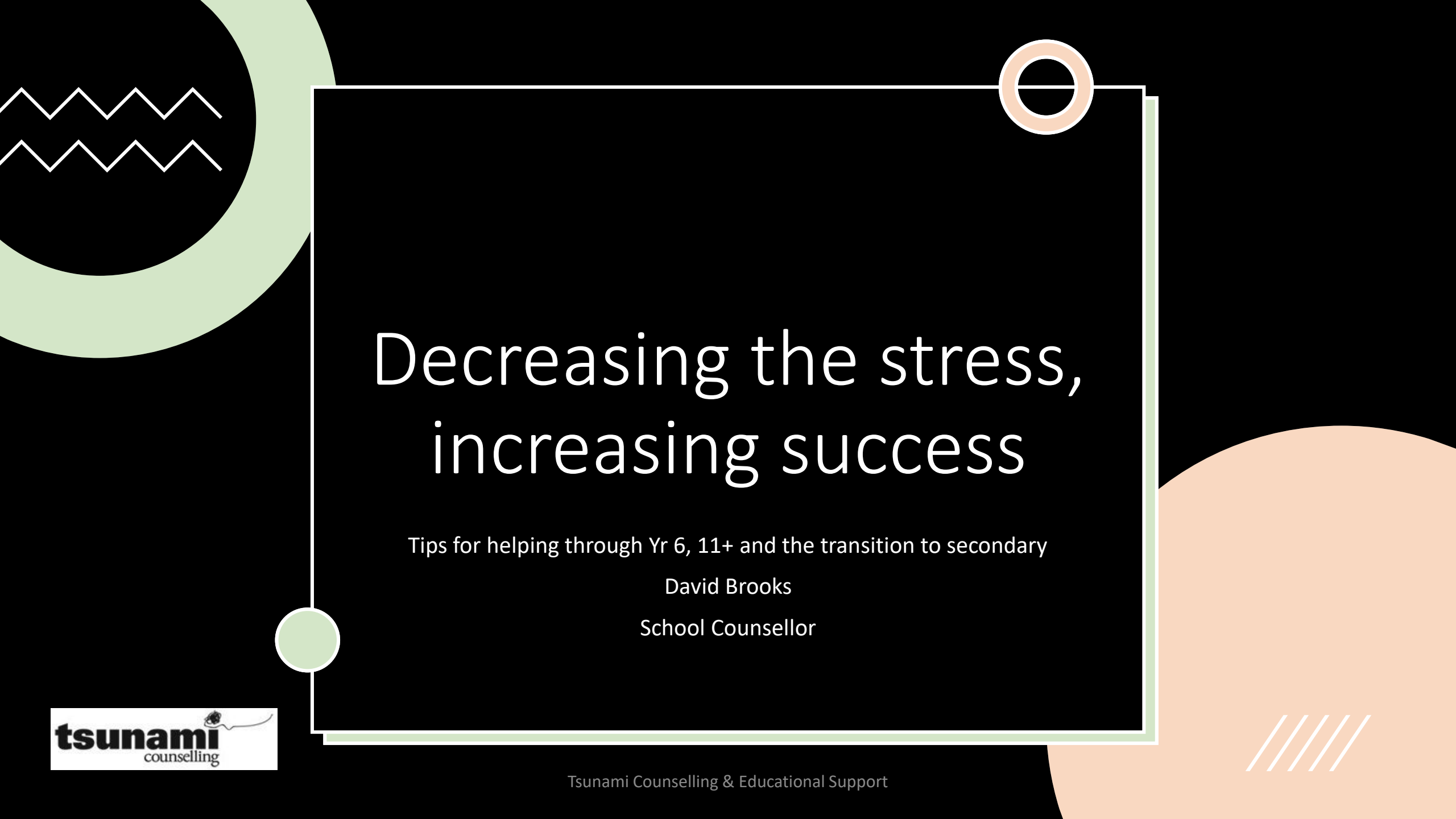




Decreasing the stress, increasing success

Tips for helping through Yr 6, 11+ and the transition to secondary

David Brooks

School Counsellor



What's anxiety/ stress?



An emotion



Causes a physical response –
often unpleasant



Can have negative or cyclical
thinking that is challenging to
control or change.



Our role



To keep safe



To meet basic needs



To teach



To challenge

Between



Protect and shield



Allow to grow and develop at
own pace



Often physically and
emotionally supported



Beside



Coach



Experience things together



Challenge but collaboratively



They feel they are supported



Behind



Cheer



Support



Celebrate



Pick up the pieces at times



They know they are supported



11+ process
= beside and
behind

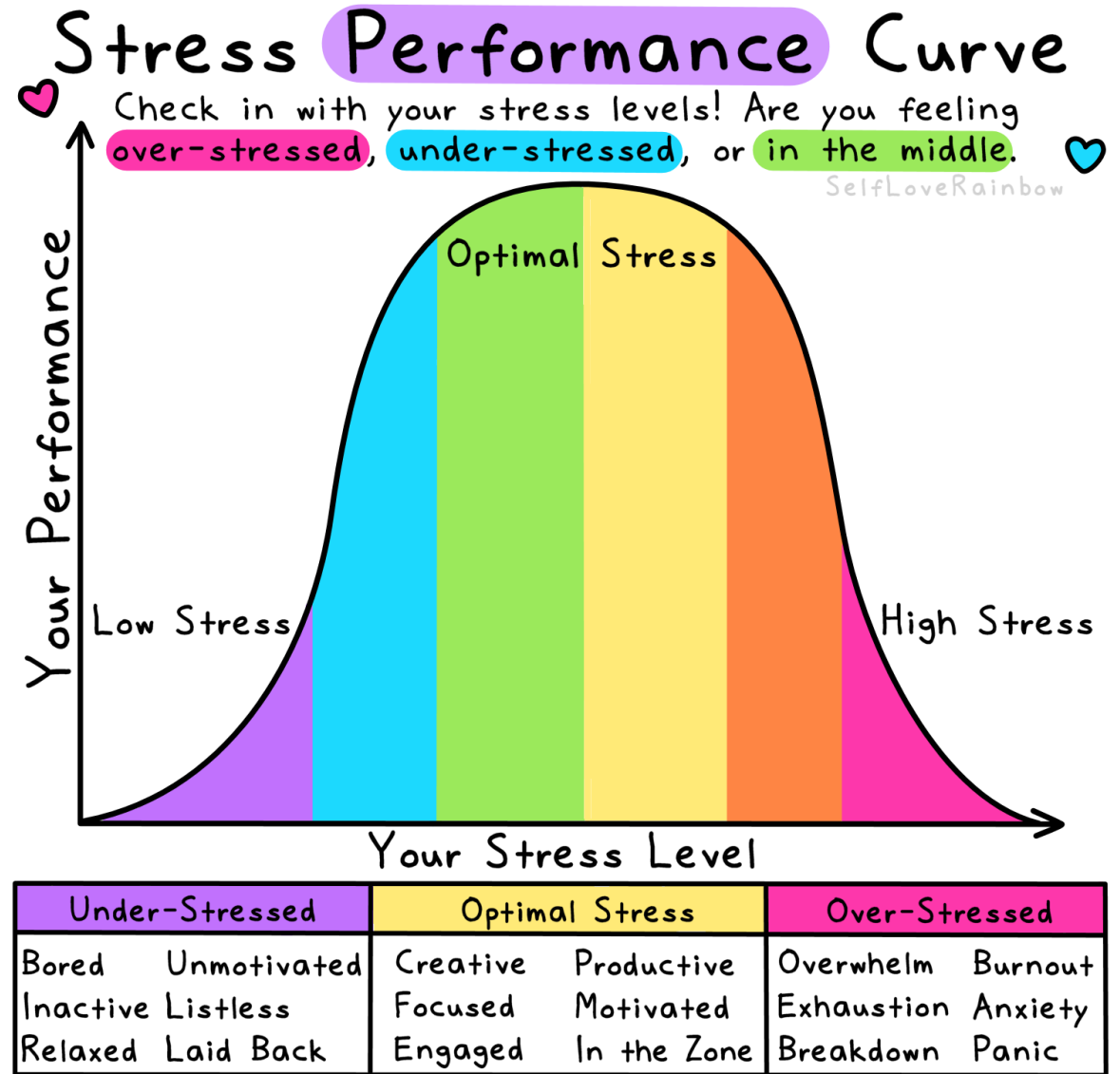


Meet their spoken
and unspoken needs

Consider love
languages

- Touch
- Quality time
- Acts of Service
- Words of affirmation
- Gifts

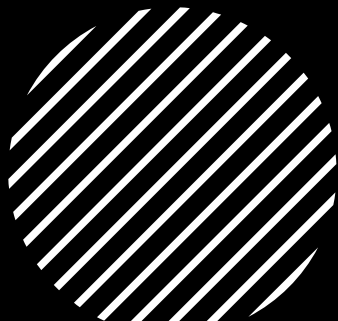
Stress and performance





Empowering your child

- Remind them that they have been preparing for 7 years, not just a few months.
- Remind them that others have 'survived' this.
- Remind them that this is an opportunity to 'show off' to the senior schools. The schools should have to meet the goals of the child/family as much as you have to meet theirs.





Do we share our
stress?

- How much focus/conversation is centered on this?
- Are the children overwhelmed with choice?
- Is this a time to stand 'between' them and the world?
- Do they feel pressure to perform for themselves or also for us?





Anxiety – a feeling... with a personality



How we work 1 to 1

Work from the idea that feelings are trying to communicate something to us.

Listen to the feeling – What is it trying to say?

Control/change a feeling through our behaviour (body) or thinking (CBT)

Engage – Distract - Divert

Very simply... if you want to feel the opposite, do and think the opposite

Act calm to feel calm

- How would you help a friend who felt like this?

Take 5 Breathing

Hold out your hand like a star

Pretend your pointer finger (other hand) is a special pencil

Trace up and down your fingers

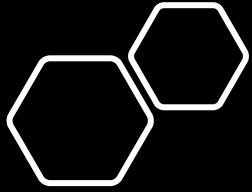
Breathe in as you go up

Breathe out as you go down

Go slowly and notice how it feels



Handprints for Peace - a project of the National Council on Education & the Arts



Think calm to feel
calm

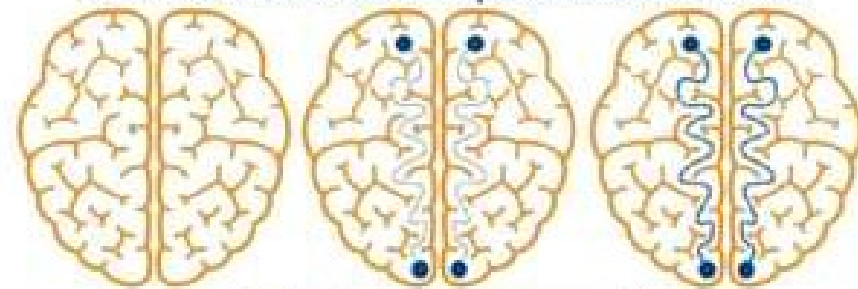
- Encourage what we want
- Interrupt to **change**

Neuroplasticity

Every thought, feeling or action that we engage in triggers thousands of neurons that join together to form neural networks.



Patterns of behavior that are repeated become automatic



Patterns of behavior that are interrupted dissipate



The more we engage in a particular thought, feeling or action, the more we strengthen the associated neural networks, the quicker signals can be processed, until eventually signals can be processed almost instantly.

@brainchat

What if it works?

Count backwards from 5

Interrupt the thought

Replace it with something else

WHAT IF IT WORKS?!

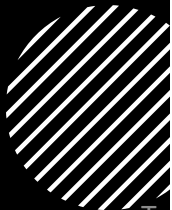


Help them be
BRAVE





BRAVE



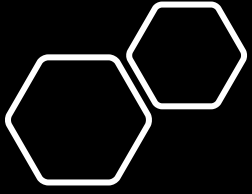
B ody awareness – breathe

R ealistic thinking – challenge,
humour, previous experiences

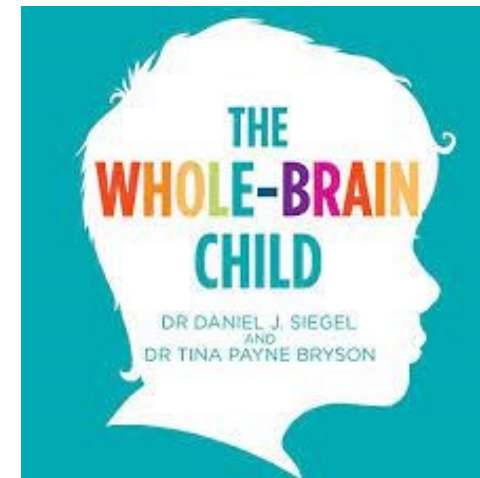
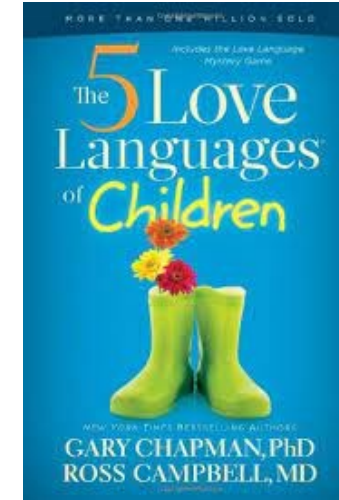
A ccept – Don't deny it or avoid it.

V alidate – I'm ok for feeling this.
Understandable feeling for situation

E nd – Don't focus on the problem
again. Let it end



Resources



Act calm, think calm = feel calm

-
- Think Calm → Feel Calm
 -
 - Remind them that it's normal to feel stressed or anxious about a new situation or change... It even shows they care about it!
 - Remind them they have been preparing for 6-7 years of schooling, not just a few months.
 - Get them to check "Am I safe?" – is this thing, exam, performance, interview or meeting new people going to cause me harm? Have others been eaten alive by the senior school process or have they survived?
 - Is this personal? Am I the only one going through this or do most young people? Is it even possible others feel like this?
 - Will this experience and feeling last forever or will it be over soon?
 - Thank the feeling – Worry and Anxiety are just trying to keep you safe
 - Let the feeling go
 - Focus on a place or memory that makes them feel safe and relaxed. If needed, close your eyes and use the senses – what can you see, feel, hear and smell in this safe place?
 -
 - Act Calm → Feel Calm
 -
 - Acknowledge what's happening in the body – rising heart rate, breathing etc.
 - Don't be scared of physical response, instead praise and be in awe of how amazingly the body can prepare itself for fight or flight.
 - Remind them that adrenaline only last a few minutes when you stop the cycle.
 - Do the opposite of what your body is trying to do. Stand/sit still. Don't jiggle/fidget. Make fists or grip knees/table if needed. Push feet into the floor to feel stable.
 - BREATHE!!! Focus on slow, even out breaths. Use the TAKE 5 technique to assist.
 - Repeat if needed. Remind the goal is not zero anxiety (otherwise they will say it's not working...) goal is a little bit less each cycle.