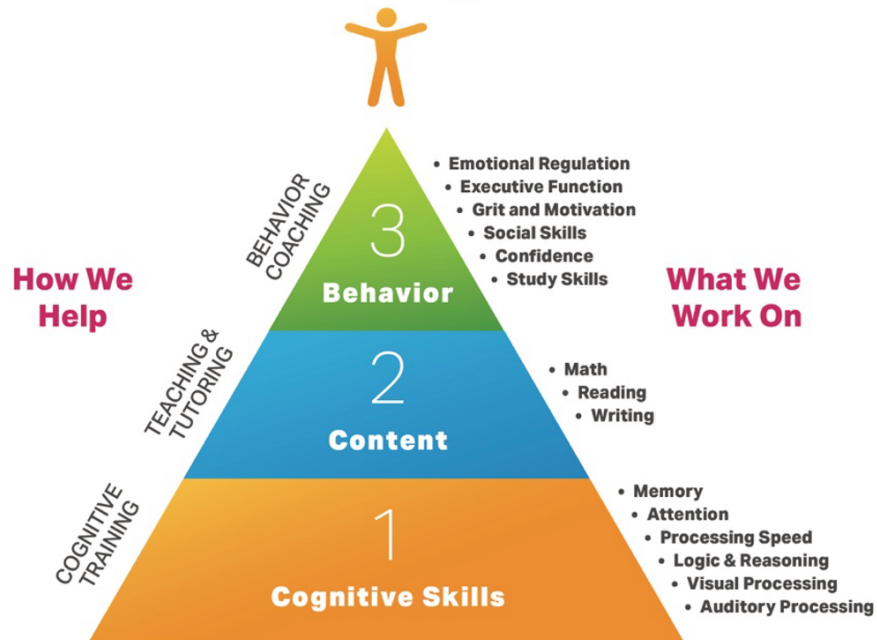


Calm Minds, Bright Futures: Reducing Anxiety to Improve Academic Performance

Potential Pyramid™



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NOTES:



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How does anxiety present?

- **Inattention and restlessness**
 - Can look like ADHD
 - Fidgets or zones out
- **School refusal**
 - Not wanting to participate
 - Unwillingness to work independently
- **Disruptive behavior**
 - Acting out
 - Not following instructions
- **Social Issues**
 - Avoids socializing with peers
 - Struggles to connect with peers
- **Trouble answering questions**
 - Can't demonstrate their knowledge verbally
- Freezes on tests
- **Emotional Dysregulation**
 - Big emotions
 - Difficulty self-soothing when stressed
- **Excessive worry**
 - Sleeplessness
 - Asking a lot of detailed questions regarding upcoming activities or events
- **Physical Symptoms**
 - Nausea, upset stomach, headaches, vomiting, picking at or biting fingernails

What cognitive deficits can cause or contribute to anxiety?

- **Processing Speed:** Overwhelm in real-time situations, struggles with time pressure, fear of slow response in social or classroom settings, frustration, self-doubt, mental fatigue, avoidance and procrastination behaviors, cumulative stress
- **Logic & Reasoning:** Difficulty in problem-solving, uncertainty & indecisiveness, social challenges, poor judgement, inability to connect consequence to behavior
- **Memory:** Fear of forgetting, social anxiety, cognitive overload, frustration, cumulative stress
- Cognitive deficits also contribute to **lowered self-esteem, lack of confidence, and low motivation** for learning.
- Cognitive deficits cause **learning disabilities** which cause **academic struggles** which lead to **anxiety**.

Action Plan for Treating the Root Causes of Anxiety:

1. Identify Symptoms

2. Assess for root causes

3. Treat!

- Utilize coping strategies to build emotional regulation by activating the parasympathetic nervous system
- Avoid Avoidance!
- Treat cognitive and academic deficits to remove the source
- Build emotional regulation, growth mindset, social thinking, and executive functioning skills for greater resiliency



Coping Strategies:

- Accommodate during school where needed
- Plan ahead and set clear expectations
- Utilize mindfulness techniques
- Monitor TV and internet usage
- Build a Calm Kit

Ideas for your Calm Kit:



Avoid avoidance!



Treatments:



Biomedical:

- Reduce stimulants: sugar, food additives, and caffeine
- Increase healthy fats: Grass-fed butter, olive oil, wild salmon, coconut oil, chia seeds, flax seeds)
- Consume foods that are rich in: Magnesium (nuts, legumes), Inositol (oats, cantaloupe), B-Vitamins (leafy greens, eggs), and Vitamin C (peppers, strawberries)
- Consider testing for food sensitivities & nutrient deficiencies for targeted supplements or dietary plans



Cognitive Training:

- Mental exercises that target and resolve cognitive deficits which are the root cause of learning difficulties and anxiety.
- One-to-one, individualized training to meet your child's needs at The Nectar Group.



Resilience Coaching:

- Study Skills and Executive Function Coaching (Nectar's SkillsBuild Program)
- Behavior Coaching: Emotional Regulation, Growth Mindset / Grit, & Social Thinking (Nectar's Wired for Resilience Program)

Resources:

1. Mindful Minutes handout on Nectar's website: www.thenectargroup.com/presentations/
2. The DARE app for kids: <https://www.dareresponse.com/dareapp/>
3. Freeing Your Child from Anxiety by Dr. Tamar E. Chansky, PhD
4. Brain Based Therapy for Anxiety: A Workbook for Clinicians and Clients by Dr. John B. Arden, PhD
5. 100 Days to Brave for Kids: Devotions for Overcoming Fear and Finding Your Courage by Annie F. Downs (Christian perspective)
6. The Client's Guide to Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy by Aldo R. Pucci, MA

How The Nectar Group Can Help:

- Psychoeducational assessments to diagnose
- Cognitive assessments
- Cognitive Skills Training
- Academic Tutoring & Nectar Academy
- Executive Function and Study Skills Coaching
- Behavior Coaching for Emotional Regulation, Growth Mindset & Grit, and Social Thinking
- Biomedical Testing
- Free consultations to determine best next steps

