

## Worry and the present moment

Children and young people can experience worry that makes day to day life difficult. Worry often consists of:

1. Thoughts into the future (e.g. what if that teacher asks me a question in class and I look stupid)
2. Unpleasant and uncomfortable bodily sensations (e.g. butterflies or pains in stomach, racing heart)

There are simple strategies that practitioners can teach children and young people to help them with their worries. Previous bulletins have looked at how to deal with troubling thoughts, see

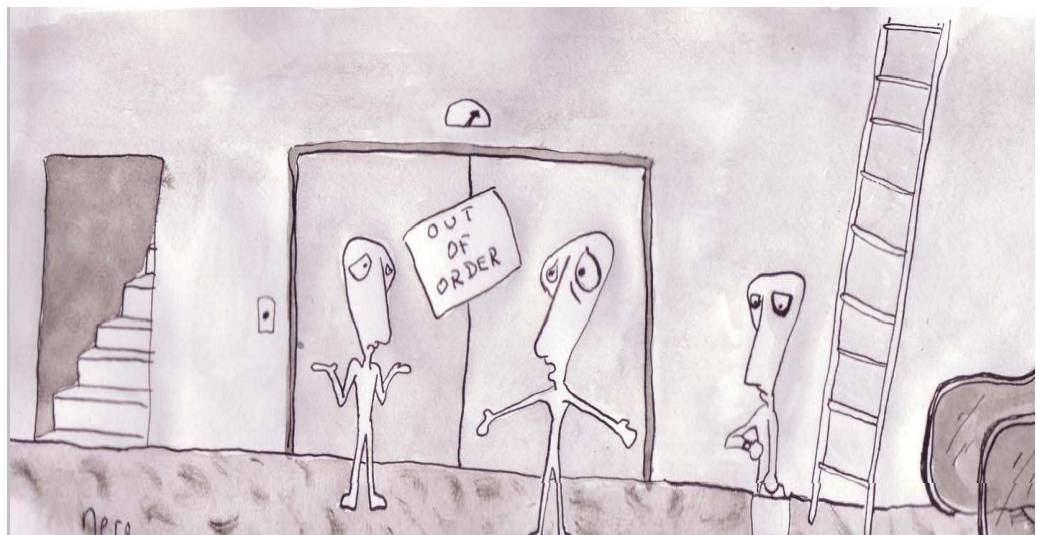
<http://www.headstart-gp.com.au/bulletins.htm>

Helping children return to the present moment can make it easier for them to deal with feelings and sensations. The simplest way to teach someone to return their attention to the here and now is through **focusing on immediate senses.**

An easy exercise might consist of four simple steps:

1. Noticing yourself take three breaths
2. Observing three things you can **see** in the present moment (e.g. leaves, footpath, sky)
3. Observing three sensations you can **feel** in the present moment (e.g. wind on arm, butterflies in stomach, feet on footpath)
4. Observing three sounds you can **hear** in the present moment (e.g. wind, car, feet on footpath)

An older adolescent may be able to do the same exercise but noticing five things rather than three.



***When we are not in the moment, we miss opportunities to discover what works***

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