

TAME YOUR WORRY BRAIN

Tame your worry brain Week 2

Breaking the code - understanding the worry brain signs

Dear Adults,

Have you got a child who worries; a child who has tummy aches or headaches when they are due to do something that they find difficult; a child who avoids certain situations because they worry too much about them; or a child who occasionally feels overwhelmed and needs help to cope?

This tool was created to help your child understand what happens to them when they feel worried. It is also meant to empower children with tools to help themselves when they worry and feel overwhelmed. Most primary aged children struggle to do this by themselves – they need you to help them.

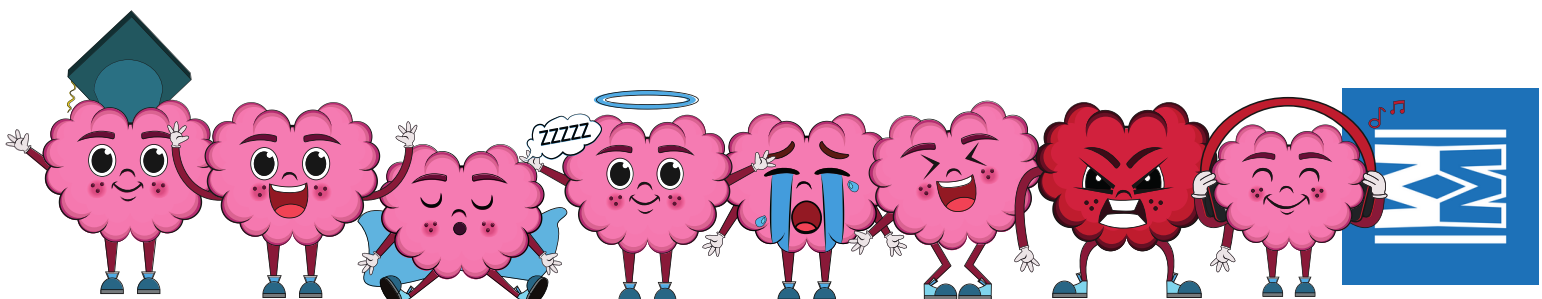
To do that please:

Read each instalment of the programme to them or encourage them to:

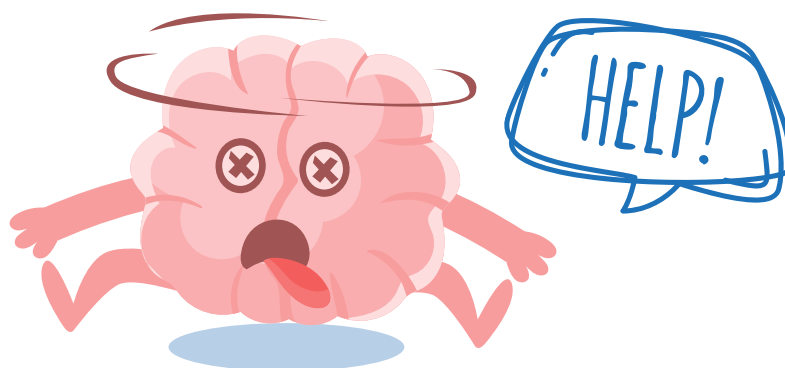
- Read it to you (there will be 6 instalments so brace yourselves)
- Help them with activities;
- Regularly draw attention to new things learned; and,
- Share your thoughts/drawings/progress/feedback with us via email marijana@move-more.org or via our social media [@movemorecio](https://www.facebook.com/movemorecio)

Your children will need different degrees of help with this – adjust language and level of activities to suit your child. At the end of the process, all families that take part in the programme and share their activities with us will get another free tool to use with their children. And on top of that, one family will get a chance to speak with Marijana Filipovic-Carter, our Family Engagement and Support Lead, and discuss any issues specific to their child.

Last week you became familiar with your worry brain. Thank you for sharing your worry brain names and other activities – you are so creative! We loved receiving your emails. Keep them coming!



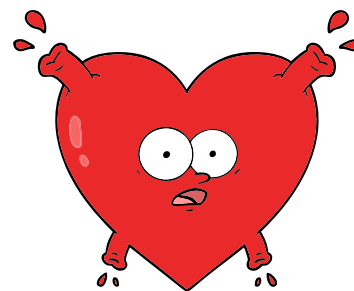
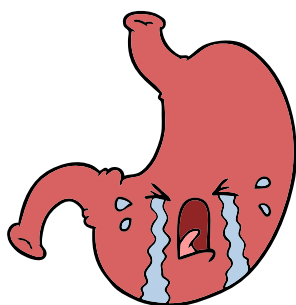
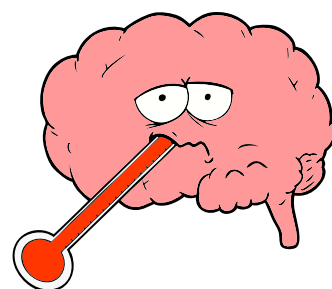
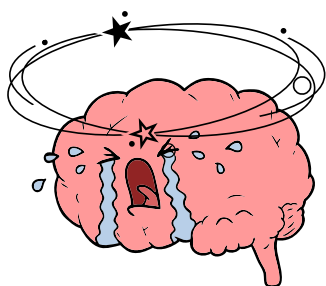
Breaking the code - understanding the “worry brain” signs



How do we know when our worry brain is speaking to us? Read on to find out!

Body-brain connection: your brain is connected with your body, and it tells it to prepare to protect you when amygdala senses danger. This happens even before we become aware that we might need to fight, flight or freeze. Usually, we notice that something is not right too late, when worry has already taken over us. But the trick is to catch worrying early enough. The first step is to learn the signs of the worry brain.

Some worry brain signs: breathing faster, feeling too hot or too cold, your heart thumping hard, feeling like you just have to move, feeling dizzy, tummy ache, feeling like you are going to faint, headache, butterflies in your tummy, feeling uncomfortable but not knowing why...



No two worry brains are the same!

To help you learn your worry brain's signs, complete activities on the next page and let us know how you get on.



Activity Sheet

Stop and think what it feels like when your worry brain starts to whisper into your ears. Use the worry brain signs decoder to help you with this.

Simply, colour-in against any sign that you notice when you feel worried. Share this with your adults and ask them to help you become more aware of your worry brain whenever you or they notice your body starting to change.

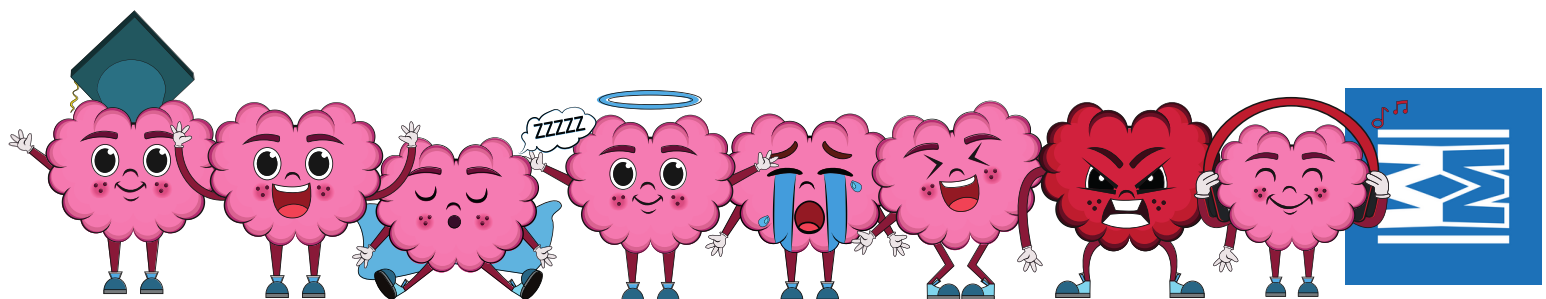
Worry brain sign decoder example– could it be my worry brain talking to me?

- ☒ ☐ **Are you breathing faster than normal?**
- ☒ ☐ **Are you feeling too hot or too cold?**
- ☒ ☐ **Is your heart thumping hard?**
- ☒ ☐ **Do you feel dizzy?**
- ☒ ☐ **Do you have a tummy ache?**
- ☒ ☐ **Do you feel like you just have to move your body?**
- ☒ ☐ **Do you have a headache?**
- ☒ ☐ **Do you feel butterflies in your tummy?**
- ☒ ☐ **Do you feel uncomfortable but don't know why?**

You don't have to feel all these things to know that your worry brain is talking to you! Feeling just one but very strongly could also be the sign of your worry brain.

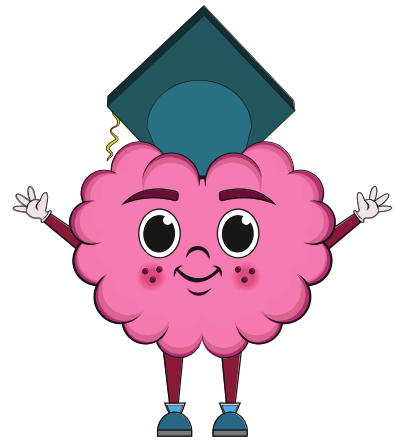
Make your own worry brain sign decoder – you can do it on a computer or create a poster. You can even add your own worry brain signs, emojis or create a colour scale.

Share your work with us by emailing it to marijana@move-more.org or share it on social media by tagging [@movemoreCIO](https://www.instagram.com/movemoreCIO)



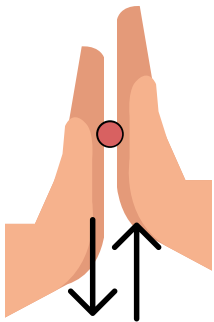
Great job!

Now you know the signs to look out for when your worry brain is taking over. The next step is to persuade your worry brain that you are ok! To do this, you need to find out what it is that you like doing when you feel worried.



What makes you feel calm again?

Deep breathing helps some people, while some need to move their bodies to reset. Here are some suggestions for you to try:



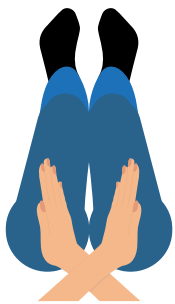
Pen Rolling

Take a pen or pencil, put it between the open palms of your hands and slowly roll it up and down your hands. Repeat until your worry brain is not as loud anymore.



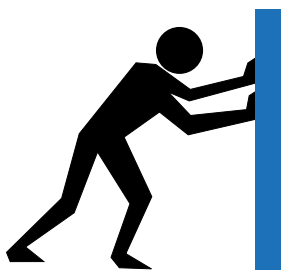
Finger Breathing

Stretch your hand out so that you can see the palm of your hand. Get a finger from your other hand ready to trace fingers on your stretch hand up and down. Slide up each finger slowly and then slide down. Repeat for all fingers. If it helps, you can breathe in while you slide up and breath out while you slide down. Do it for as long as needed to quiet your worry brain.



Cross crawls

Touch one hand to opposite knee and repeat on the other side. Remember to breathe and do for as long as needed.



Wall pushes

Lean against the wall with your hands and try your best to try and move the wall. Tense every muscle in your body and then relax. Repeat as many times as you like.

Which one of these do you like the best? Or do you have a different way to calm your worry brain? [Share with us by emailing it to marijana@move-more.org](mailto:marijana@move-more.org) or share it on social media by tagging @movemoreCIO



before you go!

Your worry brain doesn't always tell the truth! Shocking but true. Wait for next week's activities to learn about how to know when your worry brain is whispering lies into your ears and what you can do about it!

