

Your 2022 ultimate guide to

Overcome Anxiety

Thrashing anxiety
without medication
even if you think
you're not mentally strong



TRACY KIMBERG

The Couples and Teenage
Relationship Expert



Your Journey to Overcome Anxious thinking Starts Here...

Welcome,

I'm so glad that we have found each other.

My name is Tracy Kimberg I am a Teenage Therapist and Relationship coach.

I support anxious, frustrated and overwhelmed young people and adults find clarity, respect, trust, compassion, contentment and happiness.

I absolutely love what I do, it's my life and has driven me in many ways to increased my skills in my profession.

Overcoming anxiety can be a long journey and I want to congratulate you for taking the first step to change your life with this Guide.

Take care,

Tracy Kimberg





Anxiety can present its self in many forms, physical sensations, strong overwhelming emotions and difficult to manage thoughts.

This booklet is based on the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) which teaches us that if we can change our thoughts we can change how we feel and what we do.

So if your looking to manage anxious thoughts feel. better and create more happiness in your life then you are in the right place.

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future. Anxiety is a natural human response when we perceive that we are under threat. It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations.

Most people feel anxious at times. It's particularly common to experience some anxiety while coping with stressful events or changes, especially if they could have a big impact on your life.

When is anxiety a mental health problem?

Anxiety can become a mental health problem if it impacts on your ability to live your life as fully as you want to.

For example, it may be a problem for you if:

Your feelings of anxiety are very strong or last for a long time.

Your fears or worries are out of proportion to the situation.

Your worries feel very distressing or are hard to control.

You regularly experience symptoms of anxiety, which could include panic attacks.

You find it hard to go about your everyday life or do things you enjoy.

If your anxiety feels like it is spiraling out of control never be afraid to seek professional help.

Negative Thinking & Anxiety

Thinking is wonderful. Our ability to think means that we can plan, prepare, imagine and fantasise. But thinking can cause us problems too – we can worry, compare, and catastrophise.

Many people feel overwhelmed by their thoughts, and problems including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem all have a lot to do with the way we think.

Thinking can literally make us sick.

In his book *Why zebras don't get ulcers* the biologist Robert Sapolsky says:

A large body of evidence suggests that stress-related disease emerges, pre-dominantly, out of the fact that we so often activate a physiological system that has evolved for responding to acute physical emergencies, but we turn it on for months on end, worrying about mortgages, relationships, and promotions ect

This guide is designed to teach you some methods that cognitive behavioural therapists use to record and change the way you think.

By the end of this guide you will:

- Understand why thoughts can cause us problems.
- Know how to record your automatic thoughts.
- Have learned some helpful ways of challenging your thinking.

Thoughts Are Not Facts

One very important thing to remember when managing anxious thoughts is that **THOUGHTS ARE NOT FACTS**

Not all of the thinking that happens in our heads is slow, careful, deliberate, or accurate.

In his best-selling book *Thinking, Fast and Slow* Daniel Kahneman describes experiments that show the 'short cuts' our brains often prefer to take, when faced with a problem. We can choose to respond carefully by thinking of possible solutions and then examining the advantages and disadvantages of each, or we might just have a quick and automatic hunch about how to solve it.

It turns out that our brains are surprisingly lazy and bias often creeps into our thinking.

Key things that you need to know are:

- We all have quick and automatic thoughts that just 'pop' into our minds.
- These automatic thoughts are often based on assumptions.
- Automatic thoughts are often very believable, but they can be inaccurate.
- In summary: thoughts are not facts.



Identifying Your Thought Patterns

So if we know that

- 1) thoughts are not facts
- 2) Our thoughts are often inaccurate and tend to be catastrophic.
- 3) Those thoughts can make anxiety worse, even leading to physical health problems.

What should we do about it?

The first thing is to start to notice and track our thoughts.

WEEK OF:

Anxiety Log

INSTRUCTIONS: For 7 days, fill this Anxious thought Log whenever you feel medium to high anxiety.

| Day & Date | Anxiety Level | Situation | Thoughts I had |
|------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|
|------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|

WEEK OF: _____

Anxiety Log

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Identifying Your Anxious Thought Patterns

Once you have an idea of what you are thinking when you feel anxious you can start to look a little more critically at your thoughts.

There are 14 "THOUGHT TRAPS" that we commonly fall into when we start to feel anxious. When our thinking falls into the traps, it gets worse, which makes us feel worse. It all breaks down into a negative spiral.

Take a look at the thought traps below, look at your thought logs and see which thought traps you fell into.

Keep your thought logs for another week but add the thinking traps in also.

14 Thinking Traps

Guide

OBJECTIVE

Which of these 14 Thinking Traps are you prone to? Tick the boxes that apply to you 70% of the time.



1. CATASTROPHIZING

Assuming the worst possible outcome automatically. Making things seem more dire than they actually are.



2. 'ALL OR NOTHING' THINKING

Black-and-white thinking. Thinks in extremes. Eg: "If I don't get a job at a top law firm, I'm a complete failure. It's 'do or die'."



3. OVER-GENERALISING

Making sweeping statements based on one negative incident. Eg: "All bosses are out to take advantage of their employees - just like my current boss."



4. NEGATIVE FILTER

Merely focusing on the negative aspects of something and totally ignoring its positive qualities. Eg: "Everything about me is bad. I look bad, I have no confidence, I have no education and a low-paying job to boot."



5. JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

Making negative inferences and drawing conclusions without checking the facts. Eg: Assuming that your colleague is plagiarising your work without asking him or her directly or investigating the matter.



6. MIND-READING

Assuming that you know what other people are feeling or thinking with no facts to back up your assumptions.



7. EMOTIONAL REASONING

Using emotions to make judgments; "I feel so stupid making that mistake, so I must be a stupid person."

14 Thinking Traps

Guide



8. MUSTS / SHOULD

Being rigid on yourself by believing that you 'should' go to a specific university or that you 'must' get married by a certain age or you will be a failure of some sort. Having unrealistic or too-high standards.



10. BLAMING

Taking responsibility or taking the blame for negative events even when it is not your fault. Or blaming others when something is your fault.



12. CONTROL FALLACY

Believing that we are powerless or taking the 'victim' stance when something unwanted happens.



14. REWARD FALLACY

Expecting a reward after self-sacrificing and feeling resentment when there is no reward at the end of your 'sacrifices'.



9. LABELLING

Describing a person or something using a general label based on 1 characteristic. *Eg: Labeling a person (or yourself) as an 'idiot' because of 1 mistake.*



11. CHANGE FALLACY

The belief that other people or circumstances should change to make you happy.



13. FAIRNESS FALLACY

Unrealistically expecting everything in the world to be fair. And getting upset when things are not 'fair' in our eyes.

WEEK OF: 6 - 12 July 2021

Anxiety Log

INSTRUCTIONS: For 7 days, fill this Anxiety Log whenever you feel medium to high anxiety. You can refer to the 14 Thinking Traps guide to fill up the Thinking Trap column as best as you can. One example has been done for you.

| Day & Date | Anxiety Level | Situation | Anxious Thoughts | Thinking Trap |
|---------------------|---------------|---|--|-------------------|
| 7/7/20 , Tuesday | high | I did not hit my business sales target this week. | My business is going to fail. I would have to go back to a 9-5 job which I hate. My dream of running a profitable business from home is destroyed. | Catastrophizing - |

WEEK OF: -- to --

Anxiety Log

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| Day & Date | Anxiety Level | Situation | Anxious Thoughts | Thinking Trap |
|------------|---------------|-----------|------------------|---------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
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Anxiety Log

[illegible]

Thinking Traps

Now you have an idea about the types of thinking traps you are prone to you can start challenging your thoughts when you have them in real time.

next time you start to feel anxious and you notice your thoughts running away with you.

- 1) slow down and notice that it is happening.
- 2) Notice which thinking traps you are falling into.
- 3) Talk yourself through it.

eg- When I feel like this I often catastrophise. Yes this could happen, but I know it's unlikely and even if it did I would cope.

When this happens I often fall into "control fallacy". I know that I do not have control over this situation so I choose to let it go.

When speaks to me like this I often "mind read". I don't actually have any evidence to suggest they think this about me. I'll wait until I know the facts.

THE MORE YOU DO THIS THE EASIER IT GETS AND THE
QUICKER IT WILL BE

Thought To Court

Another great technique for managing anxious thoughts is called **THOUGHT CHALLENGING**

Use the form in this booklet to challenge your thoughts.

It goes like this:

1. Situation

Note down some information about the situation or context in which you noticed the change in your emotions. Some suggestions for helpful information to record in the situation column include: Make a note of the date & time

Record where you were. Note who you were with.

Summarise what was happening just before you noticed a change in how you were feeling.

2. Emotion or feeling

Briefly describe the emotions and body sensations that you were aware of. Rate the intensity of these on a 0-100% scale.

3. Automatic thought.

Identify the thought you want to work on and write it down. Only work on one thought at a time. If you had an image rather than a verbal thought ask yourself "what does that say about me?" and use that answer as your thought. If your original thought was in the form of a question (e.g. "Why am I so stupid?") then turn it into a statement (e.g. "I am so stupid").

Thought To Court

4. Rate your belief

Give the thought an initial belief rating. How strongly do you believe in the truthfulness of that thought right now? (0% = not at all, 100% = completely).

5. Record evidence for the thought

Next, make a list of all the reasons why that thought might be true. Some of these reasons might be better than other, but don't censor anything – just write them all down. Keep asking yourself "What is the evidence that makes me think this thought is true?"

6. Record evidence against the thought

Now make a list of all the reasons why this thought might not be 100% true all of the time. You might find it helpful to ask yourself: "If a friend thought this about themselves, what would I say to them?" "When was the last occasion that I had a thought like this that wasn't true?" "What facts or evidence make me suspect that this isn't completely true?"

"Have there ever been any times when this wasn't true?"

"If I looked back on this thought in 20 years what would I say to myself?"

Thought To Court

8. Alternative thought: Summarise what you have done
Say to yourself "Given all of the evidence, is there a better way of summing up this situation?" and write down your new thought

"Is there a more helpful way of thinking about myself or this situation?"

"Have I been judging myself harshly? Is there a fairer, more balanced way of summing this up?"

"Is there a way of thinking about this now that is more likely to help me achieve my goals?"

9. Re-rate your emotion and belief

When you read the new thought (step 8) rate how strongly you believe in the new thought and your old thought right now (0-100%). What emotions do you feel now? What do you notice?

Thought Challenging.

Situation

Emotion
Feeling

Thought

Evidence that
supports the
thought

Evidence that
does not
support the
thought

New more
balanced thought

How do you
feel now?

Summary

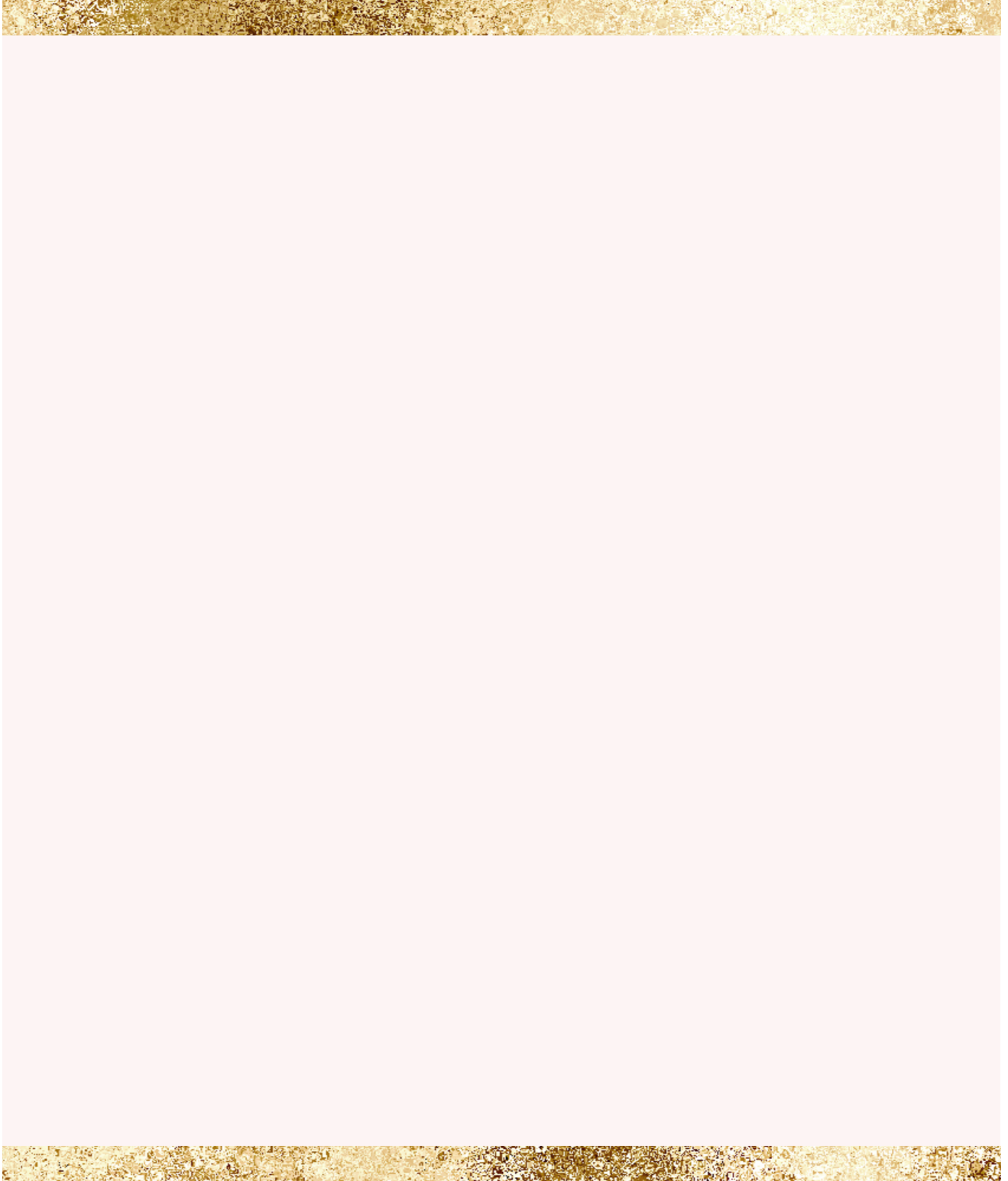
I do hope that you have found the information in this booklet helpful.

We have learnt.

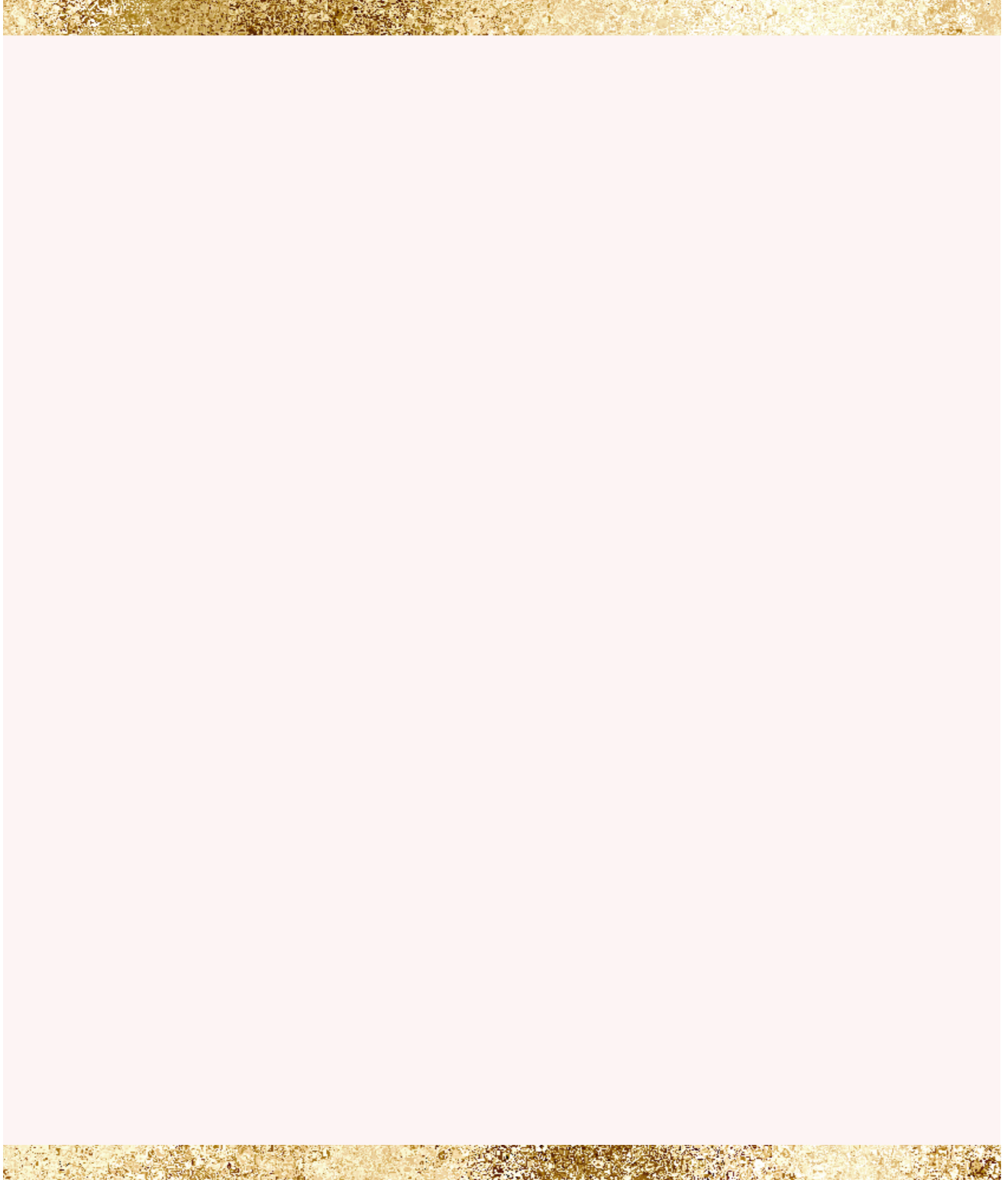
- 1) How thinking affects anxiety
- 2) That our thoughts are not facts and can actually make things much worse for us.
- 3) The thinking traps that we often fall in to and how to get out of them.
- 4) How to challenge our thoughts and escape the negative thinking cycle.

Please remember that this booklet is not intended to be a substitute for professional advice and if you are struggling please do seek help.

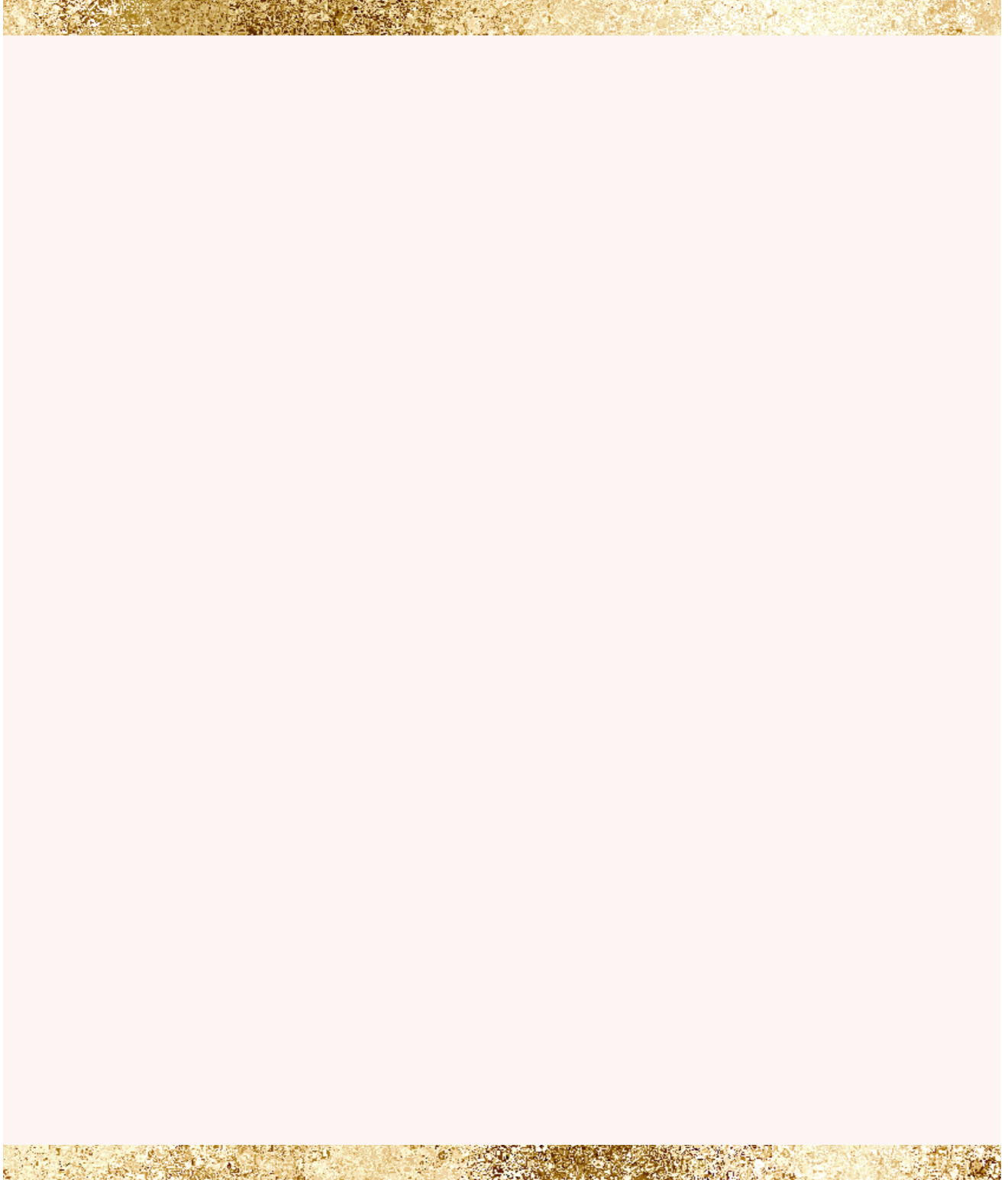
my notes



my notes



my notes



READ SOME REVIEWS.



CLAIRE

I would strongly recommend Tracy's workshops, I attended the teen one recently and really learned some great techniques. My two teenagers now have responsibilities around the house and I kept my cool and talked to them calmly as a team - I'm very impressed at the outcome 😊 So far so good! Tracy has a lovely calm manner and helps you find techniques that work without judgement in a constructive way. Thank you Tracy ☐



Graham Crosbie

Tracy was excellent support during a few tough occasions where I was struggling with my marriage collapsing she's is thoughtful, listens and is kind.



Hannah Jeffery

I reached out to Tracy when I noticed that our teenage son was struggling. As a parent it was hard to admit that our love and support was not enough, and we need professional help. Tracy put my mind at rest straight away from our initial phone call, and she began weekly sessions with Charlie straight away. Although initially apprehensive (as any teenager would be!), Charlie really enjoyed his sessions with Tracy, and we soon noticed positive changes in him....almost as though a weight had been lifted. He has learnt coping strategies that he will use for the rest of his life. I am so glad we reached out for Tracy's help, and will be eternally grateful to Tracy for helping Charlie.

Tracy Kimberg
tracykimberg.com



Need more help?

If you have tried and failed before, you need
the help of a professional,
please book a free,
no obligation chat with me.

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Tracy Kimberg

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