



# Us Plus Mental Health and Wellbeing Bulletin 1

*Hello everyone,*

*Welcome to the first bulletin of the new academic year. This first bulletin is focused on addressing any worries you have about returning to / starting Penrice Academy. Future bulletins will be shared fortnightly.*

*Remember first and foremost that we are all feeling differently about our return and everyone's feelings are perfectly normal and justified. Some of us are very excited about going back to school and others are very nervous about what to expect.*

*The advice that follows is to help you if you are feeling worried about the first few days of term.*

*Mrs Taylor*

1. Deal with some of the physical symptoms. It is hard to think if your body is stressed. Use calming strategies like mindfulness or breathing exercises. Slowing your breathing can reduce symptoms of anxiety, depression, anger and confusion. Useful apps to help you control your breathing include Smiling Mind (iOS and Android) or Breathing Bubbles (Android only) or you can try the rainbow breathing at the end of this bulletin.
2. Anxiety increases while using avoidance techniques such as avoiding eye contact, not raising your hand to answer a question or not attending school. So the most effective way to deal with social anxiety might be to face it. Remember there is lots of support at Penrice to help you if you are feeling anxious.
3. It is important to understand that fear and anxiety are normal and benefit by helping us to respond efficiently to danger. Rather than read your body as under threat, think about the changes as helpful. Your body is preparing you for action

4. No one can promise negative things won't happen. It is possible you will be embarrassed or make mistakes. Rather than trying to avoid these events, try reframing them. Remember that we all experience negative social feedback, and this does not make you silly or of less value. It makes you normal.
5. Remember it is the "perception" that something is a threat – not the reality. What we think is truth is often revealed as untrue when we face our fears. There is joy in social situations and being part of the Penrice family creates many social situations as well as providing you with an amazing education.
6. The following link takes you to a short video from Jo Morton-Brown who works as an Emotional Health Practitioner. She talks you through three key tips to help you prepare for return to school:  
<https://m.youtube.com/watch?d=n&feature=youtu.be&v=GwAh7z1iFHA&extid=VRxOYETASDLLgq31>

Finally... as you all know I love a rainbow! The video link and image below take you through the idea of 'Rainbow Breathing' – this is a great way to create energy and calm! Give it a go ...

<https://youtu.be/O29e4rRMrV4>



Remember that you can contact the TIS team at Penrice if you need to discuss any worries or anxieties you might be feeling. You can do this by emailing me at [ktaylor@penrice.org.uk](mailto:ktaylor@penrice.org.uk)

**FOR PARENTS/CARERS:** The following link takes you to a great downloadable pack to support returning to school produced by The Big Life Journal: <https://biglifejournal-uk.co.uk/blogs/blog/back-to-school-free-printable-care-package>