

The Ball of Wool Game

Purpose:

Some children become overwhelmed with the various worries and intrusive thoughts they experience. They start to feel as though they can't begin to figure out their problems because they don't know where to start. The ball of worries activity introduces children to a practical coping strategy to make thoughts and worries appear more manageable.

Materials needed:

Several different coloured pieces of string or wool

Instructions:

1. Label each different coloured string as an intrusive thought or worry.
2. Jumble them up into a ball.
3. Talk about how it feels to look at them all jumbled up (e.g. confusing, overwhelming, hard to see or know where to start).
4. Start pulling them apart makes and notice if this makes them feel easier to see and appear more manageable
5. Reflect on this with the participant

Outcome:

Children are encouraged to see that it is easier to find solutions and sources of support when focusing on one worry at a time. When they start to feel overwhelmed by their worries, they can be reminded of the ball of worries and encouraged to 'untangle' them and identify one worry to work on at a time. Writing lists and prioritising tasks can make starting tasks more manageable.

Visual aid for the Ball of Wool game

