

# The Jack Petchey **Spark** Programme

a self-discovery programme for young people

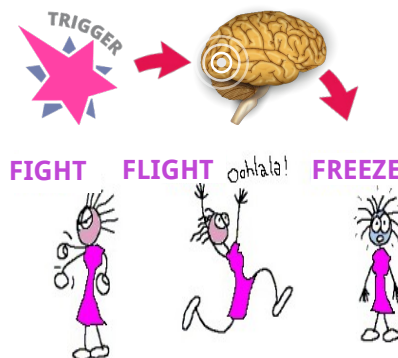


**Discover how to be at your best  
more of the time!**

## **Session 4:** **Recognising my self-talk**

# Chain reactions

In session 3, we looked at what happens before we go In the Box (and are no longer at our best). The process starts with a specific trigger event which can set off a chain reaction resulting in our Fight, Flight or Freeze Response. In most situations today this response, which evolved to protect our ancestors from real danger, is an over-reaction. Although we may not always notice them, it is our thoughts, which occur after the trigger, that determine whether we go In the Box or not, and lead to our feelings and behaviours. **Let's look at some examples of this chain reaction:**



Trigger	Thought	Feeling	Behaviour	Results
Jack's mum says "Bring those dirty cups down from your room right now!"	Jack thinks 'Give me a break! Why are you always nagging me?'	Annoyed	Jack ignores the situation. Keeps playing on games console	Jack's mum gets frustrated and an argument follows
Kyrah reads a negative comment on a social media post	She thinks 'I look terrible. I shouldn't have posted that picture.'	Self-conscious and embarrassed	Kyrah stays home instead of going out to see friends	Kyrah spends more time on social media
Leia sees an announcement for student council elections	Leia thinks 'There's no way they'll choose me'	Unhappy and unconfident	Leia snaps at her friend and spends break by herself	Leia feels distant from her friends and more unhappy

These thoughts and feelings can happen in a split second, without us really noticing, and before we know it, we're In the Box. We may feel confused, uncertain, unmotivated or angry, and definitely not at our best. We are likely to respond to the situation in an unhelpful way.

## Exercise: a real life chain reaction

Have a look at another of Helen Flanagan's I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here trials to see a real-life example of this chain reaction. Watch the video [here](#). Fill in the boxes below with the steps involved, including Helen's likely thoughts and feelings, her behaviour and the result.



Trigger	Thought	Feeling	Behaviour	Results

If it was you in the Jungle, facing the same trial, how do you think you would get on? **Write down some of the Growth Mindset thoughts** (see session 1 if you need a reminder about this) **that could help you succeed:**

# The voices in our heads

In this section, we're going to explore further the thoughts that take us into the box.

We all have voices (self talk) in our head. When we are Out of the Box and feeling At Our Best, this self-talk may be encouraging and optimistic (eg. *"I'll give it a shot"* or *"That sounds exciting"*) We call this voice the **Realist**. But when we are In the Box (Not At Our Best), our self-talk is much more likely to be negative and worried. In fact, when we are In the Box, two particular types of voices show up. We call them the **Pessimist** and the **Judge**.

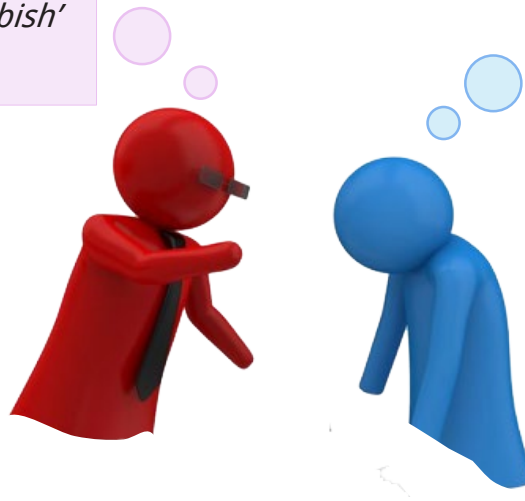
## The Judge . . .

makes judgements about ourselves and about others (e.g. *'That's rubbish'* or *'You idiot!'*)

## The Pessimist . . .

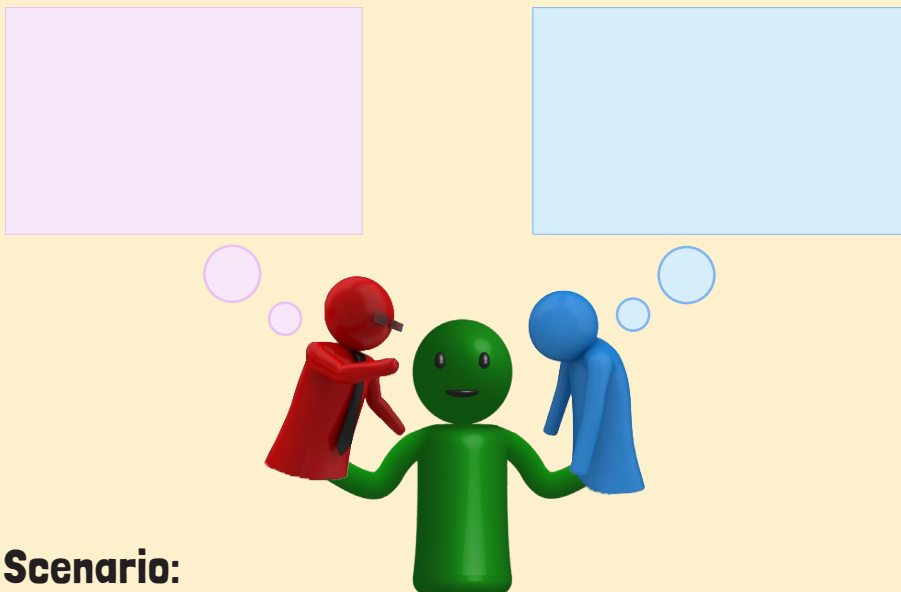
imagines the worst, picturing the potential negatives (e.g. *'I'll never be able to do that'*)

OR will immediately see the problems associated with a situation (e.g. *'There's not enough time'*)



## Exercise: Judge and Pessimist examples

Have a look at this scenario below. Fill in the boxes to show what your 'Judge' and 'Pessimist' might be saying if this happened to you:



### Scenario:

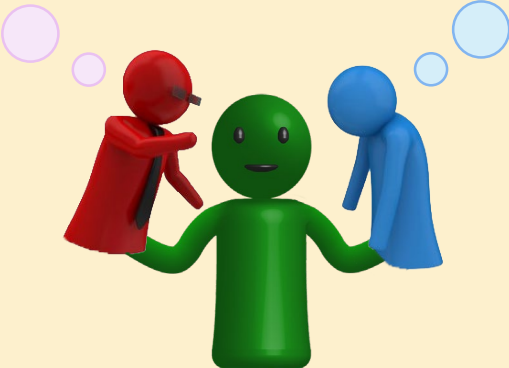
You are in a different group to one of your friends during a science lesson. You heard him / her mention your name to the person s/he was sitting next to. After the lesson you asked your friend what it was he/she said about you. Your friend just says *'Oh, it's nothing important.'*

What behaviour might result from these voices?

What might the results of this behaviour be?

# Personal example

Now have a go at filling in an example of your own. Think of one of your common trigger situations or a recent experience when you were In the Box. Fill in the boxes with your Judge and Pessimist self-talk.

<b>Scenario:</b>	<b>What behaviour resulted from these voices?</b>
	<b>What were the results (for myself or others) of this behaviour?</b>

## The Realist . . .

Our Realist is the part of us that is able to tell the truth.

It allows us to be clear, more balanced and more honest about what is going on in the world.

Our Realist reflects our strong innate qualities.

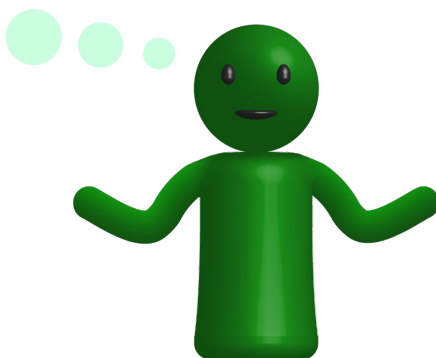
Our Realist helps us to be resourceful, to solve problems and to help others.



**Go Do!**

Listen in to the conversations around you, on social media, the news and the TV.

See if you can notice the overly dramatic, exaggerated and probably untrue, judging or pessimist thoughts that can indicate someone is In the Box.



**Go Do!**

See some more examples of unhelpful self-talk on this video [here](#).

Which are examples of the Pessimist voice and which are the Judge?

**Coming up soon! Learn how to, connect with your Realist and get Out of the Box!**

## Key Insights

- Trigger events can set off a chain reaction which ends up with us In the Box and not at our best. This means the way we behave and the result might not be what would be most helpful for us or for others.
- We all have voices in our head. (If you are thinking 'No I don't!', that is an example!) This is our self-talk.
- When we are triggered, our Pessimist and Judge voices often take over. Our Pessimist immediately imagines the worst or the problems. Our Judge makes judgements about ourselves or others. Our Judge and Pessimist voices make overly dramatic claims and exaggerations.
- Our Realist voice is our Out of the Box voice. The one that is balanced, realistic and honest and helps us to Be at Our Best!

