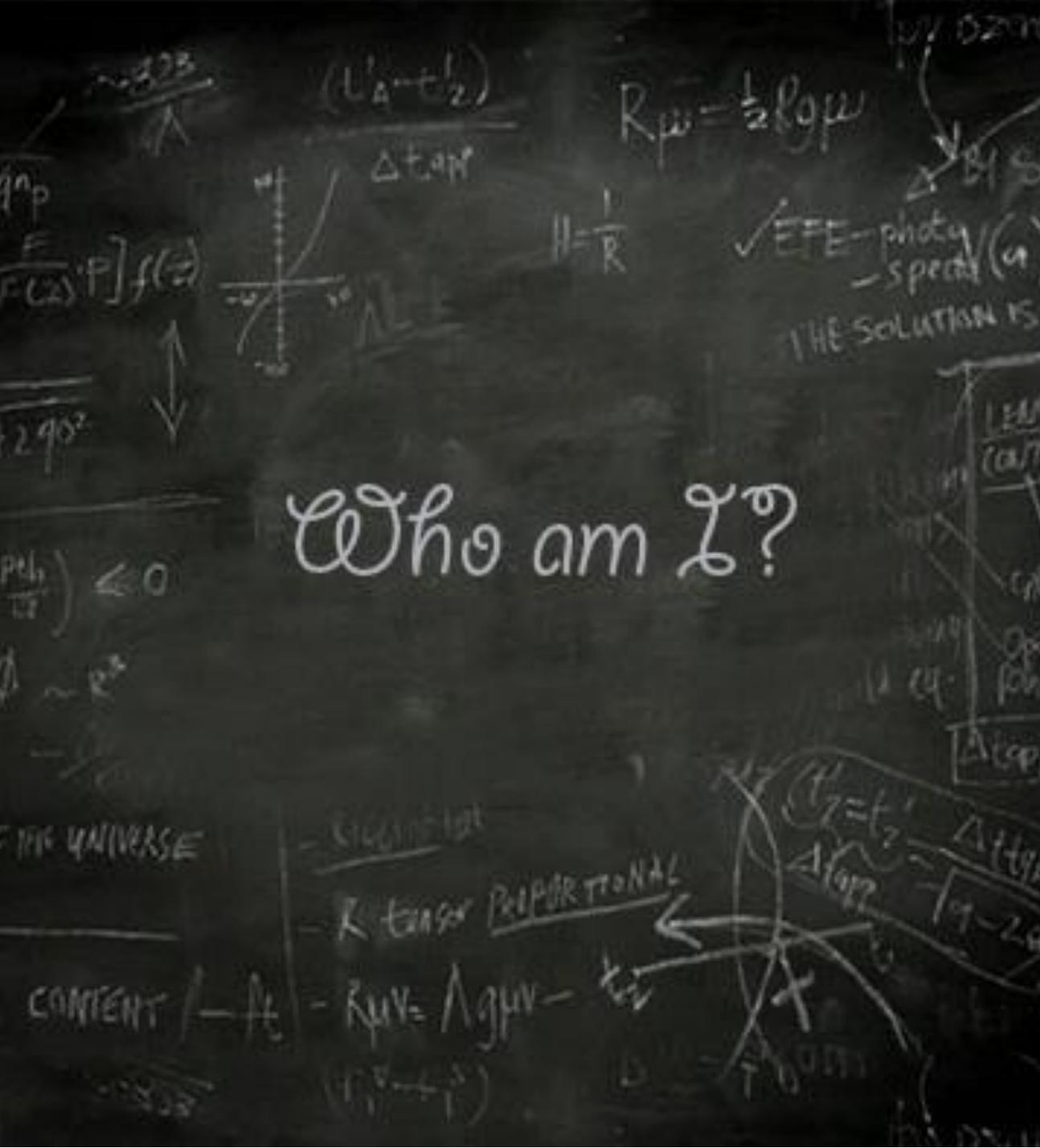


TEACHING ABOUT EATING DISORDERS AND SELF-HARM WITH CONFIDENCE

**Dr Pooky Knightsmith
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Advisor
PSHE Association**



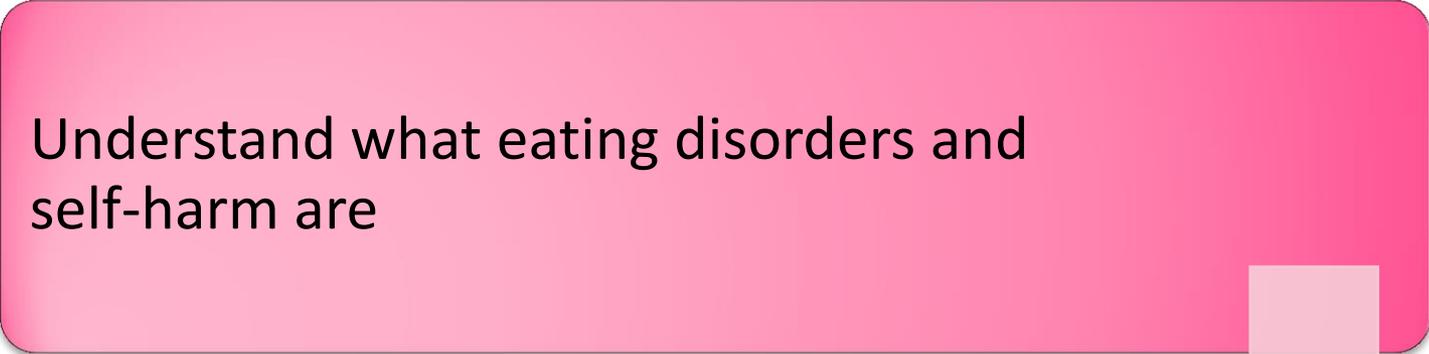
**Pooky
Knightsmith**

PSHE
Association
Mental
Health and
Emotional
Well-Being
Advisor

PhD
Institute of
Psychiatry

BY THE END OF THIS WORKSHOP YOU'LL BE ABLE TO

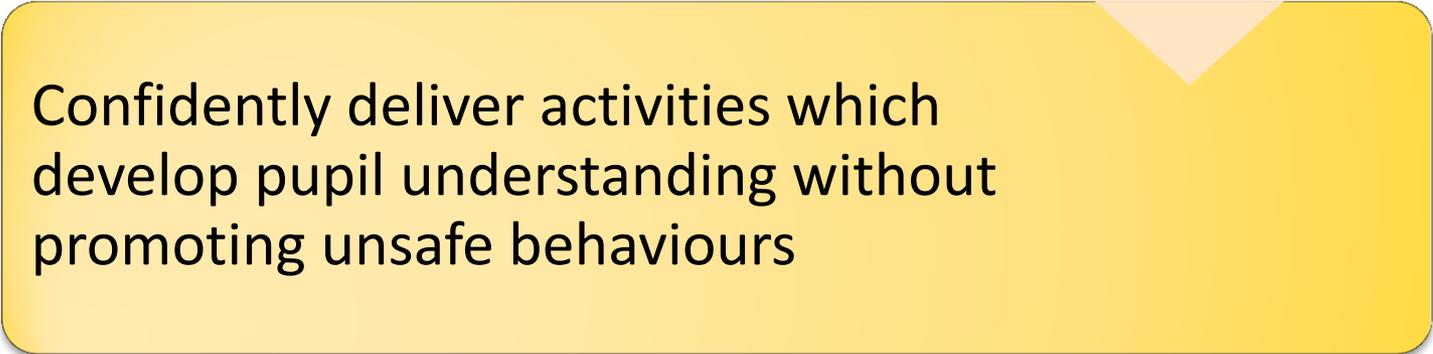
Understand what eating disorders and self-harm are



Implement safeguards to ensure the wellbeing of vulnerable pupils



Confidently deliver activities which develop pupil understanding without promoting unsafe behaviours



SELF-HARM

Causing harm to the body, usually through physical abuse

Cutting / swallowing tablets / burning / bruising / hair pulling / scratching / misusing alcohol or drugs

It is usually conducted at times of anger, distress, fear, emotional worry, depression or low self-esteem in order to manage negative feelings

Direct self-harm



Eating disorders are serious mental health conditions

Food, weight or shape are used as a way of coping with difficult circumstances or emotions

Anorexia Nervosa

Bulimia Nervosa

Binge Eating
Disorder



UNDERSTANDING WHY

“When I hurt myself it’s because I’m angry with myself - usually because I’ve said or done something stupid again.”

“No one can control what I eat except me. Having power and control over that one aspect of my life when everything else is such a mess is comforting.”

“I don’t like it when I hurt inside – in my heart and my brain – physical pain is a lot easier to deal with.”

**Talk to the person next to you.
For each quote consider:**

Why did this start?

How does it make them feel?

Would it be easy to stop?

Control

PUNISHMENT

To appear ugly or disappear

To manage overwhelming feelings

Nowhere else to turn

To feel cared for

To fit in with a group

To access support

The GP

You don't understand,
Make me feel stupid, small
'Doesn't it hurt?' you say
But don't understand
The hurt it hides,
The relief it brings.

You look at me strangely,
I'm lost for words,
There feels no point in trying,
I'll still be odd whatever I say,
I cannot push that away,
As I can't erase the pain

'You must be so low to do it',
But you don't understand,
It keeps me from sinking,
Saves me from the pit,
Gives visible hurt to inner hurt,
And gives me such relief.

Could be
used to get
pupils
talking?



“If we talk about eating disorders or self-harm in class, pupils will be more likely to develop them.”

Secondary School Head

Maybe....

But it IS possible to teach
these topics safely

Let's think about some
Dos and Don'ts

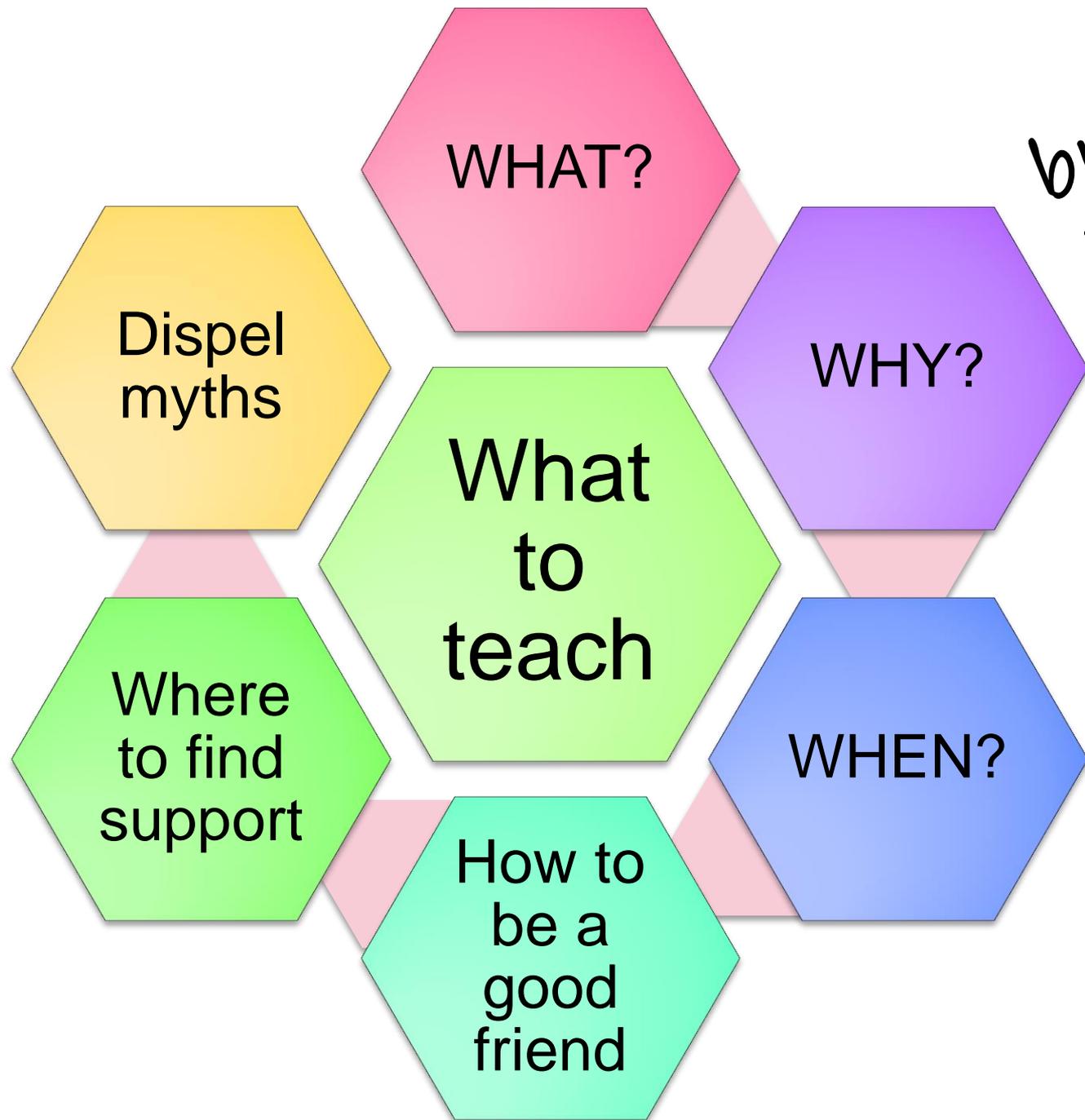


- x Provide a how to guide**
- x Share weights / numbers**
- x Share graphic images**
- x Catastrophise**
- x Glamorise**

**DON'T EVEN
THINK
ABOUT IT**

- ✓ **Have specific aims**
- ✓ **Consider vulnerable pupils**
- ✓ **Agree clear ground rules**
- ✓ **Tackle misconceptions**
- ✓ **Encourage questions**
- ✓ **Signpost support**
- ✓ **Prepare for fallout**





but NEVER
how

VULNERABLE PUPILS

- Assume you have vulnerable pupils
- Warn pupils about the topic
- Provide an opportunity to learn more (withdraw?)
- Set up anonymous question box ahead of lesson
- Signpost support ahead of lesson
- Discuss with pastoral team / CP lead
- Follow your school's safeguarding policy

ESTABLISH OR REINFORCE CLEAR GROUND RULES

Openness

**Keep the
conversation
in the room**

**Non-
judgmental
approach**

Right to pass

**Make no
assumptions**

**Listen to
others**

**Use of
language**

Ask questions

**Seeking help
and advice**

TACKLE MISCONCEPTIONS

USING TRUE OR FALSE STATEMENTS...

- Question box prior to lesson
- Explore common misconceptions in your school
- Take inspiration from headlines / news stories
- Consider the key messages you want to get across and use them as points of debate

LET'S TRY IT...

*“People who self-harm
are just attention
seeking”*

Parent of a self-harmer

*“He started this, he can
stop it.”*

Parent of a binge eater

*“People who self-harm
are suicidal.”*

Year 9 Pupil

It's Your Turn!

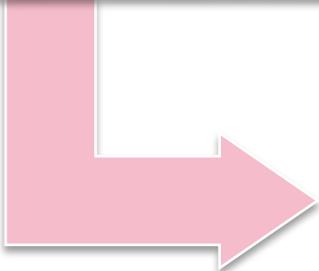


ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

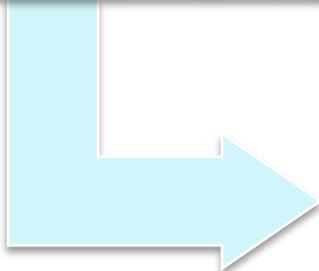
- Anonymous questions before & after
- Exploration in the lesson – dispel myths
- If you don't know the answer, come back to it
- Arguably, the most important part of the lesson

SIGNPOST SUPPORT

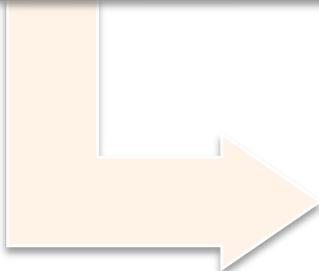
School



Local



Helplines



Online

*NB
Some ideas
listed at the
end of this
PPT*

Raise
awareness
with staff

Check policies
are up to date

Signpost
support at
school

Communicate
with parents

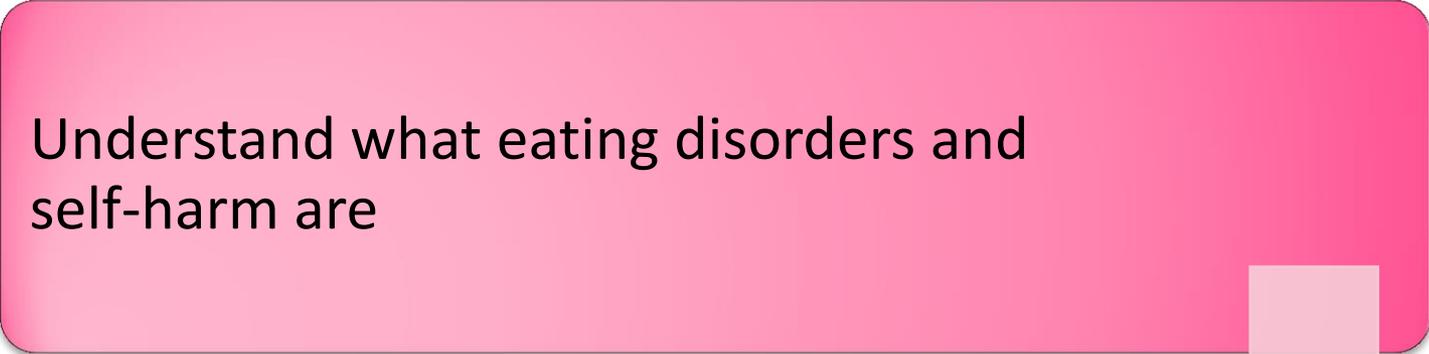
BE PREPARED!

TEACHING CHECKLIST: HAVE YOU...

- Familiarised yourself with school policies
- Set specific aims and objectives
- Considered vulnerable pupils
- Thought about ground rules
- Considered likely questions / misconceptions
- Given pupils the chance to submit questions
- Located sources of school, local and national support
- Told relevant staff you'll be covering this topic
- Communicated with parents – providing info / support
- Reviewed lesson content to 'first do no harm'

OBJECTIVE REVIEW – ANY QUESTIONS?

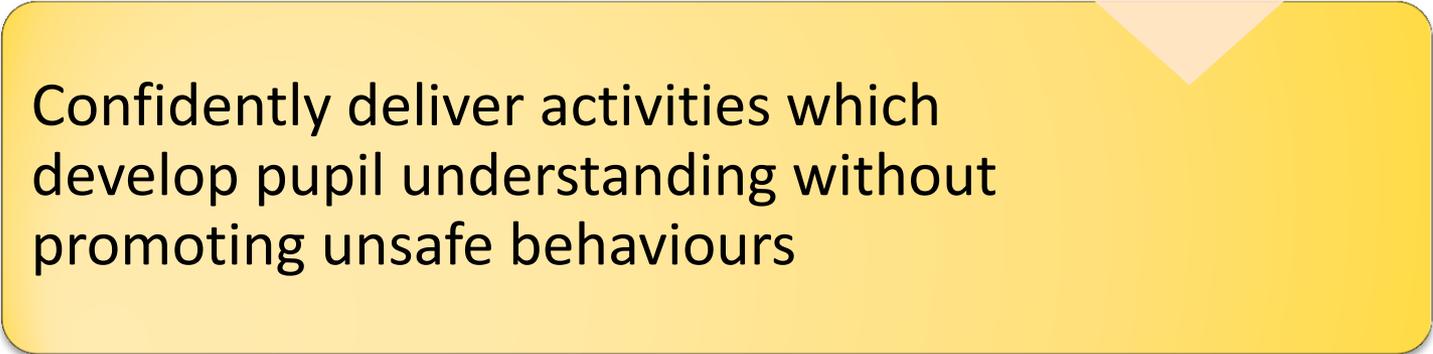
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FURTHER SUPPORT

www.pshe-association.org.uk <PSHE resources, support, ideas

www.inourhands.com <my site, inc practical mental health blog

www.eatingdisordersadvice.co.uk <also mine

www.b-eat.co.uk <eating disorders support & advice

www.self-harm.co.uk <self-harm support & advice

www.youngminds.org.uk <support & advice, child mental health

www.Samaritans.org <info & online support

Samaritans: 08457 90 90 90 <24 hour confidential helpline

www.childline.org.uk <info & online support

Childline: 0800 1111 <24 hour confidential helpline

www.time-to-change.org.uk <Reducing mental health stigma

www.mind.org.uk <Support & advice, mental health (all ages)

pooky@pshe-association.org.uk or **020 7922 7950**