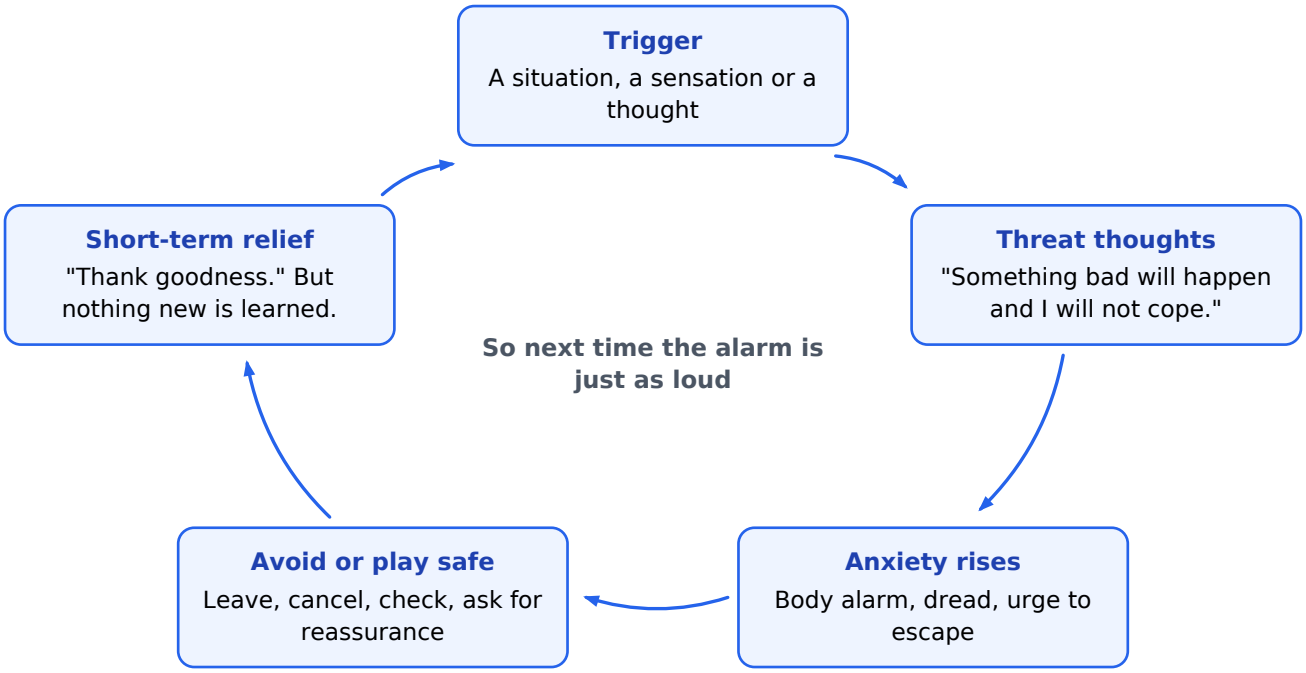
The anxiety cycle

How anxiety keeps itself going.

Anxiety is kept going by a loop. Each step makes sense on its own, but together they keep the anxiety going.



What keeps the loop turning

- **Relief rewards avoiding.** The drop in anxiety when you avoid tells your brain that avoiding was the right thing to do.
- **The prediction is never tested.** You do not get the chance to find out that the feared thing would not have happened, or that you would have managed.
- **Attention sticks to danger.** When you are on the lookout for threat, you find it.

Where the loop can be broken

1. **Thoughts.** Check the prediction. How likely is it really? How would I cope?
2. **Body.** Slow the breathing and let the wave pass without fighting it.
3. **Behaviour.** Stay, or go in, a little at a time. This usually makes the biggest difference.

> **Keep in mind**
> Breaking the cycle means feeling more anxious for a short while, in order to feel much less anxious in the long run.

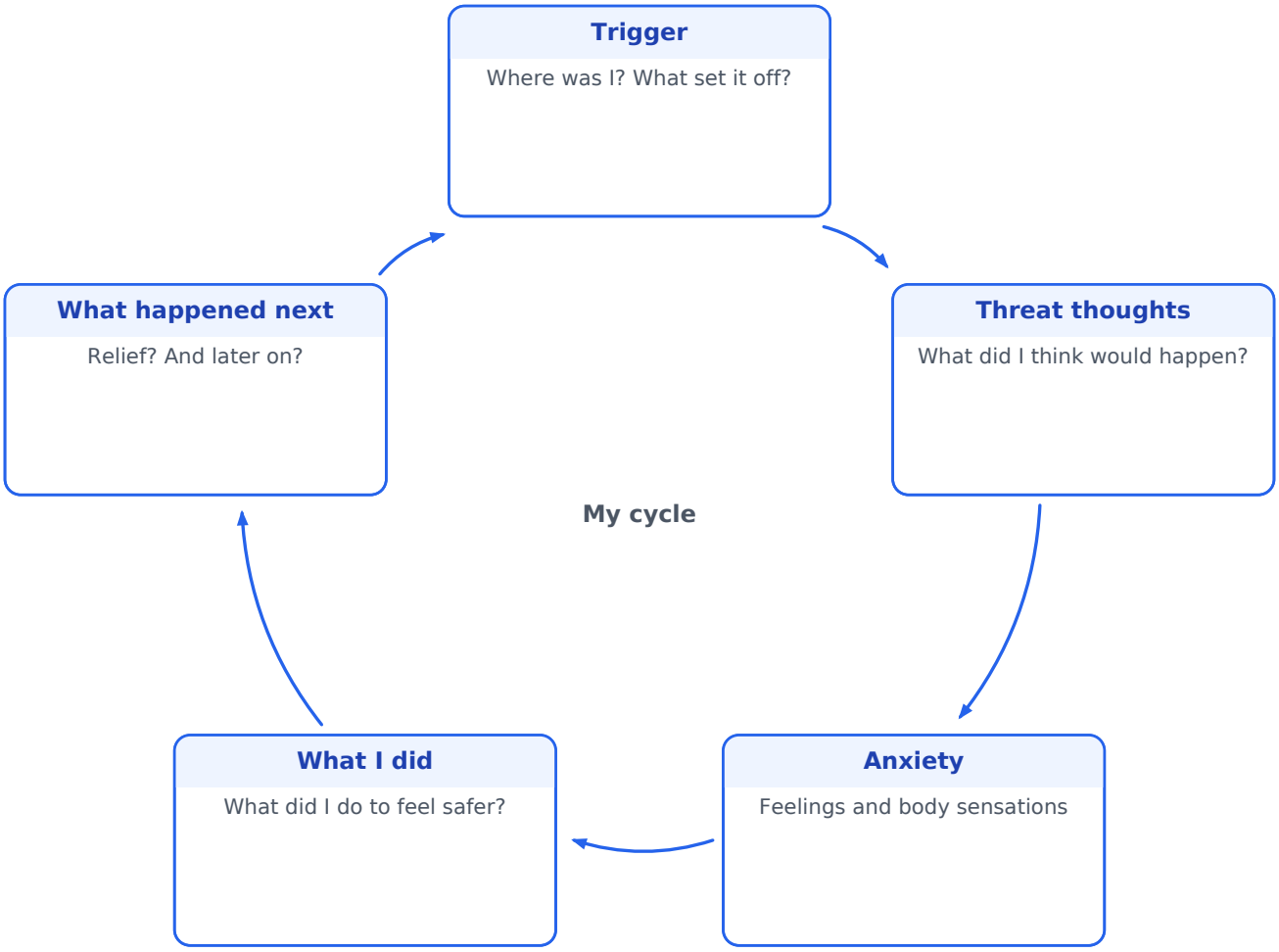
My notes and questions

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My anxiety cycle

Map one recent time when anxiety took over.

Name _____ Date _____



What did avoiding or playing safe stop me from finding out?

If I had stayed, or done it differently, what might have happened?

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