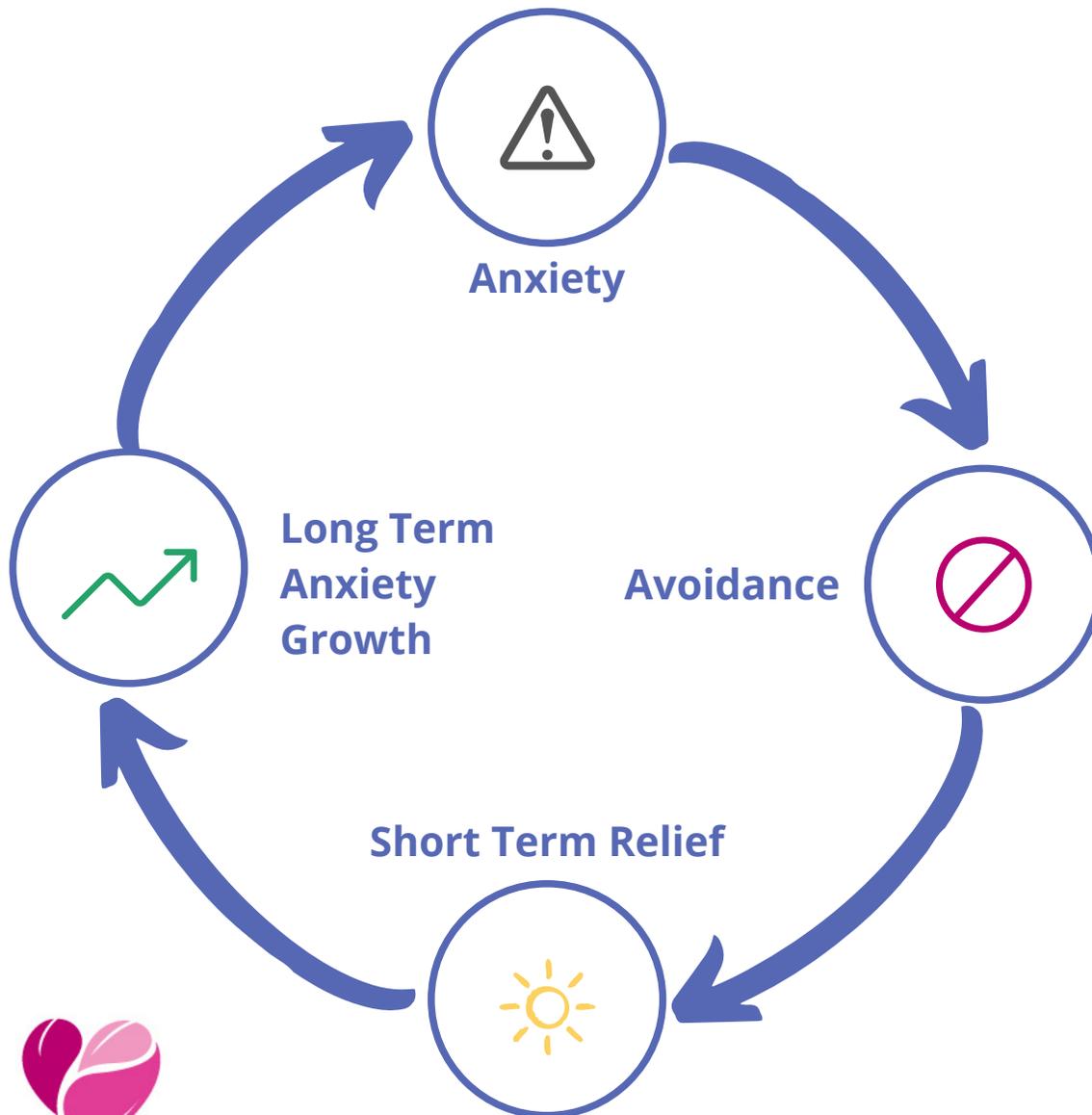


# Anxiety Cycle



## Anxiety

An anxiety producing situation leads to uncomfortable symptoms such as worry, fear, a racing heart, sweating, or feeling of being overwhelmed.

## Avoidance

Uncomfortable symptoms are controlled by avoiding the anxiety producing situation. Examples of avoidance include:

- Skipping class to avoid a presentation
- Using drugs or alcohol to numb feelings

## Short Term Relief

Avoidance of the anxiety producing situation gives an immediate sense of relief. The symptoms of anxiety lessen, but only temporarily.

## Long Term Growth

The fear that initially led to avoidance worsens, and the brain learns that when the anxiety producing situation is avoided, the symptoms go away. As a result, the symptoms of anxiety will be worse the next time, and avoidance is more likely.

