

My *Wellbeing* book!



"What you do today can improve all of your tomorrows."

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Tips & Techniques



Relaxation Techniques

When a person is confronted with anxiety, their body undergoes several changes and enters a special state called the *fight-or-flight response*. The body prepares to either fight or flee the perceived danger.

During the fight-or-flight response it's common to experience a "blank" mind, increased heart rate, sweating, tense muscles, and more. Unfortunately, these bodily responses do little good when it comes to protecting us from modern sources of anxiety.

Using a variety of skills, you can end the fight-or-flight response before the symptoms become too extreme. These skills *will* require practice to work effectively, so don't wait until the last minute to try them out!

Deep Breathing

It's natural to take long, deep breaths, when relaxed. However, during the fight-or-flight response, breathing becomes rapid and shallow. Deep breathing reverses that, and sends messages to the brain to begin calming the body. Practice will make your body respond more efficiently to deep breathing in the future.

Breathe in slowly. Count in your head and make sure the inward breath lasts at least 5 seconds. Pay attention to the feeling of the air filling your lungs.

Hold your breath for 5 to 10 seconds (again, keep count). You don't want to feel uncomfortable, but it should last quite a bit longer than an ordinary breath.

Breathe out very slowly for 5 to 10 seconds (count!). Pretend like you're breathing through a straw to slow yourself down. Try using a real straw to practice.

Repeat the breathing process until you feel calm.

Imagery

Think about some of your favorite and least favorite places. If you think about the place hard enough—if you really try to think about what it's like—you may begin to have feelings you associate with that location. Our brain has the ability to create emotional reactions based entirely off of our thoughts. The imagery technique uses this to its advantage.

Make sure you're somewhere quiet without too much noise or distraction. You'll need a few minutes to just spend quietly, in your mind.

Think of a place that's calming for you. Some examples are the beach, hiking on a mountain, relaxing at home with a friend, or playing with a pet.

Relaxation Techniques

Paint a picture of the calming place in your mind. Don't just think of the place briefly—imagine every little detail. Go through each of your senses and imagine what you would experience in your relaxing place. Here's an example using a beach:

- a. Sight: The sun is high in the sky and you're surrounded by white sand. There's no one else around. The water is a greenish-blue and waves are calmly rolling in from the ocean.
- b. Sound: You can hear the deep pounding and splashing of the waves. There are seagulls somewhere in the background.
- c. Touch: The sun is warm on your back, but a breeze cools you down just enough. You can feel sand moving between your toes.
- d. Taste: You have a glass of lemonade that's sweet, tart, and refreshing.
- e. Smell: You can smell the fresh ocean air, full of salt and calming aromas.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

During the fight-or-flight response, the tension in our muscles increases. This can lead to a feeling of stiffness, or even back and neck pain. Progressive muscle relaxation teaches us to become more aware of this tension so we can better identify and address stress.

Find a private and quiet location. You should sit or lie down somewhere comfortable.

The idea of this technique is to intentionally tense each muscle, and then to release the tension. Let's practice with your feet.

- a. Tense the muscles in your toes by curling them into your foot. Notice how it feels when your foot is tense. Hold the tension for 5 seconds.
- b. Release the tension from your toes. Let them relax. Notice how your toes feel differently after you release the tension.
- c. Tense the muscles all throughout your calf. Hold it for 5 seconds. Notice how the feeling of tension in your leg feels.
- d. Release the tension from your calf, and notice how the feeling of relaxation differs.

Follow this pattern of tensing and releasing tension all throughout your body. After you finish with your feet and legs, move up through your torso, arms, hands, neck, and head.

five ways to wellbeing



Connect

Connect with people around you. Spend time with your friends and family. Make new friends. Use different ways to communicate.



Be Active

Go for a walk or a run. Cycle, dance or play a game. Walk to school instead of getting the bus. Go to the park. Try a new activity.



Take Notice

Take time to be still, reflect, and become aware of your surroundings. Notice what you are thinking and be aware of what's going on in the world around you: the everyday and the unusual. Be curious. Savour your favourite food.



Keep Learning

Set yourself a goal. Learn something new. Research something you're interested in. Learn a new word or a random fact. Visit a museum.



Give

Do something nice for a friend. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Raise money for charity. Be a good role model. Take action to improve your neighbourhood.

Ideas Bank

How to advise young people on getting involved in each of the Five Ways to Wellbeing

In the Ideas Bank you will find a list of ideas for encouraging young people to get involved in each of the Five Ways to Wellbeing. They are just a starting point for inspiration and there are many many more. Often young people will come up with the best ideas themselves.

The Ideas Bank is designed to be used in conjunction with the rest of the toolkit, so please read the introductory sections first so that you understand how the Five Ways framework works and how to explain it to young people.

Connect

Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, and neighbours. At home, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Key message:

Connect, build, broaden and strengthen relationships and social networks. Spend time with others, friends and family and make time for conversation or having that chat.

Ways to connect:

- With family – share your day and ask about theirs
- At school - speak to someone new. Smile and speak to someone as you pass them in the corridor
- Ask a friend about their weekend and pay attention and listen when they tell you
- Talk to someone in person or on the phone instead of messaging or social media
- Make contact with someone you used to hang out with
- Find an old photo of friends or family and share it with them
- Don't use your phone for a day (or at least for a few hours!)
- Take your headphones off when in a shop
- Ask your parents or carer about their childhood
- Don't use the self-checkout in a shop and talk to the shop assistant
- Write a letter or send a postcard to someone
- Smile at a person on the street and say hello
- Share a random or inspirational photo with your friends
- Set up a social network group with a new group of friends



Be active

Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Evidence suggests that physical exercise changes your brain chemistry and releases happy hormones which in turn can make you feel more positive. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Key message:

Being active is for people of all ages and does not need to be intense physical activity. Being active, such as walking, can also encourage social interactions.

Ways to be active:

- Play your favourite song and dance to it
- Go for a walk at lunchtime
- Walk to school
- Get off the bus one stop earlier and walk the final part of your journey
- Go to your local park
- Stretch and move your limbs in the morning, midday and evening
- Join a new sports club or team
- Walk the dog
- Do some gardening
- Make bread – it's hard work!
- Climb a tree
- Go to PE – no excuses!
- Try out a new exercise class like yoga or zumba
- Learn how to swim or ride a bike
- Create a five a side football team
- Try crazy golf or bowling with your mates
- Walk to see friends instead of going in the car
- Have a Wii fit competition
- Learn to be a lifeguard
- Coach a kids football team

For more information on how to be active, visit Hertfordshire Sports Partnership www.sportinherts.org.uk



Take notice

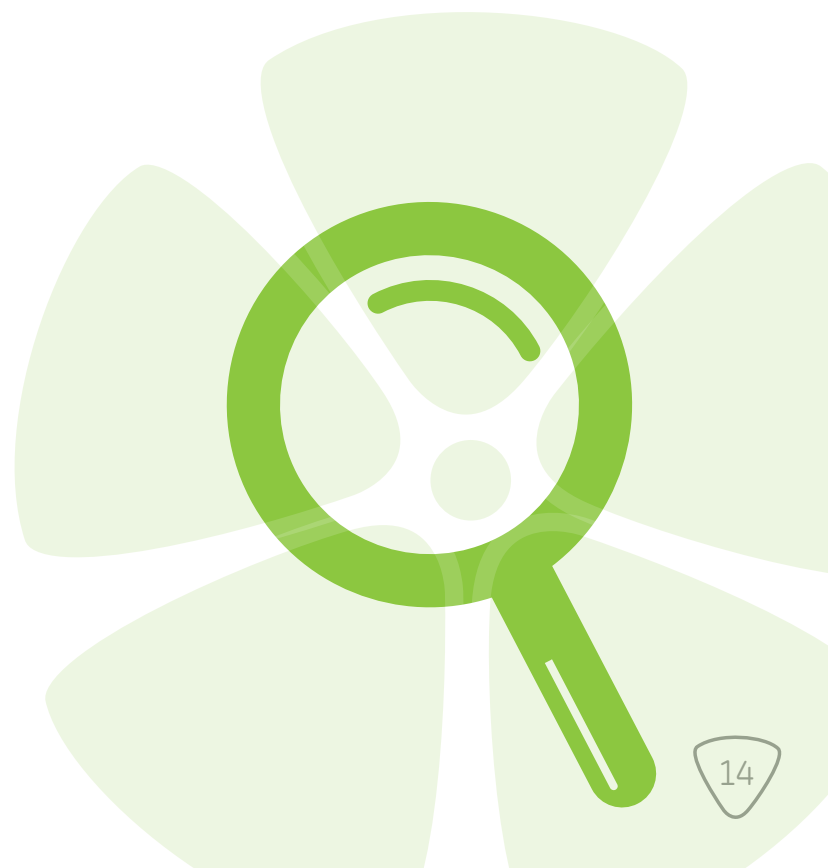
Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to school, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling; reflecting on your thoughts and feelings may help you to identify why you may be feeling a certain way.

Key message:

Take time to be still, reflect, become aware of your surroundings. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

Ways to take notice:

- Take a different, more beautiful route to or from school
- Stop and really take in your surroundings
- Reflect on the positives, what can you be grateful for – there is always something
- Take notice of what you are thinking. Not to judge or be hard on yourself, but just to be more aware of what you are thinking
- Really savour every mouthful of your lunch, noticing the texture, flavour, how the food feels, tastes
- Consider your strengths and how you make the most of them.
- Think about who inspires you and why
- Notice your neighbours and people around you
- Notice wild flowers and where they grow
- Watch animals and birds outside
- Think about what your parents do for you
- Pretend you are someone else and reflect on what they would think about you
- Plan for the future and where you'd like to be in 5 years time
- Do some people watching in the middle of town or in the park
- Try a new food and then notice how different it tastes and feels



Keep learning

Try something new. Sign up for that course. Take on a responsibility at school. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food.

Key message:

Set a goal. Learn something new. Try something fun. Achieve a goal.

Learning can involve any manner of subjects, not just what you have to do in school. Learning can be social, you may make new friends as well as new skills. Many exciting learning opportunities exist in Hertfordshire covering a wide range of topics.

Ways to keep learning:

- Research something you've always wondered about
- Discover something new, find out more about something you're interested in
- Read the news or a book
- Use a conversation as a way to learn new things, be curious
- Sign up for a class or group outside of school
- Learn a new word
- Visit your local library
- Learn something new about yourself
- Go to a quiz or host one among your friends
- Learn an inspirational quote
- Download a random fact app
- Go to a museum
- Learn a new hobby or a new language
- Learn a new dance routine or the words to a new song
- Learn a new route home
- Find out more about something your friends or family are interested in
- Learn more about your family history
- If you hear something you don't understand, google it straight away
- Use a dictionary for words you don't know
- Learn how to drive
- Think about how others are feeling and work out why

For more information on how to keep learning, visit www.hertsdirect.org/services/libraries



Give

Do something nice for a friend, thank someone, smile, volunteer your time, join a community group, look out, as well as in.

Key message:

Any acts of kindness, whether small or large can make you feel happier and more satisfied about life. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

Ways to give:

- Smile and be willing to give your time to a conversation
- Check up on a friend
- Say thank you to someone who has helped you. Send a text, or message or write them a letter to show how much it meant to you.
- Give unwanted items to a local charity shop
- Donate your time to do something for someone else; help out a neighbour; carry shopping or offer to baby-sit
- Offer to help your parents or people you live with round the house
- Bake a cake and give it to someone
- Do some volunteering
- Help out at a local fete or event
- Nominate someone for an award
- Give some food to a food bank
- Give someone a hug
- Be a mentor for someone
- Raise money for charity
- Help an elderly neighbour
- Be a good role model
- Learn how to put someone in the Recovery Position
- Give your pocket money to someone who needs it more than you
- Give yourself some time to relax
- Take action to improve your area e.g. suggest ideas for reducing crime, help to clean up graffiti or pick up litter in the park
- Volunteer for an extra responsibility at school or college

For more information on how to give, visit www.vinspired.com the website for young people doing good things.



Activities to complete.





Logging my Five Ways to Wellbeing

Look at the next page, you will see a weekly timetable and different words.

1. Consider the five ways to wellbeing found in the Tips & Techniques section of your Wellbeing book.
2. Write down what you did each day to meet those five ways.
3. Choose how each activity made you feel and circle the emoji.
4. At the end of each day, score how you feel about your overall day.

Questions to consider:

- What did you do to **be active** today?
- Was there anything interesting you **noticed** today?
- Did you **learn** something new today?
- Did you **give** or do something nice for someone today?
- Did you **connect** with anyone today?

My Stress Bucket Activity

Look at the next page and see how the metaphor of a stress bucket allows us to consider our own coping strategies when stressed. Then continue onto the activity sheet on the next page.

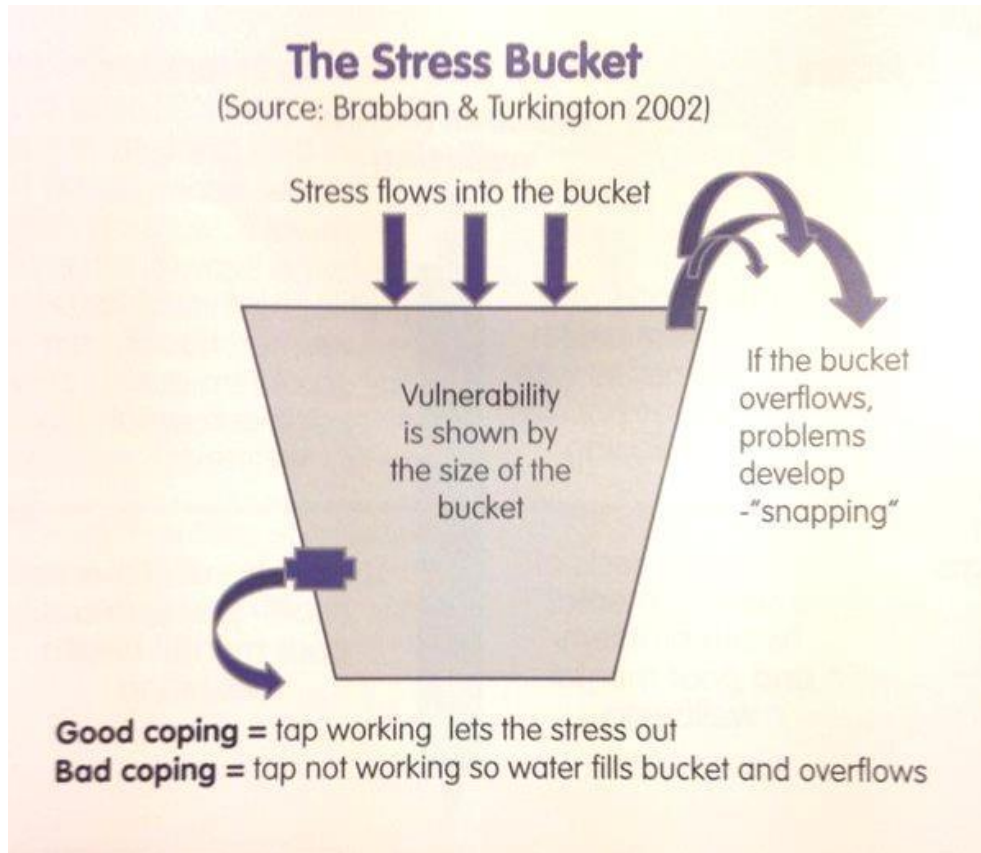
1. Can you write all the stresses and worries you may be having inside the stress bucket.
2. Consider the questions written on the page. Can you answer them for each stress or worry you have?
3. Look at the water droplets coming from the tap. Can you come up with a list of helpful and unhelpful coping strategies?
4. Write your lists in the water droplets.

Things to consider:

- Good coping strategies are things we can do to help ourselves when stressed.
- Consider the things you can change and think of how you can make these positive changes.
- It's okay that there are things you can't change.



Stress bucket activity



Discuss the diagram above, note the tap or release valve which is a metaphor for coping skills.

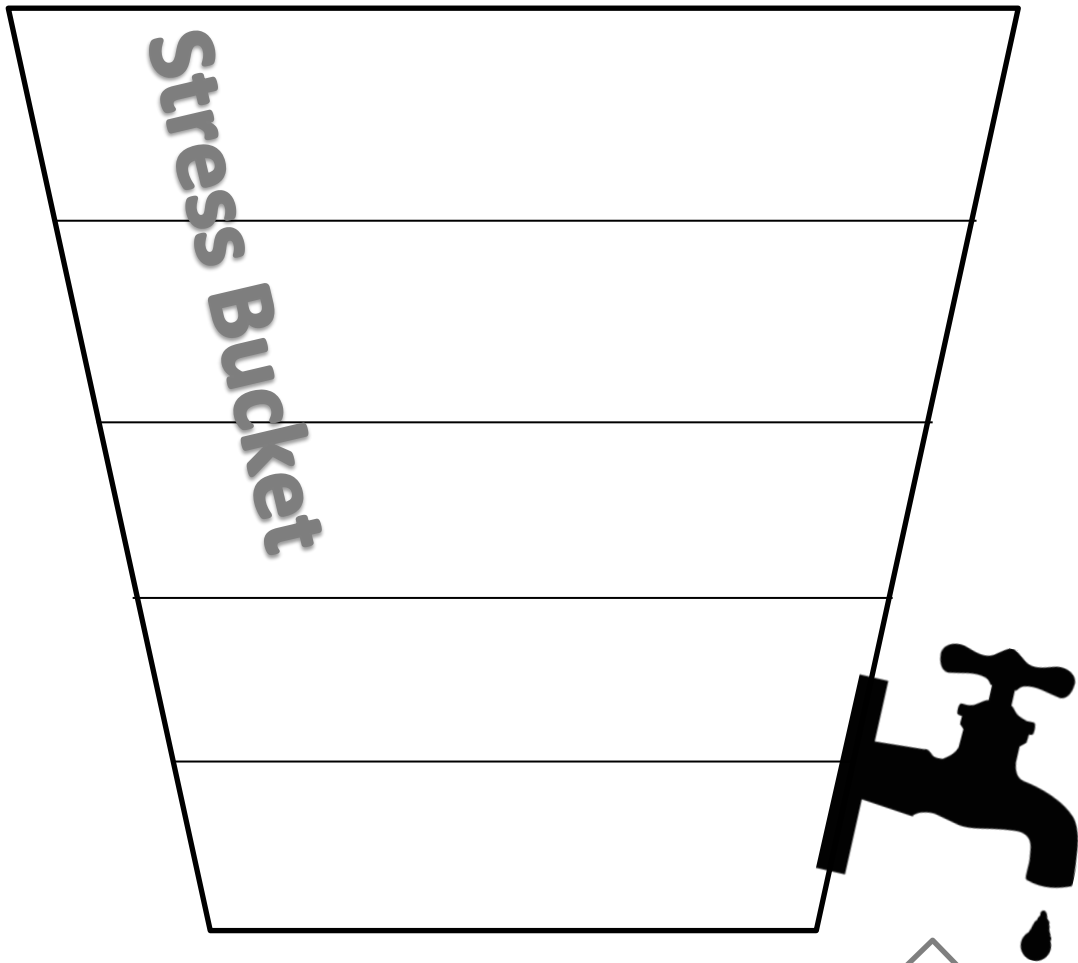
First think about the size of the bucket – the worksheet enables you to choose a size to reflect how vulnerable the person feels they are in relation to managing the stresses in their life.

Secondly, ask the young person to think about the things that could go in the bucket, all the things that contribute the stress in their life.

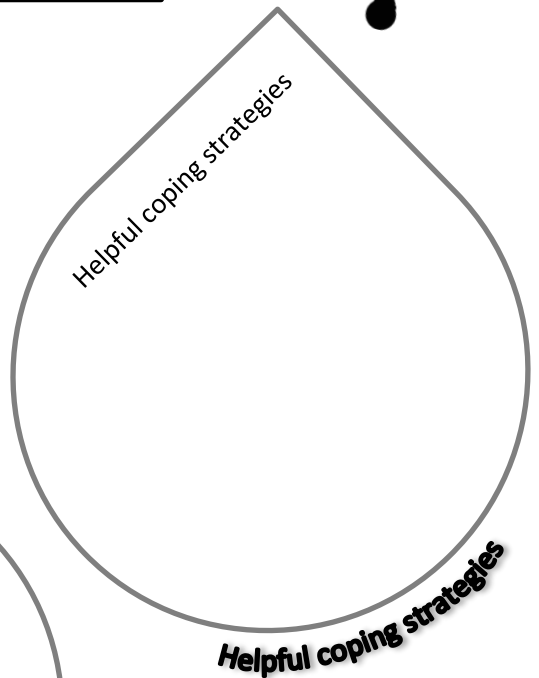
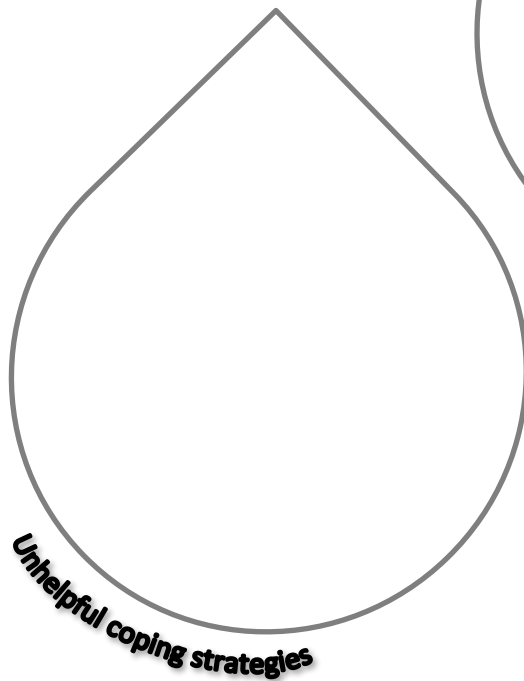
Thirdly, ask the following questions or ask the young person to ask themselves:

1. Do you have any evidence to support your feelings?
2. What can you change?
3. What can't you change and need to accept?
4. What needs your urgent attention?
5. Can anyone help you?

Finally, ask the young person to consider the helpful and unhelpful coping strategies that they employ. Are there any unhelpful strategies that they could reduce and any helpful ones they could increase?



1. Do I have any evidence to support my feelings?
2. What can I change?
3. What can't I change and need to accept?
4. What needs my urgent attention?
5. Who can help me?



Thought Clouds Activity

Look at the next page and consider practicing your breathing exercises found in the Tips & Techniques section of your Wellbeing Book.

1. Focus on your deep breathing and consider the thoughts that enter your mind.
2. At the end of your deep breathing, write down the thoughts that you noticed entering your mind.
3. Consider the questions below.



Questions to consider:

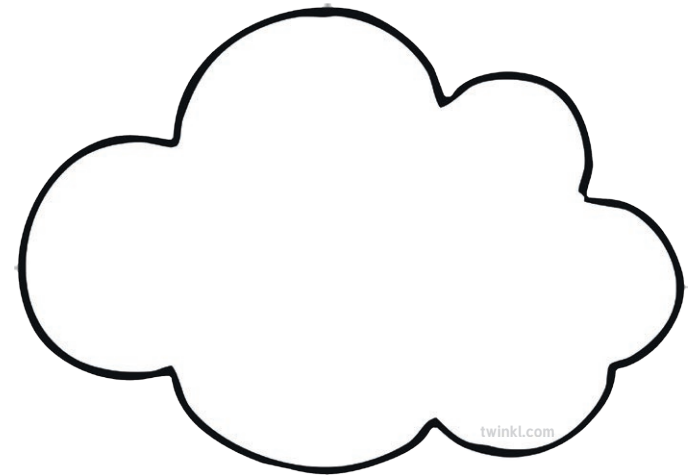
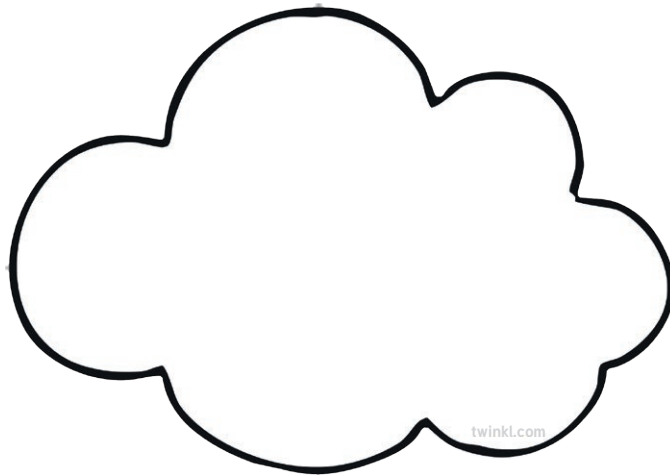
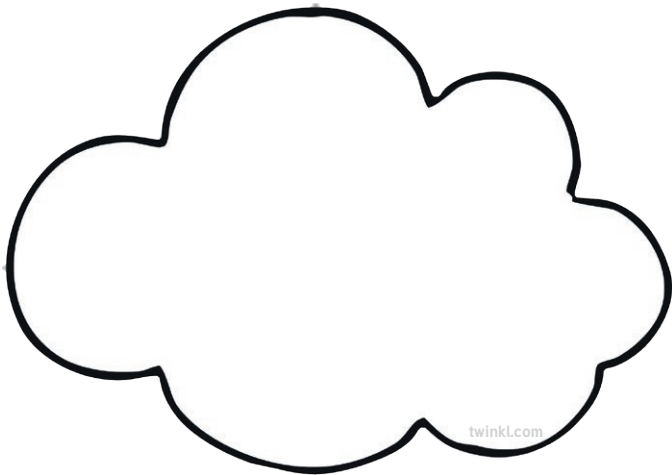
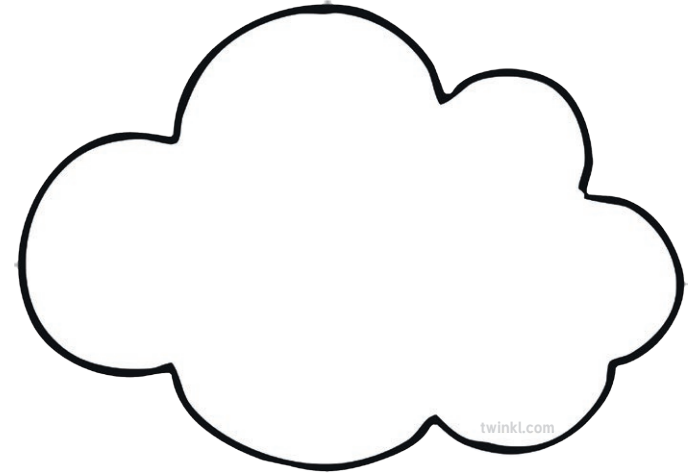
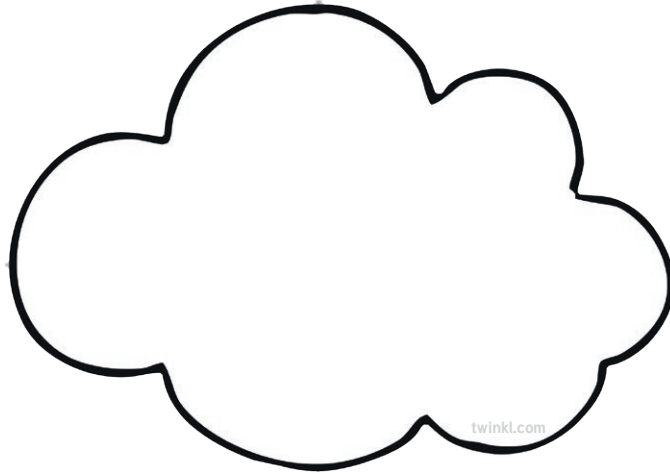
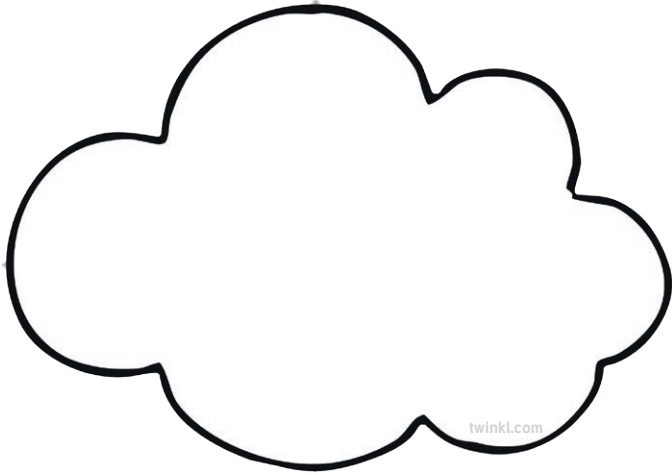
- Are the thoughts entering your mind any worries you have? Can you do anything to change these worries?
- Do you get excited by your thoughts? Is there something funny you have thought of?

Are you having thoughts about things you don't know about?
Are you interested in learning something new? Consider investigating something you're interested in and creating a fact sheet.

-

Thought Clouds

Sit quietly, and focus on your breathing. When you notice that you are having a thought, write it on a cloud and then let it drift away.



Bedtime Gratitude

As well as being mindful of our breath and our thoughts, there are other things we can do to help support good mental health.

One way is to be mindful of gratitude.

Gratitude is when we feel thankful, or grateful about something.

An excellent way of developing gratitude is to purposely remember things during the day that we have been grateful for.

Before bedtime, pick up one of these cards and write three things from that day that you are grateful for.

You can be grateful for anything. It can often be quite small.

Maybe you remember a friend saying a nice word, or perhaps talking to a parent or sibling. It might be just enjoying the taste of food, the smell of soap or perhaps it was just a fun game you played.

When you have the three things you are grateful for written down, smile to yourself and then prepare for sleep.



By simply taking some time to focus on things to be grateful for, you can develop positive habits that make us more likely to notice times when we feel happy!

Today I am grateful for...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Today I am grateful for...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Today I am grateful for...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Today I am grateful for...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Today I am grateful for...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Today I am grateful for...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Challenging Anxious Thoughts

Anxiety can be a healthy emotion—it forces us to focus on our problems, and work hard to solve them. But sometimes, anxiety grows out of control, and does just the opposite. It *cripples* our ability to solve problems. When this happens, **irrational thoughts** often play a role.

In this exercise, we will practice catching our irrational thoughts, and replacing them with rational alternatives. With enough practice, this will become a natural process that can help you manage anxiety.

Describe a common situation that triggers your anxiety:

example: "giving a speech in front of a crowd" or "driving in rush hour traffic"

Anxiety distorts our thinking by causing us to **overestimate the likelihood of something going wrong**, and **imagine the potential consequences as worse than they really are**. Sometimes, just taking a moment to think about these facts can help us recognize our irrational thoughts.

Imagine you are faced with the anxiety-producing situation from above. Describe the...

Worst outcome:
Best outcome:
Likely outcome:

Imagine the worst outcome comes true. Would it still matter...

1 week from now:
1 month from now:
1 year from now:

Usually, anxious thoughts focus on the worst possible outcomes, even when they aren't likely. For example, a person who is nervous about giving a speech might think: "I am going to forget everything and embarrass myself, and I'll never live it down".

As an outside observer, we know that an alternate, more rational thought might be: "My speech might only be OK, but if I do mess up, everyone will forget about it soon enough".

Using your own "worst outcome" and "likely outcome" from above, describe your...

Irrational thought:
Rational thought:

My Research Map – Fact Finding

Look at the next page and think about anything you are interested about. I challenge you to learn and write down 6 facts about a topic you're interested.

For example: I am really interested in Karate and I think it would be really cool to learn some facts about how Karate started.

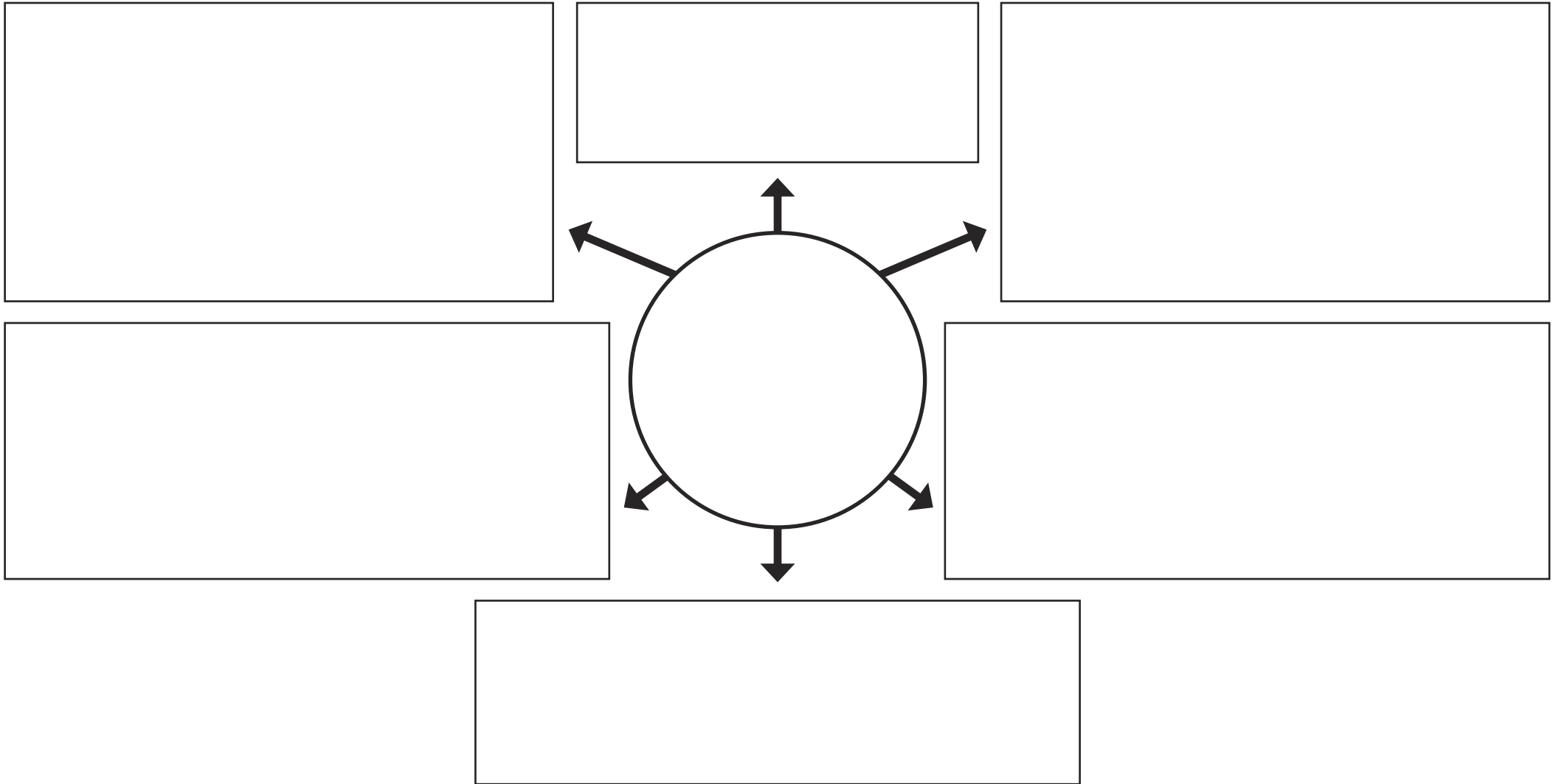
You can think of absolutely anything! Use the internet or books to discover 6 facts about your interesting topic. This links to **learn** from our five ways to wellbeing!



Once you've found your facts, share them with someone. This can be with a friend or family member. You can even call me! I would love to know your facts! That way we are also **connecting** from our five ways to wellbeing.

My Research Map

Fill the map with facts or pictures from your research and make links between any that have a connection. You could include questions you might research another day.



What Are My Main Worries

If you have completed Rate Your Anxiety/Worry resource and you scored quite highly, it may be an idea to write down the top five worries you have each day.

Please put them in order, the top one being the biggest worry. All five worries may be everyday worries, or they may be something you worry about on most days but not daily.

When you have completed all five worries, think about whether you feel you are able to make any changes that would help you to feel less anxious.

The adult you are with can also help you to think about which coping strategies would be useful to help you deal with the worry and make it more manageable for you each day.

You could try a variety of coping strategies, such as using worry dolls or writing a diary about your feelings. Take notice of any patterns, for example: "I am nervous on Monday mornings because I have maths and I worry I won't be able to do it." If this is the case, try to find a solution. Could you speak to your teacher, your parents/carers or a member of school staff?

You could use mindfulness to help you relax. If you are relaxed, you will sleep better, wake up more refreshed, feel more resilient and your levels of anxiety and worry will fall.

You could try exercise to release positive feelings in your body, which will help you to feel better about yourself and reduce your anxiety and negative thoughts.

You could create a worry doll: tell your worries to the doll at night and, when you wake up, you will feel better about the issue and more able to face the task/situation that is troubling you.

If you know you are going to feel worries about something, try to think about it in advance and try to change your mindset. You could change your routine to break the anxiety cycle or you could do something that you really enjoy right before the task/situation which makes you feel anxious.

Tell yourself that you feel good and that you are excited and ready for the task or situation you are about to start.

My Top Five Worries



1.

4.

2.

5.

3.

My Mood Diary

If you find that you are ever in a mood, look at the next page!
Keep track of your moods throughout your time out of school.

1. When you feel you're in a mood (good or bad!), complete your mood diary.
2. Record the day and time you felt your mood change.
3. Rate your mood intensity from 0 to 100, how strong was your mood?
4. Comment on what caused your mood.
5. Do this every time you feel your mood change.

Questions to consider:

- How often is your mood changing?
- Is it usually a good mood or a bad mood?
- Is there something in particular that makes your mood change?
- Can you see any patterns in your moods?



Mood Diary

Day & Time	Mood / Emotion Rate intensity of emotion 0 – 100 %	Comments Example: What was happening, where, who with? What went through your mind (thoughts, images)? What were you doing just before and / or after you felt this way?



My Action Plan!

Now that school is closed, think about something you want to achieve during this time. Set yourself a goal to have

done by time schools open again. This can be something you want to learn or do. Now is the opportunity to use this time off!

1. Think about your overall goal and complete the top half of the next page.
2. Write down your plan to achieve this goal (including challenges and actions)
3. Consider reviewing your action plan in 4 weeks time.
4. Complete the review on the bottom half of the page 4 weeks (or similar) after you set the goal.
5. Keep your goal SMART! Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely!

Questions to consider:

- Did you achieve everything you wanted to?
- Was there any challenge in particular that made it difficult to finish your goal?
- What could you have changed to make it easier to achieve your goal?

Do you think your goal was SMART?

-



Action plan

Topic: My overall goal:	This goal is important to me because: 1. 2. 3.
Possible challenges to this goal:	Things that might help me reach this goal:
The actions I will take to support me in reaching my goal: 1. 2. 3.	When might be a good time to do these actions: How regularly:

I will review this plan on this date:

Reflection on action plan

Date:

What has gone well?

What do you feel has been challenging about your action plan?

Will you change anything about your action plan moving forward?

Contact for Support



BUZZ US is a **text** messaging service run by **Compass BUZZ** for young people aged 11-18 who live in North Yorkshire

Text a wellbeing worker on
07520 631168

if you are experiencing any of the following:



Bullying



Low Mood



Anxiety



Stress



Self Esteem



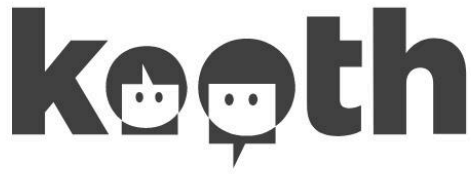
Self Harm



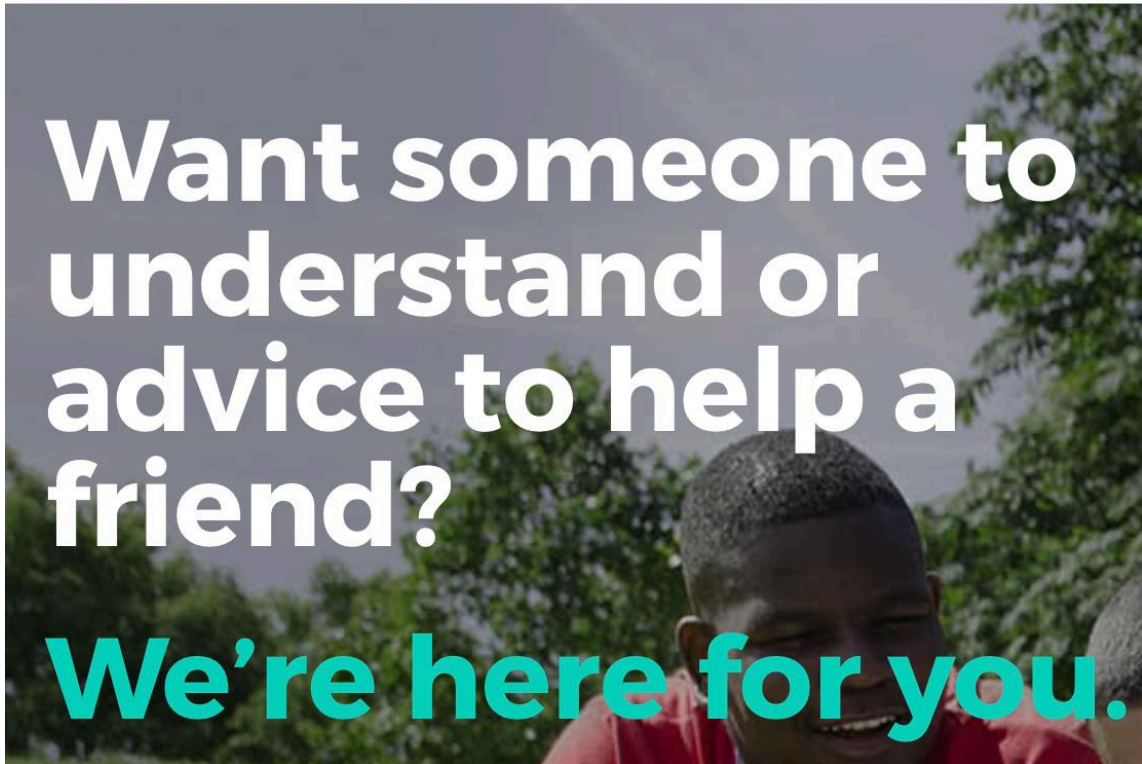
Eating Problems



Emotions




Free, safe and anonymous
online support for young people



childline

Call 0800 1111

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME

Info and advice 

Get support 

Toolbox 

Get involved

You are here / Home / Info and advice

Se

INFO AND ADVICE

We're here for you, whatever's on your mind. We'll support you. Guide you. Help you make decisions that are right for you.

Our tips and techniques, ideas and inspiration, can help you feel more in control. And you can access them in your own time, at your own pace!



**You.
Your friends.
The Internet.**

References of Resources

Relaxation Techniques (p4.) – Free Download from TherapistAid.com
<https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/relaxation-techniques>

Five Ways to Wellbeing and Ideas Bank (p6-11). – Free Download from Healthy Young Minds in Herts.
<https://www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk/five-ways-wellbeing>

Logging my Five Ways to Wellbeing (p14.) - Free Download from Healthy Young Minds in Herts. <https://www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk/five-ways-wellbeing>

Thought Clouds Worksheet (p19.) – Downloaded from Twinkl.co.uk account

Bedtime Gratitude (p20-21.) – Downloaded from Twinkl.co.uk account

Challenging Anxious Thoughts (p22.) – Free Download from TherapistAid.com
<https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/challenging-anxious-thoughts>

My Research Map (p24.) – Downloaded from Twinkl.co.uk account

My Main Worries (p25-26.) – Downloaded from Twinkl.co.uk account

My Mood Diary (p28.) – Free download from getselfhelp.co.uk
<https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/docs/MoodDiary2.pdf>

Action Plan (p30.) – Free Download from Public Health England, Rise Above
<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/rise-above/overview>