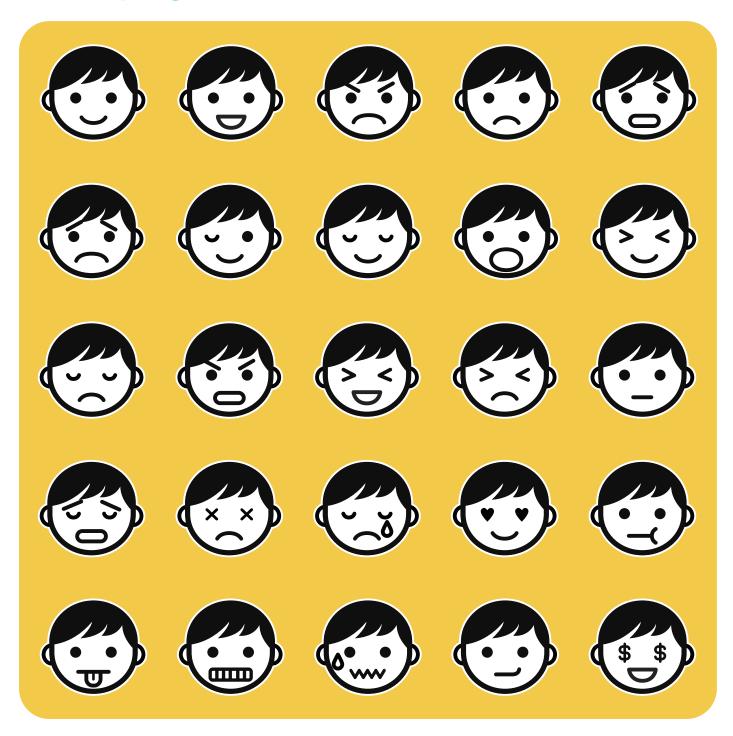




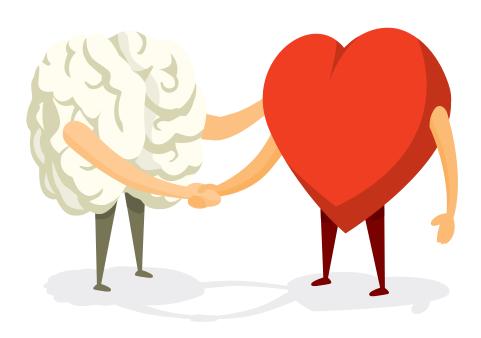
### What are these things called emotions anyway?!

A young person's guide to understanding and coping with emotions



### What you'll find in this workbook

	Page
Introduction	3
Session One: Recognising emotions	4
Session Two: Cues and signals of emotions	10
Session Three: Understanding anxiety	17
Session Four: Understanding anger	22
Session Five: Understanding sadness	25
Session Six: Emotions and our brain	30
Session Seven: Managing physical sensations	32
Session Eight: Challenging thoughts	36
Session Nine: Challenging thoughts continued	40
Session Ten: Communication styles	43
Session Eleven: Bringing it all together	46



### **Introduction**

As human beings we all experience a wide range of emotions, some positive, some negative and some a mixture of both! It's really common for young people to find their own emotions confusing and may even struggle with understanding other people's emotions too. This workbook has been designed to help you learn more about emotions, helping you to identify them and find ways to manage them when they get too much.

To help you develop your skills each session of the workbook will include a take-home task. There is no right or wrong answer to the tasks but we know that the more we practice something the more changes we notice.

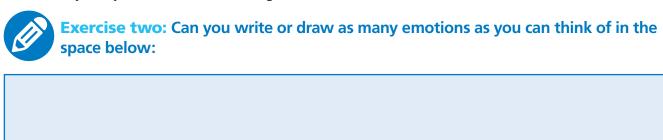


**Exercise one:** Complete the 'My Workbook Plan' below to plan when you are going to complete the take home tasks:

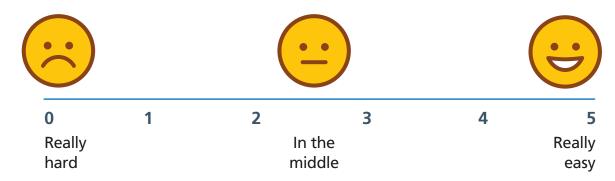
I'll start at this time	I'll complete the tasks in this location	I can talk to the below people if I need help or feel stuck

### **Session One: Recognising emotions**

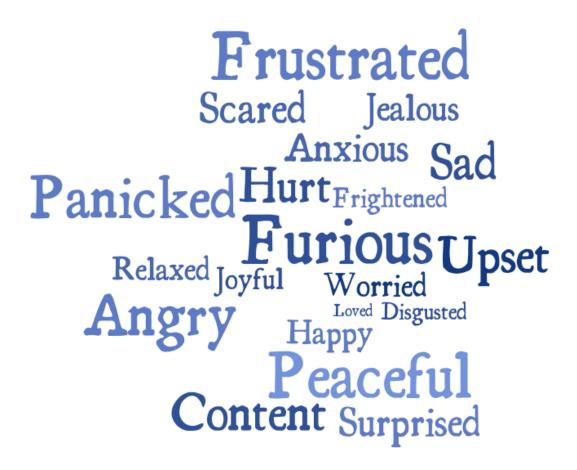
As we touched on earlier a big part of being human is experiencing lots of different emotions but they aren't always easy to understand or recognise. There are lots of words to describe different emotions.



Circle one of the numbers below to say how you found listing different emotions:



Here are some examples of different emotions we may experience:



Some of the most common emotions are:



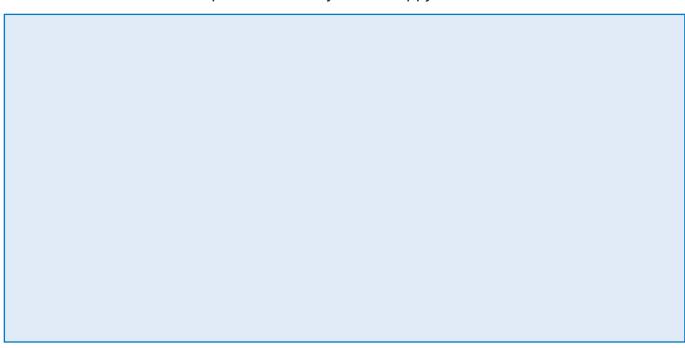
But how do we recognise we feel this way?

Emotions are more than just words or pictures. When we feel a certain way we may notice changes in our body, the way we think and even the different things that we do. Although everyone is different we tend to express our feelings in a similar way.



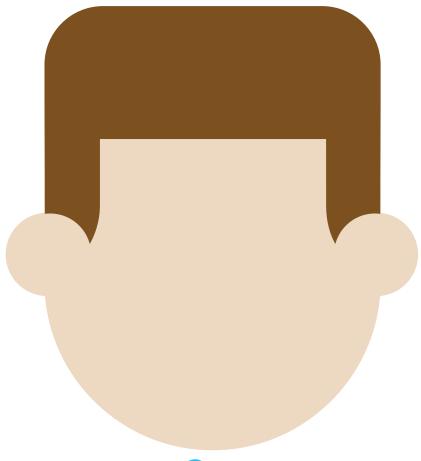
**Exercise three:** Take happiness as an example, we might tell others that we feel happy but there are other cues that can tell us more about how we are feeling.

What kind of situations or experiences make you feel happy?

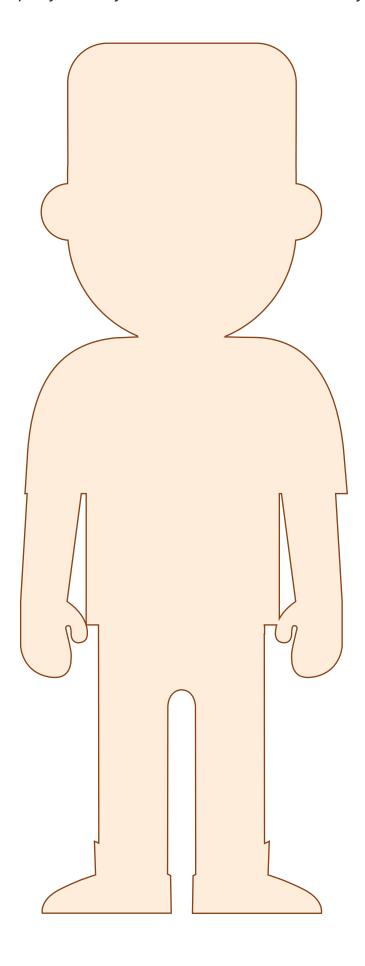


Think back to one of these situations when answering the following questions.

When you felt happy in this situation what changes did you notice in your face? Write or label them on the picture below:



What sensations come up in your body? Draw or label them on the body map below:

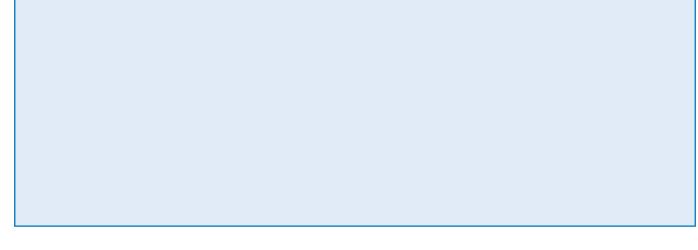


### What sort of thoughts run through your mind in this situation?

HINT: Thoughts are the words or sentences you might say to yourself.



What kind of things might you do when you feel happy?





### Take home task: Exploring my emotions

Use the diary on the next page to help you pay attention to your feelings this week.

- 1. Think back on what you have done that day.
- 2. Write down a word to describe how you were feeling during an event in the day.
- 3. Reflect on this event and ask yourself what thoughts, body sensations and behaviours showed up. This will help you begin to identify the feeling.

## **Exploring my emotions**

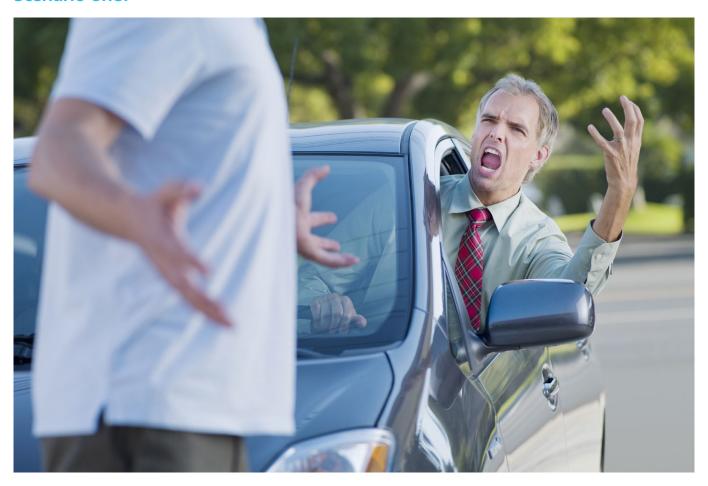
What I was doing	How did I feel? What word, colour or image would I use to describe this emotion?	How did I know I felt this way? What was going through my mind? How did my body feel? What was I doing?

### **Session Two: Cues and signals of emotions**

**Non-verbal communication:** Often we can pick up on signals about how we, and others, feel based on non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is communication that does not involve words and it makes up about 93% of our interactions with people! Non-verbal communication includes body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, eye contact and posture amongst other things. Let's look at an example and some of the non-verbal cues that might tell us how we, or others, are feeling.

Take a look at the following scenarios and answer the questions below. Even if you feel that you can't relate to each image, try to imagine what the person might be feeling, thinking and doing.

### **Scenario one:**



Describe what you see in the above image:

How do you think he might be feeling?
How can you tell this?
What physical sensations might Bob be feeling in his body?
What is Bob doing because of how he feels?

### **Scenario two:**



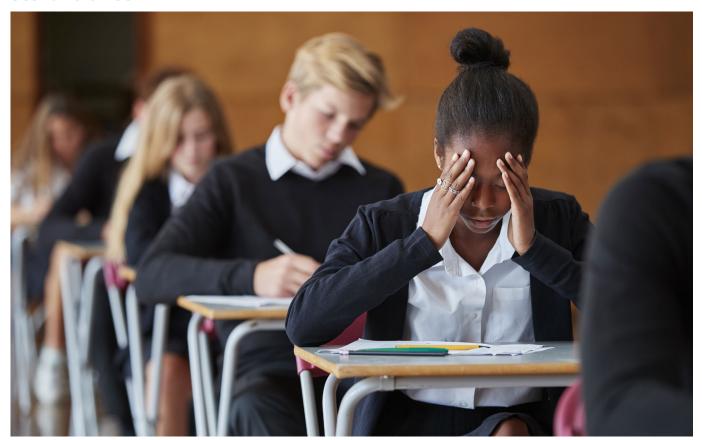
Describe what you see in t	he above image:		

Let's look at Sam - the young person in the blue t-shirt.

How do you think he might be feeling?

How can you tell this?
What physical sensations might Sam be feeling in his body?
What is Sam doing because of how he feels?

### **Scenario three:**



Describe what you see in the	above image:		

Let's focus on Simone, the young person you can see sitting their A-level exam.

How do you think they might be feeling?

How can you tell this?
What physical sensations might Simone be feeling in their body?
What might Simone do because of how they feel?



### Take home task: Exploring my emotions take two!

These scenarios have focussed on some of the more difficult emotions, use the diary on the next page to explore the thoughts, sensations and behaviours that accompany pleasant emotions such as feeling loved or excited.

# **Exploring pleasant emotions**

### **Session Three: Understanding anxiety**

### Other words include fear, stress, scared, panicky, worried, terrified and frightened.



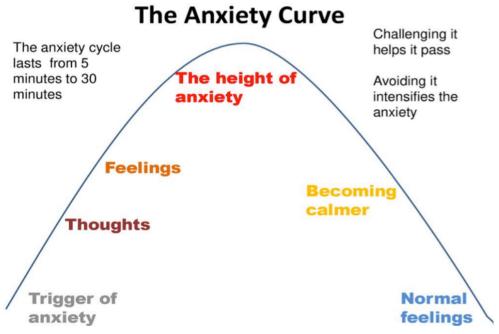
When we were cavemen and women we may have been faced with lots of dangerous situations that might threaten our life. Our brain wants to make sure we stay alive so has had to develop a quick way to respond to danger. This is called fight, flight or freeze response.





The fight, flight or freeze system is like our internal alarm system that detects threat and responds quickly with lots of physiological changes in the body. These changes happen automatically and are outside of our control. At times it needs to be this way (for example when a car is racing towards us) but it can become difficult when our alarm system is firing when there is no immediate threat or danger. Sometimes our own thoughts and body sensations can be enough to set our alarm off.

### How anxiety peaks:



### What did you learn from talking about Sarah's music exam?

**Anxiety and avoidance:** When our anxiety is at its peak we may have the urge to escape the situation (the flight part of our system is activated). If we do escape, we feel immediate relief but what would happen in the long run?

The more we avoid the things that make us feel anxious the harder it becomes to overcome anxiety. We need to gradually face our fears so that our alarm system learns that it doesn't need to go off!





**Exercise five:** Take a moment to think about a situation where you felt anxious or experienced someone being anxious.

**Situation -** Where? When? Who with? What happened? How? **Thoughts -** What went through my mind? If I think this what does it mean about me or the situation? Behaviours - What helped me Feelings - What emotion did I cope? What didn't I do? What automatic feel? What else? How intense was the reaction did I have? What would other feeling? people have seen me doing? Physical sensations - What did I notice in my body? What did I feel? Where did I feel it?



### Take home task: Facing my fears

- Is there anything that you might be avoiding because of anxiety? Complete the handout to think about the small steps you could take to overcome this.
- Read through Handout One for more information on the fight, flight or freeze system.

### **Handout one:** Fight, flight or freeze response

### Head dizzy / light headed Result of our faster breathing.

### Breathe fast and shallow Helps us take in more oxygen which is then transported around the blood system. Sometimes experience a choking feeling.

### **Stomach churns**

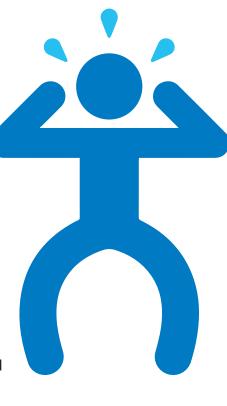
Adrenaline reduces blood flow and relaxes muscles in stomach and intestines (blood diverted to limb muscles) causing nausea, butterflies or churning.

### Muscles tense

Blood containing vital oxygen and glucose energy, is sent to the big muscles of the arms and legs - ready for fight or escape. Can also cause aches and pains.

### **Brain hijacked**

Thoughts race which makes it hard to think clearly and rationally. Feelings of being 'unreal' or detached.



### **Bladder relaxes**

Inner sphincter muscle relaxes so we might feel urge to pass urine. Outer sphincter remains under conscious control (except in rare terror situations).

### **Eves widen**

Allows more light in - improves (or blurs) vision.

### **Mouth dries**

Caused by narrowing of the blood vessels.

### Heart beats faster and palpitations

Blood pressure and pulse increase as the heart pumps more blood to the muscles, allowing us to run away or attack.

### **Body heats and sweats**

A side effect of all the speeded up systems is that the body rapidly heats. Sweating allows the body to cool again, and to become more slippery to allow escape.

### Hands tingle - legs tremble ('jelly legs')

Blood is diverted to large muscles, and small blood vessels constrict, causing tingling, trembling or numbness.

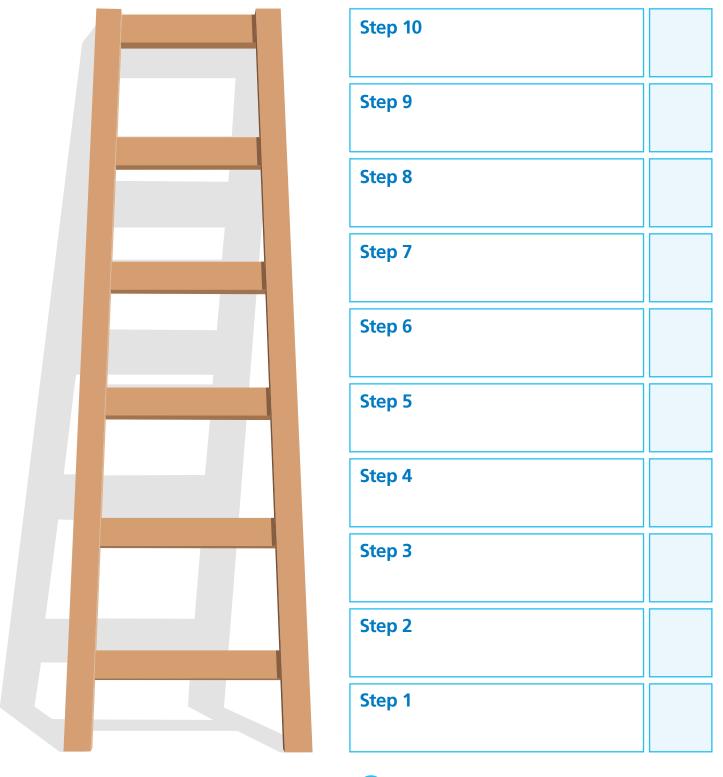
Adapted from © Carol Vivyan (2009-2015)

### **Facing my fears**

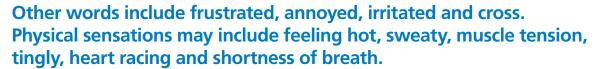
The situation I am avoiding is:	

### My goal is:

Write down the steps you can take to achieve your goal. When starting each step remember it's important to start slowly with something that gives you a bit of anxiety but not too much. To help you with this, give each step a rating from 0-10, where ten is very high anxiety and 0=no anxiety at all.



### **Session Four: Understanding anger**





Anger has a similar physical response in the body as anxiety, it's almost like you're just experiencing the fight part in the fight, flight or freeze response. Anger can feel like a difficult emotion to experience at times as sometimes it can lead us to act aggressively or do things that we later regret.

Some of these responses to anger might be unhelpful but anger can also be a helpful emotion. Anger helps ensure that we are aware of injustices and gives us the motivation to right wrongs. Imagine living in a world where there was no anger, would people be treated fairly and equally?



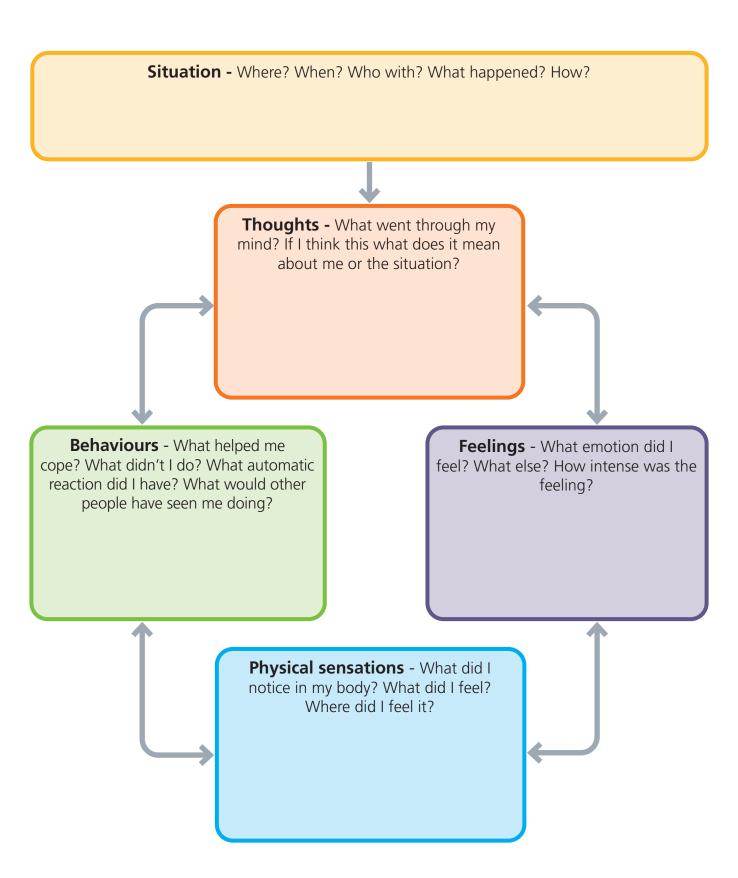
### **Exercise six:** Circle the helpful responses to anger out of the list below

Pushing someone	Taking deep breaths
Shouting at someone	Talking to others about how you feel
Doing exercise	Going to the police
Writing things down	Never talking to the person that's
Distracting yourself	angered you again
Going for a walk	Punching a pillow
	<b>Hurting yourself</b>

Why might some of the above responses be unhelpful? Could there be times when they are helpful?



**Exercise seven:** Take a moment to think about a situation where you felt angry or experienced someone being angry

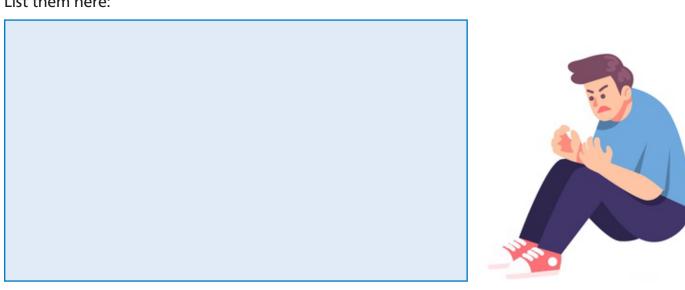




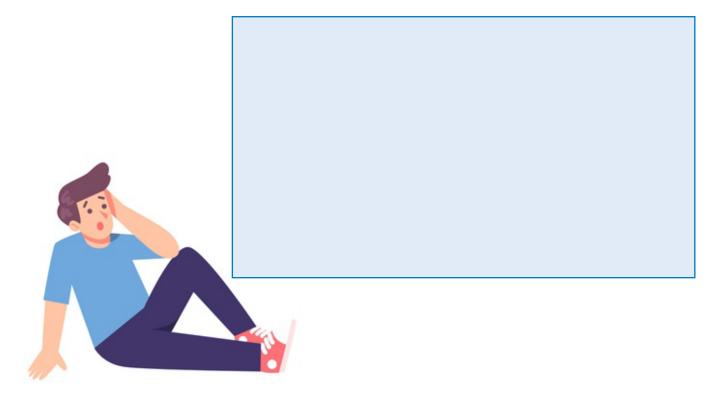
### Take home task: Helpful and unhelpful responses to anger

Looking at your behaviours in the cycle you mapped out, which ones might not be helpful?

### List them here:



What helpful behaviours could you do instead when you feel angry? List them here:



### **Session Five: Understanding sadness**

Other words include upset, miserable, low in mood, blue or down in the dumps. Physical sensations of sadness may include heaviness, tired, a weighed down feeling or a feeling of slowness.



Sadness is a helpful signal that something in our environment is wrong and is often the result of experiencing a loss such as the loss of a significant relationship. It's therefore thought that sadness helps motivate us to regain what has been lost whilst acting as a signal to others that we need extra support. Even as cavemen and women we needed the social support of our group to survive and sadness would be a way of seeking emotional help from others when needed.



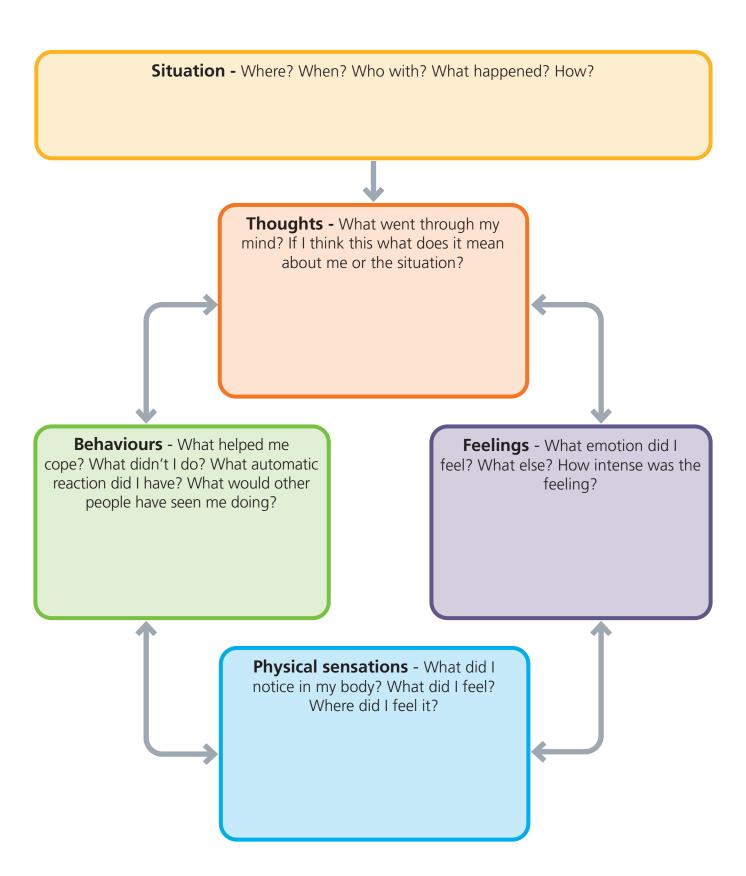
### **Exercise eight: Signs of low mood**

What might you notice if you were feeling low in mood? Write your answers around the image below:

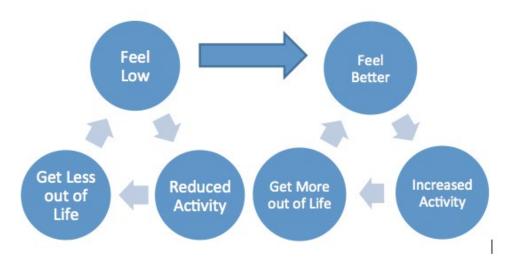




### **Exercise nine:** Take a moment to think about a situation where you felt sad or experienced someone feeling sad



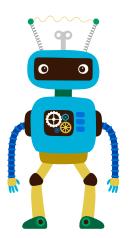
**Inactivity and low mood:** As motivation, energy and enjoyment are lower when we are sad it can feel harder to engage in any kind of activity-even the things we used to love doing. However the less we do, the worse we tend to feel. Doing more of the things we need to and the things we enjoy helps us to feel better.





### Take home task: Self care and activity plan

- Look at the list of activities on the next page. Circle some that you think already help you when you feel sad and those that you would like to try.
- Write them down in your Self Care and Activity Plan.



Food for thought: If we could pick and choose our emotions would we be the person we are today? What sacrifices would come if we only felt some of these emotions? Would we be more like a robot than a human being? The aim of this workbook isn't to 'get rid' of your feelings but to help you become more aware of them and find ways to cope if emotions get too overwhelming.

### **Handout two:** List of enjoyable activities

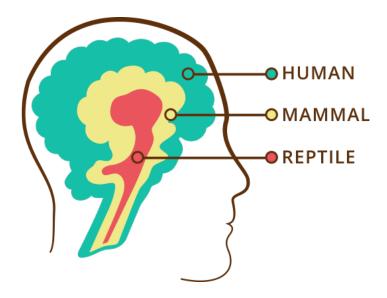
- Spending time with family and friends
- Reading
- Watching TV
- Playing or listening to music
- Video games
- Cooking or baking
- Sports
- Going for a walk or being outdoors
- Doing some creative like art or photography
- Researching my interests on the internet
- Taking a bath
- Eating a nice healthy meal
- Connecting to my faith or spirituality
- Learning a new skill
- Relaxing
- Laughing
- Thinking about an enjoyable trip or holiday
- Planning for the future
- Dancing

Can you think of anymore not on the list? Write them here:				

My self care and activity plan

Day	Activity	How you felt before? (on a scale of 0-10)	How you felt afterwards? (on a scale of 0-10)

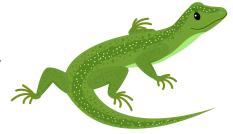
### **Session Six: Emotions and our brain**



This picture shows that our brain is made up of three parts; the reptile, mammal and human brain.

### The reptile brain

The reptile brain is the part of the brain that ensures our survival by managing all our basic instincts including breathing, digestion, hunger, sleep and heart rate. Our reptile brain is a bit like our survival control centre.



### The mammal brain



The mammal brain is our emotional control centre involved in processing feelings, memories and response to stress. It is responsible for our nurturing and caring instincts, controlling our hormones and helping us attach to other people.

The cat and a lizard both have super sharp instincts when it comes to ensuring their safety-both would be able to pick up on a predator and run away as quickly as possible! That's because both the mammalian and reptile brain control the fight, flight or freeze response that we talked about above. The cat however is more nurturing of it's offspring and has slightly more complex emotions than a lizard.

### The human brain

The human brain is referred to as the thinking brain. It is responsible for rational thought, problem solving, self-awareness, planning and understanding or interpreting emotions. When all parts of our brain are working together we can remain calm during times of stress. However there are times when our reptile or mammal brain gets overwhelmed which makes it hard for our thinking brain to connect.





### **Exercise ten:** Flipping your lid

Watch the below clip by Russ Harris. This introduces an easy to remember model which shows what happens in our brain when we get stressed.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CpRY9-MIHA&t=29s

Have there been times you've flipped your lid? If so what happened and how did you manage it?



### Take home task:

Explain the Hand Model of the brain and 'flipping your lid' to a friend or family member.

### **Session Seven: Managing physical sensations**

The reason why it can be useful to focus on what is happening in our body is that when our emotions become too overwhelming, and we've flipped our lid, it's hard for our thinking brain to connect and calm us down. We need to find a way to bring our emotions down so that the upstairs and downstairs brain can communicate with each other again.

### **Relaxation exercises**

Physical relaxation is a great way of calming down the fight, flight or freeze response and helping us to slow down and think

### **Progressive muscle relaxation**

Our bodies respond automatically to stressful situations and thoughts by becoming tense. The opposite relationship also works: a good way of relaxing the mind is to deliberately relax the body.

In a progressive muscle relaxation each muscle group is tensed in turn, and the tension is then released. This relaxes the muscles and allows you to notice the contrast between tension and relaxation.

Relaxation should be enjoyable so if any part of the exercise is too difficult skip it for the moment. If you have any injuries you may wish to leave out that part of the exercise. Lie down flat on your back, on a firm bed, a couch, or on the floor. Support your head and neck with a pillow or cushion. Alternatively sit in a comfortable chair with your head well-supported. Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so.

**Instructions:** Focus your attention on different parts of your body in sequence. Go through the sequence three times. For the first time tense each body part, hold it for a few moments, then relax. For the second time lightly tense and release each body part. For the final round just pay attention to each muscle group and decide to relax it.

### **Recommended sequence:**

- 1 Right hand and arm (clench the fist and tighten the muscles in the arm)
- 2 Left hand and arm
- 3 Right leg (tense the leg, lifting the knee slightly)
- 4 Left leg
- 5 Stomach and chest
- 6 Back muscles (pull the shoulders back slightly)
- 7 Neck and throat (push the head back slightly into the pillow/surface)
- **8 Face** (scrunch up the muscles in your face)



You might find it easier to listen to the relaxation exercise. Here is a link to a 15 minute guide to progressive muscle relaxation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=912eRrbes2g

### **Balloon breathing**

This technique engages your diaphragm, which is the most efficient muscle of breathing located at the base of the lungs. When our fight, flight or freeze system is activated we may notice that we are shallow breathing with our chest rather than our diaphragm and stomach. This exercise helps to reset and slow our breathing so we feel calmer. The sequence is described below but whilst doing it some young people find it helpful to imagine a balloon in their stomach that gently inflates as they breathe in and deflates as they breathe out.

### Diaphragmatic breathing technique



1. Lie on your back on a flat surface or in bed, with your knees bent and your head supported. You can use a pillow under your knees to support your legs. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm move as you breathe.



2. Breathe in slowly through your nose so that your stomach moves out against your hand. The hand on your chest should remain as still as possible.



3. Tighten your stomach muscles, letting them fall inward as you exhale through pursed lips. The hand on your upper chest must remain as still as possible.

Illustrations ref: https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/26573625/diaphragmatic-breathing

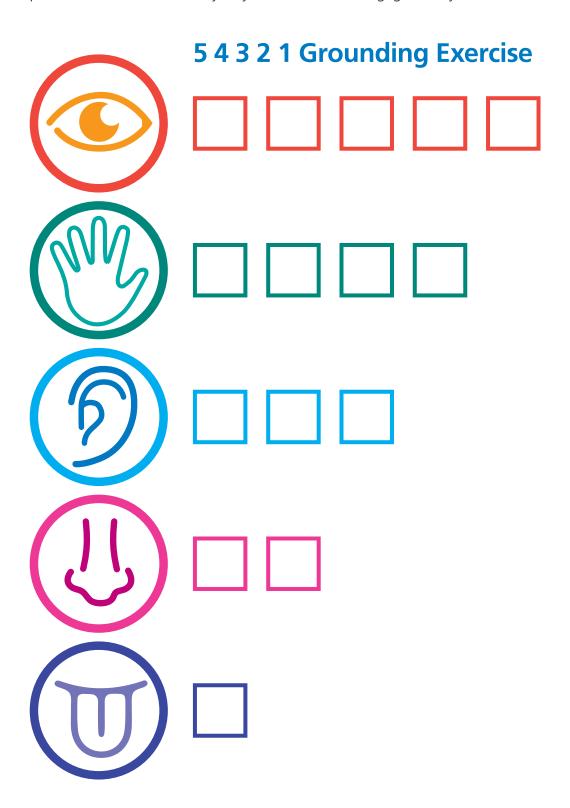
### **Physical exercise**

Another way of releasing tension and adrenaline from our body is by doing exercise. Doing exercise also helps to increase the amount of endorphins (pleasurable hormones) in our body which can help us to feel happier and calmer.



### **Grounding exercises**

When we have flipped our lid, or emotions have become too overwhelming, we need to find a way to bring ourselves back to where we are right now. Grounding exercises help to ground us back into the present moment and an easy way to do them is to engage all of your senses.



Some young people also find it helpful to carry around a small object that is meaningful to them. When they get overwhelmed they can look at the object, notice its textures, shapes, patterns and details as a way of helping calm emotions that have gotten too much.



### Take home task: Practicing relaxation

- Write down what physical exercise you are going to do this week below.
- Choose one of the exercises introduced in this session to practice each day and monitor the impact it has on your relaxation levels.

What exercis	Vhat exercise could you do over the next week? Make a plan for when you will do this:					

### **Monitoring relaxation**

Day	Relaxation exercise practiced	Relaxation levels before (on a scale of 0-10)	Relaxation levels after (on a scale of 0-10)

### **Session Eight: Challenging thoughts**

The first step to challenging our thoughts is being able to catch our unhelpful thoughts and examine them using our thinking brain.



Evergise aleven. Take a look at one of your cycles that you manned out for feelings

of anxiety, anger or sadness. Pick one example and focus on the thoughts box only.
Are these thoughts helpful or unhelpful? Why?
Thoughts can be tricky as we have so many of them and they happen automatically. We also tend to believe that because we think something it must be 100% true and a fact. When we look more closely at our thoughts we can notice some common unhelpful thinking styles.
Exercise twelve: Take a look at the list and see if you can identify the unhelpful thinking styles that you might have experienced. Write them in the box below:
Key point!

**Sometimes one thought can be an example of lots of different unhelpful thinking styles.** 

### **Unhelpful thinking styles**

### Mind reading

When we assume that we know what others are thinking - usually about us.

Where is the evidence? Are these my own thoughts?

### **Prediction**

We believe we know what is going to happen.

Ask myself "am I making predictions"? How likely is it?

### **Compare and despair**

When we see the good in others but only the negative in ourselves.

What would be a more balanced way of looking at this?

### **Critical self**

Self-criticism, putting our self down, see mistakes as all our fault.

I'm being hard on myself, am I really responsible for the situation?

### Black and white thinking

Believe things can only be one of two ways, good or bad, right or wrong.

Allow for grey areas. Widen my spectrum of beliefs.

### Catastrophising

When we believe that the worst possible thing will happen.

Question myself - what is more likely to happen?

### **Mountains and molehills**

When we exaggerate a negative outcome or minimise a positive one.

How would it appear to someone else? Check out the bigger picture.

### **Emotional reasoning**

Feeling anxious means there must be danger. Feeling bad means things must be bad.

The feelings are a reaction to my thoughts - an automatic brain reflex.

### Mental filter

When we see only the negative - we have our 'gloomy' specs on.

Am I only aware of the bad things? Take my 'gloomy' specs off and take a more realistic look.

### **Judgements**

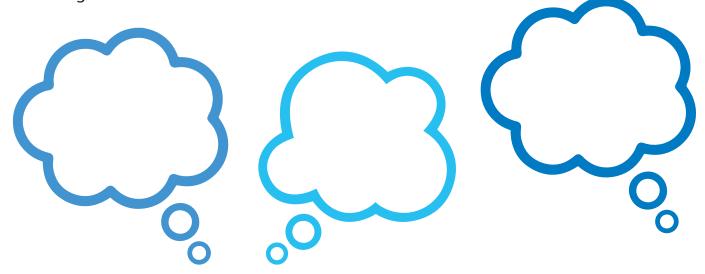
Judging things around us rather than describing what we actually see.

Try to find another perspective, an alternative way of seeing an event.



Write your unhelpful thought here:

To challenge this thought, ask yourself how else could I look at this situation? Is this thought true all of the time? What would be a more helpful thought to have? Write your answers in the thought bubbles below:



### **Key point!**

Sometimes one thought can be an example of lots of different unhelpful thinking styles.



### Take home task: Thought record

- Keep practicing catching your unhelpful thoughts by using the thought record on the next page.
- Identify if you are falling into any unhelpful thinking patterns.
- Challenge your thought to gain a more balanced perspective.

### Thought record

Situation Tild Tild Tild Tild Tild Tild Tild Tild	Thought	Unhelpful thinking style	Balanced thought

### **Session Nine: Challenging thoughts continued**

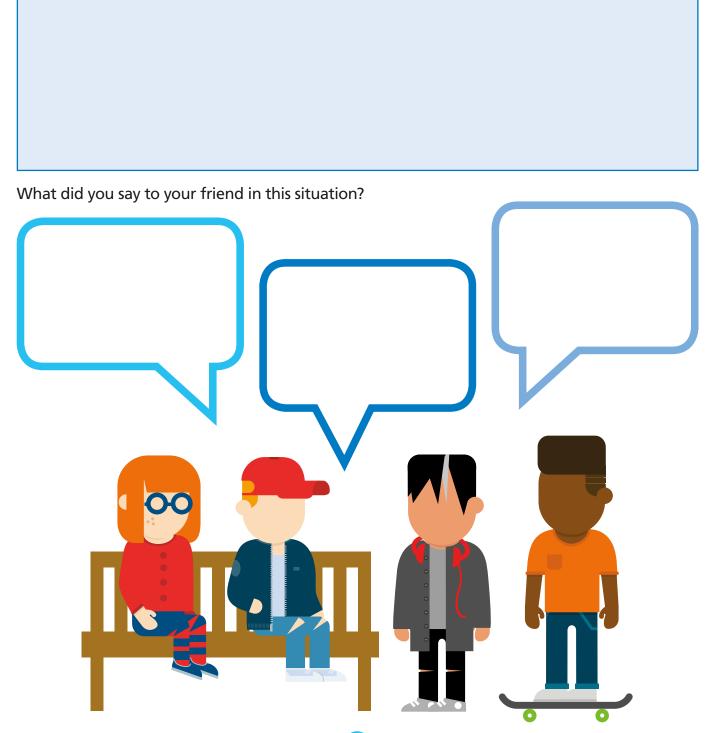
Sometimes when we are experiencing difficult emotions we can have critical thoughts and say unkind things to ourselves. Critical thoughts are a bit like having a bully on our shoulder telling us horrible things and pointing out all of our mistakes.



### **Exercise fourteen:**

Think of a time that a friend was upset or felt cross with themselves.

Write what happened here:



Exercise fifteen: Kindness role model
If this exercise felt like a hard one to do perhaps think of someone in your life-either a friend, a family member or even a celebrity that you look up to as being kind and caring.
Who have you chosen as your 'kindness role model' and why?
What would your role model say in this situation?

Next time you feel cross or upset with yourself ask would I, or my kindness role model, speak to a friend in this way? If the answer is no then try not to speak to yourself in that way either. Use some of the examples you wrote above to help you treat yourself as you would treat your friends.

### **Balancing perspectives: Taking off the dark sunglasses**

When we feel overwhelmed by our emotions it can feel like we are wearing dark sunglasses. These sunglasses filter out all the positive and make it hard for us to see the bigger picture. One way of challenging our thoughts is to get some balance and pay attention to the positives we might be overlooking.





### Take home task: Gratitude diary

• To help us balance our perspectives, write at least one thing you are grateful for each day in the diary on the next page.

### **Gratitude diary**

Monday		Tuesday
Wednesday		Thursday
Friday		Saturday
	Sunday	

### **Session Ten: Communication styles**

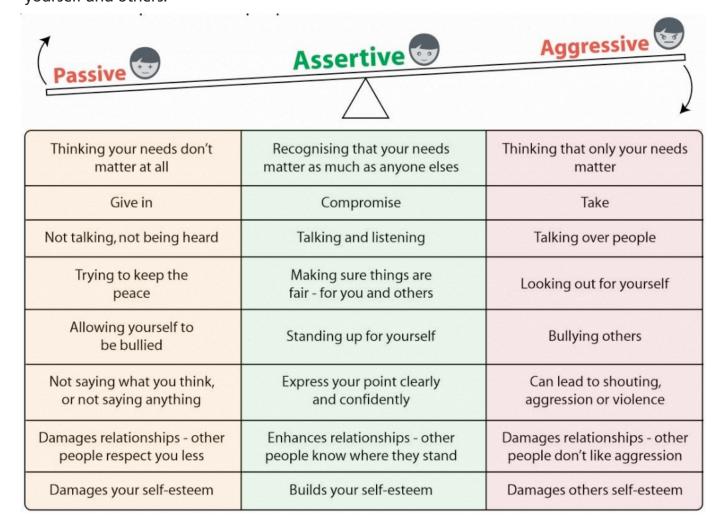
There are three types of communication skills which are described below:

Passive: "Your needs are more important than mine"

**Assertive:** "Both of our needs are important"

**Aggressive:** "My needs are more important than yours"

Here's some more signals and cues for each communication style and the impact of these on yourself and others:



Looking at the table which communication style do you think you fall into?

Communication styles ref: https://www.bcpti.ca/assertiveness-art-communicating-need/

### 10 top tips for assertive communication!

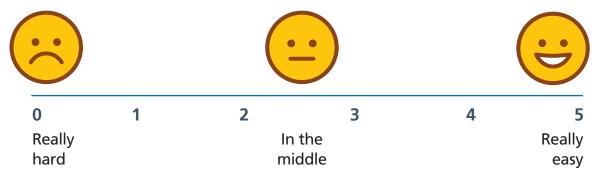
- 1. It's okay to say no.
- 2. It's okay to make requests and ask for help.
- 3. No one will be annoyed with you for being direct. Direct and clear communication is easier to understand.
- **4.** You don't need to apologise for needing or asking for something.
- 5. When talking to someone about how you feel lead with 'I' statements. E.g. When you didn't respond to my message for a couple of days I felt upset and worried. In the future I'd appreciate it if you could reply as soon as possible.
- 6. Being assertive isn't the same as being rude!
- 7. If you know you have a difficult conversation coming up, try to practice and rehearse what you are going to say beforehand.
- **8.** When assertively communicating with others, keep a calm tone of voice, look them in the eyes, sit upright and avoid long explanations.
- 9. Use the broken record technique if someone won't take no for an answer. Just keep repeating your point no matter how much the other person might try to convince or change your mind.
- **10.** If you feel yourself getting angry, try to relax by using some of the relaxation and breathing techniques.



### **Exercise sixteen:**

We want to be aiming for a more assertive communication style so look at the points in the assertiveness column and try practicing these. You could either talk about how you might assertively manage a difficult situation or even role play this.

### How did this go?





### Take home task:

Practice your new assertive skills and write them in the diary to record how they went. Writing about our experiences trying new skills out helps us see if it was helpful and what could be done differently if not.

Practicing my assertiveness skills

Situation	How I acted assertively	What I thought would happen	What did happen

### **Session Eleven: Bringing it all together**

It is really helpful to remember what you want to achieve and all the things/people that will help you. Complete the wellbeing plan below and remember to keep practicing your strategies and reviewing them. Keep the ones that work and change the ones that don't. Keep going you're doing great!!

My goals:	Helpful strategies:
People/activities I enjoy:	I can talk to:

