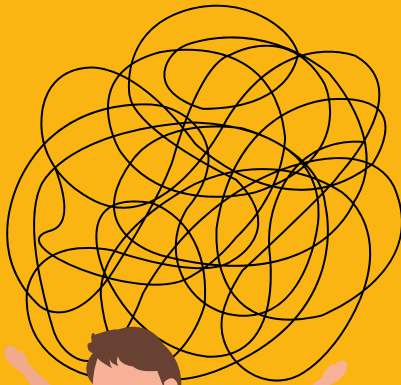


# How to help my difficult feelings



This booklet talks about difficult thoughts and feelings that you or a friend may have felt. If anything in the book makes you feel sad or upset, please talk to a grown up straight away.



# Understanding feelings

Everyone experiences different feelings.

A feeling can be something that we feel in our bodies (a physical feeling) like the feeling in our tummy when we are hungry, or it could be an emotion feeling like when we feel sad if we have fallen out with our friends. An emotion feeling could also be if we are looking forward to something and feel excited.

It is normal to have lots of different emotion feelings.

They can come and go throughout the day.

It is when these difficult feelings last for a long time that we might need to tell a grown up, someone that we trust like a parent or carer, a relative or a teacher.

Can you name some difficult feelings?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

# What are difficult feelings?

I may feel...



Well done if you wrote some of these down, can you think of any more difficult feelings?

.....

.....

Remember everybody has these feelings at some time and these are normal.

We can all have difficult feelings for lots of different reasons and sometimes it can be hard to work out why we feel like this.

It could be that we have some big things happening in our lives, or maybe it is smaller things that have built up over time. Sometimes there seems to be no reason.

Point to how you are feeling today, show a grown up so they can understand how you feel.

Difficult feelings usually pass but it may help to talk to a grown up that you trust if they last a long time.

Choose how you are feeling today



Write the names down of people who you can talk to or ask for help...

Someone I live with .....

Teacher/s .....

Relative/s .....

Friend/s .....

Anyone else? .....

# Why do we have these feelings?

Millions of years ago these feelings were helpful so people could react to anger or danger, such as seeing a dinosaur or a huge tiger.

To help them run faster and get away from the danger, their body's alarm system starts working.

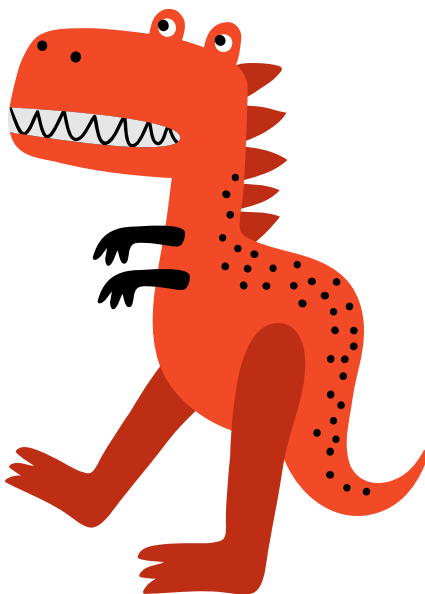
This means

- They breathe faster
- Their heart beats quicker
- They start to sweat
- They may feel sick
- They have butterflies in their tummy
- Their mind starts to race with lots of thoughts

We do not have these dangers now, but we still have these feelings, and we still have the alarm system in our body, and it sometimes thinks there is danger when there is no real danger.

It is normal for us to have some of these physical feelings when we are worried or anxious, but it can feel scary.

Once we realise the danger has gone or it is not as bad as we think, the feelings usually go.



## Here are examples of why I may be feeling this way

- Being bullied
- A big change
- Moving to a new school
- Making new friends
- Falling out with friends or family
- Thinking the worst is going to happen
- When parents/carers don't get along



- Feeling others are judging you
- If someone or something dies
- Being scared of messing things up
- Feeling under pressure
- Embarrassed
- School work

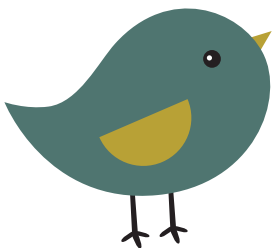


## When do I get these difficult feelings?

Sometimes we cope with difficult feelings by avoiding going to places or doing the things that make us feel like this. Which means we could be missing having fun in these places and learning new and exciting things, so let us try to work through the worry.

Write down what makes you worry or stresses you out as this can help.

Use your imagination to try and see what you can do that will change these unhelpful thoughts and feelings into helpful thoughts and feelings.



# Turning unhelpful thoughts and feelings into helpful thoughts and feelings.

Unhelpful thoughts:  
I have fallen out with  
my friend and now no  
one likes me, and I  
have no friends.

Helpful thoughts:  
I have had an  
argument with my  
friend. I know there  
are other people who  
like me, and I am not  
alone. I can sort this  
out and we can still be  
friends.

What are the things  
that worry me?

How do I change  
these unhelpful  
thoughts and feelings  
to helpful ones?



## How do I know if I need extra help to manage my difficult feelings?

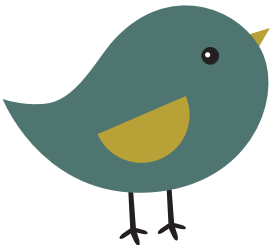
When difficult feelings build up it might feel overwhelming. This can affect how we think and how our bodies feel.

Sometimes when we have difficult emotions, we might feel like we want to hurt ourselves.

If you are having these thoughts and feelings, then you must talk to someone straight away and tell them how you are feeling.

If you are finding it difficult to explain how you are feeling you could use the activity on page 16 to help you.

EVERY  
DAY IS A  
FRESH  
START



## Things that may help me

Circle or highlight all the things you can do from the list, to help these feelings pass or can you think of any other things that help you?

- Talking to someone
- Write down how I am feeling
- Ask for help from a parent, carer or teacher
- Listen to (happy) music
- Play with my pets
- Watch my favourite movie or TV programme
- Hug my favourite toy
- Drink lots of water
- Go for a walk
- Make some nice food
- Dance or sing
- Sleep well
- Stay off mobile devices
- Do something I enjoy
- Listen to relaxing sounds
- Popping bubble wrap



## Try making a Worry Jar

Find a clean empty jar and decorate it, to make it unique like you. This is a place for you to put in any worries, so you do not have to carry them in your head all the time.

Write your worry down or draw it on a piece of paper and put it in the jar then put on the lid. When you feel ready to look at the worries in your jar, sit with a grown up and take out one or more of the worries.

Decide if the worry can now be torn up and thrown away or discuss what you can do to help the difficult feeling turn into a better feeling.

For every worry removed, feel proud of how well you are doing.



## Letting someone know how I am feeling

When you have difficult feelings, it is important to talk to a trusted grown up so they know what you are going through. This could be a parent or carer, a relative, a teacher, a lunchtime supervisor, a coach, or a youth worker.

It can be hard to put our feelings into words sometimes. It might be helpful to draw it out with different colours or to write how you are feeling down on paper.



Look at the image of the figure, think about how you are feeling right now.

Where is that feeling in the body?

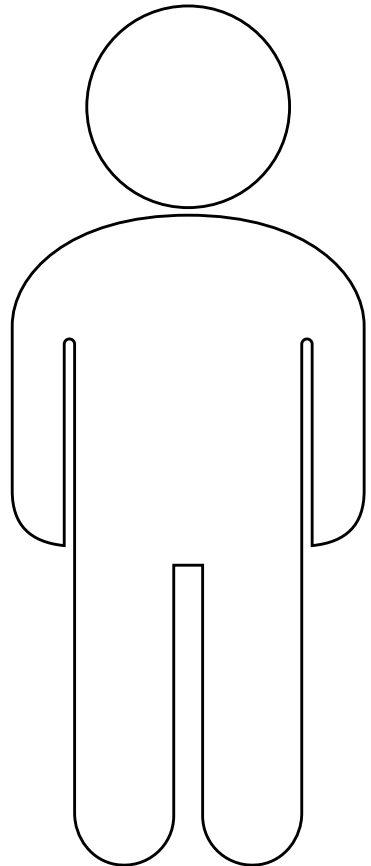
Does it feel light or heavy?

Is it bright or dark?

If it were a shape, would it have soft edges or sharp edges?

Using the figure image, you can write down words to explain how you are feeling around the outside of the figure.

When you have finished, you can use it to share your feelings with your grown up.



## What can I do if I need help now?

If the grown up, that you've started talking to about your feelings, thinks you need urgent support, please show them this page.

They can:

Contact the CAMHS ReACH team. A parent, carer or adult can call on 01924 316200.

They are available between 9am - 8pm, seven days a week.

Ring your doctor or call NHS 111.

If you need urgent medical treatment a grown up should take you to the nearest Emergency Department (A&E) or call 999

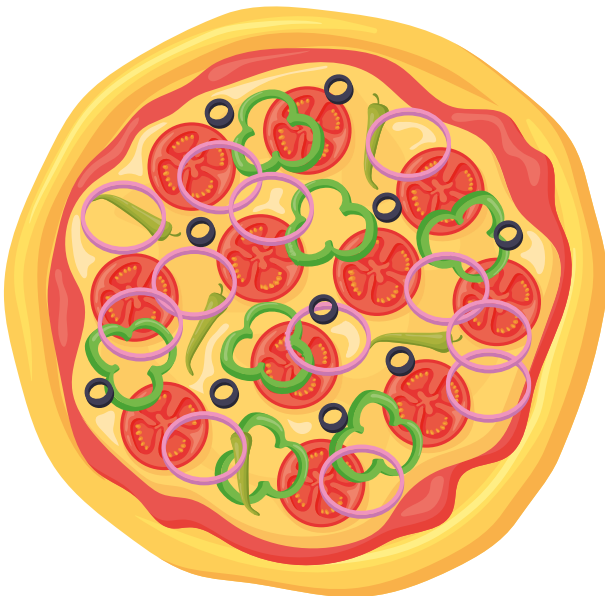


## Calming breathing

Everyone who you know gets worried and feels nervous, and these feelings are not always bad. Imagine if you have a test, feeling a bit worried can mean you decide to do that bit of extra work before the test.

When we are worried or anxious our breathing gets quicker, when our breathing is calmer, our brain will start to feel calmer too.

Imagine holding a warm pizza in both of your hands, slowly breathe in through your nose imagining all the wonderful smells, breathe out through your mouth imagining cooling the pizza down.



# Positive things about me

Sometimes when we are experiencing difficult feelings it can affect how we think and feel about who we are. It can become harder to see our strengths and to feel good about ourselves.

On this page is space for your friends, parents/carers, and teachers to write down what they like about you and your strengths. Once you have things wrote down it may be helpful to look over this page if you are having difficult feelings.



## Create a self-care box

Find and decorate an empty box, fill it with things that make you smile and remind you of the things you have got in your life that make you happy.

You could add photos, a book, or add something to keep your hands busy such as a fidget toy, colouring book, pens, a cuddly toy or even a piece of material that you like to hold.

You could include a list of people you can talk to or support websites such as [www.WF-I-CAN.co.uk](http://www.WF-I-CAN.co.uk) or Childline [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) .

Don't forget smells are good to help lift your mood, so you could add something with a smell that you like, such as a bath fizz. You could even add a packet of hot chocolate but ask a grown up to make this for you!



# Feel Good Tree

Where the leaves are:

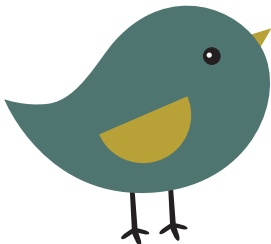
Write down the things you do or where you go to make you feel better if you are feeling sad.

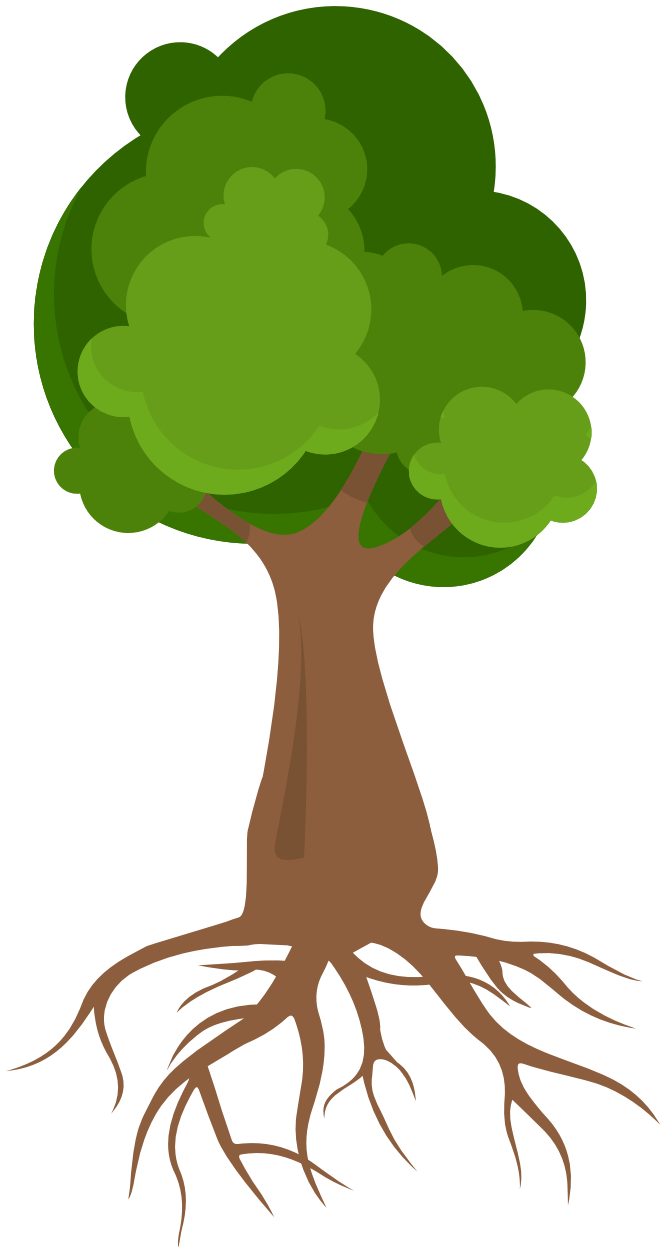
Where the trunk is:

Write down the things that make you excited, happy, or proud.

Where the roots are:

Write down the people in your life that help and care for you. Such as family, friends, carers, or teachers.





# My personal safety net

I start to feel anxious or angry when

.....

I will calm my mood by

.....

I will tell myself

.....

I can help me stay safe by

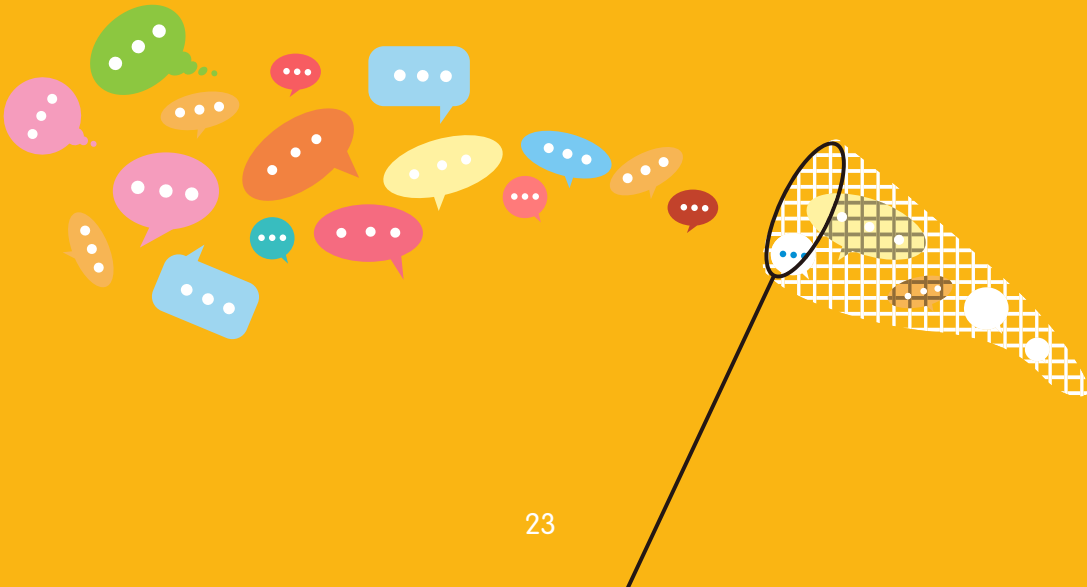
.....

I will talk to

.....

I can get help from these places

.....

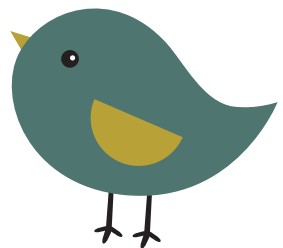


## People who can help

Show or tell a grown up how you are feeling and use the pictures in this book if it helps you explain.

Your chosen grown up may make an appointment for you to see a doctor or another health professional. They can ring NHS 111 who are a 24-hour helpline, the person answering the phone deal with these sorts of things all the time and can give advice.

You can also show your grown up the next page so they can visit the websites with you to get help and advice. Some of these websites also have people you can talk to online or by text.



# Websites and places to get help

## Papyrus Hopeline

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

Offers online, text or phone support to young people.

Call 0800 068 4141, text 88247 or email [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)

## Samaritans

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

Free, any time from any phone. Call 116 123

Or email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

## COMPASS Wakefield

[www.compass-uk.org](http://www.compass-uk.org)

Text BUZZ to 85258 for free confidential support 24/7.

For more ways to access emotional wellbeing and bereavement support visit the website.

## Childline

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Free, any time, day or night for help with any worry (under 19s).

Call 0800 1111, email or use the online 1-2-1 counsellor chat.

## Young Minds

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Emotional wellbeing support and advice for children and young people.

## Night OWLS

Available every day 8pm-8am

Online chat [wynightowls.org.uk](http://wynightowls.org.uk)

Call free on 0800 148 8244 or text 07984 376950

## BEAT

[www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

Support and advice around eating disorders.

## Hope Again

[www.hopeagain.org.uk](http://www.hopeagain.org.uk)

Offers support for children and young people when someone has died.

## Winston's Wish

[www.winstonswish.org](http://www.winstonswish.org)

Speak to a grown up and let them know if you want support from Winston's Wish when someone has died.

## Victim Support

[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

Call 0300 3031971

Practical support for anyone under 18 years old who has been affected by crime.

## WF-I-CAN

[www.wf-i-can.co.uk](http://www.wf-i-can.co.uk)

Offers information, support, and self-care tips on a range of topics.



Write three things, to help stay positive today.

I deserve to be happy

I am kind

I am loved

Write three things to look forward to.

Everything will be okay

I am proud of myself

Today is going to be a great day

If I fall down, I will get back up again

I can make a difference

Thank you to Young Lives Consortium, Wakefield Public Health, Education Psychology, Future In Mind (CAMHS) and especially the pupils from Ackworth Howard Junior and Infant School and Jerry Clay Academy who helped create this booklet.

*Please Note: The information within this booklet is correct at the time of printing (May 2026)*