

Young Carers Wellbeing Toolkit



Young Carers
Bedford Borough

Contents

★ 5 Ways to Wellbeing	3 - 12
Connect	4
Be Active	5
Take Notice – Gratitude journal	6 - 10
Keep Learning	11
Give	12
★ Wordsearch.....	13
★ Your “Chimp”.....	14 - 17
★ Our Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviour	18 - 21
★ Coping with Stress	22 - 25
★ Mindful Activities	26 - 28
★ Other Helpful Resources.....	29 - 30



This toolkit was created by Harmeet Bhamra (BSc, MSc)
Young Carers Wellbeing Practitioner



Hi my name is Charlie

I'm going to help you through this booklet and give you ideas of how to help your wellbeing

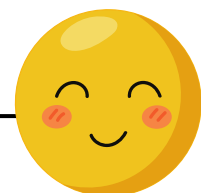
What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing is about how we are doing, and how we are feeling about our lives.

Sometimes our wellbeing can be high when we feel good, or sometimes it can be low when we feel sad or have a low mood.

Everyone feels low sometimes, the important thing to remember is that you can do things that can help to feel good again.

Using the faces below draw or mark where you are on your wellbeing scale right now:



5 Ways to Wellbeing

([Health in Mind | 5 ways to wellbeing.\(health-in-mind.org.uk\)](http://Health in Mind | 5 ways to wellbeing.(health-in-mind.org.uk))))

Just like how your body needs the 5-a-day (fruit and vegetables) for a healthy body – there are 5 key things that are needed to keep our mind and body well.



Connect

Be active

Give

**Keep
learning**

**Take
notice**

Connect

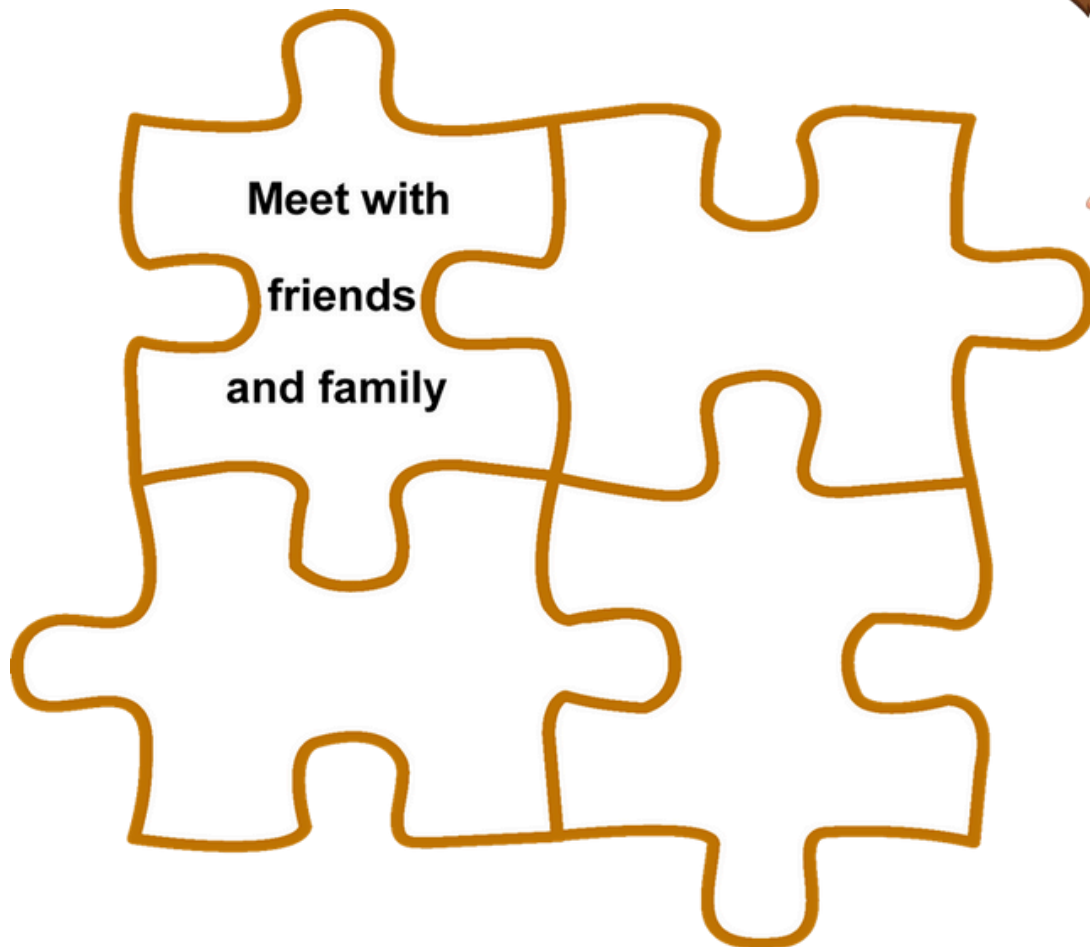


Connecting with people around us is a great way to remind ourselves that we're important and valued by others.



Building these connections in your life will give you a support network

Task: An example is provided below, write/draw any more ideas you have in the empty spaces



Be active

Staying active = Positive mental health and wellbeing

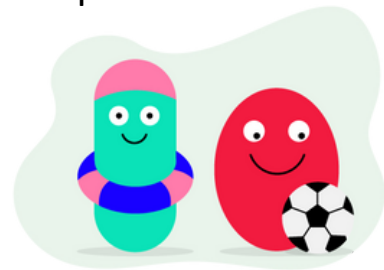
By making sure we move our bodies often, we can look after our mental and physical health at the same time!

Here are some examples

- ★ Going for a walk at lunchtime/ going outside to play
- ★ Trying activities that focus your mind, such as sport like:
 - Football
 - Swimming
 - Basketball
 - Netball

... and many more!

- ★ Making time for movement that you enjoy, such as dancing
- ★ Playing a game with your friends or family
- ★ Cycling
- ★ Being outside in the garden or playground



In the space below write down some activities that you enjoy to keep active, or some that you would like to try:



Take notice

Taking notice of our thoughts, feelings, and environment is a great way to stay present and pay attention to our needs

Noticing the things we're grateful for, **BIG** or SMALL can boost our mood



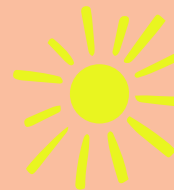
What can we do to take notice?



Take up a mindful hobby e.g. journaling, drawing, or knitting



Write down 3 things you feel grateful for in your life



Spend time to reflect on what went well today

Taking notice can help us to become aware of the world around us and what we're feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you. One way we can practice to take notice is by using a **gratitude journal**.



Use the prompts and empty boxes below to fill out three good things for each day this week

Gratitude Journal: Three Good Things

Gratitude Journal: Three Good Things (Worksheet) | Therapist Aid

Day 1

One good thing that happened to me today ...

Something good that I saw someone do ...

Today I had fun when ...

Day 2

One good thing that happened to me today ...

Something good that I saw someone do ...

Today I had fun when ...

Day 3

One good thing that happened to me today ...

Something good that I saw someone do ...

Today I had fun when ...

Did you know practicing
gratitude regularly has been
shown to increase positive
emotions and improve our
wellbeing!

Day 4

One good thing that happened to me today ...

Something good that I saw someone do ...

Today I had fun when ...

Day 5

One good thing that happened to me today ...

Something good that I saw someone do ...

Today I had fun when ...

Day 6

One good thing that happened to me today ...

Something good that I saw someone do ...

Today I had fun when ...

Day 7

One good thing that happened to me today ...

Something good that I saw someone do ...

Today I had fun when ...

You've completed this gratitude journal!

Keep learning



Learning new things is a good way to meet new people and boost our self-confidence which means better mental health and wellbeing.

Examples:

- ★ Try out something new: a new hobby, a new game or a new sports
- ★ Learn to play an instrument
- ★ Learn something new about people around you
- ★ Learn to cook or bake your favourite food

Learning new
things can make
us more
confident

In the space below write some new things would you
like to learn:

Give

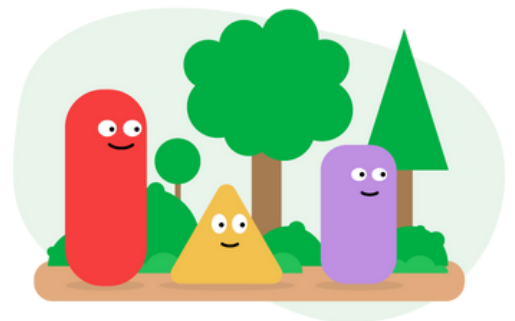
Giving is an easy way to help ourselves feel good. We can give through things that we do for other people or the environment.

Doing good things = increases better wellbeing

From the examples below **tick some of the options that you would like to try** or come up of some of your own:

- ☐ Try and do one kind thing every day
- ☐ Recycle items and give back to the environment
- ☐ Do something nice for a friend or someone in your family
- ☐ Smile at someone you know
- ☐ Thank someone

What other ideas can you come up with?

☐
☐
☐
☐

Wordsearch

W	E	L	L	B	E	I	N	G	A	E
C	O	N	N	E	C	T	B	R	Y	C
D	E	Z	O	A	X	E	R	A	L	I
J	C	W	B	C	I	Y	L	T	V	T
U	O	F	T	T	A	P	E	E	B	O
R	G	Y	K	I	E	P	A	F	K	N
O	B	S	A	V	S	A	R	U	J	S
L	A	H	I	E	W	H	N	L	Y	S
Y	O	G	N	B	U	E	F	K	M	A
P	X	V	A	F	T	C	L	U	E	Z
E	M	O	T	I	O	N	S	L	N	P

CONNECT
GIVE
BE ACTIVE

NOTICE
PLAY
LEARN

GRATEFUL
HAPPY
WELLBEING

JOY
EMOTIONS
FUN
GRATEFUL

Your Chimp

By Professor Steve Peters

Your brain is amazing it can control everything about you, like what you think, what you feel and how you might behave.



Sometimes our brain can make us do or say things we might not like and it can make us feel sad, or angry without us knowing why

We can understand why we might be feeling or doing things by learning about our brain

Your brain has 2 different parts that helps with your emotions:

**thinking
brain**

**emotional
brain**



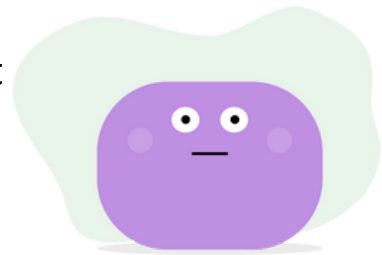
We can easily control the **green** section, but it can be harder for us to control the **blue** section of our brain.



Compared to chimpanzees we have a bigger green section, but they have a bigger blue section of the brain (more emotional). So we can call the **thinking brain the human brain** and the **emotional brain the chimp brain**.

When something happens like losing a game or being told off, our **chimp brain** reacts first.

That is why we shout, get angry or upset, but it might not be how you wanted to react, but it's how your chimp wanted to.



This is why it is important to learn how to **train your chimp**

Just like a wild animal – the **chimp brain = unpredictable** and it might seem impossible to train it but you have to learn to treat your chimp like a pet.

It can take a lot of time and effort to learn but don't worry if it's too difficult you can always ask for an adults help.

To become friends with your chimp the most important thing is to ...

Stop

Stop before
you do
anything

Think

Think about how **you** want
to react compared to how
your chimp wants you to
react

then... React

And put things right if
you make a mistake

It's okay to make
mistakes, it's how we
learn about ourselves
and the world



Here is an example below of how to
train your chimp

Your chimp wants to play video games but you have homework to do for tomorrow.

1. **Talk** to your chimp and ask what it wants to do
2. Then **negotiate**: if we get the homework done now we can play afterwards
3. Finally **reward yourself**: play the video game after you have finished your homework as a reward – if all else fails ask for help (it is always okay to ask for help from someone you trust)

The best way to become friends with your chimp is to practice the following good habits that will keep you and your chimp happy

Be kind

It makes you and others feel good – e.g. complimenting others, helping others and be kind to yourself

Say sorry

This is how we can let things go – do it for yourself not just for the other person

Smiling

It's contagious – if you don't want to smile fake smile it will trick your chimp into feeling better

Try new things

This will give you a sense of achievement



Ask for help

Things can get done easier and quicker you can then do fun things afterwards and also learn along the way

Talk about your feelings

It helps you to understand your emotions and can help you to relax

Learn to share

This encourages others to share too and we can make friends by sharing

But your chimp isn't just negative, it can also protect you from danger by making you either fight or flight or freeze

It is important to **find a balance between you and your chimp** and it does take some work but, eventually it will all pay off and it will help you understand your emotions and other peoples' emotions.

Our Thoughts, Feelings and Actions

Therapist Aid

Everyone has problems, some are **BIG** and some are SMALL .

To solve our big problems, it helps to learn about our thoughts, feelings and actions and how they are connected.

Imagine you have a test tomorrow, and you think “**I’m not going to do well**”. Because of this thought, you start to **worry** and start to feel sick. Because it’s uncomfortable, **you don’t end up studying**.

The **thought** led to a **feeling**, which led to an **action**





Thoughts

... are the words in your mind. You can have many different thoughts about a single situation. They tell you about what is going on around you.



Feelings

... come and go as things happen. You can feel happy, sad, and angry all in one day. Some feelings can be uncomfortable. Everyone has these feelings sometimes



Actions

... are the things you do, or the way you behave. Your thoughts and feelings effect how you act. If you feel happy you may do nice things, but if you feel angry you might act mean.

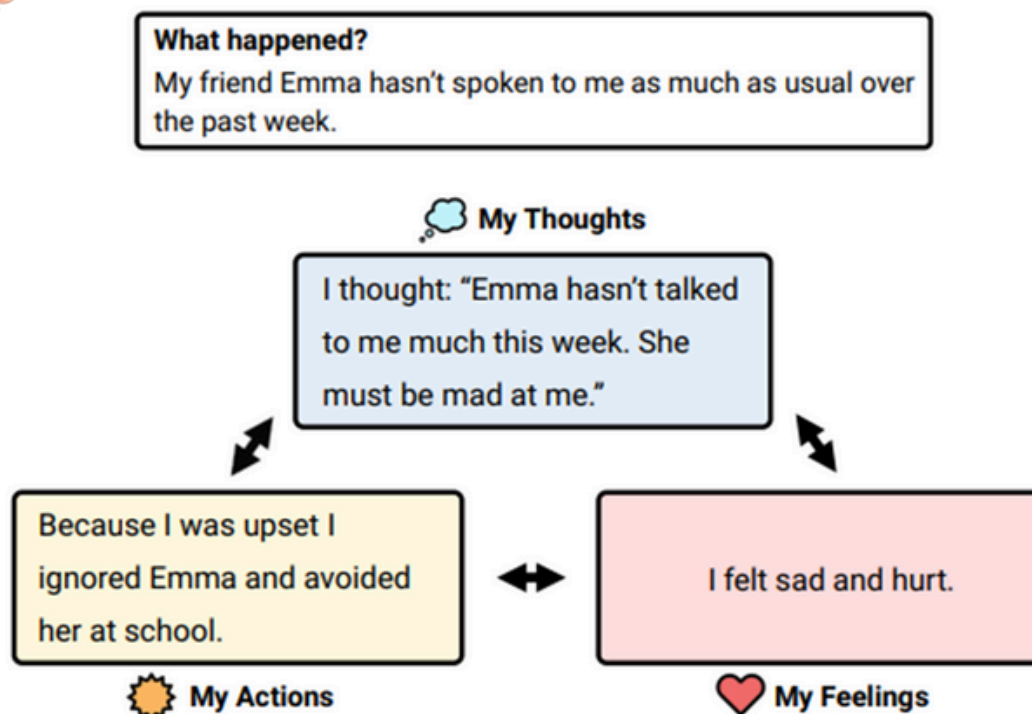
Just because you have a thought doesn't mean it is true.




Your thoughts are guesses about why something happened, or something might happen.

Coming up with new thoughts can help you see a situation differently



Here is an example below of how someone can come up with new thoughts ...

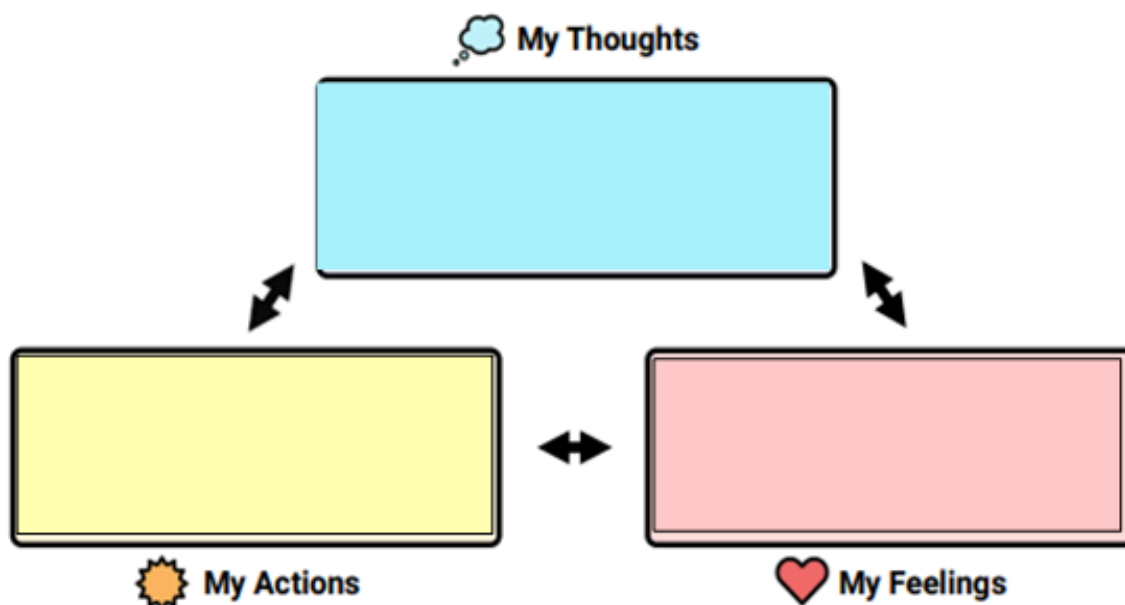





	 New Thoughts	 New Feelings	 New Actions
1	"Emma might be upset with me, but maybe not. I don't know."	Concerned that Emma <i>might</i> be upset, but I'm not as sad as I was.	Ask Emma if she is mad at me, or if she has another problem.
2	"Emma has probably been busy with school or something else."	Disappointed I haven't talked to Emma, but understanding.	I'll stay friendly with Emma, as usual. I'll be sure to say "hi" anyway.
3	"Maybe Emma is upset about something unrelated to me."	Worried about how Emma is feeling.	Ask Emma what's going on, and if she needs help.



Now it's your turn:

What happened?



	 New Thoughts	 New Feelings	 New Actions
1			
2			
3			

Provided by Therapist Aid

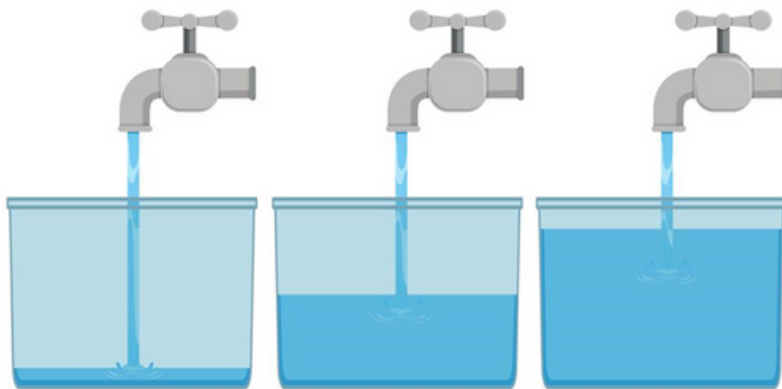
Stress

We can all get stressed sometimes, it is part of our daily lives.

However, sometimes the stress can get too much if you don't know how to cope with it. This is often known as **stressors**.



Imagine a bucket and every time you feel stressed water gets added...



... so over time the bucket fills up bit by bit until eventually it overflows.

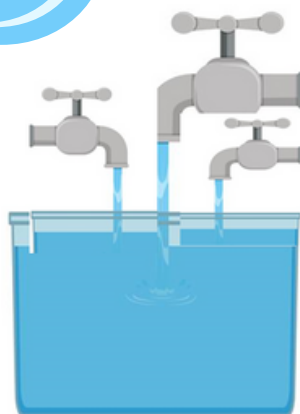
Examples of stressors:

Looking after your sibling

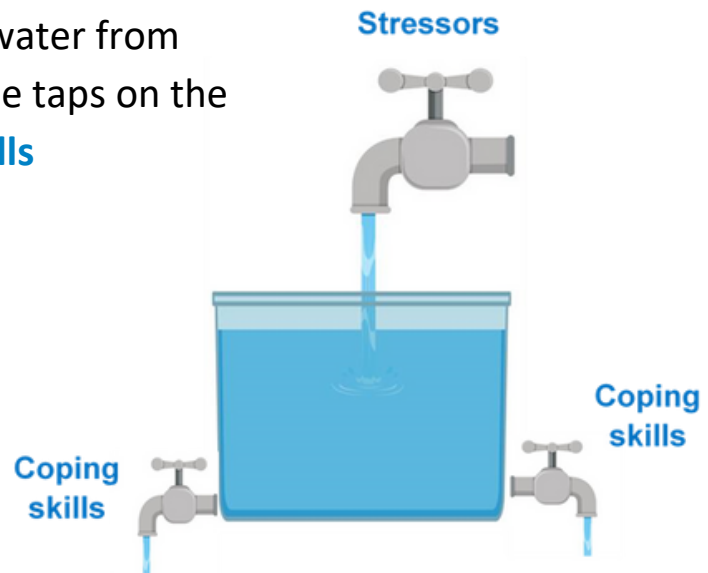
Looking after your parent

Completing homework

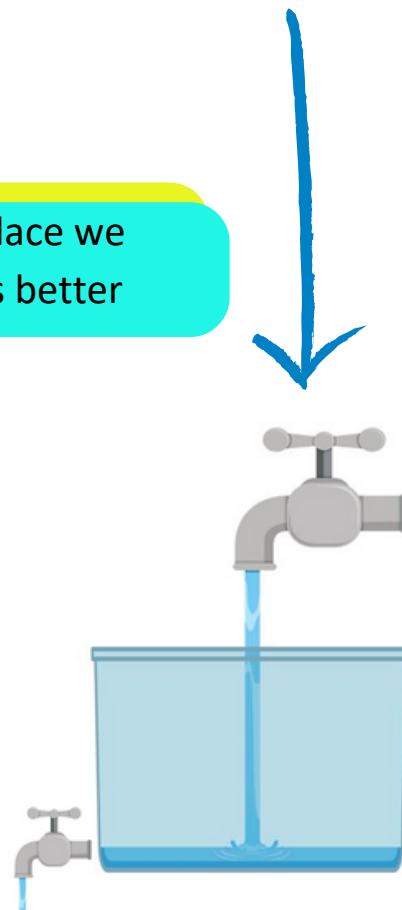
Being away from home



One way we can control the water from overflowing is by putting some taps on the bucket – known as **coping skills**



By putting coping skills in place we can then manage our stress better



Therefore, we can help our stress levels by practicing **healthy** coping skills

Here are some coping skills that might be helpful to you. Circle or colour the ones that you think would like to do.

COPING TOOLS: What Helps Me

<input type="checkbox"/> Read A Book or Magazine  <input type="checkbox"/> Hug or Climb a Tree  <input type="checkbox"/> Journal or Write a Letter  <input type="checkbox"/> Use Kind & Compassionate Self-Talk  <input type="checkbox"/> Make a Collage or Scrapbook  <input type="checkbox"/> Rest, Nap or Take a Break  <input type="checkbox"/> Go on a Hike, Walk or Run  <input type="checkbox"/> Take Good Care of the Earth  <input type="checkbox"/> Drink Water  <input type="checkbox"/> Play a Board Game  <input type="checkbox"/> Do Something Kind  <input type="checkbox"/> Make and Play with Slime  <input type="checkbox"/> Discover Treasures in Nature  <input type="checkbox"/> Take a Shower or Bath  <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise  <input type="checkbox"/> Drink a Warm Cup of Tea  <input type="checkbox"/> Forgive, Let Go, Move On  <input type="checkbox"/> Practice Yoga  <input type="checkbox"/> Garden or Do Yardwork  <input type="checkbox"/> Jump on a Trampoline  <input type="checkbox"/> Cuddle or Play with Your Pet  <input type="checkbox"/> Practice Gratitude  <input type="checkbox"/> Do a Puzzle  <input type="checkbox"/> Blow Bubbles  <input type="checkbox"/> Smile and Laugh 	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride a Bike or Skateboard  <input type="checkbox"/> Create Origami  <input type="checkbox"/> Cook or Bake  <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for Help  <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to Someone You Trust  <input type="checkbox"/> Weave, Knit or Crochet  <input type="checkbox"/> Build Something  <input type="checkbox"/> Get a Hug  <input type="checkbox"/> Visualize a Peaceful Place  <input type="checkbox"/> Stretch  <input type="checkbox"/> Make Art  <input type="checkbox"/> Use Positive Affirmations  <input type="checkbox"/> Take Slow, Mindful Breaths  <input type="checkbox"/> Clean, Declutter or Organize  <input type="checkbox"/> Use Aromatherapy  <input type="checkbox"/> Cry  <input type="checkbox"/> Try or Learn Something New  <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to Music  <input type="checkbox"/> Use a Stress Ball or Other Fidget  <input type="checkbox"/> Get Plenty of Sleep  <input type="checkbox"/> Kick, Bounce or Throw a Ball  <input type="checkbox"/> Take or Look at Photographs  <input type="checkbox"/> Eat Healthy  <input type="checkbox"/> Play Outside  <input type="checkbox"/> Sing and/or Dance 
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Now it's time to create your own stress bucket. Using the coping tools on the previous page you can put in what coping skills would work for you.



Mindful activities

Here are a few relaxation exercises that can be easily done at home to help:

Deep Breathing Exercise



There loads of simple deep breathing exercises that you can do at home

Here's a deep breathing exercise you can try when you're feeling anxious:

- **Breathe** in through your nose for 5 seconds
- **Hold** your breath in your lungs for 5 seconds
- **Breathe** out through your mouth for 5 seconds
- **Repeat**

Grounding Exercise

Grounding exercises can be done to focus the mind on the present, this technique can also be used as a way of calming your anxiety.

We can also do this through our imagination.

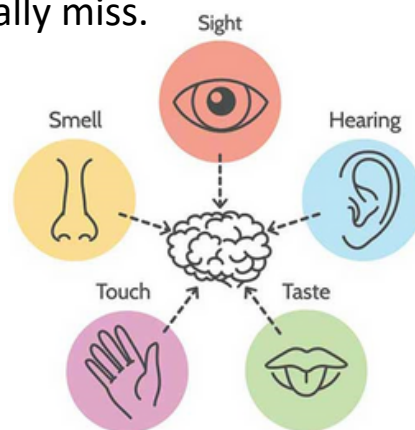
To begin, think of a place you find comforting: Somewhere in your house, a favourite spot in the park, a beach, or a memory from your childhood. Now spend 5-10 minutes visualizing this place that you have imagined in your mind.

What 5 things do you see?

- Look around and take in your surroundings in. What can you see in the distance?
- What do you see close to you?
- Try to notice small details that you might normally miss.

What 4 things can you feel?

- Is it warm or cool?
- Is there a breeze?
- Is the sun shining on you warming your skin?
- Or are you bundled up in a soft blanket?



What 3 things can you hear?

- Listen closely to the noises around you. Are the noises you hear soft or loud?
- Do they sound close by or far away?

What 2 things can you smell?

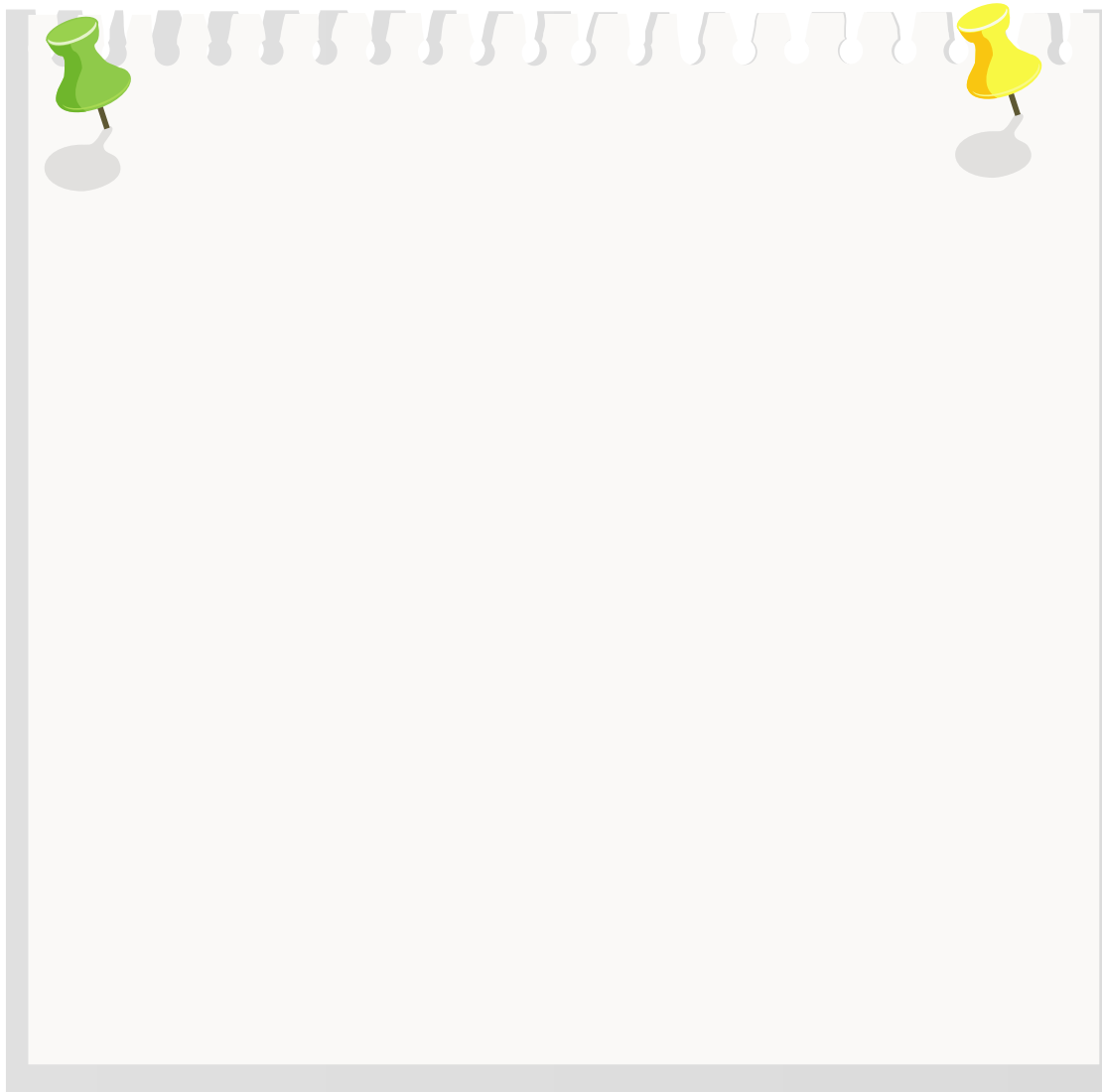
- What does the air smell like here?
- Is the scent strong or faint?
- Do you smell any flowers, or a scent wafting from your beverage?

What 1 thing can you taste?

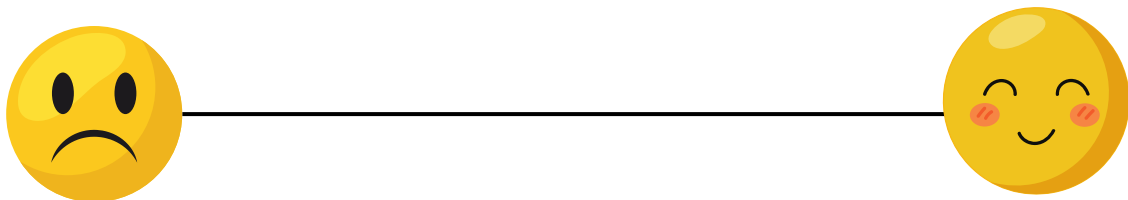
- Are you eating or drinking something?
- If so, what does it taste like?
- Is it sweet or savoury?

Use this exercise to relax your mind when you are feeling anxious or stressed. Spend as long as you need visualizing your comfortable space.

Now you have completed the wellbeing toolkit, take moment to think about your thoughts and anything you have found useful.



Using the faces below draw or mark where you are on your wellbeing scale right now:



Other Helpful Resources

It's okay not to be okay – there is always someone who will be there to help, support, and listen to you. There is a list of some helpful people below:

- ★ Parents/Carers
- ★ School teacher
- ★ Support Worker at CiB
- ★ Wellbeing Practitioner at CiB
- ★ School Counsellor



Talking therapy, counselling and wellbeing support is offered through GP services and Carers in Bedfordshire. There are other apps and helplines that can be helpful.

Helplines

- **NHS:** To get urgent medical help, use the NHS 111 online service, or call 111 if you're unable to get help online
- **SHOUT:** Shout is a 24/7 text service – it is a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help – Text 85258 for immediate help
- **SAMARITANS:** Access confidential emotional support at any time either by emailing or called 116 123
- **HOPELINE:** confidential support and advice service for: children and young people under age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide – Call 0800 068 4141 any day 9am-12am
- **SIDEKICK:** from Action for Children – specifically for young carers. Text 07888 868 059 or email sidekick@actionforchildren.org.uk

Apps

- **SMILING MIND**: practice daily meditation and mindfulness exercises
- **MOOD PANDA**: track your mood and get anonymous support
- **DEPRESSION CBT SELF-HELP GUIDE**: learn to control stress that contributes to depression
- **SLEEP CYCLE**: track your sleep so you can get woken up at the perfect time for your mood
- **MOODPATH**: depression and anxiety tracker and test (ages 13-25)
- **BREATHR APP**: Designed for young people offering mindfulness exercises, which may be fun and accessible for you to try
- **SEL-ANXIETY MANAGEMENT (SAM) APP**: SAM includes lots of information about anxiety, as well as calming activities to help you feel more relaxed
- **MINDSHIFT**: designed to help teenagers struggling with anxiety or low mood. It includes tracking tools, positive thinking activities, relaxation tips, and inspiring quotes/stories
- **PACIFA**: aims to help with anxiety, depression and stress using techniques based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and mindfulness
- **HEADSPACE**: train your mind for a healthier, happier life (ages 13-25)

Self-harm apps:

- **BLUEICE**: App to help young people manage their emotions and reduce urges to self-harm
- **CALM HARM**: Reduces urges to self-harm and manage emotions in a more positive way





Young Carers
Bedford Borough

Your wellbeing toolkit.

**This booklet is filled with information,
activities, colouring and ideas on how to
support your wellbeing. Along with some
helpful tips and contacts**

We are an experienced charity supporting unpaid
Young Carers across Bedford Borough.



0300 111 1919

www.youngcarersbedford.com

Registered charity no. 1135507

Registered company no. 07140432