

Managing worries and anxious feelings workbook

for primary aged students



Aims and goals:

- To understand worry
- To be able to identify the different types of worries
- To learn strategies to better manage my worries
- To learn about relaxation and mindfulness

Introduction to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)

This workbook can help you to learn to take care of your mental health using cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

CBT can help develop strategies to break unhelpful behaviours that may be making you feel more anxious or sad. CBT is a type of therapy that has been proven to help people of all ages to focus on how their thoughts and emotions can affect their behaviour.

Throughout the book there are exercises (where you see the pencil diagram) for you to complete.

If you feel at anytime that you need more help, please see the numbers at the back of this workbook or speak to your carer or someone in school.

If you are having any thoughts of hurting yourself please tell an adult immediately



What are worries?

Worries are uncomfortable thoughts that get stuck in your head. Having worries is a normal part of life and everyone has them.

Worry can become difficult to manage and can affect our lives by making it difficult to do certain things, like going to school or leaving our parents.

We can worry about small things or big things! When worries start to impact your life often, this is when we need to do something to support them.

What if I can't do my school work

I am not a good friend

I don't look good

What if i am late?



The Fight, Flight or Freeze response

Part of your brain is a bit like a Meerkat, always looking out for things that might hurt us or put us in danger. Anger is one of the body's ways of responding to danger.

When we feel like we are in danger, or we feel threatened, your 'Meerkat' brain sends messages to your body to stay and 'fight' the problem, to run away, 'flight' or to 'freeze' and hope the problem goes away.










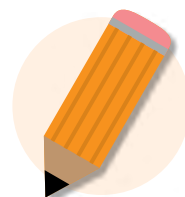
For example, if you were hiking in the woods and you came across a bear, there are three main things that your body would do:

Fight	Flight	Freeze
Try to make yourself look big and scary, shout and fight the bear	Run away from the bear as fast as you can	Become frozen to the spot with fear

Here are some ways your body can feel when you are angry. We call these physical sensations. Do you notice any of these in your body?

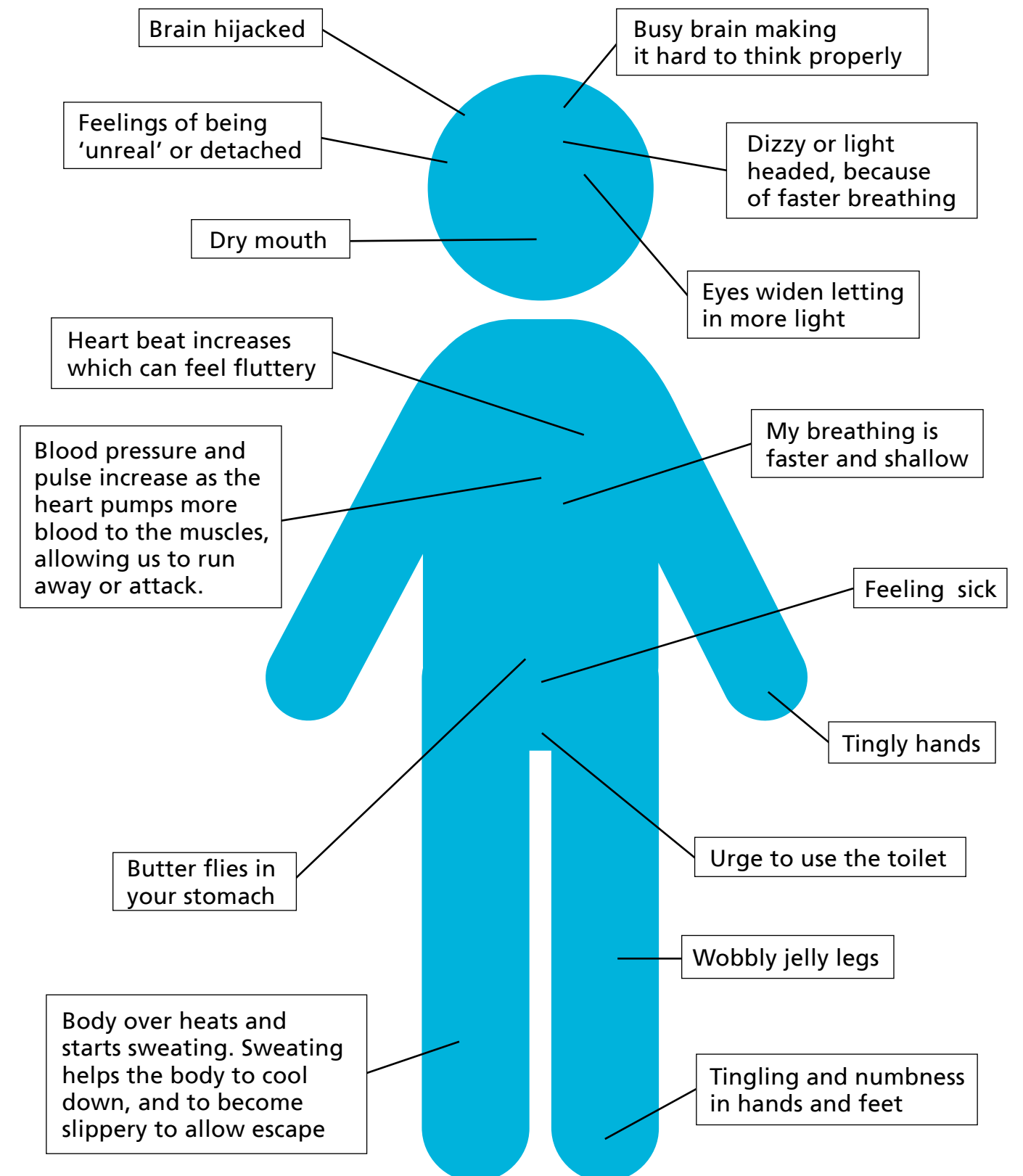
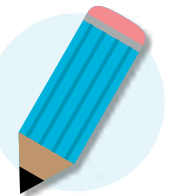
Tick which ones apply to you...

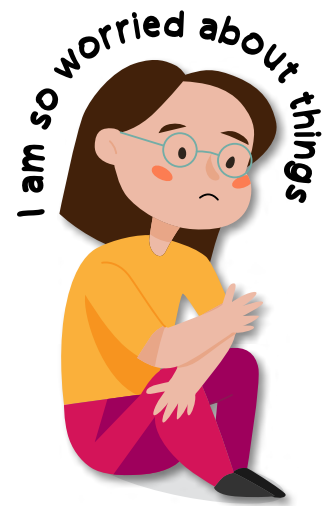
- | | |
|---|---|
|  <input type="checkbox"/> Your face feeling hot and red |  <input type="checkbox"/> Tummy ache |
|  <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling sick |  <input type="checkbox"/> Hot and sweaty |
|  <input type="checkbox"/> Breathing faster |  <input type="checkbox"/> Headache |
|  <input type="checkbox"/> Heart beating faster | |



Body Sensations

Here are some ways your body can feel when you are worried.



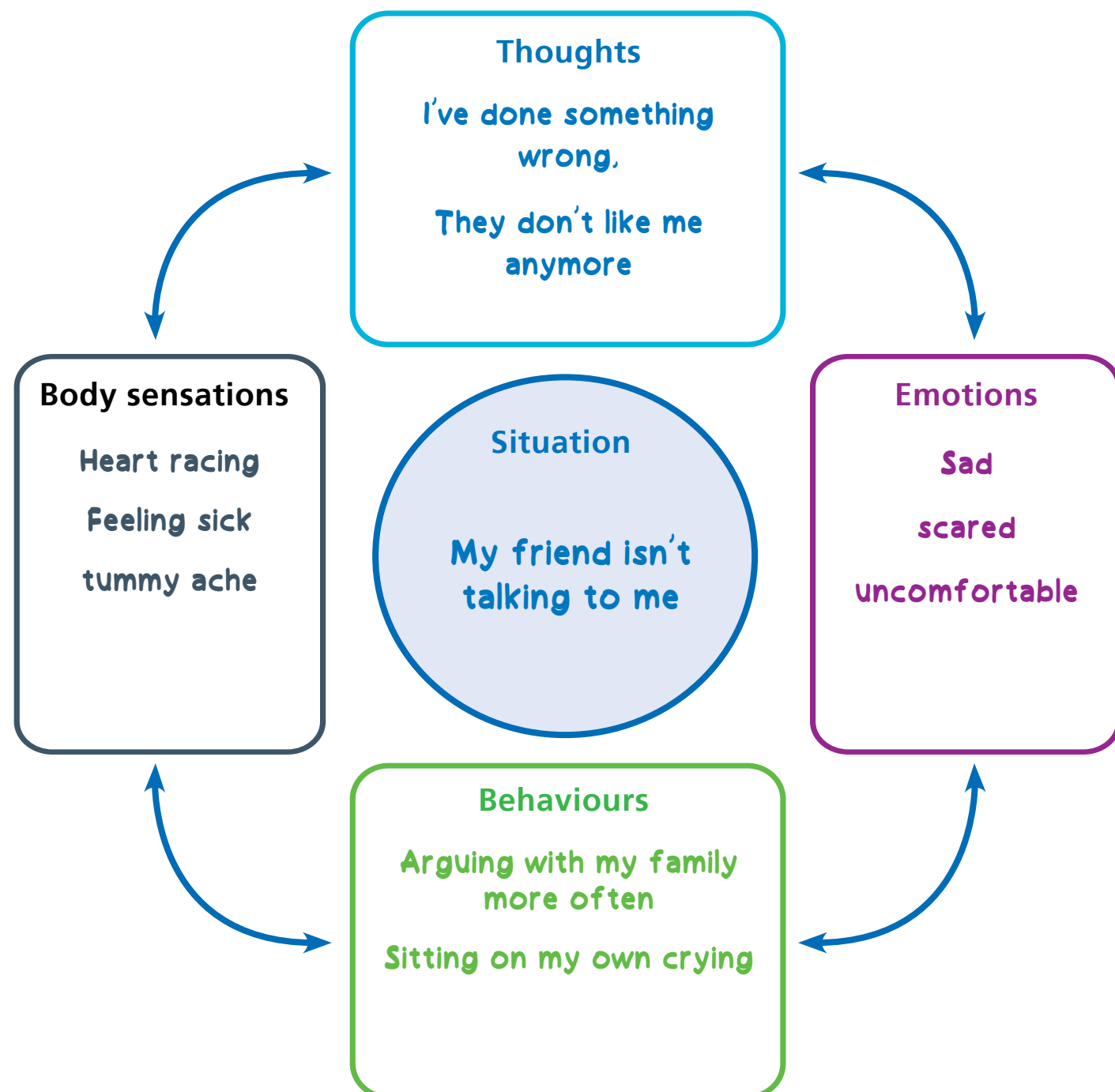


The cycle of worry

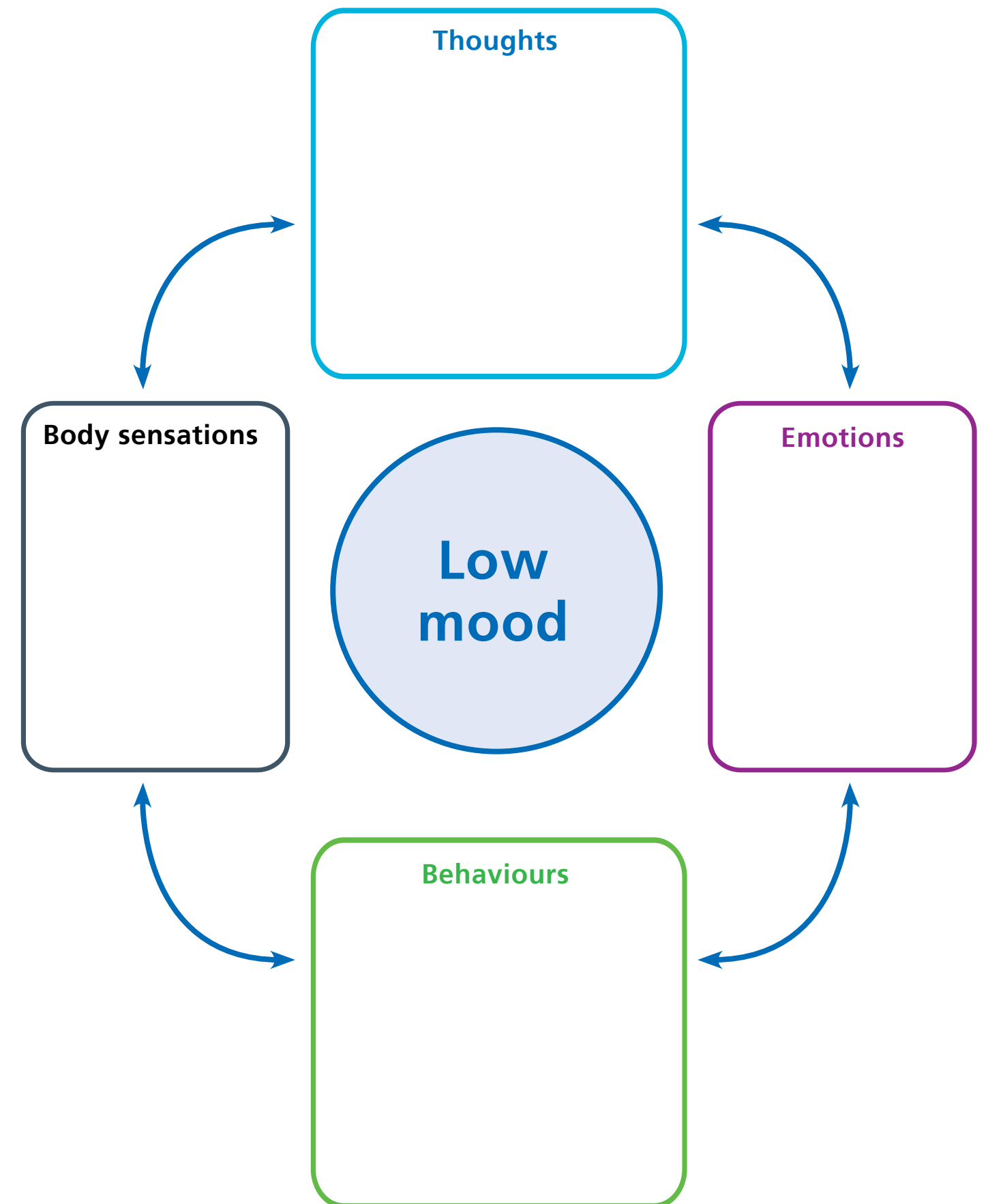
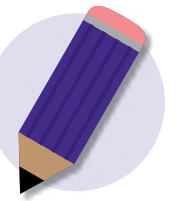
Worrying can affect how you think, how you feel, how you behave and the sensations you feel in your body.

When all of these areas start to feed into one other, this can keep our worries in our mind and makes it harder to break out of the cycle. This is what we call a vicious cycle of worries.

Here is an example:



Fill this one in to help you see your worries.
Use the prompts from the diagram on the previous page to help you.

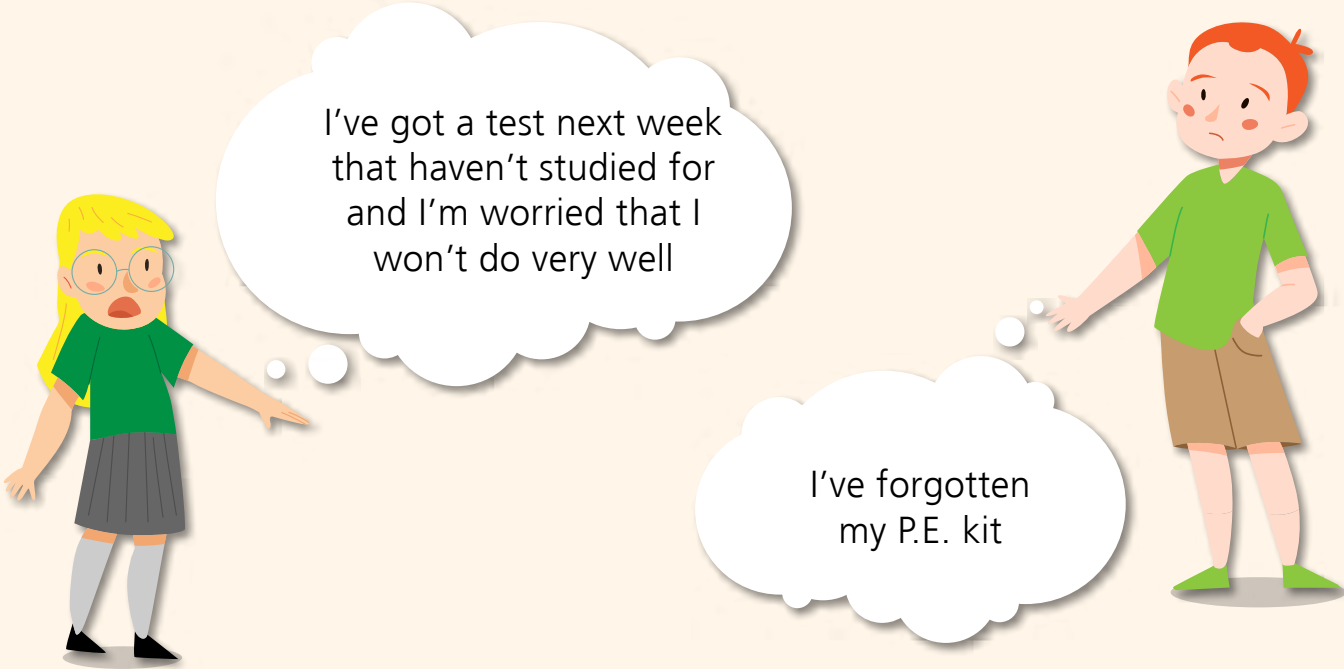


Types of worry

Here are two of the different types of worries we might have.

Here and now worries

These are worries that we can do something about now.
Have a look, can you identify any “here and now” worries you have.



What if worries

These are often about the future and we cannot fix them right now.
Can you identify any “what if” worries you have?



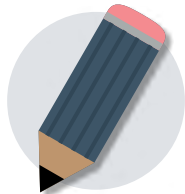
Worry sorting activity

Try and sort the worries on the next page into 'Here and Now' and 'What If' worries in the table below.



What if worries

Here and now worries



I have an exam, what if I fail?

I have forgotten my lunch

I've fallen out with my friend and I want to sort it out

I promised my parents that I would tidy my room, but I don't have time

What if people laugh when I walk past them at the school gates?

What if I get really ill?

I have been invited to a party and I don't know many people. What if no one likes me?

I am stuck on my homework and don't know where to start

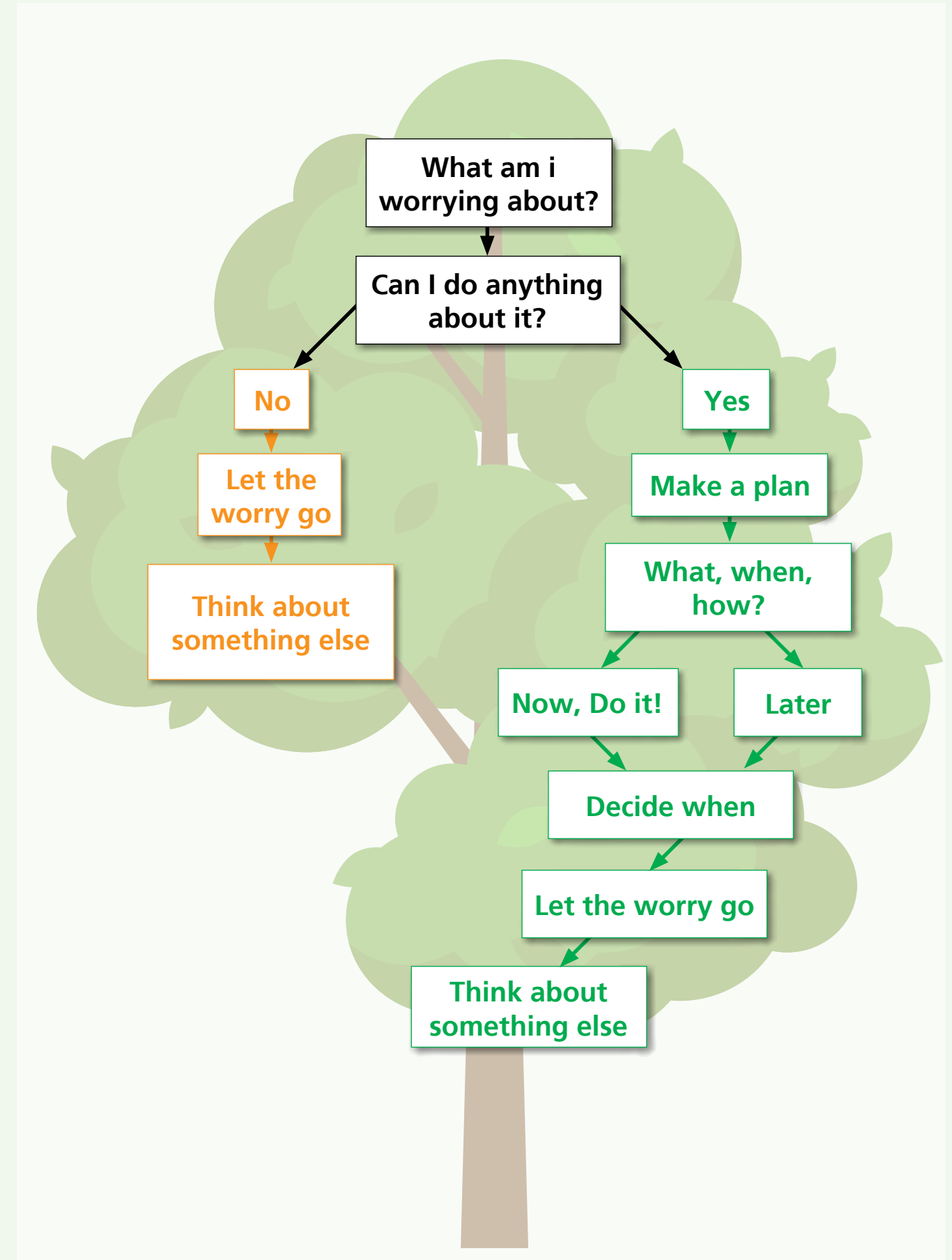
What if my friends fall out with me?

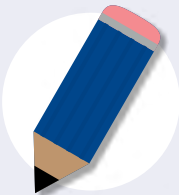
My earphones have stopped working, so I can't listen to my music

Worry tree

The worry tree can help you decide the best way to deal with your worry. Why not give it a try?

Try this!





Problem solving

The way that we think about a situation can also impact on our mood. Over thinking can contribute to low mood so learning how to problem solve can be helpful with avoiding this.

It can become really overwhelming when we have a lot to do and don't know where to start, particularly when we are already feeling low. This is why we use a step by step approach to solving problems

What is the problem?

Can you think of 4 things that you could do to deal with this problem? (no matter how helpful or silly!)

Now that we have some options, we need to work out which is the best solution

Solutuons	Good things	Bad things

Which solution will you choose?

Think about which has more good than bad, which seems the easiest and which you think will solve the problem the best.

Collecting your worries

Try and collect your worries throughout the day!

When a worry pops into your head, write it down and place it into a safe place, like a worryloope or a worry jar, and leave it until worry time.



After you've written it down, do something else to take your mind off it like playing football or reading a book.



My worry diary

We can also use a worry diary to track our worries throughout the day. This can help us to understand what makes us worried. Try filling it out yourself below:

Date and Time	Where was I? Who was I with?	What was I worried about?	How big was my worry? 0 - 10 (0 is teeny and 10 is huge)

Worry time

If we worried all the time, it can overwhelm us and stop us from doing what we need to do. To try to help this, we can schedule time in our day to worry, rather than worrying all the time.

See if you can find some worry time in your day.

- 1

Plan your time to worry

When we have lots of worries and they impact our day it can overwhelm us. Setting a worry time will give you space each day to think about all of your worries. The more you use worry time, the less your worries will impact you throughout the day.
- 2

Set a time to worry

Decide a time of day that you can set aside and focus on your worries without being distracted. The more you use your worry time the less you will need it as you will get better and better at managing your worries.
- 3

Write down and keep a log of your worries

Keep track of the things that you are worrying about during the day by writing them down so you can think about them later.
- 4

Refocus your mind

Once you have written down your worry it is important to try not to think about it. Try to distract yourself by doing something you enjoy or something that will keep you busy.
- 5

Take your worries to worry time!

Take your worry list into worry time.
- A cartoon illustration of a young boy with orange hair, wearing a light blue t-shirt and dark blue pants. He is holding a large, round, blue clock with white hands. The clock face is simple, with no numbers, just a circle and two hands.
- # Distraction
- When your mind wanders to worry, it is important to bring yourself back to the here and now by distracting your mind. Why not try some of these ideas to help you along?
- 

Letters game

Go through the alphabet and name countries, animals, and food!



Counting game

Pick a number, add it to the number before and see how far you get!
- A cartoon illustration of a young boy with dark skin and black hair, wearing a blue t-shirt and black pants. He is holding a black smartphone in his right hand and looking at it.
- 

5 things I can see



4 things I can hear



3 things I can touch



2 things I can smell



1 thing I can taste
- Grounding**
Try using your five senses to name five things you can see, four things you can hear, three things you can feel, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste.
- A cartoon illustration of a young girl with dark skin and curly blonde hair, wearing a pink t-shirt and light blue pants. She has her arms outstretched to the sides and is smiling.



Things I can do to refocus my mind

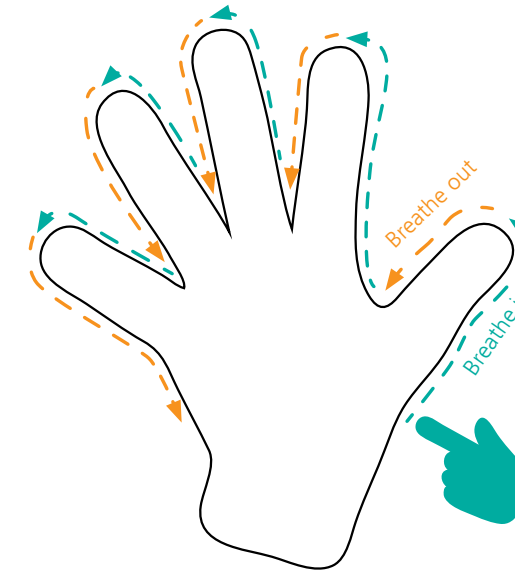
What things do you enjoy doing? What makes you feel happy? Write or draw them below...

Relaxation

We can use relaxation methods to help manage our body sensations and our worries.. **Here are a few methods to try:**



Finger breathing

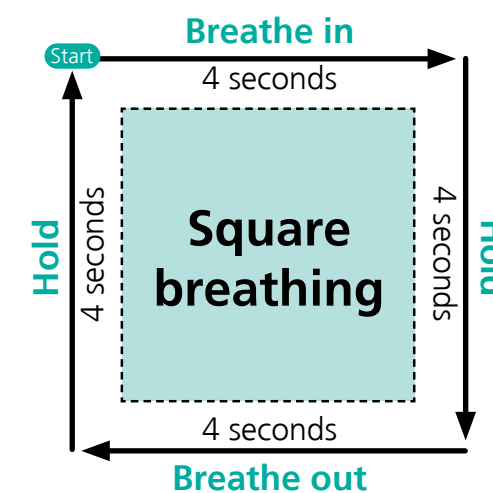


Step 1: Sit comfortably, resting one hand in front of you with fingers outstretched like a star. Have the pointer finger of your other hand ready to trace your hand.

Step 2: Starting at the base of your thumb on the outside of your hand, breathe in slowly through your nose as you slide your pointer finger up to the top of your thumb.

Step 3: Breathe out slowly and slide your pointer finger down the inside of your thumb. Breathe in as you slide your finger up the next finger and out as you slide down.

Step 4: Continue breathing in and out as you trace your whole hand.



Square breathing

Step 1: Starting at the top left hand corner of the square, sit upright and slowly inhale through your nose for a slow count of four. Pay attention to the feeling of the air filling your lungs.

Step 2: Hold your breath for another slow count of four.

Step 3: Exhale slowly and deeply through your mouth to the count of four. Feel the air leave your lungs.

Step 4: Hold your breath for the same slow count of four before repeating this process until you feel calm.

Muscle relaxation

Ask a trusted adult to help you try to relax your muscles by reading the following script.

You can
try this at
home too!

1

Please begin by sitting back comfortably or lie down.

Take a deep breath in through your nose (pause for 4 seconds) and out through your mouth (pause for 4 seconds.) Breathe in again through your nose (pause for 4 seconds) and out through your mouth again (pause for 4 seconds.) Keep breathing like this, imagining any worried thoughts or tightness in your body floating away as you breathe out.

2

Now, we're going to start by focussing on our feet. Tense your feet by curling your toes up like fists. Hold on to that tense feeling (pause for 5 seconds) and now slowly let go, imagining all the tightness in your toes slipping away from your body.

Take a deep breath in through your nose (pause for 4 seconds) and out through your mouth (pause for 4 seconds.)

3

Next we're moving to your lower legs and calves. Maybe there's some tightness in your calves, do your legs feel heavy or sluggish? Tense your lower legs now, tensing the calves (pause for 5 seconds) and slowly let go. Now, your upper legs. Squeeze your thighs together (pause for 5 seconds) and now slowly let go.

Take a deep breath in through your nose (pause for 4 seconds) and out through your mouth (pause for 4 seconds.)

4

This time, we're moving on to your tummy area. Tense your stomach by sucking in your tummy (pause for 5 seconds) and now slowly release and let go.

Take a deep breath in through your nose (pause for 4 seconds) and out through your mouth (pause for 4 seconds.)

5

Moving up, we're going to your shoulders. The shoulders are one of the places that we can hold lots of tension, so really push those shoulders up as high as you can to your ears (pause for 5 seconds) and slowly let go.

Take a deep breath in through your nose (pause for 4 seconds) and out through your mouth (pause for 4 seconds.)

6

From your shoulders move on to your arms and hands.

Tense up your arms and make your hands into fists, squeezing tight (pause for 5 seconds) and now release, letting your arms go limp and letting go of any tightness.

Take a deep breath in through your nose (pause for 4 seconds) and out through your mouth (pause for 4 seconds.)

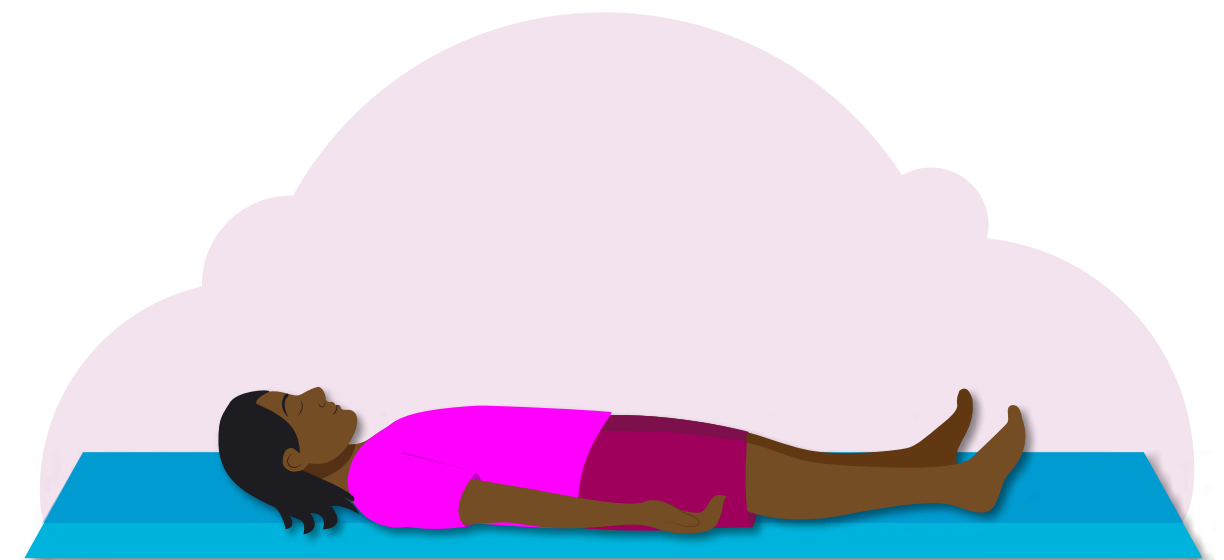
7

Finally, your face. Keeping those eyes closed, scrunch up your face as much as you can and hold it there (pause for 5 seconds.) Now let go slowly and imagine any tightness in your face leaving you.

Take a deep breath in through your nose (pause for 4 seconds) and out through your mouth (pause for 4 seconds.)

8

Now, when you're ready, slowly open your eyes.

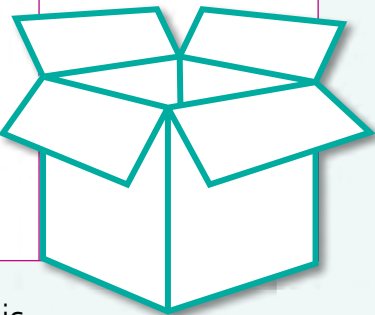


The Self Soothe Box

A self soothe box is a useful tool to use when you are feeling lots of worries, emotions including sadness, anxiety and anger. It is personal to you and can be kept throughout your life!

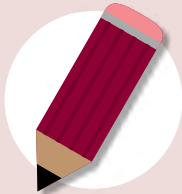
Here are some ideas on what to include in a self soothe box.

Sensory Items	Photos	Hobby items	Notes	Relaxation
Things like: fidget cubes / spinners or stress balls.	Pictures of loved ones / friends / pets etc.	Things like: music, books, games, colouring, books.	Supportive notes from yourself or people in your support network.	Things like: breathing and other relaxation techniques, that you may have found useful.
These items can help restlessness.	These can help to remind you of your close relationships and who is around to support you.	These can help to relax and distract you.	These can help provide reassurance and place things into perspective.	



We recommend finding a shoe box and taking time to decorate this how you like, to make sure it's personal to you. Collect together items that are meaningful to you, or you know will be helpful. Make sure to keep it somewhere you can easily access it.

Why not have a go at making your own?
Write some ideas below of what you would include...



Keeping well

Everyone is different, so it's important to think about what helps you stay healthy and well.

Fill in the boxes below to remind you of what you have learnt, in the future



What have I learned about worry?

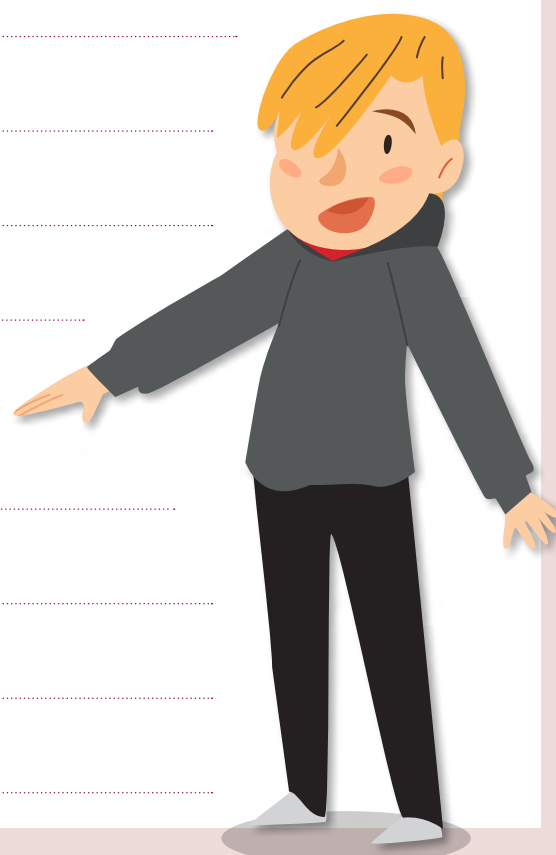
What do I need to keep doing?

What times ahead might be difficult for me?

What are the early warning signs I'm struggling or that my worries are back?

What can I do when I notice these warning signs?

Who can help me and how can they help?
(Write as many names as you can and how they can help)



Useful websites and numbers



Mental Health
Crisis Response
Team

01744 415 640

24 hours a day
seven days a week.

24/7 Mental
Health Crisis Line

Freephone
0800 051 1508

24 hours a day
seven days a week.

Text Support

Text REACH
to 85258

24 hours a day
seven days a week.

HOPELINE247
0800 068 41 41

Are you, or is a young person you know, not coping with life?

For confidential suicide prevention advice contact HOPELINE247.

Call: 0800 068 41 41
Text: 07860 039 961

www.papyrus-uk.org

THE MIX
Essential support for under 25s

Essential support for under 25s. Get advice about relationships, drugs, mental health, money and jobs.

0808 808 4994
4pm to 11pm Monday to Friday

One to one chat and message, visit
www.themix.org.uk

LISTENING EAR
someone to talk to

A charity to help those who've been bereaved, suffered loss or experienced separation.

0151 488 6648
www.listening-ear.co.uk

YOUNGMINDS
fighting for young people's mental health

www.youngminds.org.uk

kooth
www.kooth.com

SAMARITANS
116 123

childline
0800 1111

Additional info

We have other workbooks available.
Please ask your local mental health support team.

We really appreciate your feedback to help us improve our service for you.
Please fill out a short survey once your have completed this workbook.

