

Sometimes we feel stressed or anxious. This is entirely normal. Different kinds of things can cause us to feel this way such as trying something unknown, exams, change and the current situation where we are staying at home.

As a pre-teen or teenager you will be starting to find ways to cope with and reduce your stress levels so that you can do this more easily in adulthood.

This pack gives some strategies, activities and links of things you can do to help when you are not feeling at your best. Maybe some will work for you or help you to find your own strategies.



Emotional Wellbeing

When and if you begin to feel stressed/ anxious, try some of the activities below ...it is good to focus your brain on something else. Distract yourself...

<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p> <p>talk to an adult</p>	<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p> <p>listen to music</p>	<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p> <p>do some deep breathing</p>
<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p> <p>pick a fidget toy</p>	<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p> <p>make a plan</p>	<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p> <p>draw</p>
<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p> <p>do some colouring</p>	<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p> <p>do some yoga</p>	<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p> <p>drink water</p>

Want to distract yourself by colouring? It is a great activity for all ages. Google: 'free mindfulness colouring' for some printable sheets

- Can you make other suggestions of activities that you could do to reduce anxiety/ stress.
- Add your ideas to the blank cards.
- You could maybe add a text box/ use another sheet of paper to write how they make you feel and if they help you.

<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p>	<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p>
<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p>	<p>When I'm anxious, I can</p>

Dump it here:

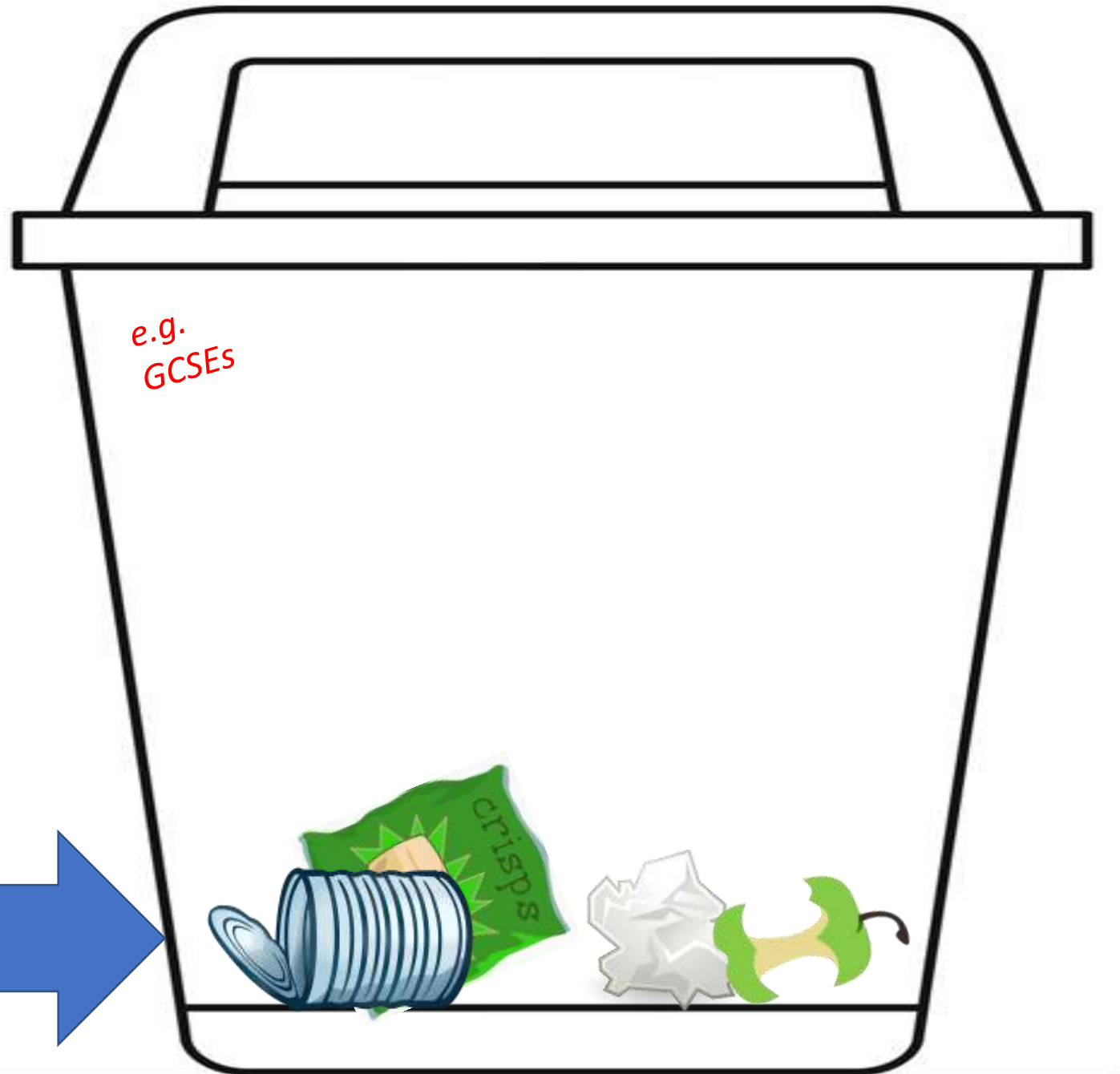
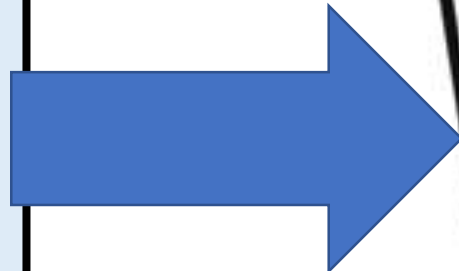
Often when we are feeling stressed or anxious we start a cycle of negative thoughts in our mind.

We can then get stuck thinking about these things until we feel even worse.

One strategy to help is to get all our stresses out of our mind and on to paper.

This could be a letter or a lot of graffiti. You can then bin it or screw it up or pass it to an adult in your family to see if they can help.

Give it a try. Scribble down all your stresses/ worries in the bin to the right...or create your own 'dump'



Gratitude:

When we are stressed or anxious it is really easy to focus on the negatives and feel like nothing ever goes right. But the world and our lives are full of positives, even if they are just the small things. To help our minds to feel happier it is good each day to list three things you are thankful (grateful) for. This could be people, hobbies, favourite belongings, singers, tv shows, nature, pets, a compliment someone gave you....absolutely anything.

Day 1:
I am grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Day 2:
I am grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Day 3:
I am grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Day 4:
I am grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

**Thank
You!**

Day 5:
I am grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Day 6:
I am grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Day 7:
I am grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



You can buy gratitude journals or better yet you can make your own. Decorate it with stickers or pictures. Use colour codes. You could record yourself. You could keep a box of things that represent what you are grateful for. It is an opportunity to be creative too!

Lists:

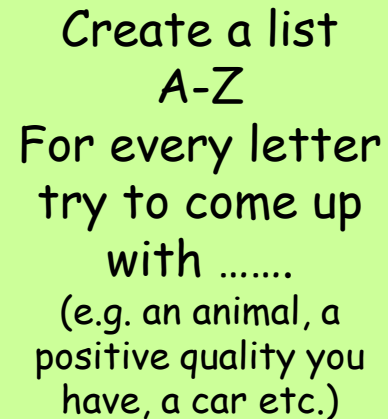
When we are stressed or anxious when can get overwhelmed with all of our thoughts.

A good activity to try and focus our minds (mindfulness) is to create lists.

These could be 'to do' lists, wishes lists, or better still fun challenges. Below are some examples of lists you could make.




Create a list of places you would love to visit one day.



Create a list A-Z
For every letter try to come up with
(e.g. an animal, a positive quality you have, a car etc.)



Create a list of people you are going to visit once things return to normal.



Create a list of jobs you would like to try/ have one day.

These lists can lead us to research further things.

They are also opportunities to be creative; decorate your list- make it colourful. Add images.

List books are very popular in shops like paperchase. You can create your very own.

But remember lists are creative fun and mindful. We do not HAVE TO complete everything on a list. For example if you make a 'bucket list' this is a list of ideas- you don't have to complete it all.

Music...it soothes the soul



When we are stressed or anxious music can be incredibly useful. Listening to it, singing along, even dancing. Listening to music releases dopamine (a chemical which makes us feel good) within our brains.

However, we should consider what music we choose.

As music makes us feel emotions we should avoid listening to music that makes us feel sad or angry when we are already experiencing stress or anxiety.

A good idea is to create playlists for when we are not feeling so good.

Start to think of what songs you could include and list below. Then create some playlists; happy, dancing, energy, good memories, relaxing etc.

Songs that make me feel happy:



happy

Songs that remind me of good times:



Songs that make me feel energised:



And...breathe:

Mindfulness is about focusing on the moment you are in. This is why activities that distract us are classed as mindful activities. You have to focus your mind on the task you are doing and therefore you cannot focus on stress and worry.

- Paying attention to your breathing is a quick and easy mindfulness technique.
- Focus Breathing is a quick and easy mindfulness technique.
- It can help you calm your mind, relax and focus your attention to whatever it is you're a doing right now...and enjoy the moment!

This is a great technique to build into your everyday life to connect with your breathing, your mind and your body...
and you'll feel great afterwards!



1 app that can help with mindfulness is: **'HEADSPACE'**

This is a free app for the first 10 sessions that you can repeat.

How to:

1. Make sure you are comfortable either sitting or standing in a quiet place if possible.
2. Close your eyes and take some slow deep breaths through your nose.
3. Concentrate on your breath flowing in and out of your body.
4. Notice how it is cooler when you breathe in and warmer when you breathe out.
5. Continue until you feel calm and relaxed.



And...breathe-continued:



1 app that can help with mindfulness is:

'CALM'

This is a free app that provides calming sounds that can be used during mindfulness/ to sleep. It also has sleep stories and music.

*Free nature sounds online:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUdZFXsHk0o>

As you now know mindfulness is about focusing on the moment you are in.

When focusing our breathing we should also pay attention to our other senses.

- What can you hear?.
- What can you smell?
- What can you feel?

You'll start to realise that you can hear/ smell/ feel things you don't usually notice

Get into nature.

- Fresh air really is important for our wellbeing- it may not seem that this is the case but as soon as you have had some you will notice you feel a bit better than when you were indoors.
- The same can be said for exercise. This doesn't have to be hard exercise it can be soft; a walk can make us feel much better.
- Spend some time in your garden/ out for a walk. Listen to the nature and sounds around you.
- What can you spot that you would usually miss in your rush to school or when socialising with your friends? Is there anything you haven't seen before? An interesting building? An animal or plant?
- Could you set yourself a challenge to try and spot a list of things?



Yoga: good for the body and mind

- Yoga is a form of meditation. Using your body in a calm and focused way can help your mind to feel more calm too.
- Have a go at the yoga poses below. Be sure to follow the instructions and make sure you're in a calm space, with no distractions (put your phone away!). This could be something you do when you need a ten minute break.
- Yoga is best on a carpeted floor where there is enough space to stretch out your arms and legs. Maybe even on the grass in your garden if it's a nice, warm day...



1 app that can help with yoga is:

'Yoga for Beginners- Down Dog'

This is a free app that provides you with video that introduces you to yoga techniques.

Yoga Cards

Mountain Pose - Tadasana

Benefits Improves posture, strengthens core, muscles and legs.

- 1 Stand tall with your weight balanced evenly on your feet.
- 2 Firm your thigh muscles and pull in your tummy.
- 3 Press your shoulders back and hold your arms out straight, a little way from your body.
- 4 Breathe deeply and hold as long as needed (at least two long breaths).



Yoga Cards

Tree Pose - Vrikasana

Benefits Improves balance; strengthens thighs, calves, and ankles; stretches legs and chest; develops concentration.

- 1 Begin in mountain pose.
- 2 Lift your right foot, turning your knee out; place your foot below your left knee.
- 3 Press your hands together.
- 4 Raise arms overhead, and look up to your hands if possible.
- 5 Return hands to your chest, and lower your right leg.
- 6 Repeat with left leg.



Yoga Cards

Chair Pose - Utkatasana

Benefits Strengthens legs, stretches shoulders and chest.

- 1 Start in mountain pose.
- 2 Exhale, and bend your knees as if you were sitting in a chair.
- 3 Reach your arms towards the ceiling, with your palms facing each other.
- 4 Hold this pose and breathe.



Yoga Cards

Warrior II Pose - Virabhadrasana II

Benefits Strengthens and stretches legs and core; stretches chest and shoulders; relieves backaches.

- 1 Stand with your feet wide apart. Turn your left foot in and your right foot out 90°.
- 2 Inhale, and lift your arms parallel to floor.
- 3 Exhale and bend your right knee. Be careful not to extend your knee past the 90° point with your ankle.
- 4 Keep your torso tall, turn your head, and look out over your fingertips.
- 5 Inhale, straighten your legs and lower your arms. Repeat on opposite side.



Yoga Cards

Downward-Facing Dog - Adho Mukha Svanasana

Benefits Calms the mind; relieves stress; energizes the body; strengthens arms and legs; stretches upper and lower body; relieves headaches, back pain and fatigue.

- 1 Begin on hands and knees with toes tucked under.
- 2 Exhale, straighten knees and lift hips, so you are in an upside-down V. Hold this position for as long as you like. Let your head hang down and breathe.
- 4 To release, exhale and bring knees to the floor.



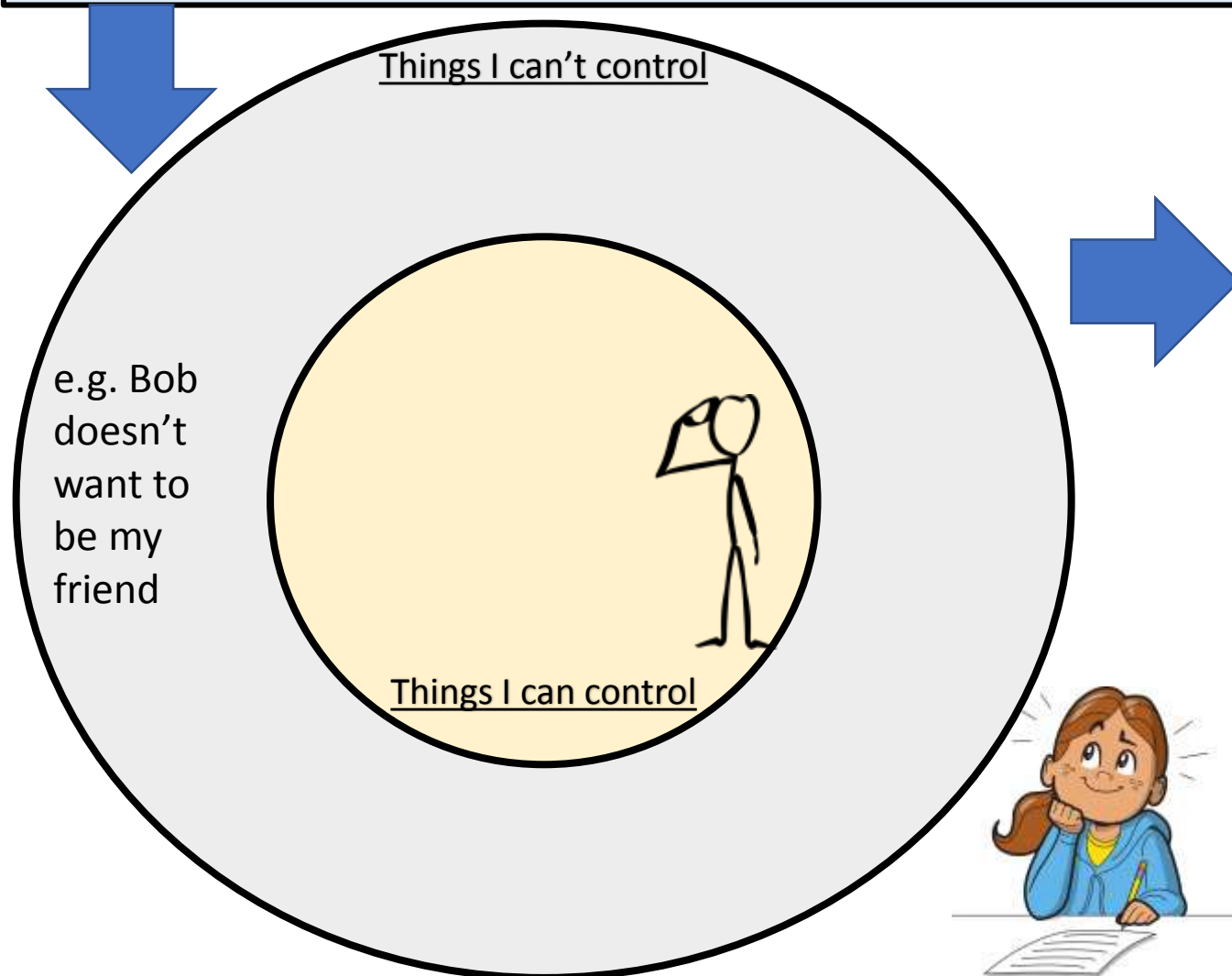
Circle of influence:

We often worry and become stressed about things that are beyond our control.

We should focus on what we can control- this will reduce our stress levels and help us to focus and achieve which will make us feel better.

Below is a circle of influence. It is for you to list your concerns.

- In the inner circle write the things you can control (your actions can affect it) e.g. completing a piece of work
- In the outer circle write the things you cannot control e.g. other people's actions/ nature etc.



Now...Take the problems from your inner circle (those you can control) and think of some solutions....

Problem/ worry	What can I do to make it better?

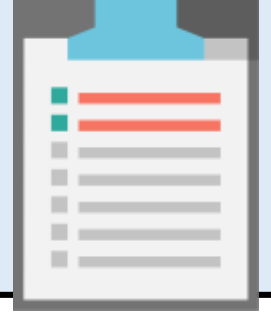
Routines:

Creating routines for yourself can help create calm. These can be daily, weekly or less often.

They can be around your morning, how you work, how you prepare for something new.

Whilst we are remaining in our homes it is good to create a routine; this will keep your mind/body active and your mind calm.

You could ask your parents/ carers to help you to do this.



- Look at the suggested timetable that school sent home.
- Create your own version to work for your own timings. Ensure it is clear and well presented.
- Display it somewhere you can see it/ your family can see it to support you.
- Ensure you include some routine for your weekends too.

Useful information/support for stress/ feeling anxious can be found:

<https://www.kooth.com/> You can access online counsellors to talk- free

<https://healthyyoungmindspennine.nhs.uk/resource-centre/apps/>

<https://www.golddiggertrust.co.uk/online-events-for-lockdown-2020>

