

Being kind to yourself

When we are busy, facing challenges or dealing with change, we can forget to consider and take care of our own wellbeing. Looking after yourself is an important part of being resilient and coping with challenges well. It is essential to be kind to yourself.

Use a set of specially created animated videos to help learn how to cope with worries and loneliness. Use these activities to think about your emotions and wellbeing, what affects them and what you can do to help yourself cope and feel better.

Learning objectives

You will:

- Build resilience and kindness
- Reflect on and learn ways of looking after your wellbeing
- Learn some coping skills
- Become aware of your own wellbeing and how you can help yourself

Primary (ages 7-11)

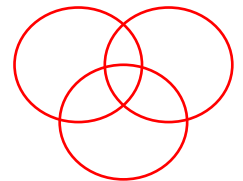
Reflective activity: What is wellbeing?

Think about the term “wellbeing”, what does it mean to you?

People use this word to mean “being happy, comfortable and healthy” - think about all the things in your life that help you feel happy, comfortable and healthy.

You could draw three big circles that all link together, like this one.

Label one circle “happy” one “comfortable” and one “healthy” and write or draw the things that help you feel this way in the circle. Some things will make you feel happy and comfortable, or healthy and happy, you can write these things in the spaces where the circles overlap.



For example: eating healthy food can help you feel fit. It might make you feel happy if you like healthy food. It can also make you feel comfortable because being healthy helps you feel relaxed.

It doesn't matter if you can't decide what circle things go in. It is important just to think about the different ways that different things affect your wellbeing.

Starter activity: How do you feel today?

It is important to take time to think about how you feel so you can see how you can help yourself feel better. Track your feelings over one day. On a piece of paper or in a diary, write or draw how you feel when you wake up in the morning, at lunchtime, in the afternoon and just before you go to bed.

You can use different emojis to show how you feel or write one word to describe your feelings. If it is difficult to express your emotion, you can use colours or create a bar chart to show you emotions over the day. The line at the bottom would be the different times of the day and the line at the side would be how you feel, from the best you can feel at the top, to the worst you can feel at the bottom.

At the end of the day, look at your emotion tracker. What was the high point of your day? What positive thing can you take from today and do again tomorrow?

You can track your emotions the next day and every day of the week if you want to. As a challenge, track your feelings for one whole week and see how your emotions change and what makes them change.

It is important to notice how you feel and how your emotions change to better understand and help your wellbeing.

What did you learn about yourself and your wellbeing from this activity?

Breathing activity: Blowing bubbles

Sometimes we are so full of emotion we can't think very well. There are many things we can do to help us so that we can then think more clearly and start to understand what we are feeling and thinking.

One activity is the 'blowing bubbles' breathing exercise. Sit somewhere quiet or close your eyes. Imagine you have a bottle of bubbles, or if you have some real ones, blow some real bubbles. Gently blow a bubble and watch it float away. Breathe in and then blow another bubble out. Keep blowing bubbles until you feel better.

Does an activity like this help you? How does it help?

Video activity: Circles of control

When we are ready to think more about what causes us to feel worried, we can do activities to help us. [Watch the video about Circles of control.](#) Do the activity from the video. Think about how understanding what you can and can't control can help you feel better.

How do you feel when you have worries?

Does understanding your worries make you feel better?

Extension activity: I can

It is important to remember that you cannot solve everything. You can always do something to feel better and to help others feel better. Think about all the things you can do. Create a poster with the words "I can" in the middle. Around the outside, write down all the things you can do to help yourself and others.

Think about the actions you can do, like listening to a friend who is sad or doing a breathing exercise to feel calmer. Start to think about the people who can help you too. Who can you ask for help?

Secondary (ages 11-18)

Reflective activity: What is wellbeing?

Think about the term "wellbeing", what does it mean to you?

People use this word to mean "being happy, comfortable and healthy" - think about all the things in your life that help you feel happy, comfortable and healthy.

People often divide wellbeing into 3 areas: emotional (how you feel), physical (your body and health) and psychological (your mind and thoughts).

Draw three overlapping circles. Label one circle “emotional wellbeing” one “physical wellbeing” and one “psychological wellbeing” and write or draw the things that help you with these things in the circle. Some objects, people, or activities might help improve emotional and physical and psychological wellbeing; you can write these things in the spaces where the circles overlap.

Look at what you have written down. Do you have access to or do the things you have identified every day? What can you do to add these things into your daily routine to help with your wellbeing every day?

Starter activity: How do you feel today?

It is important to take time to think about how you feel so you can see how you can help yourself feel better. Track your feelings over one day. On a piece of paper or in a diary, write or draw how you feel when you wake up in the morning, at lunchtime, in the afternoon and just before you go to bed.

You can use different emojis to show how you feel or write one word to describe your feelings. If it is difficult to express your emotion, you can use colours or create a bar chart or scatter graph to show your emotions over the day. The line at the bottom would be the different times of the day and the line at the side would be how you feel, from the best you can feel at the top, to the worst you can feel at the bottom.

At the end of the day, look at your emotion tracker. What was the high point of your day? What positive thing can you take from today and do again tomorrow?

Think about how changes in the weather or your hormones might affect your mood too. Do you notice these things changing how you feel?

You can track your emotions the next day and every day of the week if you want to. As a challenge, track your feelings for one whole week or a month and see how your emotions change and what makes them change.

It is important to notice how you feel and how your emotions change to better understand and help your wellbeing.

What did you learn about yourself and your wellbeing from this activity?

Breathing activity: Ocean waves

Sometimes we are so full of emotion we can't focus or think straight. There are many things we can do to help us so that we can then think more clearly and start to understand what we are feeling and thinking.

Breathing exercises can be an excellent way to clear our mind. One breathing exercise is the 'ocean waves' exercise. Sit in a quiet place and close your eyes. If you can, lie down and relax your body. Imagine you are sitting on a soft sandy beach. You can put headphones in and play the sounds of the ocean if it helps you. Watch the waves come in and out on the shore. Breathe along with the waves. Feel your chest and lungs go in and out, as you breathe. Keep breathing the waves until you feel better.

Does an activity like this help you? How does it help?

Video activity: Circles of control

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Think about the actions you can do, like listening to a friend who is sad or doing a breathing exercise to feel calmer. Start to think about the people who can help you too. How can you ask for help?

Take a worry from your inner circle from the Circles of control activity and think about key actions you can do to start to improve the problem.

How can focusing on what you can do to help yourself, help your wellbeing? What will you do differently in the future now?