

Let's think about...

# CARING FOR YOU



























Anyone working with, supporting and caring for children and young people will know the emotional rollercoaster it can be.

We can sometimes take on the cares of others as well as well as carrying our own life challenges and so we would like to say:

THANK YOU

Thank you for all you do, it really matters.

In this booklet of the 'Let's Think About....'
Series we would like to bring some ideas
about caring for you.

# THE 'LET'S THINK ABOUT...' BOOKLET SERIES FOR SUPPORTIVE ADULTS

has been created in collaboration with Safe Families and TLG.

**Safe Families** are a charity who know that facing life alone is hard and when you feel there is no one there to support you it is a scary place to be.

We offer support, hope and belonging to improve the lives of those in our communities. We link children, young people and families, with local volunteers who can offer them help and support.





**TLG** are a charity helping to bring a hope and a future for struggling children in communities by resourcing and equipping local church.

From crisis in education to poverty and hunger, there are children and young people across the UK facing some of the toughest starts in life.

We believe change is possible and that's why in all our work we are resolved to transform lives for good.



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### **EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTERS**



When supporting children and young people it can be very difficult not to be pulled onto their emotional rollercoaster as they experience their highs and lows.

### **BEING IN THE ROLLERCOASTER**

Chaos, Giddy sensations, Feeling very high one minute and very low the next, Uncertain, Unsafe



Often if children have been familiar with some chaos and traumatic experiences, they can feel most familiar with the emotions and sensations connected to those experiences.







As adults we can have the experience of being steady, with our feet on the ground.

### BEING ON THE GROUND

Steady, Safe, Regulated, Calm, Certain

If our children and young people don't know what steady feels like, they may feel uneasy or suspicious of it.

They are more likely to subconsciously try and bring you onto their rollercoaster experience.

It can be helpful to pause now and then to ask yourself:

#### WHERE AM I RESPONDING FROM?

#### AM I 'ON THE GROUND' OR AM I ON THEIR 'ROLLERCOASTER'?

We can offer such vital support when we keep ourselves 'on the ground', showing them security and calm.

Taking time to care for yourself, will help you stay 'on the Ground' when the child or young person you support is experiencing their 'Rollercoaster'.



# Caring for your EMOTIONAL HEALTH

A way of caring for your emotional health is to be aware of your stress levels and the impact these can have on your body, mind and emotions.

Sometimes it can feel like you have an internal stress dial.



### Internal STRESS DIAL

Let's take a minute to be aware of it.



### Things that can effect our stress levels on the dial:

Expectations from family, friends, partners, people we work for, colleagues...

Circumstances in our home, work, community, nation, world

Physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and relational health

### Where is the dial for you today?



Is there anything that you're feeling a sense of alarm in?

Where and with who do you feel most calm?



### **TUNING INTO YOUR EMOTIONS**

and what they could be signalling

Your emotions can help signal to you where your stress levels are.

### FEELING OVERWHELMED?

You can experience panic, shock or numbness when stress and anxiety levels feel unbearable. It can be very hard to think clearly and your emotions may feel overwhelming or even sometimes absent.

Your reactions may seem to come from an instinctive response that could look like one or more of these:

Fight – with your words and/or actions
Flight – needing to get away or withdraw
Freeze – feeling numb or in shock

TOTAL STRES

NO OR LOW STAR



### FEELING PEACEFUL?

This can indicate very low levels of stress, or manageable stress. You may feel peaceful and are able to think, create, reflect, have great ideas and dream about your future.

Even when you feel differing degrees of nerves about accomplishing a hard thing, you can stay focused and regulate your feelings.

Some stress that is manageable can be good for us as it can help us learn and develop.

### FEELING CAUTIOUS?

This could be because you are experiencing a growing amount of stress linked to your physical or relational wellbeing – people or situations you are feeling uncertain about.

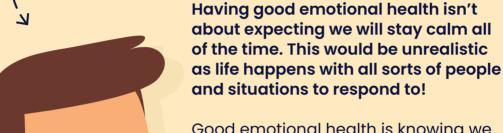
Your thinking and actions are likely to be influenced from a number of the emotions you're feeling. You may feel the need to be watchful. Stress and anxiety related to this can sometimes feel distressing or overwhelming.





SS OVERLOAD





Good emotional health is knowing we all have a spectrum of emotions that signal to us **HOW** our health is doing.

### SO, HOW CAN WE TURN OUR STRESS DIALS DOWN?

Dealing with our emotions well is all about spotting them, understanding why we feel them

So that can we turn the Stress Dial down?



#### Good times to pause and think

#### HOW AM I DOING

- Start and end of the day
- During breaks
- Just before and just after chats with those you live with
- Just before and after chats/activities with your kids

### HAS THE EMOTION I'M FEELING BEEN GENERATED BY ME OR AM I CARRYING SOMEONE ELSE'S EMOTION WITH ME?

Activating our senses in a positive way can really help calm the body and the mind.

So, whether your emotions are your own or being impacted by someone else we care about, let's take a moment to pause and reflect on the ways we can nurture and calm our body, mind and emotions.



### Ideas for Nurture and Calm FOR YOUR BODY



### **YOUR PEOPLE & PLACES**

- Talk to the doctor about any niggles or concerns to seek their advice.
- Have you got a place in your home for rest and comfort?



### **FIDGET RELIEF**

If you can, take regular breaks during your day to stop, walk, eat/drink, stand/sit and stretch any part that has been still for over an hour.



### ITEM OF SCENT



Choose lotions and creams that you enjoy the smell of. Give yourself a hand and foot massage or for a real treat, ask someone you trust to massage the cream in for you.

### LISTEN

Programmes and podcasts that promote healthy living, that inform and energize you to exercise and try new foods and drinks.



### **ACTION**

A nice long walk or high action sport, a lovely bubble bath or snuggle up in a super soft blanket or scarf.



### **SPECIAL ITEM**

This could be your favourite hot water bottle or ice pack, exercise mat, water bottle or cushion.



### Ideas for Nurture and Calm FOR YOUR MIND



### **YOUR PEOPLE & PLACES**

- Make time to chat with those in your life who you trust, who really listen and give you space to think things through and give wise advice when you ask for it.
  - Go as often as you can to a natural spot, where you can clear your head and enjoy being outside.



### **FIDGET RELIEF**

What do you find yourself doing when thinking? Chewing, swivelling or tapping your pen? Tapping your feet, your knees, the nearest surface?

Build up a collection of things to fiddle with that will help get rid of extra tensions:



- Puzzle cubes or snakes
- Bouncy or squidgy stress balls
  - Quick sudoku
  - Word games
  - Doodle pads



### **ITEM OF SCENT**

Maybe choose a soap you enjoy the smell of, take your time to focus on how soft the water feels and tuning in to caring for your hands.



### LISTEN

Stay curious about things.

- Make a list of what you would like to learn about just because YOU want to.
- Seek each one out on a video or audio platform.
  - · Set a realistic goal of one a day/week/month.

### **ACTION**

Read a book, finish a jigsaw, play board games, card games on your own and also with others. Practice or learn a musical instrument, circus skill, a new craft or a new sport.

### **SPECIAL ITEM**

Journal on paper or electronically, the thoughts and ideas that linger for you each day.









### Ideas for Nurture and Calm FOR YOUR EMOTIONS

### YOUR PEOPLE & PLACES

Have regular chats with someone you can depend on.
Who accepts you when you're angry?
Who listens and lets you process your thoughts?
Who can you laugh or cry with?

Consider where your peaceful place is inside and outdoors, go as often as you can. For the one off places you've been to that hold a peaceful memory - find a picture of it to keep the memory alive.

### **FIDGET RELIEF**

Do you find yourself biting your nails or chewing the inside of your mouth? Grow a habit of healthy snacking on apples, carrots etc. Chew gum or to help you resist – have frequent cups of water.

### **ITEM OF SCENT**

Bake or cook up something you LOVE the smell of using ingredients you like that could be both sweet or savoury.



### LISTEN

Create a 'soul soothing' playlist to calm you.
Watch a favourite movie or series. Avoid
(or keep to a minimum) listening to things that
cause your stress dial to go up: certain songs,
news programmes or articles, social media
threads and people that wind you up.



#### **ACTION**

Sing, hug, swim inside or outside, run, walk and find what makes you laugh.

#### Count down:

- 5 things you can see on the floor
- 4 things you can hear above ground
  - 3 different textures you can touch
    - •2 things near you to smell
- •1 taste of something you can access

### SPECIAL ITEM

Feel connected with someone you care about by swapping pictures, accessories, gifts with them. Keep looking at photos of shared memories.



### Your SUPPORT TEAM

It can be helpful to think about the people and activities that help you to have **CALM**, **PERSPECTIVE AND ENERGY**.

Make a list of the Activities and Interests you have:

Is there anything that you would like to add to your list that you would like to do?

Make a list of individuals and groups of people who you enjoy spending time with:	
	Is there
	anyone 19. would
	Is there anyone   groups that you would like to spend more time with?



for more help



Also talk it through with someone you trust. Here are some charities and organisations we recommend:



touchbase.org.uk
Therapy and community support



nspcc.org.uk
Care for mental health in children



powerthefight.org.uk Empowering communities to end youth violence



samaritans.org 24hr call in support



ataloss.org.uk
Care for those facing
bereavement and loss



connectedlives.org
Support for parents seeking to
understand attachment

RenewWellbeing

renewwellbeing.org.uk



kintsugihope.org.uk Wellbeing groups with a spiritual context



youngminds.org.uk
Care for mental health in
young people



mindandsoulfoundation.org.uk
Exploring christianity and
mental health

## FOR YOUR INTEREST...

Themes and responses in this booklet have been drawn from the work of specialists who have written these books:

### Mindsight

By Daniel Siegal

### The Body Keeps the Score

By Bessel Van Der Kolk

### **Creating Loving Attachments**

By Kim S.Golding and Daniel A.Hughes











