



POWER

Path Of Wellness,
Empowerment
& Recovery

Healing from Technology-Assisted
Child Sexual Abuse (TACSA)

9-12 years



Marie Collins
Foundation

The Marie Collins Foundation is a specialist charity that works to improve the outcomes for victims and survivors of Technology-Assisted Child Sexual Abuse (TACSA). This means we want no further harm to occur to any child who has been groomed online, had intimate images shared or taken, had a fake sexual image made of them, or been sexually harmed or abused through any other use of the internet or technology. We have created this free resource to be used by practitioners who work directly with children and young people – including those impacted by TACSA – to support recovery.

It is important to note that this is not an 'online safety' resource. Such resources often focus only on prevention which can be inappropriate to use with victims and survivors as they can appear victim blaming. Online safety resources don't allow the exploration of thoughts and feelings on the journey to recovery that this resource seeks to provide.

You will have watched the short video for information on the resource preparing you for how it must be used with children and young people. It can be used with a range of suggested age groups, with this particular resource being aimed at young people aged 9-12. As a practitioner you must be mindful of not just the chronological age of a child but also their capacity to understand to ensure you utilise the age-appropriate resource.

The resource has been designed as a minimum of 8 sessions, which includes a getting to know you session followed by 3 mandatory foundation sessions, then the practitioner and young person can select from a range of targeted sessions before ending their time together with the mandatory closing session. Within each session there may be additional resources to access. However, the resource is not limited to 8 sessions, further sessions can be facilitated should the practitioner and young person choose. The resource has been created from a combination of research, the voices of those with lived experience, professional experience and the expertise of the Marie Collins Foundation.

Although as a practitioner you may not directly work alongside the young person's parent(s)/carer(s) you can direct them to support material designed specifically for them on the Marie Collins Foundation website, please visit: mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk/How-We-Can-Help/I-am-a-parent-or-carer

The professional relationship between the practitioner and the young person will be a key element in the effectiveness of this resource. Practitioners should make themselves aware of the following:

Empowering the young person: where possible every opportunity should be taken to give the young person some control. Consider: how much choice does the young person have on when the sessions take place, what notes or records are made and who will see them. For example, if the young person's sexuality is not relevant to the concerns, then is there a need to record this, and share it with others? Empowering the young person will support the development of their self-esteem, their feelings of self-worth and their confidence within the sessions.

Reassurance: It is incredibly distressing for a young person to repeatedly talk about what has happened to them and can cause more harm. Practitioners do not need to know the details of any incident to use this resource. Specialist police officers should be the only people who may have seen any images. When meeting a young person you need to be clear that you haven't seen any images and that you won't see any.

Practitioner Bias: Recent research⁽¹⁾ has highlighted how practitioners fail to recognise that online sexual abuse can be as harmful as offline sexual abuse. These views can lead to victim blaming language where the victims and survivors are seen as being responsible for their own abuse and this can come across to the young person either deliberately or via unguarded comments.

⁽¹⁾ Hamilton-Giachritsis C, Hanson E, Whittle H, Alves-Costa F, Pintos A, Metcalf T, Beech A. Technology-assisted child sexual abuse: Professionals' perceptions of risk and impact on children and young people. Child Abuse Negl. 2021 Sep;119(Pt 1).

Limitations of resource: This resource cannot be used as a replacement to therapy or counselling. It is a programme of work to support the young person on their path to recovery. If the young person is already receiving therapy, good practice would be to discuss this intervention with their therapist to ensure the process would not be overwhelming.

How to use this resource: Prior to using this resource you will have watched the video for guidance on how to use it with children and young people and will now need to familiarise yourself with the material before facilitating any sessions with a young person.

The resource is comprised of 4 stages, with clear session overviews and contact with the young person and family being made prior to the resource being used.

STAGE 1 – OPENING SESSION

This session aims to build the trust and rapport between the practitioner and the young person.

STAGE 2 – FOUNDATION SESSIONS

There are 3 mandatory sessions, which will be relevant to the young person regardless of the TACSA.

STAGE 3 – TARGETED SESSIONS

Practitioners and young people will choose at least 3 sessions from a broad range of different topics that explore supporting the young person in their recovery.

STAGE 4 – CLOSING SESSION

This provides the opportunity to reflect on the sessions and look at how far the young person has come in their recovery and the strategies they can utilise as ongoing support. It is important that the young person knows this intervention has finished.

Our Human Needs

Sometimes it is useful to have a framework to understand how and why things happen in life and how we can help ourselves to be happy, healthy and emotionally well. It can also help to remove self-blame and judgement when things haven't turned out the way we hoped.

A useful framework comes from the Human Givens⁽²⁾ approach, which identifies a set of needs that all human beings have to meet in order to be in a state of wellbeing. When we meet these needs in balance and in healthy ways we are able to build a life that works for us. However, sometimes we don't or can't find healthy ways to meet these needs and so we either don't manage to meet them or meet them in less healthy ways, which can create problems.

Our emotional needs include:

- **Security** – to feel safe in at least one area of our life.
- **Control** – a sense of autonomy or agency in what happens to us.
- **Attention** – both giving and receiving in order to feel seen by those around us.

⁽²⁾ Human Givens | www.hgi.org.uk

- **Status** – seeing that others value us for our contribution.
- **Community** – to feel connected and a sense of belonging to the wider group.
- **Emotional connection** – closer relationships to a few individuals so that we feel accepted.
- **Privacy** – time to reflect and think our own thoughts.
- **Achievement** – a sense that we are stretching ourselves and developing.
- **Meaning** – what gets us up in the morning, often met through being needed by others or by being part of something important.

Three physical needs – **nutrition, movement and sleep** – also help us to feel emotionally well.

Children have the same needs as adults and sometimes it is more difficult for them to meet their needs, mainly because they have less day-to-day **control** in their lives. They are generally expected to follow and fit in with the rules of their family and school. At school they can't choose what to wear or even when to go to the toilet. At home they may have little choice over what they eat or when they go to bed (potentially impacting how they meet their need for **nutrition and sleep**). They may have less access to **privacy**, especially if they share a bedroom.

When we recognise that all human beings, whatever their age, are looking to meet these same needs, it's apparent that we become vulnerable if this is not possible. We can see how potentially easy it could be for any of us to be groomed by someone with an ulterior motive. By making us feel seen (giving **attention**) and valued (**status**), by making us feel accepted (**emotional connection**) and by providing a sense of being needed or part of something important (**meaning**) we can be taken in by people whose intentions are harmful.




When this happens, the fallout can also mean that it's harder to meet our needs. For example, when we discover that we've been taken advantage of, it is hard to feel **secure** and we often feel out of **control**.

When we can't meet our needs, human beings become stressed – which makes our emotions stronger and harder to manage and this in turn makes it harder to think clearly. Finding ways to calm strong emotions will help us find ways to meet needs in healthy ways again.

When supporting a young person who has been the victim of TACSA, we need to be aware of their unmet needs. We can work with them to help them manage strong emotions and develop strategies to feel calmer. We can work to help them regain a sense of **control** over their lives. We can make them feel more **secure** and create an environment where they can build healthy relationships, meeting their needs for **attention, status, community** and **emotional connection** again. This will help restore their sense of **meaning**. When we understand that all human beings have the same set of needs, we remove blame and judgement when things go wrong and we can help young people work towards meeting their needs in healthy ways again and support the journey to recovery.

 **One way to check in with someone over how they are currently meeting their needs is a questionnaire. Please use the questionnaire provided on the next page.**

If scores are consistently at the lower end for a particular question(s), then this might begin to identify appropriate support to help that young person find ways to feel calmer and meet their needs better.

How satisfied were you with the following aspect of your life in the last week ?							
							
1	I had a sense of control over day-to-day events						
2	I was able to relax when I felt I needed to						
3	I felt able to give attention to others						
4	I felt that life was meaningful						
5	I had interest or pleasure in doing things						
6	I felt able to remain calm enough in challenging situations						
7	I had time and space for myself						
8	I felt safe and secure						
9	I slept well						
10	I had a sense of closeness or connection with someone						
11	I felt positive and hopeful						
12	I dealt with my problems effectively						
13	I felt that I achieved something						
14	I felt valued and respected						
15	I felt able and happy to socialise with others						



The session we did today was...

I would like to share with you...



The session we did today was...

I would like to share with you...



The session we did today was...

I would like to share with you...



OPENING SESSION

Getting to know each other

This session is beginning the process of building a connection between the young person and practitioner to support their recovery. This will be the opportunity to discuss expectations and give clarity on what is to come.

FOUNDATION SESSIONS

Relationships

This session is to set out what good and healthy relationships look like and how to behave and treat each other in ways that feel safe and respectful.

Dealing with change

This session is to explore the different things that may change in someone's life – good and bad, expected or unexpected – how you can predict and prepare for some changes and how you might manage change.

Managing and understanding emotions

This session is to help the young person understand how emotions are triggered and what effect they have on the mind and the body. The aim is to widen understanding of emotions beyond simple angry/sad/happy etc and to have greater awareness of how to manage their own emotions.

TARGETED SESSIONS

Okay and not-okay behaviours in friendships and other relationships

This session looks at behaviours that are okay and not-okay in relationships, and how we might respond to them. We will look at different situations and think about when we are being forced to something that we don't want to do (which is sometimes called coercion).

Feeling safe

This session allows the young person to explore what feeling safe looks like in their life, and what and who offers them the feeling of safety. This will allow discussion around safe places and people.

Telling people what support I need

This session gives the young person an opportunity to explore how they can tell certain people in their life what support they need and words to vocalise it. It will also provide families and other trusted adults with ways to interact with the young person in a way that is helpful and supportive to them.

Feeling like it's my fault

This session gives the young person opportunity to consider scenarios where we may blame ourselves or feel as though others blame us, but where we need to look at the context of a situation in order to see that it wasn't the victim's fault.

Managing upsetting thoughts

This session is an opportunity to explore managing unhelpful or upsetting thoughts.

Building strengths

This session allows the young person to explore the positive things in their life and their strengths. Reflecting on our strengths helps in our recovery.

TARGETED SESSIONS – TACSA

Giving and receiving permission (consent)

This session will explore the issue of young people giving and receiving permission and empowering them to find ways to do only what they feel comfortable with.

Talking to people online: grooming

This session will allow the young person to explore how some people build connections to us online and then use them to get us to do things we might not want to, or that we feel uncomfortable doing.

Picture received with pressure to then send one back

This is an opportunity to explore thoughts, feelings and responses when someone receives a picture they didn't ask for, or want, and is then pressured to send one back.

Image taken and shared with permission/consent then shared on without permission/consent

This is an opportunity to explore thoughts, feelings and responses when someone you trusted shares a picture with other people after tricking you into believing you were in a relationship.

AI generated and/or altered images

This is an opportunity to explore from a range of perspectives the impact of images altered using Artificial Intelligence (AI).

CLOSING SESSION

What makes us us?

These sessions have been designed to support recovery, teach skills and open up discussion. This ending session is about bringing it all together and reassuring the young person that they are able to move forwards.



Session overview

This session is beginning the process of building a connection between the young person and practitioner to support their recovery. This will be the opportunity to discuss expectations and give clarity on what is to come.

Information for practitioner

If appropriate you **must** tell the young person that you have not seen any images of them and never will. This is vital as it will be an overpowering and distracting thought from the young person.

It is also essential that this session is done together, both practitioner and young person giving and sharing examples and thoughts to aid the development of connection and trust.

Resources needed

- Big paper and pens

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they are feeling since everyone came together in a meeting to talk about what would be happening. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



Introduce yourself & why you are there

Not your job description but done in a simple way that puts the young person at ease. Practitioner to explain that they have not seen any images, and won't, and that there is no expectation to talk about what has happened as the sessions will focus on recovery and moving forward.

It is possible that the young person may want to talk about what has happened, so don't shut them down and do allow them to get anything off their chest. In this case, offer reflective listening without judgment and reassure them that your work together will help them to recover from their experiences.



Confidentiality and recording

These sessions offer a safe space for a young person on their recovery journey so it is imperative that there is clarity around how we record what happens and what we share with others.

It is important to remind the young person of the boundaries we work to around confidentiality; when we have to share information for safeguarding reasons and the information that may be recorded. Practitioner to be mindful of using the terms confidentiality and safeguarding, ensuring that the young person has an understanding of what the terms mean. Examples of situations when we need to break confidentiality should be given to enhance understanding because a young person's perception of what constitutes risk may not be the same as ours.

Recording of information should be accurate, clear and relevant and reflecting on these three areas as we record can be helpful.

If information is being shared it needs to be relevant, adequate, accurate, concise, timely, secure and recorded.

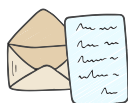
As a practitioner when you record information the young person should be fully informed, and if not a safeguarding concern they should give consent for any information to be shared.



Expectations

Discussion on expectations for young person and practitioner. This is to include, but is not an exhaustive list: meeting on an agreed regular basis, no other practitioner is to cover a session, both young person and practitioner to actively participate, to be open to and respectful of each other's thoughts and opinions, to be clear on time keeping and where sessions take place, no expectation to share anything that the young person doesn't want to share, after the foundation sessions, future sessions

can be selected together, reiterating this is not about blaming them for anything that happened.



Lived experience letter

Discuss how it felt for the young person to receive a letter from someone with lived experience. It is important to note that the experience in the letter may not mirror exactly the young person's own experience and their feelings around what happened. Rather, it is an opportunity to reflect that their experience isn't unique, they are not alone and that there is a path to recovery.



Using the big
paper and pens

Activity

Communication using technology

Using the paper and pens both young person and practitioner write or draw the ways in which they communicate using technology. This will include specific apps, emails, webcam, emojis, banking/shops, work meetings on Zoom/Teams, memes etc making sure you have a broad range of examples covering both the young person's use and the practitioner's experience. It may be useful to draw and use emojis to bring out the young person's feelings about different ways of communicating.

Reflection from this activity is that there are many ways to communicate, and that technology is a huge part of all our lives.

Questions to ask – in any order – for both practitioner and young person to talk about their own experiences.

- **What do we like/dislike about some of the ways we communicate?**
- **Do we communicate with some people differently?**
- **Does it make communicating better or easier?**
- **Have we faced any problems with any of these ways of communicating?**

Discussion to be expanded to consider what happened, how it felt and whether it changed the use of that medium. For example, a meme sent as a joke but not being funny.

- **What do we do when we aren't sure about something, or when we don't feel comfortable?**
- **Do we talk about how we use technology, like we might about school or a hobby? If so, who to?**
- **Is it difficult to talk to someone if we experience something we aren't sure about or feel uncomfortable with?**

Discussion may include sharing our worries about technology and the response that may receive, it being taken away from us, not being understood, being judged, feeling like we did something wrong etc.

- **Who might we feel ok to talk to?**

Young person may only identify friends, practitioner to encourage the opportunity to identify trusted adults.



Reflection on this session

The main purpose of this activity was to get to know each other and build rapport and a sense of open communication.



Closing activity

Fears and hopes

Start with fears so that worries are validated first before moving onto their hopes as this will allow a focus on a positive end to the session.

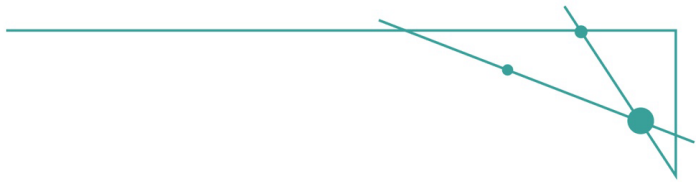
- **Can you share with me 2 or 3 worries or fears you may have about what we are going to do together?**
- **Can you share with me 2 or 3 hopes you might have about our time together?**



Reflect and address each hope and fear, being honest and reassuring.



The fears and hopes activity can be reviewed in future sessions to see how things change.



You are not alone.

I am writing this letter to you because I am a survivor of abuse, I have been where you are, and this is what I would like you to know.

You are believed and it wasn't your fault. You didn't deserve what was done to you. Abuse thrives in silence and often leads to feelings of blame and shame. But you don't need to feel ashamed or guilty. No matter what happened, the only person to blame is the person who did this to you.

You might not have reacted in the way that you thought you would. This might feel complicated and confusing, and these feelings can sometimes silence us as victims and survivors. But you don't have to justify how you feel. Your feelings are valid, whatever they may be, and they don't make you any less deserving of help and support.

It might feel like everything in your life has changed and those close to you may be hurting too. But it's important you know you did not cause this pain.

Other people may find it difficult to talk to you about what has happened in case they upset you or because it can be hard to find the right words. But I want you to know that there are people who will listen to you and who want to support you.

It's not always easy. It can feel overwhelming now, but it won't always be this way. There will be good and bad days throughout your recovery journey. Even though you might have a wobble every now and then, it doesn't mean you are going backwards, it's all part of the journey.

You're still whole as a person. You didn't deserve this, but you do deserve to live a life full of enjoyment and happiness, where you feel safe, supported and in control.

You can get through this.
-From Charlie





Session overview

This session is to set out what good and healthy relationships look like and how to behave and treat each other in ways that feel safe and respectful.

Information for practitioner

This session will include reflection on friendships, relationships with peers, teachers and practitioners, family and even the people we come across day to day such as retail or transport workers

Pre-session action

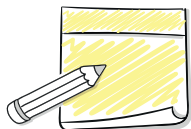
Select a *“Looking after yourself”* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

Resources needed for this session

- Post-it notes
- Paper
- Relationship qualities cards

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your opening session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

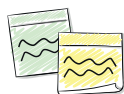
Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



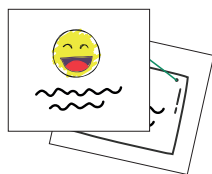
Using the post-it notes explore the questions in **bold**

- **What different types of relationships do you have in your life?**

Include discussion about the different relationships they have, for example: family, peers, different support practitioners (include the relationship you are building with the young person for these sessions), social media apps and chats, online, gaming, VR community, school, shopkeepers.



Differentiate on the post-it notes those they know online, in real life or both.



Relationship
qualities cards

- **What qualities do you think you need in these different relationships?**

This will allow discussion on what relationships need to include, for example: caring, dependable, supportive, listener, empathic, trust, things in common, encouraging, make you smile and laugh, respectful, honest, loyal, fun, there for you, discussion, equality, love, security, shared interests, a sense of belonging, being special/loved, excitement/a buzz.

- **Do your different relationships give you what you need?**

Using the relationship qualities cards, match them to the different types of relationship in turn to see which relationships offer which qualities. This will involve discussion as to whether qualities are consistently present or only at times and also begin to identify if and where things may have changed.

- **What do I bring to the relationship?**

Discuss how we connect and engage with people and what may be expected of us.



Be mindful that this may include negative responses that need to be acknowledged and explored.



Reflect that relationships are a balance of give and take and that healthy relationships take effort and shared expectations for both sides.

- **If you had to describe in one or two words how each relationship makes you feel what would you say?**

Run through the list of different relationships on the post-its and elicit from the young person a one or two word feeling for each one.



Practitioner needs to acknowledge that relationships are not necessarily easy all the time, that we do have to nurture them but that the foundation of a good relationship is important for it to be healthy.



If the young person gives examples that are unhealthy or have a negative impact on them this must be acknowledged.

- **Looking at what we have talked about around qualities, which trusted adult would you be willing to approach if you needed support between sessions?**



Be aware there might not be someone who the young person feels displays all the qualities.



Encourage them to think of somebody who could offer support and safety if needed.



Reflection on this session

It is important that when we look at what is healthy in a relationship that we also look at what happens when things aren't what we thought they were or don't make us feel as safe and secure as we perhaps should. There are targeted sessions (see contents page) that could develop this discussion further supporting the young person in their recovery. This is also picked up in the next foundation session: *Dealing with Change*.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close



**Make you smile
and laugh**



Caring



Listener



Empathic



Honest



Fun



Love



**Excitement
/a buzz**



Encouraging



Supportive



**A sense
of belonging**



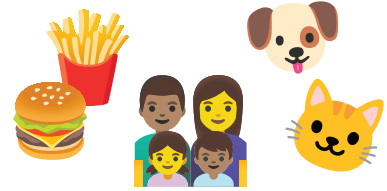
**Being special/
loved**



Discussion



Shared interests



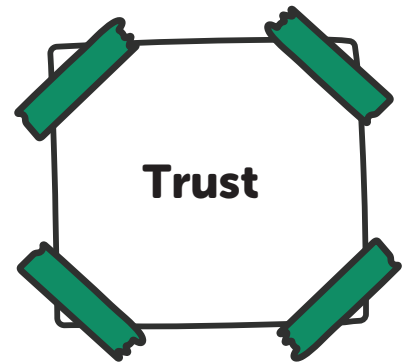
Things in common



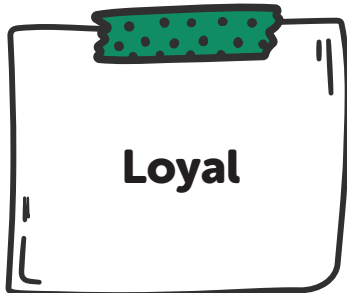
Equality



There for you



Trust



Loyal



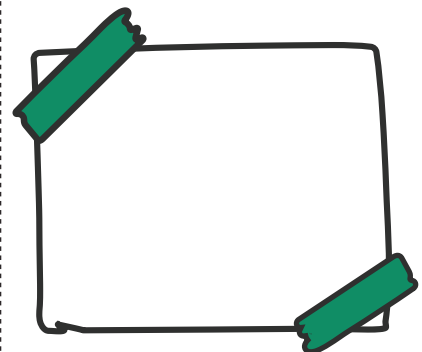
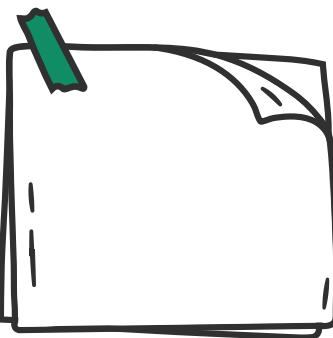
Respectful



Security



Dependable



Session overview

This session is to explore the different things that may change in someone's life – good and bad, expected or unexpected – how you can predict and prepare for some changes and how you might manage change.

Information for practitioner

In the guidance below are some examples to start off the different conversations – don't leap in with all of these at once but elicit what you can from their own thoughts. Use any additional ideas to add depth and breadth, encouraging the young person to share their ideas.

Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

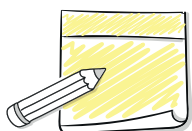
Resources needed for this session

- Pen
- Big sheet of paper
- Post-it notes
- Worksheets

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

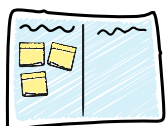
Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



Using the post-it notes explore the questions in **bold**

- **Is change always a bad thing?**

Discuss and write down on post-it notes as many examples of change as you both can think of – through this you will elicit good as well as bad change. Practitioner may need to prompt to get things started but allow space for young person's input. For example: moving house, growing up; changing school; being given a present; getting a new friend; losing a friend; leaving school; getting a pet; getting a haircut; finding a new band you like; passing an exam; choosing GCSEs; going on holiday; getting ill; cancelling plans; other people's choices; your choices; the seasons; birth and death; flowers turning to fruits; climate change; general elections; prices going up; getting a job; taking up a new hobby; adolescence; getting new clothes; getting braces; parents divorcing; new year's resolutions etc.



Big sheet of paper

- **Which are good and which are bad?**

Divide a piece of paper into two halves and move the post-it notes into either 'good' or 'bad'. Tease out what would make them good and what would make them bad and whether they are fixed in one place. Look at whether there's anything good to be found in the bad changes and vice versa.

- **What can you control?**

On the post-it notes identify whether you can control or not control each change. Be aware that some examples may be in between the two depending on circumstances. Discuss whether this makes a difference as to whether they are good or bad?

- **Which changes might be expected, and which might be unexpected?**

Reflecting on two or three examples, discuss how some changes can be prepared for and some can happen without warning, and how this can affect how you feel about the change.

Practitioner and young person to think about a change that they have each experienced, one that does not cause them distress to reflect on.



List any good and bad things about these changes, including anything they have learnt about themselves and others.



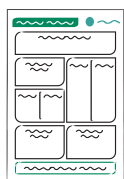
Noticing change

Using one of the examples from the post-it notes, what might you notice if someone was struggling with this change?

This may include for example: sadness, stress, withdrawn, moody, avoidant.

What advice would you give them?

For example: having a routine in which changes can happen; exercise to burn stress and clear thoughts; finding ways to relax – think of some examples; acceptance – how do we accept change and move on? Set realistic goals and have realistic expectations; find things you enjoy; be kind to yourself.



Worksheet



Using the worksheet look at a change that you might face in the near future. Fill in the worksheet together and highlight the quote at the bottom about 'this too will pass'.



Reflection on this session

Change will always happen in life and by understanding and accepting this we can manage these changes better.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

"Circles of control" exercise is particularly useful for this session.

What is the change?

What's good about the change?

What are your
worries around
the change?

What can you do
to help with some
of the worries?

What can you
control about
the change?

What can't
you control?

In five years' time what might the change
look like?

Who could you talk to about the change?

Change happens. When you're going through a tough time it's worth remembering
and saying to yourself **"this too will pass"**.

Change happens. When you're going through a tough time it's worth remembering and saying to yourself **"this too will pass"**.

Foundation session: Managing and understanding emotions

Session overview

This session is to help the young person understand how emotions are triggered and what effect they have on the mind and the body. The aim is to widen understanding of emotions beyond simple angry/sad/happy etc and to have greater awareness of how to manage their own emotions.

Information for practitioner

Exploration of emotions - it is very helpful to understand that all human beings experience emotions that lead to different behavioural responses. The point here is to understand the emotional response and remove blame from behaviours. Along with the recognition of our emotions, finding techniques to calm strong emotions can help.

Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

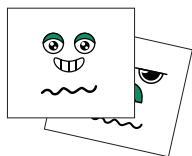
Resources needed for this session

- Emotions cards
- Emotions wheels
- Brain diagrams
- Behaviour cards

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.

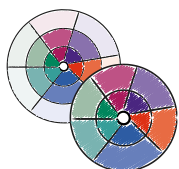


Emotions cards

Feelings

Begin by looking at some of the emotion cards that show emotions and discuss when they might happen and what it might look like.

Now break each of the emotions listed down into other feelings that might be happening. For example: sad might be pain, disappointment, shame, grief, misery; happy might be joy, excitement, hope, cheerfulness, contentment.



Emotions wheels

Practitioner to introduce the **emotions wheel** that feels most appropriate for the young person they are working with (two circles of emotions or three circles of emotions) and spend some time looking at it together, exploring how the primary emotions contain a range of different emotions.

We don't generally feel just one emotion at a time; sometimes we feel two or more emotions that can even contradict each other. Practitioner and young person to **pick three emotions** they are feeling now.

Are there any emotions in different parts of the emotions wheel that feel similar or that you can imagine having at the same time? For example: I'm scared of riding my bike fast **and** I also find it exciting; I'm happy that I won a race **and** I'm embarrassed to be mentioned in assembly; I am **content** to chat to my friends online **and** I'm anxious that I haven't done my homework yet; I'm excited to meet people online **and** I'm worried that I don't really know who they are.

It can be useful to see each emotion in three different ways:

- The emotional **feeling** (e.g. sad, happy, angry).
- Where we feel this in our **bodies** (e.g. butterflies in our tummy, jittery feeling, worry headache, fidgety, needing a wee).
- How we **behave** as a result of that emotion (e.g. cry, laugh, storm off, ignore someone).

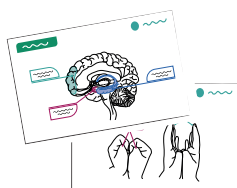
Now pick one or two emotions and think about them in the above terms. Explore all the different physical feelings and behaviours that might occur in you (or a hypothetical person if this is easier) to go with that particular emotion.



Reassure the young person that the experience of emotions and how they make us feel is **human** – and by understanding emotions we empower ourselves to have more control over what we do when we feel strong emotions.

Bodily reactions

Sometimes we notice the feeling first; or sometimes we notice a reaction within our body.



Brain diagrams

Introduce the basic explanation of the brain using the diagram and your hands. If you fold your thumbs inside your fists and wrap your fingers around your thumbs, putting both hands together facing each other, you can imagine that this is your brain. Your thumb is the safety officer (**use explanation below**).

We have two of these, one in each side of the brain. When our safety officer (the thumb) becomes worried that we are in danger it puts pressure (by 'wiggling') on the fingers (the thinking part of our brain) and makes it harder to think clearly. If it decides to take over completely we might 'flip our lid' (demonstrate by opening up the fingers).



Practitioner to encourage young person to make the hand model of the brain themselves so they can do it too.

- The safety officer's job is to look out for potential danger, and it is constantly taking information from what we see, hear, smell, taste and touch, deciding whether there is a threat or not.
- It produces our emotional responses to what's around us.
- When these emotions get too intense – especially if it feels like there is a threat, whether that's real or not, it can cut us off from the thinking part of our brain – this is the thumb wiggling, making it harder for the fingers to be steady and when it wiggles really hard it 'flips' the thinking brain.
- This is an important survival strategy to act without thinking in a dangerous situation (think jumping out of the way of a car without thinking about it) but it's not so useful when we need to respond to things that are more complex.

- So, when we experience strong emotions, we find it harder to think clearly – the safety officer is too excited and we therefore react without thinking.

Practitioner and young person to think about a time when they did something 'in the heat of the moment', one that does not cause them distress to reflect on. For example: replying to a message without thinking or beeping their horn when driving.

How did your bodies respond?

For example: heart rate increased, sweaty palms, panicky breathing.

Behaviours

In your 'heat of the moment' example what happened next?

Start to reflect on how an emotion presents in three different ways: the emotion, the bodily response and the behaviour. Notice that the emotion that caused the 'flip' also caused bodily sensations and a behaviour. Show how these are linked.



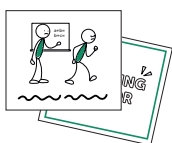
Practitioner to share the following information with the young person.

Behaviour is an important form of communication but because it is not as clear or direct as words it isn't always seen and understood and can therefore be easy to misinterpret.

When we realise that behaviour comes from an emotional response it can make it easier to understand someone else's behaviour – and even our own.

Behaviours are often trying to do one of two things:

- To obtain or gain something – more time, understanding, order, calm, peer or adult attention, a desired object or activity, or sensory stimulation.
- To avoid something – a stressor, a frustration, a task that may be difficult, boring or easy, a physical demand, an activity or person we don't like.



Behaviour cards

Using the **behaviour cards** think about possible emotions that might be causing that behaviour.

Can we always tell what emotion someone is feeling from their behaviour?

For example: someone may look angry but actually be scared; or they may seem very calm but actually be sad.

Thinking about some situations you may have been in, and how you behaved, do you think people knew how you were feeling? Did you always know what emotions and feelings had caused your behaviour?



Practitioner must reflect that this is not about judging past behaviours but understanding the emotional process that everyone has.



It may be useful to look at what else was going on when we behaved in a particular way.

For example, sometimes we seem to manage a difficult situation calmly while at other times our emotions seem to take over. If we look at what else has been going on, for example, how much sleep we've had, how things are in our friendship group, how safe we are feeling at that time, whether we've come from a calm, happy event or a stressful one, then we can sometimes make sense of the resulting behaviour. Practitioner can share their own examples of times when they feel they have had more or less control over their responses in a particular situation.



Reflection on this session

Our emotions are a very useful resource that help us stay safe. When we've had an intense experience, the brain learns how to cope from what it did last time. For example: if storming off kept us safe one time, we may default to this behaviour next time we feel a strong emotion even if this is not a helpful behaviour this time. We can learn how to interrupt that pattern (to an extent) – if we are able to calm our strong emotions quickly. Go back to the hand model of the brain and explore ideas about what would help reset the brain after it's flipped its lid – reflect that we can do things that will help get our brain calm again – and show this visually by closing your fingers round your thumbs so your fists look like a brain again. This represents what happens when we calm the safety officer and regain our clear thinking. Refer to the Looking after Yourself exercises – both the one you choose today and others – as these are often about finding different ways to calm the safety officer and help us to have more choice over our reactions.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Pick one of the techniques that can help calm strong emotions (i.e. restore the brain to its calm state), for example: "54321" or "extended exhale breathing".



Grumpy



Calm



Happy



Worried



Bored



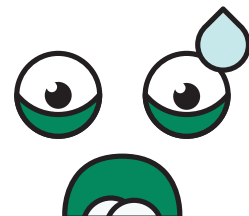
Sad



Excited



Angry



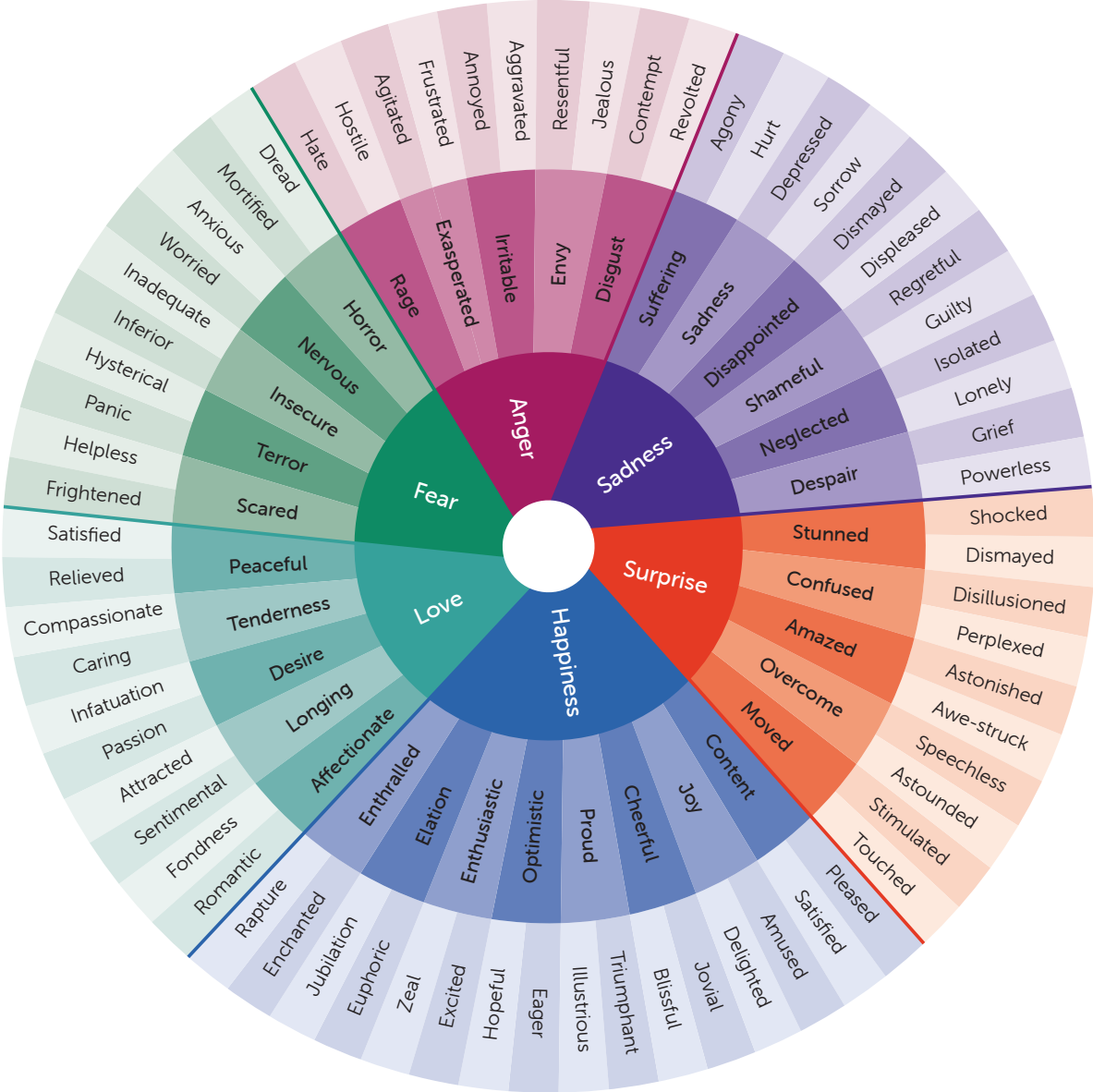
Afraid



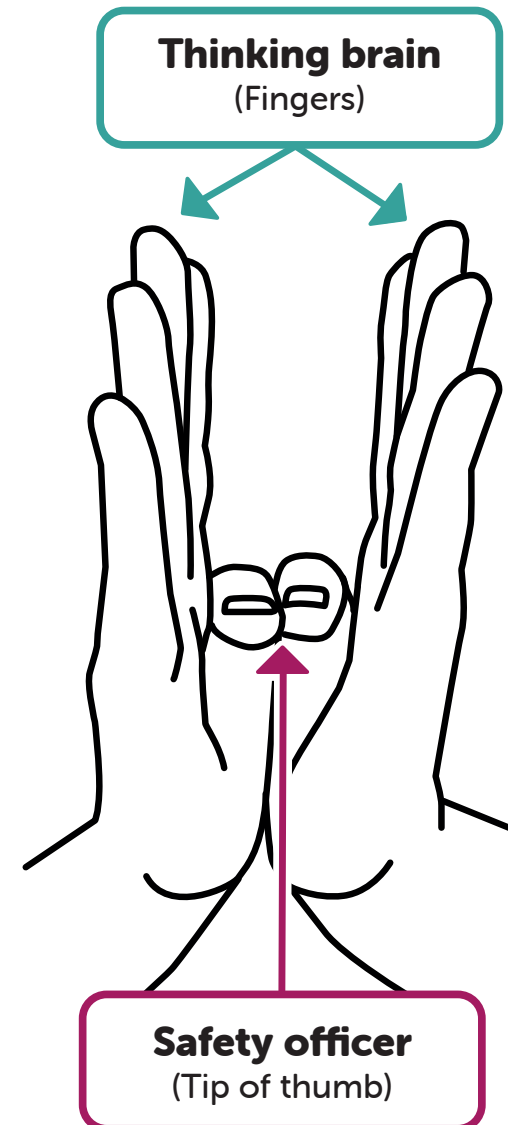
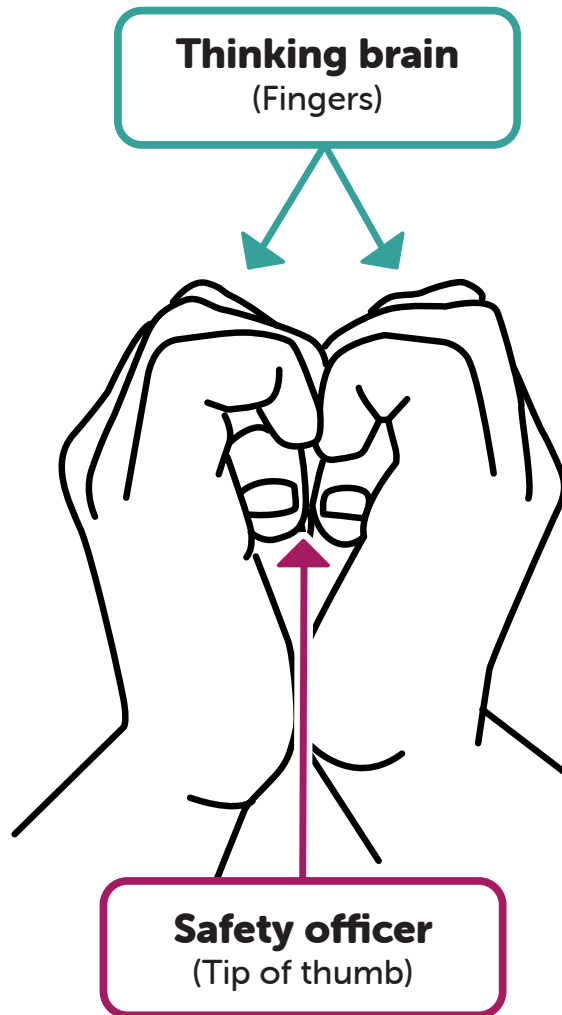
Frustrated



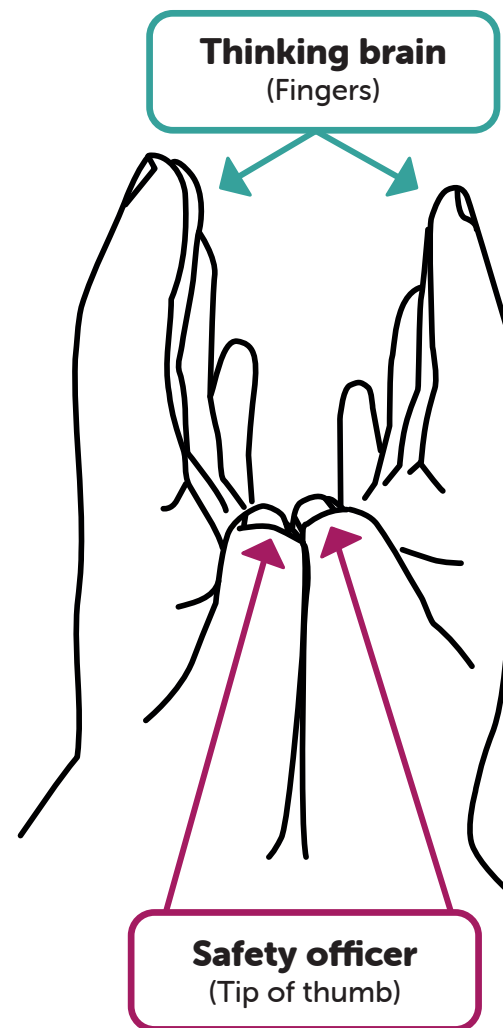
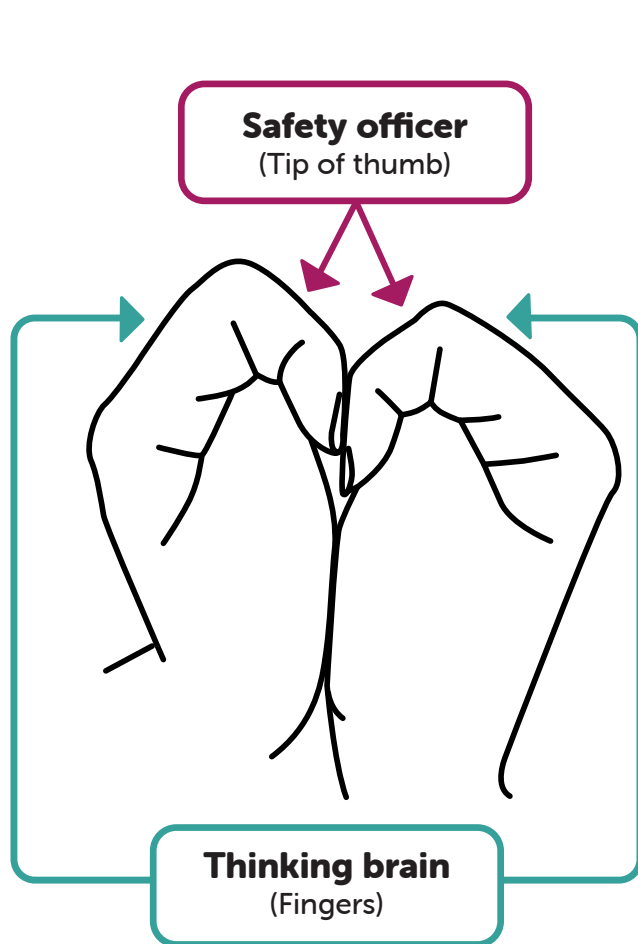
Emotions & feelings wheel - 3 levels

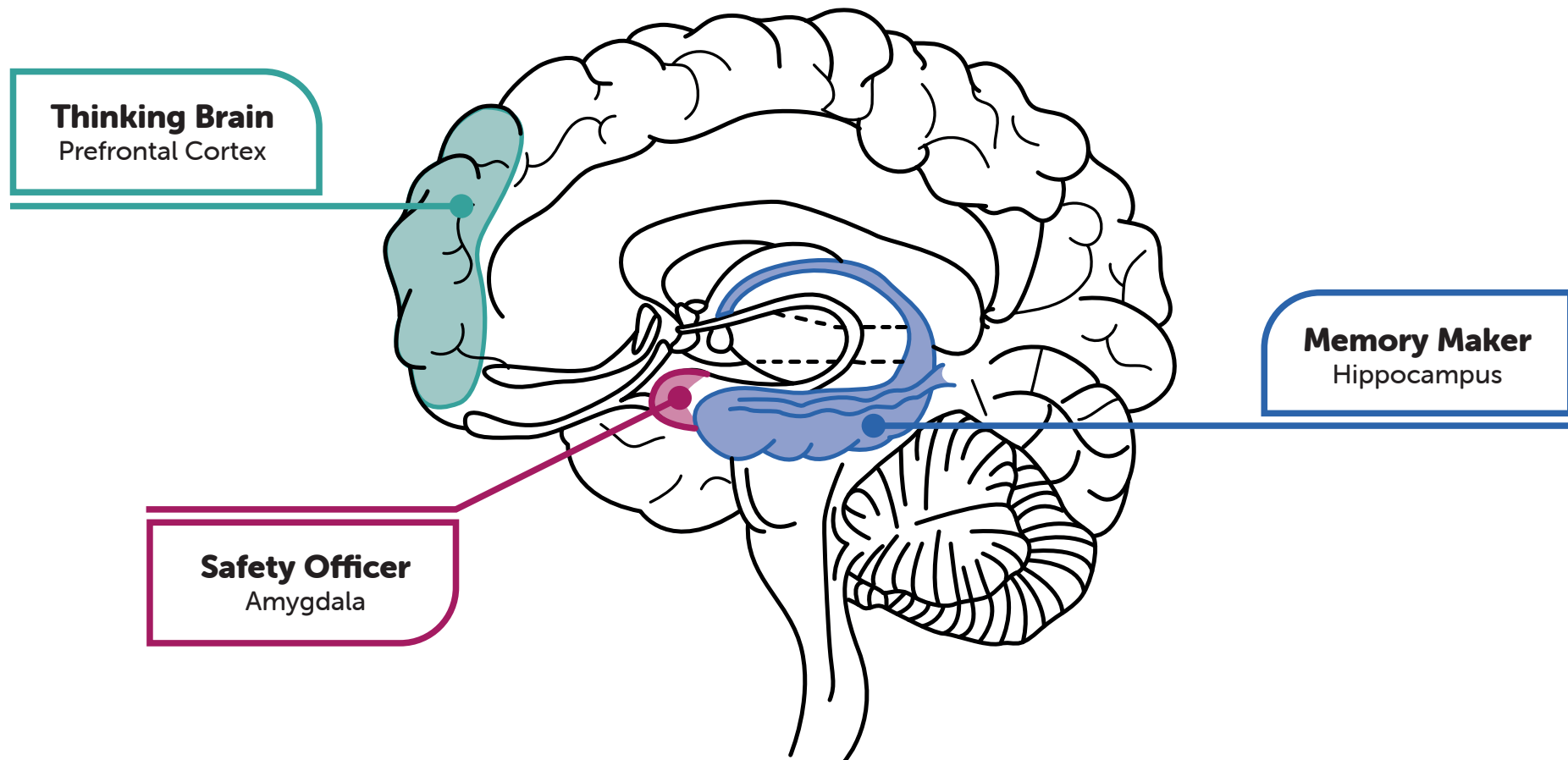


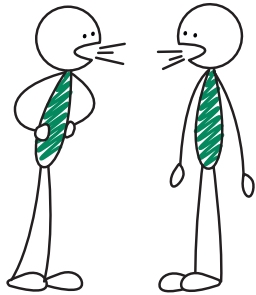
The 2 hand diagram of the brain



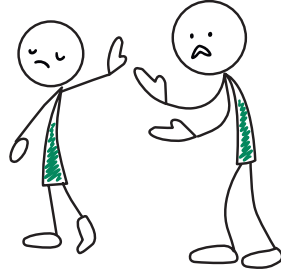
The 2 hand diagram of the brain







Answering back



Ignoring someone



Jumping up and down



Avoiding a situation



Storming off



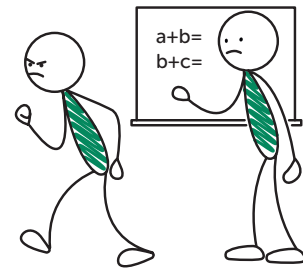
Crying



Shouting



Sitting in the corner



Leaving a lesson

SMIRKING



LOOKING
AWAY

FIDGETING



SLAMMING
A DOOR



TALKING
LOTS



Charlie was
staying off
school

Jamie was
tapping

Jordan was
hiding

River was
staring into
space

Rowan was
avoiding
a place



Targeted session: Okay and not-okay behaviours in friendships and other relationships

Session overview




This session looks at behaviours that are okay and not-okay in relationships, and how we might respond to them. We will look at different situations and think about when we are being forced to something that we don't want to do (which is sometimes called coercion).

Resources needed for this session

- Statement cards
- Hierarchy cards

Information for practitioner

The relationships we are looking at are focusing mostly on friendships but also people the young person talks to online.

-  **It is important for the practitioner to be age appropriate** – while these ideas can be applied to more intimate relationships, this should be led by the young person according to their needs and experiences.
-  It is also important to acknowledge with this age group that their parents/carers are likely to tell them what to do a lot of the time as a means of caring and supporting them – acknowledge that some of these behaviours could usually be seen as ok from a parent and not okay if consistently done by a friend or other peer or an adult they don't know. Other behaviours are not ok from anyone.
-  During this session the young person – and practitioner – are expected to share examples. **Be mindful not to blame our own behaviours that we may reflect on during the activity.**

Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

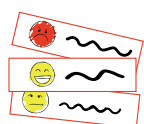
Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.

Relationships

In most relationships there is always a bit of 'give and take' as we may do things one person wants to do on occasion and then do things that we want to do on other occasions. Problems can occur when someone always expects us to do everything they say. When they do this once or twice it doesn't always seem unreasonable so can be difficult for us to see that things might not be okay when it happens a lot.



Statement and hierarchy cards

Activity

Place the statement cards across the spectrum of okay, to feeling uncomfortable, through to not-okay behaviour. Discuss each one considering whether the behaviour is fixed in place or moveable depending on the context.



This gives you as practitioner the opportunity to discuss some of the intricacies as there are examples that may be more complex and need unpicking to be able to consider the situation and context.

Both of the following examples could sit in different places across the okay to not-okay spectrum depending on the discussion.

For example, *"Says I should do what they want to do"*. This could be that you might always do what you want and now they want a choice, or it could be that you always have to do what this person wants and you rarely/never have choice.

Another example would be *"sharing funny memes"*. This may be seen as harmless but what if we offend someone? Are they always funny?



Consider the following questions in an open discussion with **both practitioner and young person to share examples.**

- **What would you do if you came across a behaviour you felt was not okay?**
- **Does the intention behind the behaviour make a difference?**
For example, sharing a meme because someone is intentionally laughing at you or sharing without realising it was hurtful.
- **Depending on who it is, does it change how you react and feel?**
- **How does it differ if the behaviour was a 'one-off' compared to something that happens again and again?**
- **How might experiencing such behaviours affect how you feel about things?**
- **How do you challenge these behaviours in a kind way?**
- **Have you ever said or done anything that someone else might have felt was not okay?**
- **How does it feel to think about that now?**



Reflection on this session




It is easy to not notice increasingly unacceptable behaviours when they come gradually, one after another. Something called coercive control starts in this way – we get used to not-okay behaviours bit by bit (they become 'normalised'), and any attempt to say how you feel is dismissed and you are made to feel like you are wrong. It is possible to not even notice that it is happening, so much so that some behaviours that would have seemed totally unacceptable at the start of a relationship feel normal when you get used to them.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Statement cards

 ACCEPTABLE	 FEELS UNCOMFORTABLE	 UNACCEPTABLE
I feel safe most of the time	Tells me what to wear	Sharing funny memes
Leaves me out sometimes	We don't often agree	They give me choices
I look forward to seeing them	We make decisions together	Checks my phone and socials
Says I need to do as I am told	I feel listened to	I feel I need to keep my opinions to myself
Sometimes talks to me, sometimes ignores me	They are the only person who understands me	Phones me to check where I am or what I am doing
They would rather we spent time only with each other	Wants to know who I have been talking to	I enjoy spending time with lots of people

Statement cards continued

Tells me no one believes anything I say	I'm scared they won't want me anymore	Makes jokes about me in front of others
Says I should do what they want to do	We have fun together most of the time	Says sorry when they do something wrong
I'm worried they will tell someone what I have said	Always asks where I was and who I was with	They stick up for me when someone is being unkind
Takes photos or films of me and shares these without me knowing	We share passwords to things as we don't have secrets	I never know what mood they are going to be in
Tells me to block certain people online (friends, family etc)	Tells me that I've sent pictures before so should just send them again	Says they will send pictures of me to other people if I don't send more to them
If I don't answer messages straight away they get cross at me	Asks me to do silly or funny things online and gets cross if I don't	

Session overview

This session allows the young person to explore what feeling safe looks like in their life, and what and who offers them the feeling of safety. This will allow discussion around safe places and people.

Information for practitioner

It may be useful to record discussions in some way, whether on paper or online format, as the feeling of safety may change as sessions progress. It can be useful to look back and reflect, to show the young person how things change.

You may need to offer your own examples of what makes you feel safe to encourage conversation.

Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

Resources needed for this session

- Paper and pens

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



Paper
and pens

- **What is safety and what does it look and feel like for you?**

Using the paper and pens, create a visual representation (for example, a thought shower, ecomap or drawing) in a way that the young person feels comfortable expressing themselves (this allows the young person to refer back to what is safe for them) of the different examples of things that help them feel safe. This may include: people, animals, places, sights, sounds, smells, fidgets, something tactile, visualisation, reading, a movie/TV, distraction, and movement.



It is important to break some of these down further to gain a better understanding. For example, the young person says they feel safe in their bedroom or at home; what does that really mean? At home could mean because Dad is there and I can hear him working or cooking, it could mean because the dog is there. Being in their bedroom could be more specific to items within the room or the smell or its look.

- **How does it feel to be safe?**

Refer back to the session on *"Managing and understanding emotions"* and the emotions wheel to bring out some of the different positive emotions that come with feeling safe.

- **Are there times and/or places when you don't feel safe?**

Discussions may include: where are you, what are you doing, who are you with, what is happening – try and elicit what it is that makes them uncomfortable/unsafe.

- **How does it feel when you don't feel safe, what happens?**



It may be useful here to consider the dynamic between emotions, bodily responses and behaviours covered in the foundation session *"managing and understanding emotions"*.



This discussion provides us with the potential to identify triggers to be able to prevent the feeling of being unsafe. It may also be useful here to refer to some of the *"Looking after yourself"* exercises as a support.

- **How do I create a sense of safety in different places for example, when I am at school/at the shops/at a friend's?**



Discussion should include who needs to be aware and how we might tell them. There is an opportunity to produce something that can be provided to school or parent/carer to help the young person in their recovery.



Reflection on this session

Overall reflection is that we can't always be safe at every moment of time or we would never do anything or go anywhere! However, it is important to be able to take appropriate risks from a place of safety and to know that the safe place will still be there.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Targeted session: Telling people what support I need

Session overview

This session gives the young person an opportunity to explore how they can tell certain people in their life what support they need and words to vocalise it. It will also provide families and other trusted adults with ways to interact with the young person in a way that is helpful and supportive to them.

Resources needed for this session

- Questions cards

Information for practitioner

This session can be revisited to consider different people in the lives of the young person.



It could be useful to start with parents/carers as this relationship can be affected by what has happened. This work can be a bridge to rebuild connection and trust, and for the young person to share what they need from home.



You need to allow time for the young person to think about which question cards they want to complete.



Some young people may need support going through the cards, whereas others may want to do this in their own time, considering each one. ***Be aware, taking note of their body language, not being afraid to ask them what they need.***

Pre-session action

Select a “*Looking after yourself*” exercise in advance for the close of the session.

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



Questions cards

Activity

Identify who the young person would like to share their thoughts with, for example, parent/carer, teacher, friend, brother, Grandma and so on.



Practitioner needs to acknowledge that there are a lot of cards – being mindful of not overwhelming them – and the young person doesn’t have to think about all of them. Allow them to go through the cards selecting a few that they want to start with.

On a fresh piece of paper, work with the young person to express what they want to say.

Examples:

Telling school, “***What would help is... sitting near the classroom door so I feel like I can get out of the room if I need to.***”

Telling home, ***"The best time to talk is... when we walk the dog."***

Telling a friend, ***"The most important thing I need from you is... to listen and not try and fix things."***

Telling my brother, ***"One thing never to say is... that it's my fault for taking the picture."***



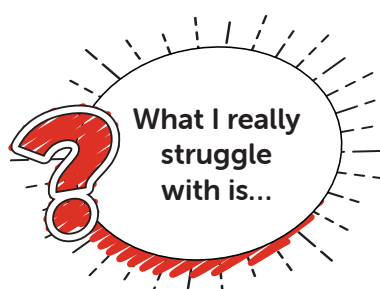
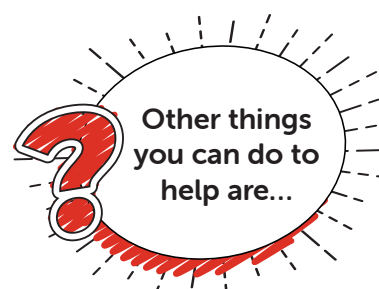
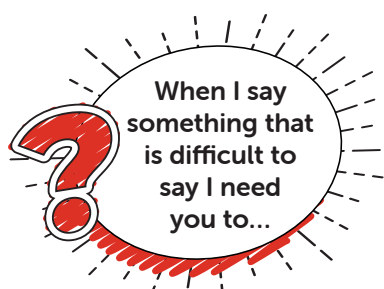
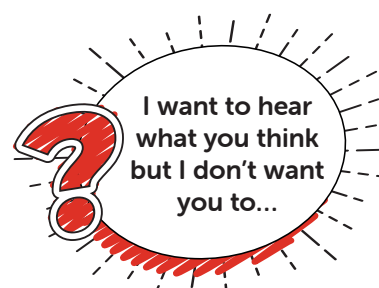
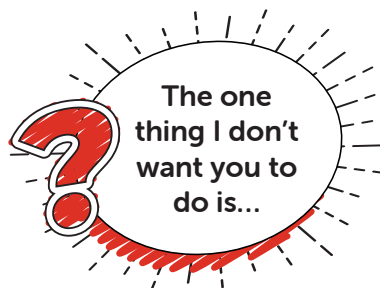
Reflection on this session

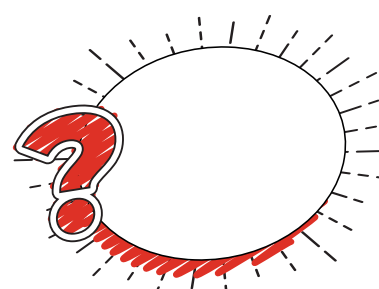
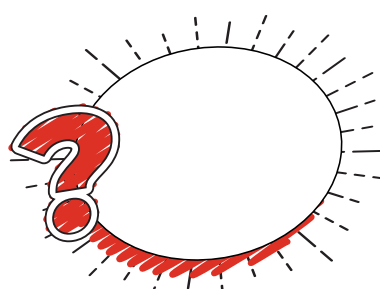
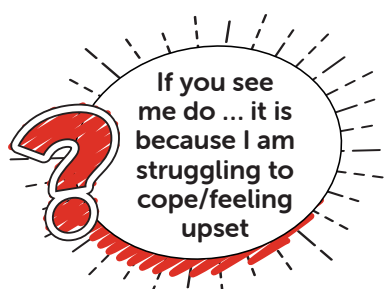
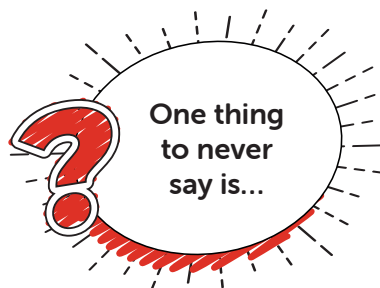
It can be hard to let people know what we need in the moment, and so thinking about it in advance can be useful. The people around us generally want to help but don't always know how, and so being able to say what we need can make both them and us feel a lot better.

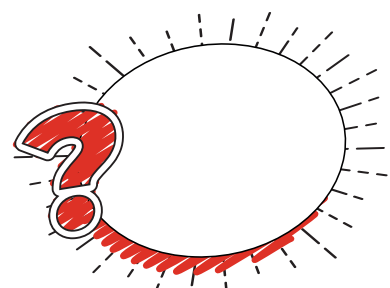
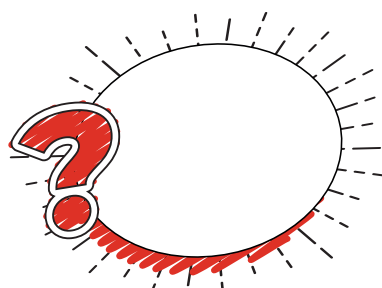
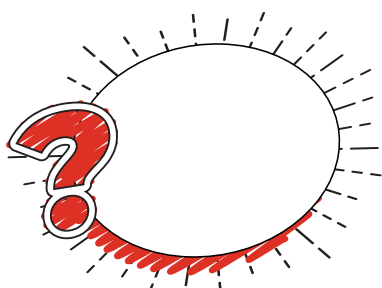
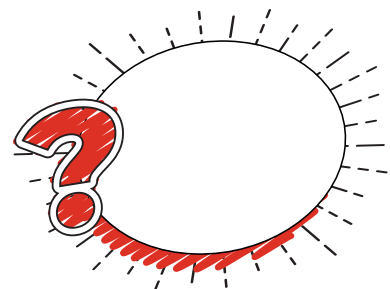
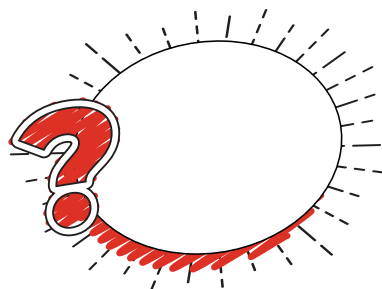
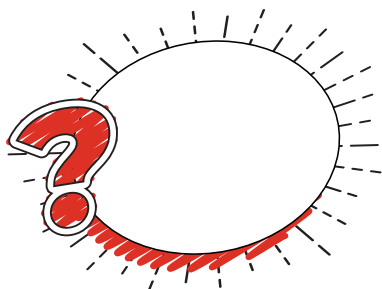
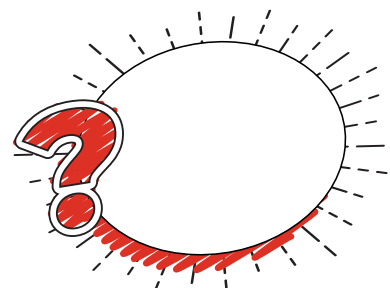
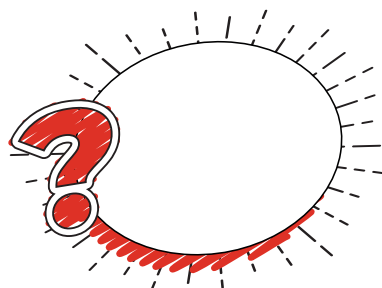
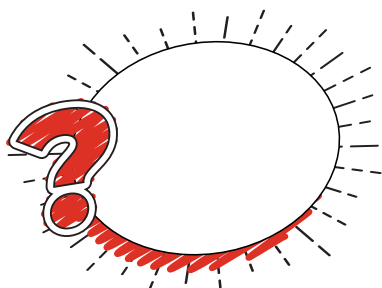
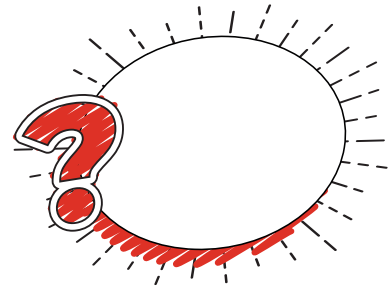
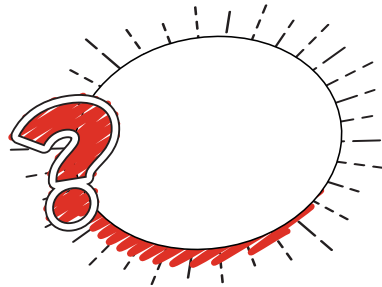
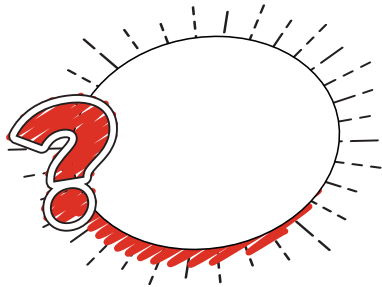


Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close







Session overview

This session gives the young person opportunity to consider scenarios where we may blame ourselves or feel as though others blame us, but where we need to look at the context of a situation in order to see that it wasn't the victim's fault.

Information for practitioner

The emotions a person feels after being harmed can be powerful and often include wishing it had never happened. It's hard to remember that decisions are not always as clear cut as they look when we look back after the event.

Because of this we can end up blaming ourselves, usually by questioning our actions and wishing 'if only I had done...' We may even feel complicit in what happened, blaming ourselves for our actions and decisions, even though the reality is that we were manipulated into those actions. Those who care about us can also blame themselves – or us! – and think their own 'if only' thoughts.

What frequently happens is a failure to blame the person who caused the harm. We don't see that someone else is to blame and is putting us in a position where there is little or no choice.

Victim blaming occurs when people talk about what actions they believe a victim could/should have taken – or not taken – to avoid being harmed. The reality is that harm and abuse can happen regardless of a victim's choices and when someone is abused, groomed or otherwise pressured, the fault lies wholly with the abuser, not the victim.

When thinking about Technology-Assisted Child Sexual Abuse (TACSA), the victim may feel complicit in the abuse/harm because they engaged in conversation, or encouraged conversation, or because they wanted to engage with the perpetrator and even enjoyed their attention, or sent 'normal' pictures.



We must reiterate to the young person that just because you engage in some way doesn't mean the other person (perpetrator) has a right to harm you in ANY way.



Be aware that you may be dealing with a young person who believes that they are to blame or what has happened. **The point to emphasise is that perpetrators are entirely to blame.**



Practitioner must be mindful of the young person's level of understanding in talking about blame and self-blame and this may depend upon the level of understanding they have about the TACSA harm.



Be mindful that the young person might share examples that are personal to them and that may include harm.

Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

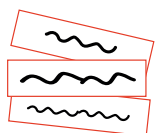
Resources needed for this session

- Statements cards
- Statements sheet

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



Statements
cards

Activity 1

Both the young person and practitioner to share any examples of someone who was blamed, even though what happened was not their fault.

Using the statements on the cards, discuss the victim-blaming language together.

Some are clearly about TACSA, others about bullying or other abuse.

Discussion points might include:

- What might be going on here?
- Why is this “victim blaming”?
- What assumptions are being made about the victim and the situation?



Reflection on this session

Sometimes we blame people for things when actually they have been taken advantage of by others. Also, even when we make mistakes or do something that goes wrong, we don't deserve and aren't at fault for the harm that happens.



Statements
sheet

Activity 2

Look at the statements and read across the “It's my fault” brain and the “Seeing it clearly” brain explanations.



Discuss the statements and then together come up with more situations where a person may blame themselves – and fill in the “It's my fault” brain and the “Seeing it clearly” brain. As you do this look at how you can encourage the “Seeing it clearly” brain to be louder than the “It's my fault” brain.



Reflection on this session

Even though the young person may have felt they had to – or even at the time wanted to – ‘go along with’ what was happening, this does not mean they are to blame for what ultimately happened, as the situation had been manipulated to remove or limit their choices.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Statement cards

They were asking for it	She should have said no	He knew what he was doing
What did they expect?	I would never do anything like that	They're always doing stupid things
You should have known better	He knows not to send pictures – why did he do it?	They clearly weren't listening in our online safety lessons
If they hadn't sent a picture this wouldn't have happened	He knew you shouldn't talk to people you don't know online	They are silly like that – I'm not surprised this happened
It's not like they haven't done it before		

INCIDENT

At a party, my friend and I accidentally broke an ornament. My friend wanted me to hide it in the corner so no one would know it was us.

I sent a picture to my friend and they shared it with someone else and I wish they hadn't.

My friends told me to take the pens from the teacher's desk. They said if I didn't do it they wouldn't be friends with me. They said it would be funny and that I was boring if I didn't do it.

"IT'S MY FAULT" BRAIN

- I should have owned up.
- Shouldn't have gone along with my friend.
- I shouldn't have been playing with the ornament.
- This is all my fault.

- I shouldn't have sent the picture.
- I shouldn't have trusted them.
- I should have just said no when they asked for it.
- I should have explained more clearly why I didn't want to.

- I shouldn't have done what they wanted – I knew it was wrong.
- It was a stupid thing to do.
- My friends are right – I'm boring.

"SEEING IT CLEARLY" BRAIN

This is not my fault, accidents happen. My friend was really insistent about hiding the pieces. I did try to suggest owning up but he said I would just get him into trouble and his parents would punish him.

They put pressure on me to send that picture. They said everyone else sent pictures. I did try to explain but I was worried they would be mean if I didn't. I trusted them and they have broken my trust. They are in the wrong. No picture should ever be shared without permission (consent).

I don't always feel comfortable with what my friends want me to do. It didn't feel as though I had much choice. I would like to find ways round being in that situation.

Feeling like it's my fault statements

Your examples could include peer pressure, knowing something worrying but not telling anyone, meeting someone.



INCIDENT

"IT'S MY FAULT" BRAIN

"SEEING IT CLEARLY" BRAIN

Session overview

This session is an opportunity to explore managing unhelpful or upsetting thoughts.

Information for practitioner

Working at changing our thoughts can be challenging as it feels as though thoughts come whether we want them or not. This session allows you and the young person to explore how we can change our thoughts, so they help us feel better and move forwards.

Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

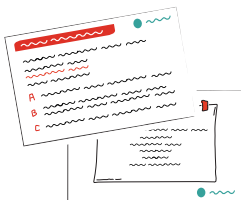
Resources needed for this session

- Big paper
- Pens
- Getting away from unpleasant thoughts worksheet
- How can we change the thought? worksheet

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



Worksheets

Begin by working through the worksheets (Getting away from unpleasant thoughts and How can we change the thought?). There's lots in there, so allow time, encourage discussion and examples with plenty of thinking time to come up with different ways to deal with different thoughts. There is a more detailed version of these worksheets in the 13-16 age range that includes reframing, which may suit some young people better.



Paper and pens

Work together to create / rewrite any thoughts that you can challenge or change, using the questions from the worksheet. The young person might be happy to share their own thoughts, or you may discuss hypothetical thoughts.

This will take most of the session, and you can then invite the young person to record some of their unhelpful thoughts. It might be a specific thought that keeps happening or a specific behaviour, for example not going to a particular activity, and what thought prompts this.



Encourage them to record when it happened, where they were, who else was about, what was the situation. This can often help a young person spot any patterns in when the thoughts are coming (particular places or people for example). They might bring this to the next session to work on challenging those thoughts with you, or they may be happy to think of challenges as they go.



Reflection on this session

Thoughts are just thoughts. We are not our thoughts, and having a thought doesn't make it true. – With practice, we can have more control over our thoughts than we might realise and we don't just have to put up with them.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Thoughts like buses would be a useful activity to end this session with if not already done – or revisited.

When something horrible has happened we sometimes find our thoughts and feelings about the event keep coming back, making us feel worse. When we see that this is happening, we can change these thoughts with a bit of effort and practice.

When you notice an unpleasant thought ask yourself:

Is this thought helping anything?

If the answer is no, then **try the ABC of negative thinking**:

A

Accept the thought. It's just a thought. Having a thought doesn't mean it's true. See it, name it ("oh, there's that horrid thought again!") and accept that it's there (and that it's not helpful – or even true).

B


Block it. Sometimes it's just enough to see it, see that it's unhelpful, and let it go. This can take practice. You may keep returning to your thought. But every time you tell your brain to let it go, your brain finds it a bit easier to do so. Try having an action to go with it – maybe a shake of the head (no I don't want this thought) or a flick of the hand (brush that thought away).

C

Change or challenge. If blocking works, there's no need to do any more – block it and get on. But sometimes it's good to challenge the thought and rewrite it into a different thought – a more useful one.

How can we change the thought?

To change a thought, we can challenge it by asking questions or looking at it in a different way. Note, not every question/statement will be relevant to every thought:

- What evidence do I have for this thought?
 - Is this the only interpretation?
 - How likely is this to come true?
 - What are other possible outcomes?
 - What's the most likely thing to happen?
 - When has something like this worked out ok in the past?
 - Is there anything practical I can do?
 - What's more likely to make it ok?
 - What will I think in one week/month/year?
 - What has this actually affected?
 - Reset from now – every moment is a new moment.
 - Has anything been gained from this situation?
 - What am I pleased with/grateful for?
 - Is this something I can control?
 - I can let this go – it's not about me.
 - I can only control my own thoughts and behaviours, not those of other people.
 - Do I really know what they are thinking?
 - Can I ask them rather than assume?
 - What would happen if I didn't...?
 - What is the other side of this belief?
 - What would someone else say about this?
-  **Write down all the different possibilities, however unrealistic.**
- What would it look like if this went really well?
 - Can I ask someone to help?
 - What ideas are in the middle?
 - What/where would be 'good enough'?
 - What small change could I make?



Finally we can have some mantras that allow us to feel more accepting of the situation:

This too will pass.

I can only do my best.

It won't feel like this forever.

I can't control anyone else's behaviour, and I can decide my own.

It is what it is.

I've done all I can for now.

Everything will be ok. Everything is ok.

I am brave. I am strong. I have the power to accept what is happening right now.

Session overview

This session allows the young person to explore the positive things in their life and their strengths. Reflecting on our strengths helps in our recovery.

Information for practitioner

Working on strengths can be challenging, especially when a young person has been focusing on negative things in their life, **so it's important to be encouraging and flexible in this session**. It's about opening a chink of light that there are things they themselves can do that will help them move forwards.

Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

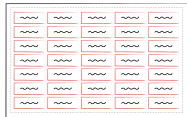
Resources needed for this session

- Characteristics cards
- Strengths and qualities worksheets

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they are since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



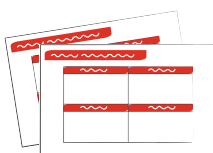
Characteristics
cards

Activity 1

- Using the list of words, talk about what they mean and find examples of when the young person has shown these characteristics. Some of the words or concepts may be new, the practitioner should tease out the young person's understanding.
- Are there any characteristics that you would add to the list?
- Identify the ones that are important for the young person – things they have or are, and things they would like to develop further.



Practitioner to reflect that the young person has many qualities to build their recovery on.



Strengths
and qualities
worksheets

Activity 2


- Using the cards, ask the young person to fill in as many as they choose. They may want to begin doing this on their own, which is fine – the practitioner can then help them when they've had a go.



The young person doesn't have to fill in three things for each point, they may struggle to find anything positive initially so the **practitioner may need to be both patient and encouraging**.



Talk through what they have put and ask them how they feel /felt for each thing. This may elicit more things to put in as you go along. Practitioner to be aware that the young person might not see some of their characteristics as strengths; this may need pointing out to them.

-  Practitioner can suggest that the young person might like to hold on to their cards, including blank ones, so that they can continue to add to them as they think more about their strengths.



Reflection on this session:

When we spend time thinking about our strengths and qualities our brain focuses on these positives rather than the negatives. This can help lift our mood and develop our sense of self worth.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Characteristics cards

Courage	Creativity	Curiosity	Open-mindedness	Love of learning
Self-respect	Honesty	Humour	Teamwork	Fun-loving
Calmness	Kindness	Love	Resilience	Self-regulation
Ability to relax	Fairness	Leadership	Forgiveness	Gratitude
Loyalty	Logic	Determination	Appreciation of beauty	Social & listening skills

Characteristics cards continued

Things I am good at:	Compliments I have received:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
Things I like about my appearance:	Challenges I have faced:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

I've helped others by:

1.

2.

3.

Things that make me unique:

1.

2.

3.

What I value the most:

1.

2.

3.

Times I've made others happy:

1.

2.

3.

How I'm a good friend:

1.

2.

3.

Things I enjoy doing:

1.

2.

3.

Things I do to care for myself:

1.

2.

3.

Times when I've surprised myself:

1.

2.

3.

Targeted session: TACSA – Giving and receiving permission (consent)

Session overview

This session will explore the issue of young people giving and receiving permission and empowering them to find ways to do only what they feel comfortable with.

Information for practitioner



You must make it clear that they will not be expecting them to share any personal experiences or information. However, it is important to be aware that they may choose to share their own experience which needs to be responded to in a sensitive and mindful way with reassurance that they don't have to say anything they don't want to.

This session gives a broad overview of permission/consent. For a more detailed look at consent, including references to sexual activity, it may be appropriate to assess the suitability of the 13-16 year old session on consent for the child or young person.



Throughout this session you will need to be mindful of how the young person is, what they say, their body language, behaviours and any potential impact this might have. The young person may not feel comfortable to take control of the session and stop if they need to.



Practitioner must be aware and be prepared to take a time out or stop totally before any distress is caused. Utilise the looking after yourself exercises to support the young person if the session is stopped.

Resources needed for this session

- What you might hear and say / do cards
- Scenario cards

Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they are since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.

Activity - discussion

- **When might we need to give, or need to get permission?**



Practitioner are to partake in this exercise giving their own examples

Examples here might include permission for school trips, asking if a friend can come over to your house, permission for your personal information on apps, borrowing something from a friend, asking if you can give someone a hug, taking a photo of someone, accepting cookies on websites, sharing a picture.

- **Can you think of any times when we give permission to something without using words?**

Putting your arm out to the nurse giving you an injection, jumping up and posing ready for the photo to be taken, feeling relaxed and enjoying yourself, nodding, smiling for the camera, wanting to join in.

- **How do we know if someone isn't giving their permission whether that's with or without words?**

Having to be pushed along to join in/pose for the picture, changing the subject, feeling uncomfortable and being able to see that in your body, not being excited or happy to join in, not being able to look at the person, going quiet, grumpy, leaving.



Reflection of discussion

When you agree or give permission – verbally or in other ways – and when you are fully aware of what you are agreeing to this is called consent.



What you
might hear and
say / do cards

Activity

Using the “what you might hear” cards, the young person and practitioner look at things that might be said to someone to try and get them to do something.

Then, using the “what might you say” cards, think about the different ways someone might respond so they don't have to do what the other person wants.



Scenario cards

- ✓ Give the young person the opportunity to add their own thoughts for how they might respond. Be aware that they may also add phrases to the “what you might hear” cards.
- ✓ Use the scenario cards to consider and discuss situations that young people may face, encouraging them to add their own scenarios.
- ✓ By the end of this exercise the aim is for the young person to have more options on how they might respond and more awareness around giving and asking for consent to a wide variety of situations.
- ! Practitioner to be aware that as you discuss scenarios and phrases it might be useful to consider some of the following questions, exploring and opening up discussion from the responses the young person gives.

- **What if you do whatever is asked of you but you don't feel comfortable?**
- **How does it feel to be able to say what you want?**
- **How does it feel to say what you don't want?**
- **How does it feel when you are ignored and they keep asking you to do something?**



Reflection on this session

There are times when we believe we have given permission, but we haven't really done what we wanted or what makes us feel comfortable and happy. Sometimes we feel like we are being made to do something we didn't want to, like there was no choice because we are told something bad might happen if we don't. When this happens, we are not giving real permission.

It is important to know that we are allowed to be firm when expressing what we want or don't want.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

SCENARIO

Being asked to share
a picture

SCENARIO

To dress up for
someone online

SCENARIO

To show their body

SCENARIO

Being told to lie

SCENARIO

SCENARIO

SCENARIO













SCENARIO

SCENARIO
















What you might hear cards

 <p>No one will find out</p>	 <p>You've done it before</p>	 <p>It'll be funny</p>
 <p>If you don't I'll tell everybody</p>	 <p>It would be really cool</p>	 <p>Everyone is doing it</p>
 <p>It's no big deal</p>	 <p>It's normal</p>	 <p>Why not?</p>
 <p>It's special for us</p>	 <p>I did it for you</p>	 <p>I'll ask someone else who will</p>
 <p>Just this once</p>	 <p>If you want to be my friend, you need to</p>	

What you might hear cards

 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>
 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>
 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>
 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>
 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>	 <p>WHAT YOU MIGHT HEAR</p>

What you might say or do cards

Unfriend them online 	Switch off / shut down 	I don't want to 
Tell a trusted adult 	Sending emoji/GIF 	Saying how you feel 
I've got to go 	No thanks 	Parents check my phone 
I'm not doing that 	I don't know you 	I already told you no 
Change the subject 	Don't rush me 	

What you might say or do cards

 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO
 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO
 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO
 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO
 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO	 WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY OR DO

Targeted session: TACSA – Talking to people online: grooming

Session overview

This session will allow the young person to explore how some people build connections to us online and then use them to get us to do things we might not want to or that we feel uncomfortable doing.

Resources needed for this session

- Chat log examples

Information for practitioner



You must make it clear that they will not be expecting them to share any personal experiences or information. However, it is important to be aware that they may choose to share their own experience, which needs to be responded to in a sensitive and mindful way with reassurance that they don't have to say anything they don't want to.



Throughout this session you will need to be mindful of how the young person is, what they say, their body language, behaviours and any potential impact this might have. The young person may not feel comfortable to take control of the session and stop if they need to.



Practitioner must be aware and be prepared to take a time out or stop totally before any distress is caused. Utilise the looking after yourself exercises to support the young person if the session is stopped.

Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.

Activity 1

- Think about a time when you wanted your friend or parent to do something (can be something like drive you somewhere or buy you something)
- How did you go about asking for it?
- Did you choose a particular time to ask?
- Did you start dropping hints saying how much you liked it?
- Did you choose one parent/friend over another as you felt they were more likely to do it for you?
- Were you super nice to them before you asked?
- Do you think the person you were asking knew you wanted something?
- Did they do anything to resist what you wanted? (For example: a parent saying no I have to go and do the shopping, a friend saying that their dinner will be ready soon.)
- When and how did you know that the person's decision to not do what you wanted was final?



Reflection

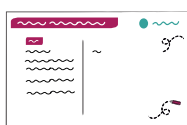
The discussion and examples above can be common behaviour when we want something. But it's important to know that no one wanted to cause anyone hurt, we simply looked at how we might get something that we wanted. This is normal human behaviour and because it is, it can be really difficult to spot when someone does it to be harmful or abusive.

What we do know is that people who want something from us that is harmful or abusive will try and get what they want by behaving in the same way BUT they don't stop when they should. They don't listen to what we want or how we feel, they will continue to put pressure on us and they will ignore our resistance whether verbal or through our actions, they are persistent, they don't care about us.



These people are groomers. This is NOT normal human persuasive behaviour; they intend to cause harm.

A groomer isn't someone we would necessarily know is a groomer when we first meet them, and **what happens isn't because of who we are or what we do**. It is important to remember that they are the ones deliberately behaving in a way that will cause harm. **We are NOT to blame in any way at all.**



Chat log
examples

Activity 2

Reading through the examples of chat logs, practitioner and young person to highlight comments that feel uncomfortable to them and to highlight grooming behaviours that we have discussed – persistence, flattery, inappropriate questions and comments, trying to get them to do something or give personal information.



Practitioner needs to be aware that the young person may not see anything wrong in the chat logs. Open up and explore through discussion being mindful of not placing blame or responsibility on the child in the chat log as well as the child you are working with.

- **What do you think the young person was thinking in these situations?**



Reflection



Practitioner must be aware that victims and survivors often blame themselves for engaging in conversations or sending images and can feel complicit in their abuse.

For example: "if I hadn't carried on chatting it wouldn't have happened", "if I had said no, it wouldn't have happened."



Practitioner to highlight in chat 2 when the groomer gives their age they ask if that is ok. This is done intentionally to place perceived consent with the young person.



Practitioner to make it clear that a **victim of grooming and Technology-Assisted Child Sexual Abuse (TACSA) is NEVER complicit and DID NOT choose to be harmed or abused.**



Practitioner may find it useful to access the “Giving and receiving permission (consent)” session with the young person as it is important to know that saying no to someone isn’t the only way to show that you don’t want to do something, we can say no with our behaviour and with other words.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Grooming chat logs

Activity questions - sheet that young person can read through

Chat 1

Groomer: would love to see u!!

YP: yh wish u could

Groomer: no cam on phone?

YP: no no phone at all!

Groomer: no webcam?

YP: not allowed

Groomer: y?

YP: dad says im too young

Groomer: I think ur perfect

Notes

Grooming chat logs continued

Activity questions - sheet that young person can read through

Chat 2

Groomer: where r u anyway?

YP: at home in [town they live in]

Groomer: im not too far away from u. How old did you say u were?

YP: 10. U?

Groomer: 14. That ok?

YP: yh

Groomer: ru home alone?

YP: dads in the kitchen

Groomer: so ur on ur own now?

YP: yh

Groomer: do u wanna play a game?

YP: what kind of game?

Groomer: show me part of ur body and ill guess what it is

Notes



Grooming chat logs continued

Activity questions - sheet that young person can read through

Chat 3

Groomer: been hot today

YP: yh too hot

Groomer: u look cool in that vest top. U got shorts on?

YP: yh

Groomer: show me

YP: k

Groomer: u look gr8. Give me a twirl

YP: ur funny!

Groomer: u can move, do a dance!

Notes



Targeted session: TACSA – Picture received with pressure to then send one back

Session overview

This is an opportunity to explore thoughts, feelings and responses when someone receives a picture they didn't ask for, or want, and is then pressured to send one back.

Information for practitioner

Along with looking at Technology-Assisted Child Sexual Abuse (TACSA) specifically this session relates back to the foundation session on relationships.

Resources needed for this session

- Scenario – Jordan and Hari
- What would you say? worksheet



It is important to acknowledge that scenarios are never going to reflect how we might be feeling or what we might do or say in that moment, but this is a way for us to have discussions.



The scenario has been written to depersonalise this from the young person to be clear that **we are not asking them to share anything personal**.



Be aware that they may choose to share their own experience which needs to be responded to in a sensitive and mindful way with reassurance that they don't have to say anything they don't want to.



Throughout this session you will need to be mindful of how the young person is, what they say, their body language, behaviours and any potential impact this might have. The young person may not feel comfortable to take control of the session and stop if they need to.



Practitioner must be aware and be prepared to take a time out or stop totally before any distress is caused. Utilise the looking after yourself exercises to support the young person if the session is stopped.

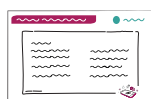
Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



Scenario Jordan and Hari

Before talking about specific things from this scenario ask the young person what their initial thoughts and feelings are on reading/hearing this. The practitioner needs to take the lead from the young person based on how they are feeling. Using the worksheet, if required, reflect on the following questions:

- **What are your thoughts about the friendship between Hari and Jordan?**

Discussion should include reflection on the positive aspects of the relationship along with aspects that may feel uncomfortable with. For example: they worry about whether they are wanted, they like to spend time with each other, they share pictures, Jordan doesn't listen, Jordan is complimentary, Jordan puts pressure on Hari to get what they want.



It is important to highlight that this is just a snippet of a relationship and discuss whether this is reflective of any relationships the young person is aware of or has had themselves.

- **Is there anything that you would say is not ok behaviour in this scenario?**

Discussion would include: sharing/showing pictures without consent or care for how Hari feels, pressuring them into sending a picture, not listening to when they say they don't want to, no reassurance that they don't have to anything they don't want to, behaving in a way that makes Hari feel worried – withholding replying to Hari as a way to get what they want (coercion).

- **How might Hari and Jordan be feeling?**

Discuss the validity of feelings and accepting how we feel when other may try to influence those feelings. It is important to recognise how feelings might be seen in our behaviours. Consider whether this changes anything in their relationship and the impact it might have.

- **If Hari told you about what had happened what would you say?**

This is an exercise that practitioner and young person need to do together.

Imagine Hari is your friend and they tell you what happened. What would you say? What might Hari need? What advice you would give? What might you say about their friendship?

The reflective question on this exercise is whether we would listen to our own advice if Hari were saying it to us.

- **What would you do if you were Hari?**



Encourage the young person to consider what action they might take if they were Hari – this must include exploration of trusted adults to speak they might talk to.

- **Does it make a difference what gender Hari and Jordan are?**

Would your response be different if this was not a hetero-normative relationship?



Consider different types of relationships, cultures, genders and identities in your discussion.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Hari is 10 and has been talking online with their older cousin's friend, Jordan for a while. They spend a lot of time together on Snapchat, talking and sharing pictures.

One night on Snapchat Jordan tells Hari that they look really cool in the picture they sent. Jordan says the picture would be even better if Hari took their t-shirt off. Hari replies laughing saying "no way!"

Jordan says "I was just messing" but tells Hari they want to see their body. Hari sends a smiley emoji and says "not now, I've got homework to do."

Jordan laughs and says "go on, you know you love me."

Hari doesn't reply and soon after Jordan sends Hari a picture of a sad face emoji. Jordan asks if Hari doesn't want to talk anymore. Hari says not to be silly, but then hears nothing more from Jordan.

Hari worries that they have upset Jordan and ruined things between them.

Late that night Jordan sends a picture of them with no clothes on and says "your turn". Hari sends a picture saying it's for them only. Jordan doesn't say anything but sends the fire emoji.



Friendship

Behaviours

Feelings

Targeted session: TACSA – Image taken and shared with permission/consent then shared on without permission/consent

Session overview

This is an opportunity to explore thoughts, feelings and responses when someone you trusted shares a picture with other people after tricking you into believing you were in a relationship.

Information for practitioner

Along with looking at Technology-Assisted Child Sexual Abuse (TACSA) specifically this session relates back to the foundation session on relationships.

Resources needed for this session

- Scenario
Charlie and Jack
- What might have happened next?
worksheet



It is important to acknowledge that scenarios are never going to reflect how we might be feeling or what we might do or say in that moment, but this is a way for us to have discussions.



The scenario has been written so as to depersonalise this from the young person. **Be clear that we are not asking them to share anything personal.**



Be aware that they may choose to share their own experience which needs to be responded to in a sensitive and mindful way with reassurance that they don't have to say anything they don't want to.



Throughout this session you will need to be mindful of how the young person is, what they say, their body language, behaviours and any other potential impact this topic might have. The young person may not feel comfortable to take control of the session and stop if they need to.



Practitioner must be aware and be prepared to pause or stop totally before any distress is caused. Utilise the looking after yourself exercises to support the young person if the session is stopped.

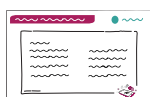
Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they have been since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.




Scenario
Charlie and Jack


Before talking about specific things from this scenario ask the young person what their initial thoughts and feelings are on reading/hearing this. The practitioner needs to take a lead from the young person, based on how they are feeling.




Practitioner must be clear that Jack sharing a picture of Charlie is unacceptable and he is grooming her in order to obtain those images.

 Practitioner must be clear with the young person and stress the point that regardless of the fact that Charlie shared an image with Jack, they did not consent to that being shared on and this is **NOT** their fault.


- **What are your thoughts about Jack sharing the picture?**

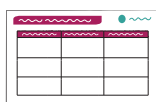
 Practitioner to not give their views at this point, they need to listen, accept and reflect back the young person's views.

 Discussion must include consenting to one thing does not mean consent is given to anything else.

- **How do you think Charlie might be feeling?**

Discuss the validity of feelings and accepting how we feel when others may try to influence those feelings.

 It is important to recognise how feelings might develop and be seen in our behaviours.



What might have
happened next?
worksheet

Activity

Practitioner and young person to work together using the form to write thoughts about what might have happened next, the impact and what Charlie might need.

What happened next

Consider what happened with Charlie and Jack but also think about what might have happened with friends, in school with peers and potentially with adults if anyone becomes aware of what has happened, police, parents, siblings and so on.

Impact

Think about how examples given can be broken down to be able to think more clearly so it isn't too overwhelming.

For example: "Charlie is blamed". What does this look like? Break this down into who is blaming Charlie and for what. To cover just this example of blame you will need more than one section in the table. Other examples may also need more than one section when broken down further.

- **What do you think Charlie might need?**

This section will include examples of things that we can't control as they are the thoughts and behaviours of others. In these examples practitioner needs to support the young person to consider their own response and what they can control to cope with each situation.

For example:

What might have happened next – Charlie is blamed by a friend for having taken and shared a picture with Jack.

Impact – Charlie feels hurt by what her friend has said, sad, guilty, responsible, angry because they didn't deserve this and thought her friend would be supportive.

What do you think Charlie might need? For her friend to understand that Charlie didn't agree for the picture to be shared and never thought Jack would share it. Charlie may be able to say this to her friend, but she may not. If Charlie talks to her friend, she may hear what Charlie says but she may not. Charlie needs to hear her friend is there for her. Charlie needs some support to manage how she is feeling, who might be there for her?



Each example can develop into new questions about what might be needed. This is an opportunity to continuing exploring what might be useful both practically and emotionally.

Other examples may include: being labelled, blamed, being or feeling as though you're in trouble (and with these examples think about who that might be and what is being said or done), changes in school classes, phone being taken away, being monitored or checked on, lonely, self-blame, ignore or pushed out by friends, bullied.

Does it make a difference if the young people in this situation identified as gay?

Would your response be different if this was not a hetero-normative relationship? Consider different types of relationships, cultures, genders and identities in your discussion.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Scenario – Charlie and Jack



Charlie has been told by her friend that Jack likes her. She is surprised but excited.

Jack contacts Charlie on Snapchat and they begin to talk about all sorts. Charlie is so happy; no one ever really ask about her life and interests. It feels good.

They don't really talk at school, Jack is busy with his mates and he says that he doesn't want everyone to know.

Charlie didn't think anyone would ever like her but Jack always says nice things. He tells her she is funny and asks her to be his girlfriend. He makes her smile.

Jack asks Charlie to send a picture of her in her underwear. He says that's what boyfriends and girlfriends do, that everyone does it, "it's no big deal".

Charlie isn't sure but Jack called her his girlfriend, and she is just so happy. She sends a picture of her posing in a crop top and shorts, and he tells her it would be better without the top.

At school the next day people are calling her names and laughing at her. She gets a message that includes the picture she sent to Jack. When she sees him he laughs at her. She messages him asking why he would do that but he never replies.

What might have happened next? worksheet

What might have happened next?	Impact	What do you think Charlie might need?

Targeted session: TACSA – AI generated and/or altered images

Session overview

Using a scenario, this is an opportunity to explore from a range of perspectives the impact of images altered using Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Information for practitioner

It is important to acknowledge that scenarios are never going to reflect how we might be feeling or what we might do or say in that moment, but this is a way for us to have discussions.

Resources needed for this session

- Scenario – Ali, Sammie and Taylor
- Character sheets



The scenario has been written to depersonalise this from the young person. **Be clear that we are not asking them to share anything personal.**



Be aware that they may choose to share their own experience which needs to be responded to in a sensitive and mindful way with reassurance that they don't have to say anything they don't want to.



Throughout this session you will need to be mindful of how the young person is, what they say, their body language, behaviours and any potential impact this might have. The young person may not feel comfortable to take control of the session and stop if they need to. **Practitioner must be aware and be prepared to take a time out or stop totally before any distress is caused.** Utilise the looking after yourself exercises to support the young person if the session is stopped.



It is important to acknowledge that often we will hear, or even use, the term 'deep fake'. This is not a helpful term as it implies that the image is not real whereas it is using a real image of a real person that has been altered. It is essential that we recognise that this is child sexual abuse material and that the child in the image is a victim of Technology-Assisted Child Sexual Abuse (TACSA).

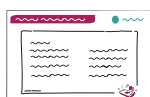
Pre-session action

Select a *"Looking after yourself"* exercise in advance for the close of the session.

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they are since your last session together. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



Scenario
Ali, Sammie
and Taylor

Activity

Read scenario together.



Before talking about specific things from this scenario ask the young person what their initial thoughts and feelings are on reading/hearing this. The practitioner needs to take the lead from the young person based on how they are feeling.

Opening questions

- How do you think Ali, Sammie, Taylor might be feeling?
- Ali asked for the photo to be deleted but it wasn't. What do you think about this?
- ✓ This is an opportunity to explore issues around consent and permissions. You may find it useful, depending on the discussion to consider visiting or re-visiting the session *"The pressure to consent"*.



Character sheets

Questions specific to each character

Using the silhouette sheets for each character work through the questions ensuring you work through each character.

Practitioner to consider some of the following points

- ✓ It is important to open up discussions and validate their reflections, as thoughts and feelings may be complex. For example, they may initially find the image of Ali funny because they know it isn't real – **it is vital to address that even though the image may be altered it is still harmful and has an impact.**
- ✓ If not addressed in previous point open discussion to whether situations such as this may be dismissed as 'no big deal' or minimised because it is not seen as harmful but this does cause distress to the victim.
- ✓ When discussing the question on impact consider the following: humiliation, minimisation, embarrassment, bullying, shame, actions taken or not taken against those who caused the harm, relationships, whether they feel heard and validated, involvement of adults (services and parents/family).
- ✓ All potential adults in the scenario – parents, school, police, football club.
- ! Not all adult responses are helpful or supportive of recovery, for example removing technology, minimising the impact, victim blaming

Questions that follow on from the sheets

- How do you feel about Taylor's friend who tripped Sammie up? Consider here the behaviour of anyone who was around at the time (bystander behaviour).
- Did you form an opinion on what gender these characters are? What happens if you think about them as a different gender?
- What are some of the different things you might have done if you had been there?



Reflection on this session

The impact of AI generated and altered images is more complex than we might have thought and is something we need to consider when using this technology.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

Scenario – Ali, Sammie and Taylor

After a football match, Ali is getting changed.

Sammie shouts Ali and when they turn around Sammie takes a picture of them with their top off and laughs. Ali tells them to delete that picture.

That night the image of Ali is shared on social media but it has been altered using AI to show them completely naked.

Taylor shared that image with a friend outside of school because they thought it was funny.


A couple of days later Taylor sees Sammie and Ali in the classroom. Taylor tells a friend to trip Sammie up so they fall onto Ali whilst Taylor films it.

Taylor uses AI to alter the video to create a meme showing a naked Sammie repeatedly falling onto Ali.




 What might Ali need?

 How might Ali feel?

 What do you think the impact on Ali may be?

 How do you think Ali's thoughts on AI generated images might have changed?

 How might the adults in Ali's life respond to this and what do you think would be a helpful response?





What might Sammie need?



How might Sammie feel?



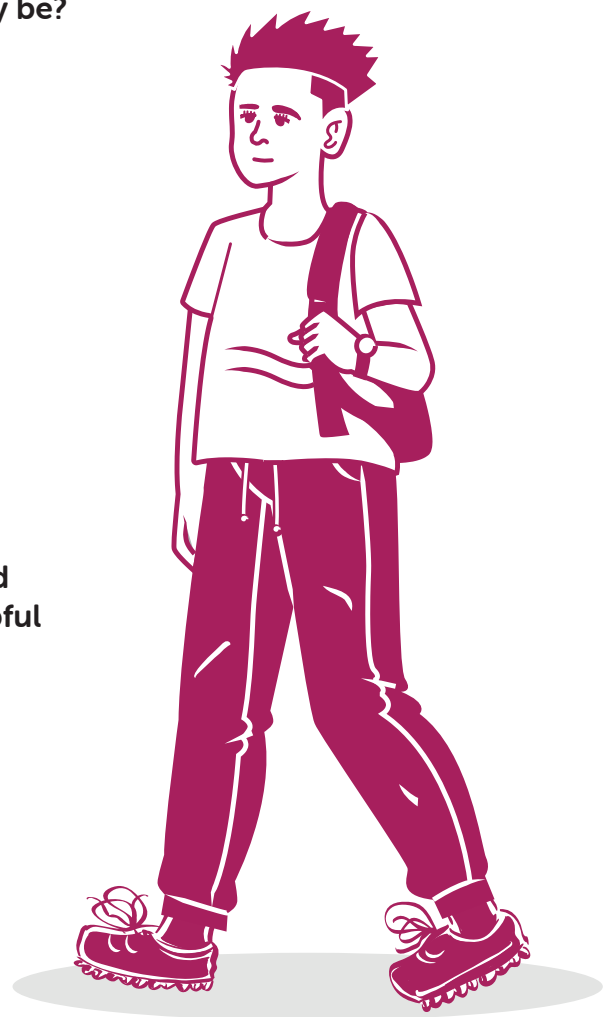
What do you think the impact on Sammie may be?



How do you think Sammie's thoughts on AI generated images might have changed?



How might the adults in Sammie's life respond to this and what do you think would be a helpful response?





What might Taylor need?



How might Taylor feel?



What do you think the impact on Taylor may be?



How do you think Taylor's thoughts on AI generated images might have changed?



How might the adults in Taylor's life respond to this and what do you think would be a helpful response?





Session overview

These sessions have been designed to support recovery, teach skills and open up discussion. This ending session is about bringing it all together and reassuring the young person that they are able to move forwards.

Information for practitioner

Hopefully you have built a good rapport with the young person and they are feeling more equipped to build a life that works for them. They may have some concerns over the ending of the programme and this session is designed to review how far they have come, remind them of the strategies they now have in their toolkit and identify any ongoing or future support that may be available. It is important to leave the young person feeling empowered, equipped and optimistic.

Resources needed for this session

- Big paper and pens

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they are feeling about this being the last session together. Do they have any questions about moving forwards?

Review the initial session where they shared their hopes and fears and see what has changed.



Open this up to a review of all the different sessions you have done together. Check how they feel about what you have covered and whether they have any questions.



Remind them of all the different self-care strategies they now have in their toolbox and discuss the ones they found particularly useful or are still using.



Using the big paper
and pens

Activity

To think about the future it's really useful to remember what makes us us – who we want to be; what's important to us; how we enjoy our lives and what we want to do with our time and energy.


Encourage the young person to draw and/or write down the things that are important to them on a big piece of paper.



Be as creative as possible; this piece of work can be a touchstone for them to take away and keep, to refer back to, to remind them of who they are and who they want to be. Within this, it might be useful to be specific about what they can do and who they can turn to if they have any concerns or difficulties.

This could include but is not limited to:

- Hobbies
- Values – what's important to them
- Characteristics, skills and qualities they value in themselves
- Characteristics, skills and qualities they value in others
- Future dreams and aspirations
- The support they have around them
- Healthy relationships
- Physical things they like to have around them (music, books, something tactile, photos, pictures, mementos, etc)
- Mantras – positive statements about what's important to them, what they want to remember, how they want to make decisions etc
- Aspects around their own safety
- Hopes and enjoyments at school
- Drawings and doodles
- Anything else that feels important

-  Remind them of the letter from someone with lived experience that was in their pack right at the beginning of this process – if they were to write a similar letter, what would they want other people to know?


Alternatively, they could write a letter to their future selves – think five or ten years' time – and anything they especially want to remember and take forward.



Closing activity

Looking after yourself exercise to close

You could pick a final option if there are any you haven't covered and think might be useful. Or revisit one from earlier that would be nice to do again.

-  Reassure the young person that the progress they have made is because of them and how engaged they have been and how very skilled they now are at managing whatever life throws at them.



These self-care activities form a set of exercises or ideas that can be shared with young people to give them a range of tools, which will help them manage different difficult situations. The activities can be revisited time and again and with repetition will become even more effective.

At the end of each session a “looking after yourself” exercise will have been selected and will be worked through together. This will allow the young person to not only build up a range of tools to look after themselves but will give them the opportunity to ‘de-brief’ from each session, leaving with a positive strategy for self-care.

These activities have been selected to use across all age ranges and the practitioner should be mindful of selecting and explaining each activity in a way that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the young person they are working with.

The 5-4-3-2-1 technique

Explanation: This is a grounding technique that comes from mindfulness and is useful because it is quick, easy and you can do it at almost any time or place to make an immediate difference. In fact, it takes less time to do than it takes to explain!

How to do it: First, notice five things you can see, then (and if you like you can shut your eyes, but you don't have to) notice four things you can feel – this can be things like your feet on the ground or your sleeve on your arm, or could also be internal things like feeling hungry. Now notice three things you can hear, then two things you can either smell or taste. Finally take one deep breath from your belly, with a longer outbreath, and then open your eyes (if they were closed). If you notice your thoughts drifting, don't worry, just gently bring them back to the exercise.

When it's useful: Any time you want to take a moment away and reset your emotions. Because you can do it anywhere, people won't even know that you're doing it. You can vary it with other techniques, such as noticing everything around you that's a particular colour or shape.



Extended exhale breathing

Explanation: When we feel stressed or anxious our bodies react to this with a range of physical changes. Most of these happen without us being able to control them, but one of the changes is to our breathing. When we are calm we breathe in a particular way and when we become anxious or stressed our breathing changes to become shallower, quicker and higher in the chest. We can hack this system by deliberately learning how to breathe in a calm way – and as our body becomes calmer so does our mind. When we feel calmer we are much more able to respond to things in ways that are more useful.

How to do it: There are just two things to do to get the relaxation going:

Firstly, breathe from your belly – imagine there is a balloon in your tummy that you are inflating with every inbreath – this is easiest to practise lying on your back with one hand on your chest and the other on your tummy. Your tummy should move out with each inbreath, whereas your chest shouldn't move much.

Secondly, make the outbreath longer than the inbreath – you could count (7 in and 11 out – or 5-8 or a number that works for you), or have a phrase to say (a shorter one for the inbreath and a longer one for the outbreath, such as 'I am calm' (on the inbreath) and then 'I am feeling very relaxed' (on the outbreath)). You could also imagine yourself playing a recorder or singing, as that uses the same breathing action.

When it's useful: This can be useful when you start to feel anxious or if something happens that produces a strong emotional response. It's a skill, though, so it's easier to do if you practise it when you're already feeling calm. If you do this, you will have more control over your responses when you begin to feel anxious. You could try practising this kind of breathing for a couple of minutes once or twice a day – maybe as you are going to sleep or before you get out of bed in the morning. It's good to do when you know you have a difficult event coming up, for example before an exam or a difficult conversation.



Write it down – Journalling

Explanation: By writing down our thoughts we get them out of our heads and often this means they stay out of our heads. It also helps us sort our thoughts out and even come up with solutions to problems. By putting our thoughts into words we start to make sense of them and we also notice how thoughts and feelings come and go.

How to do it: There are lots of different ways to try this beyond the stereotype of writing a daily diary entry. The purpose is to take some time to record your thoughts and feelings. You could have a lovely notebook, or you could type on your laptop, you could record voice messages. You could do it every day or just when you feel the need. The best thing to do is experiment and find what works the best for you.

When it's useful: This is something to do when you're on your own and wanting to make sense of how you feel. The more often you do it the easier it gets, and the more things seem to make sense.



The AWARE technique

Explanation: The emotion of anxiety is there to protect us and to keep us safe, but it can get out of hand. Sometimes it stops us from doing the things that are good for us or that we want to do. Sometimes the anxiety voice is very loud and it often wants you to avoid doing the very thing that will make you feel better. This is particularly true when it triggers social anxiety. It feels as though doing what the voice is telling us, for example not going out, will quieten that voice, but in fact the opposite is true. The more the anxiety voice has its own way, the stronger it gets.

This technique allows you to challenge the anxiety voice making it less powerful.

How to do it: AWARE stands for five things to do when you notice the anxiety voice getting louder.

A **Accept** and acknowledge the feelings of anxiety. Recognise them. It's ok – there they are. They are not you. You can even name the anxiety voice if it's helpful. (Ideally, give it a silly name: "Oh that's just Mr Worryhead again.")

W **Watch**, wait and scale. What is it wanting you to do/not do? How loud is it on a scale of 0-10? – It doesn't matter what the number is but giving it a number means you can see it going up and down which reminds the brain that it is temporary and variable.

A **As you were:** act normally – keep doing whatever you were planning to do. Try not to let the anxiety voice have its way.

R **Repeat.** Back to the first A and acceptance, scale it again, keep resisting whatever the anxiety voice wants you to do/not do.

E **Expect** the best – this feeling will pass. It will be ok. You know the anxiety voice when it gets like this and it's usually lying. The world won't end and you'll feel better and calmer again soon – especially if you can manage to push back against the anxiety voice and what it wants you to do.

When it's useful: This is particularly useful for social anxiety or when anxiety makes us want to avoid things that we need to do or that are good for us – like meeting up with good friends, learning new skills, taking exercise or going to school or particular lessons, etc. If we can challenge the anxiety we definitely feel better and it's easier to do those things again next time.



A positive spin

Explanation: Noticing the good things in life encourages the brain to notice more good things and helps us feel more positive. When bad things have happened it's really easy to only notice bad things and to feel like nothing good will ever happen again. This is your brain trying to protect you and keep you safe, but it's got caught in a loop and it needs you to restore the balance. It needs you to find the positive things again.

How to do it: There are lots of different ways to do this; you could try any the examples below. Set aside a few minutes every day to record one of the following:

- List up to three good things that happened today.
- List up to three hobbies and activities that bring me joy and why.
- Describe my favourite location in my house and why I like it.
- One thing I've learned this week that I'm thankful for.
- Who or what made me smile in the past 24 hours and why?
- Describe my favourite smell/sound/sensation/taste/sight – in as much detail as possible.
- Write about someone famous who has helped my life in some way.
- Name a great book I've recently read/tv show I've watched/song I've listened to and why?
- What is today's weather and one positive thing I can say about it?
- When was the last time I had a genuine belly laugh and why was it so funny?
- What's one lesson I can learn from rude people?
- What makes me happy when I'm feeling down.
- Look around the room and list all the items that I like.
- Write about a challenging person in my life for example, someone I frequently disagree with, and the qualities I like about this person.

When it's useful: If you have some time to yourself and you're feeling a bit down, or it feels like things are going wrong, this will help reset the brain to notice some of the positives in life as well. It's something you can do on your own, but you could also try doing it with a friend or trusted adult.



Thoughts like buses

Explanation: We are not our thoughts. Just because you think something or something crosses your mind doesn't make it true. But often when we think negative and destructive thoughts they feel very real and we can get caught up in the same thoughts going round and round, causing more upset, misery and distress. But we have more control over our thoughts than you might think!

How to do it: Let's imagine that you are sitting on a lovely bench in your favourite place in nature. It also happens to be a bus stop. You can see the buses coming and going, and on the front of every bus is the destination – these are your thoughts. You don't have to get on every bus that comes by – you can choose. If you see a familiar bus arriving that you don't like, you don't have to get on – you already know where it goes and how it goes round and round. It's not taking you anywhere of value, so stay on your bench. Maybe choose another bus – a bus where you remember a really good holiday, or your favourite food, or one where you plan something nice to do. If you find yourself on the wrong bus, you can just ring the bell and get off and come back to that bench.

When it's useful: This can be done when you feel your thoughts running away with you on a negative spiral – perhaps a thought you've had many times before. Reminding ourselves that we don't have to just accept every thought as it appears helps reset the brain. It can take a bit of practice, but the more you reset yourself and come back to the bench, the more your brain gets the message that you don't have to have these unhelpful thoughts. Another way of looking at it is to think of your thoughts like clouds – you are the sky above. The clouds may cover the sky sometimes, and some stick around longer than others, but they are not you and they always pass in the end.



Sleep hygiene

Explanation: It really is true that we feel better about things when we get enough sleep. This is because while we are asleep the body and mind are still busy with physical repair and emotional processing. Sleep helps us sort things out and resets both body and mind. We all need good sleep to help us manage the ups and downs of everyday life but sometimes our sleep can be interrupted. Stress and worry can affect our sleep, and young people are even more disadvantaged because their bodies want to sleep when society expects them to be awake and at school! There are lots of different things we can do to help promote good sleep – you don't have to do all of these, but if you are having trouble sleeping it's worth trying some of them and seeing what works for you.

How to do it:

- Try to keep to a routine – keep your bedtimes and getting up times reasonably stable as this encourages the brain to be ready for both sleeping and waking up.
- A pre-bed routine also helps the brain to recognise that it's time for sleep. Things like –
 - Reading or music for around ten minutes before lights out.
 - A hot bath or shower.
 - A warm milky drink.
 - Turning off any screens at least an hour before lights out.
 - Audio books – so long as you can turn them off or set them only for a short time.
- Keep your bedroom temperature cool as the body needs to lower its core temperature to sleep.
- Avoid caffeine or energy drinks after 2pm – especially important if you feel anxious as caffeine mimics the anxiety response so can make you feel worse.
- Try to have a quick tidy in your bedroom before you prepare for sleep as this will help your brain put thoughts from the day aside.
- Keep a pad and pen by your bed to record worries so you can dismiss them until the next day.
- When you get up, open the curtains and get lots of light – morning light helps keep us awake when we need to be and regulates the sleep rhythms.
- White noise can help sleep, whether it's a fan or the sound of a rainforest.
- Exercise during the day will help make you physically tired and also burns cortisol (the stress hormone).
- Healthy eating and not eating anything very rich or sugary before bed can also make a difference.

When it's useful: If you are having trouble sleeping or feeling tired during the day then it can be helpful to look at your sleep routines. Often just small tweaks can make a really big difference.



The Worryspace

Explanation: If you find that you are spending a lot of time worrying about what's happening or feeling very negative and anxious, it's not always easy to turn these thoughts off. Giving them space but also boundaries can help. By giving your brain a dedicated time when you are allowed to worry – the worryspace – it can often be easier to dismiss the worries the rest of the time, saving them up for the worryspace. In repeating this exercise time and again it may be that when we get to our worryspace we find some of those things aren't so very worrisome anymore.

How to do it: Allocate a time in your week – maybe about 20-minutes, but no longer than an hour – when you are allowed to worry. During this time, think about the things that are making you worry and feel anxious – you can write them down, you can cry about them, you can feel overwhelmed, you can tell someone else about them. But only for that allocated timeframe. If you start to have these thoughts at other times, tell your brain that you will think about them in the worryspace. Make a note if you need to and then turn your thoughts to something else. If your brain knows that you will give it time then it will be more able to turn away from the worry when you don't want it there.

When it's useful: Any time when sad or worrying thoughts are stopping you from being able to get on with the things you need or want to do. Giving yourself dedicated time and permission to worry makes it easier to turn our thoughts to more useful things the rest of the time.



Move more

Explanation: Two important things happen when we move our bodies that can help us feel happier in our minds as well as healthier in our bodies. Firstly, the body releases chemicals that literally lift our mood. Evidence shows that even in people who have a diagnosis of mild to moderate depression just 150 minutes of movement a week is as effective at lifting their mood as taking medication. The other thing movement does is to burn off the stress hormone cortisol. This is released when we feel stressed or anxious and it tends to hang around in the body. By moving our bodies we burn this off which lifts those feelings of stress.

How to do it: The most important thing is to find something that works for you – you don't have to go running or visit the gym (though you can if you like). Walking, stretching, dancing to music at home, jumping up and down, swimming, rollerblading, playing Twister, doing star jumps, there are so many things you could try! Whatever works for you! And just five minutes will make a difference.

When it's useful: Good as part of your daily routine, but particularly good if you have a wave of strong emotions, such as anger, anxiety, unhappiness, panic, frustration etc. When using it to calm really strong emotions try something more intense, like jumping up and down or running on the spot really hard for five minutes. Over time, the more we move the better we generally feel.



Mindfulness

Explanation: Anxiety and stress tend to focus on the past or the future – what's happened already or what we want or don't want to happen. Mindfulness is about bringing our thoughts into the moment, to right now. By bringing our attention to our thoughts, feelings and observations about right now we can calm the inner voice and reset ourselves.

How to do it: There are lots of different things you can try for this. Being creative is often a really good way of being in the moment – whether that's drawing, baking, colouring or crafting. The point is just to be in the moment, so you can do it with any activity. Bring your attention to every detail of what your body is experiencing. For example, when you clean your teeth notice every tooth and the feel of the brush on your gums, pay attention to the taste of the toothpaste and imagine the shape of your mouth and the toothbrush. You can even eat a snack mindfully. Look at the snack first and smell it, notice the texture and colour. Then take a tiny bite and think about how it feels on your tongue and how it changes as you chew and prepare to swallow. Then try with a larger mouthful. Really take your time.

With any of these activities it's really important that you don't judge – it's not about doing anything 'right' – it's just about noticing what you are doing right now, being curious and interested and letting the past and the future just drift away for the moment.

When it's useful: Mindfulness helps us step away from stress and anxiety. The more we practise, the easier it gets, and it can be a really calm place to be. It's great to do at the end of the day as part of a wind-down; or as you get up to prepare yourself for the day ahead. It's also really useful if you just need a bit of time out during the day and it helps you focus your mind on something else.



A hero's journey

Explanation: Framing our experiences as a story in which we are the hero is a powerful way to help us through difficult experiences. In any good story there are chapters where our hero faces really difficult challenges and manages to overcome them. By looking at our own experiences in this way we can take control of where we want the story to go next.

How to do it: Ask the young person to think about what has happened as though it were a chapter in a story. It's important to remember that the central character (the young person) is the hero – we like them; we are on their side; we have faith in them. Remind them that they are still near the beginning of the book – there are lots of chapters still to come. Explore the different ways in which the next chapter may be written, finding as many ways as you can that lead to a positive outcome. Encourage reflection on all the different resources and strengths that our hero has – what can they do to overcome their challenges? What different ways will they find to recover from their experiences? Peek ahead to ten chapters, or twenty chapters further down the book – what is happening now? What skills and qualities does our hero have? How are they using these skills to create a life that works for them?

When it's useful: This is an effective way to put distance between a traumatic event and the person who has experienced it. When we feel stuck or defined by a situation it can be useful to see it as simply a chapter in a much longer narrative. It shapes the story but only as much as the author wants it to. This is about empowering people to move forward into recovery.



Three chairs of perspective

Explanation: This is an exercise that encourages a compassionate voice that we can use to calm our inner critic. By imagining how we would support a friend in a similar situation we can encourage our own self-compassion.

How to do it: Arrange three empty chairs in your room. Ask the young person to think of something where they have blamed themselves – this may be to do with something that has happened to them but does not have to be. Each chair represents a different way of thinking about what has happened.

The first chair represents the young person's self-blame and the thoughts and emotions that go with that. The second chair represents the feelings that other people are judging you. The last chair takes the perspective of a supportive friend or wise counsellor.

Ask the young person to physically sit in each chair and express out loud what that perspective feels like. In each chair, the young person can use words or just noises to represent that perspective, but ask them to notice the tone of voice, the emotions that accompany the words and even the posture adopted in each chair. Try to understand how each perspective feels. When the young person is in chair 3 encourage them to talk directly to the emotions and thoughts expressed in chairs one and two. What do you say? What advice do you give? How do you relate to each perspective from a more detached point of view?

Don't spend too long in chairs one and two and always finish in chair three. Reflect to the young person that they already have the ability to use a more supportive voice to themselves. It can be helpful to give this voice, or aspect of themselves a name (a superhero name can be good, like 'Captain Calm' or 'Mrs Kindness') so that when they are feeling down on themselves they can step outside and ask, "What would Captain Calm say about this?"

When it's useful: This is great for young people who enjoy role playing or who struggle to understand others' points of view. It engages the observing self so that we can take a step back and be more compassionate to ourselves.



Relaxing your body – Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

Explanation: When the body is tense, the mind is too, and where the body goes, often the mind follows. Therefore, if we are feeling stressed and anxious, one solution is to work on relaxing our bodies and notice that the mind also calms down as a result. One way of doing this is a progressive muscle relaxation exercise.

How to do it: Essentially, you bring your attention to the muscles in your body – starting either with the top of your head or with your feet – and then move through the body, consciously relaxing each muscle and muscle group as you go. It's a calming process that allows you to be more in tune with your body. If you are struggling to know how to relax, tense the muscles first and then relax them, so you can feel the difference. You can just do this in your own way or use the script below if you want some direction. The practitioner or a parent/carer could read the script to help you relax or you could record it and play it to yourself when lying in bed getting ready for sleep. Don't rush through the script, take your time and pause as you allow different parts of your body to relax.

When it's useful: This is a great thing to do before going to sleep as it really relaxes both body and mind. If you want to do something similar during the day you can focus on one bit of your body – such as your hands – and just clench and relax your fists a few times.



Script for a PMR (feel free to adapt and make your own):

I am going to direct your attention to your body and the different muscles in your body, starting with the top of your head. Focus your attention on the very top of your head. Be aware of how it feels and how your scalp feels across the top of your head and all around your hairline. Start to feel the muscles across your scalp relax and loosen. You can feel any tension melting away as your scalp loosens and relaxes. Move your attention to your forehead and let that relaxation wash down from your scalp and into your forehead and face. Across your forehead and your temples you can feel the muscles relaxing... relaxing and smoothing out... good. Your forehead feels smooth and comfortable and the whole of the top of your head is relaxed.

Now move your attention to your face. Feel the muscles round your eyes start to relax. All the small muscles around your eyes and your eyebrows are softening and relaxing. They are loosening and smoothing out. Your eyelids feel comfortable and at ease and the muscles around your eyes feel so comfortable. Now the muscles across your face and in your cheeks also start to relax. Your cheeks loosen and you can feel your jaw loosening and any tension in your jaw melting away... The muscles around and beneath your ears are softening as your jaw relaxes. Perhaps your mouth will open slightly as the muscles in your chin relax, and that's fine. Your tongue rests comfortably in your mouth and your face is relaxed. If you need to move as you relax, that's fine.

Bring your attention to your neck now and the back of your neck. From your hairline at the back and down your neck, feel the muscles loosening and elongating. As the muscles soften, your neck feels comfortable and relaxed and your head feels light and easy just resting on your neck. If you want to move your head to the side or if your chin wants drop slightly that's fine... move if necessary so that your head and neck can enjoy feeling very relaxed. You feel very comfortable and your neck is relaxed and at ease.

As the muscles in your neck continue to relax you can feel this relaxation moving now into your shoulders as your attention moves down into your shoulders. Across your shoulders the muscles relax and your shoulders feel loose and comfortable. They feel relaxed and comfortable. If you want to just roll them gently as they relax that's fine.

Now feel the muscles in the tops of your arms relaxing, down to your elbows, and your arms are feeling heavy and comfortable as they relax and any tension drops away. Feel this warm comfortable sensation move down, through your elbows and down your lower arms... and into your hands. Your hands are relaxing, your palms feel soft and your fingers relax. All the muscles in your arms are now relaxed, all the way down to your fingertips, and you feel warm and comfortable....

Bring your attention now to your chest and to your breathing. Your breathing is even and relaxed. It is unforced and easy, and you can feel your breath moving in and out... in and out. Feel your chest area relax as you breathe in and out... in and out.... Good.

All the muscles between your ribs are relaxed and comfortable and just gently supporting your breathing as the breath moves in... and out... Your breath is moving easily and the muscles in your upper back and chest area are softening and relaxing... relaxing. Focus for a moment more on your breath; with every in-breath imagine the breath moving through your whole body, washing your whole body with a feeling of calm and peace... The breath moves easily and brings that relaxation through your entire body. With every out-breath, feel any tension melting away, leaving your body

more and more calm, more and more relaxed... so comfortable and so peaceful. In... and out.... In... and out... that's right. Your breath is calm and easy, you are peaceful and relaxed.

Breathe deeply now down into your stomach and feel your diaphragm and stomach relaxing too. Bring your attention fully to your stomach and feel your tummy loosen and relax. Your stomach supports your breathing and each breath relaxes your stomach more.

As the tummy relaxes with every breath you can feel your lower belly, your hips and the muscles in your lower back begin to soften... with every out-breath, your lower back is relaxing and feeling loose and easy. The muscles feel long, soft and comfortable and you feel so relaxed.

As these large muscles in your lower back soften and relax you can feel your hips and pelvic area relaxing more and more and down to the tops of your legs. Feel the long muscles of your thighs loosening and relaxing, the tops of your legs relaxing and down into your knees. Your knees feel soft and comfortable and that feeling of relaxation moves down through your knees and into your calves and shins. Your legs feel warm, heavy and comfortable.

Your whole body feels relaxed and comfortable. Good. Feel your ankles relax and soften and feel this easing of tension move finally into your feet. Let your feet relax. Feel your instep smoothing and the arch of your feet softening. The muscles feel comfortable and soft all the way down to your toes as finally your whole body is so relaxed, so comfortable. Just enjoy that feeling of being totally relaxed. Relaxed and comfortable and totally at ease.

Now your whole body is relaxed, all your muscles are soft and comfortable, and you are feeling so peaceful... as relaxed as you can be and so comfortable, so calm.

Optional: Now begin to imagine you are in a place... somewhere that you really like. A relaxing place in nature, maybe. It can be a real place that you have been to... or it might be somewhere imaginary, or even fantastical. Wherever it is, this is a place where you feel relaxed and secure and a place that is your place and you have complete control of how it looks and how it behaves – it is a safe and comfortable place that you can bring this place to life in your mind's eye. Look around you and think about what you can see. What is the space like? What is the light like? Look at the colours around you and see and feel the textures. Think about how the place feels and how it feels for you to be there. Are you standing or sitting, or even floating in this place? Engage all your senses ... perhaps you can hear things – or perhaps you can even smell or taste something in this place. Spend a moment just being here and enjoying that feeling of comfort and complete relaxation... notice how calm you feel and how relaxed your body now is.

Use if you are doing this during the day rather than as an aid to sleep: Now it's time to bring your awareness back to this room, feeling wonderfully calm and relaxed. I'll just count to five to give you time to reorient yourself and bring your attention back to the here and now. One... noticing again the room around you... Two... maybe you can hear the everyday noises around you again ... Three... noticing the space around you, the sense of your arms and legs... Four... feeling alert and present in the room and ready to open your eyes... Five. Open your eyes.

Feel free to stretch and take a minute to readjust.



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