

A Self-Harm self-help workbook for young people in secondary school



Emotional Wellbeing Service

Cardiff and the Vale



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

Resilience
Project
Prosiect
Gwydnwch



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan
INTEGRATED HEALTH
& SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP
PARTNERIAETH IECHYD
& GO'AL CYMDATHASOL INTEGRDIG
Caerdydd & Bro Morgannwg

Adapted by the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board Resilience Project, from the guided workbook by the Emotional Wellbeing Service (Change Grow Live).

This self-help workbook provides information and advice about self-harm. Most importantly, it gives some techniques and tools to keep yourself safe and help reduce self-harming behaviour as well as how to get support and what help is available.

You can either complete this on your own, or alongside an adult you trust so that they are able to offer support.

It is helpful to work through this workbook slowly, completing small bits at a time. Everyone is different and will work through this booklet at a different pace but setting aside an hour a week to begin with might be a good place to start. Make sure you give yourself a few days where you can practice the skills you learn. Feel free to go back to an early section or repeat it. There is no right or wrong way, just whatever works best for you!

Sometimes it can be overwhelming to think about these things, and we should always look after ourselves first. **Notice** when you are feeling overwhelmed, **take a break** and have a go at using coping skills (like the ones on page 11). When you're feeling ready to tackle the booklet and **carry on**, go for it! There are lots of opportunities to practice different coping skills throughout the workbook, some will work for you, others won't.

Just find the ones that are right for you.

Contents

General Harm Minimisation Advice	4
My Personalised Safety Plan.....	5
What is Self-Harm?	6
Why Self Harm?	6
Getting to know your emotions	7
What do you feel?.....	8
Body scan.....	10
Coping strategies for different emotions	11
Rate your feelings	12
Understanding your own self-harm	14
Example:	15
Template Chain Analysis	19
How do you break the chain?.....	21
Using your senses	21
Self Soothe box	22
Managing the physical symptoms of distress with TIPP skills	23
What's in and out of your control?	26
Radical Acceptance	27
Doing the Opposite.....	27
Opposite Action Diary	30
Twenty Ways to Relax.....	31
Additional support	32

General Harm Minimisation Advice

When possible, it is good to try to have alternative ways of coping as using self-harm can never be completely safe. However, if the urge does become too overwhelming and you are going to use self-harm, then please use the harm reduction advice below.

- Make sure you have a first aid kit to hand, or items such as plasters and antiseptic.
- Avoid alcohol or drugs because being intoxicated might mean you hurt yourself more than you had intended, plus you may not be able to react as quickly in an emergency.
- Make sure that anything you use to harm yourself is clean to reduce the chance of infection. You can clean items with antiseptic or very hot water.
- Avoid cutting areas where there are major blood vessels, tendons and nerves, like the inside of the wrists or the tops of the legs.
- Avoid cutting deeply and try to cut carefully as this will reduce long-term damage.

How to reduce scarring

- Avoid picking at wounds, as this will interfere with the healing process and will lead to more scarring.
- Infected wounds are more likely to cause scarring.
- Skin closure plasters or adhesive strips can help keep the wounds closed and therefore reduce scarring and infection.
- There are some products that may reduce the appearance of scarring a bit, like lotions or gels, for example bio-oil.

IMPORTANT:

If you are in any doubt as to how serious an injury is, always seek medical attention.

- In an emergency, call **999** and ask for an ambulance, or go to your nearest **A&E**.
- If the situation isn't urgent, visit your **GP**.
- If you're unsure what to do, contact **NHS direct on 111** for advice.

My Personalised Safety Plan

Having a safety plan can help you stay on track with your desire to reduce or stop using self harm, and also to have details on hand to get help if you need to. Go ahead and complete section 3 now. You will be prompted to come back and fill in sections 1 and 2 as you go through the workbook. It is here at the front so you can find it easily.

1. Know when to get help - How do you know when you are at risk of using self-harm?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

2. Coping Skills - Think about how different coping skills help with different emotions or situations. What helps you at different times? It's good to have a mix of coping skills ready...this may also change over time.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

3. Social Support - It can be useful to receive support from the people around you, list your support network and their contact details

- | | |
|----------|---------|
| 1. Name: | Number: |
| 2. Name: | Number: |
| 3. Name: | Number: |
| 4. Name: | Number: |

Get Help from Professionals:

Emergency number: **999**

NHS direct: **111** for non-emergency advice

Lots of other services are also listed on the back page of this booklet

What is Self-Harm?

NICE (2018) define self-harm as "self-poisoning or injury, irrespective of the apparent purpose of the act. Self-harm is an expression of personal distress, not an illness, and there are many varied reasons for a person to self-harm"

Just as there are many varied reasons for self-harm, it can also take many different forms. For some it might be visible, for others it may not be.

Self-harm is common in young people, at least 10% report having self-harmed and 1 in 6 report to have harmed in the last year (*The Good Childhood Report (2018) Children's Society*).

Why Self Harm?

You might know exactly why you use self harm, but you might not. We will spend some time later in the workbook looking at this in more detail, but here are just some reasons that young people have shared with us...

Task: You might find it helpful to tick any that apply to you. There is also space at the bottom to add your own reasons if you would like to:

- to manage and/or express overwhelming emotions
- to making high emotional distress more bearable
- to prevent suicidal thoughts from becoming overpowering
- feeling that there is no other way of helping you
- having the urge
- an attempt to punish ourselves or others
- to feel something
- to feel in control/empowered
- to get help
- to interrupt repetitive thoughts, for example about self-harm
-
-
-

Getting to know your emotions

Before we look any further at self-harm, we are first going to look at emotions – what they are, their changeability and their levels of intensity.

Understanding and being able to label emotions accurately is an important part of understanding and being able to reduce self-harm.

Emotions are like a wave

Much like waves in the sea, there are calmer days and choppy days; there are times when waves have big gaps between them. Just as we learn to surf waves in the sea, we can also learn to surf the waves of our emotion; to not be intimidated by our emotions but to be respectful of them, to listen to them and



understand what they are trying to tell us. We may not be able to change our automatic responses overnight, but we can recognise when the threat-focused/ protective system has kicked in, and choose to do things that allow for our 'contentment and soothing' system to do its job.

Pro-surfing tips

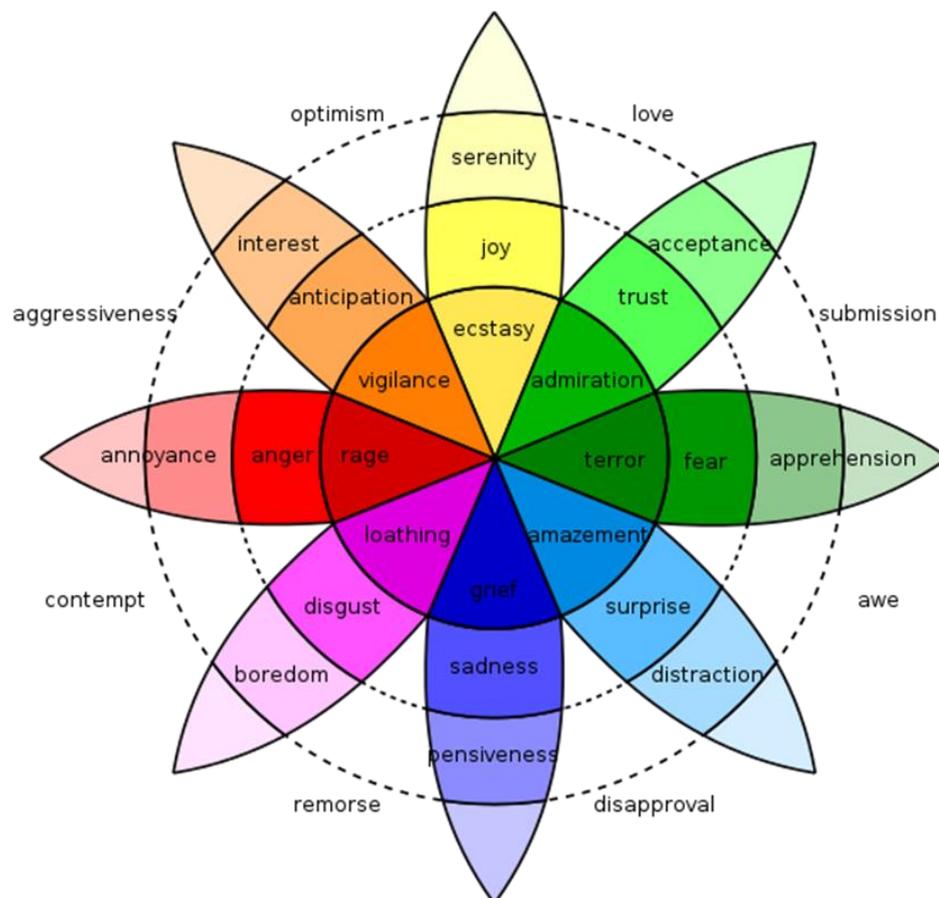
- Catch the waves of emotion before they become big crashing waves. Take time to check in each day, pay attention to how you are feeling and start to notice the patterns of emotion that come every day. Use the emotions wheel on [page 8](#) as a starting point.
- Recognise that emotions aren't the problem, it's our resistance to them. A surfer does not fight the wave, they surf it! Be open to your emotions and allow yourself to experience the emotion that is presenting. It can be hard to experience our emotions fully, the self-soothe skills on [page 21](#) can really help to manage the discomfort in order to allow them to pass.
- Express your emotion with maturity, honesty and grace. Find a way of communicating the emotion you are feeling without dramatising or creating a difficult or worse situation for yourself. Using TIPP (Temperature, Intense Exercise, Progressive muscle relaxation, Paced breathing) skills can be particularly helpful here, you'll find them on [page 23](#).
- Remember, you are the sea, not the wave. Open your mind to the truth that you are not your emotions and that all emotions rise and fall. Shift your focus from the wave to the rest of the sea.

What do you feel?

Feeling is a complex process and coming to terms with how you are feeling can sometimes be overwhelming. The emotion wheel gives words to help communicate what you are feeling to yourself and others.

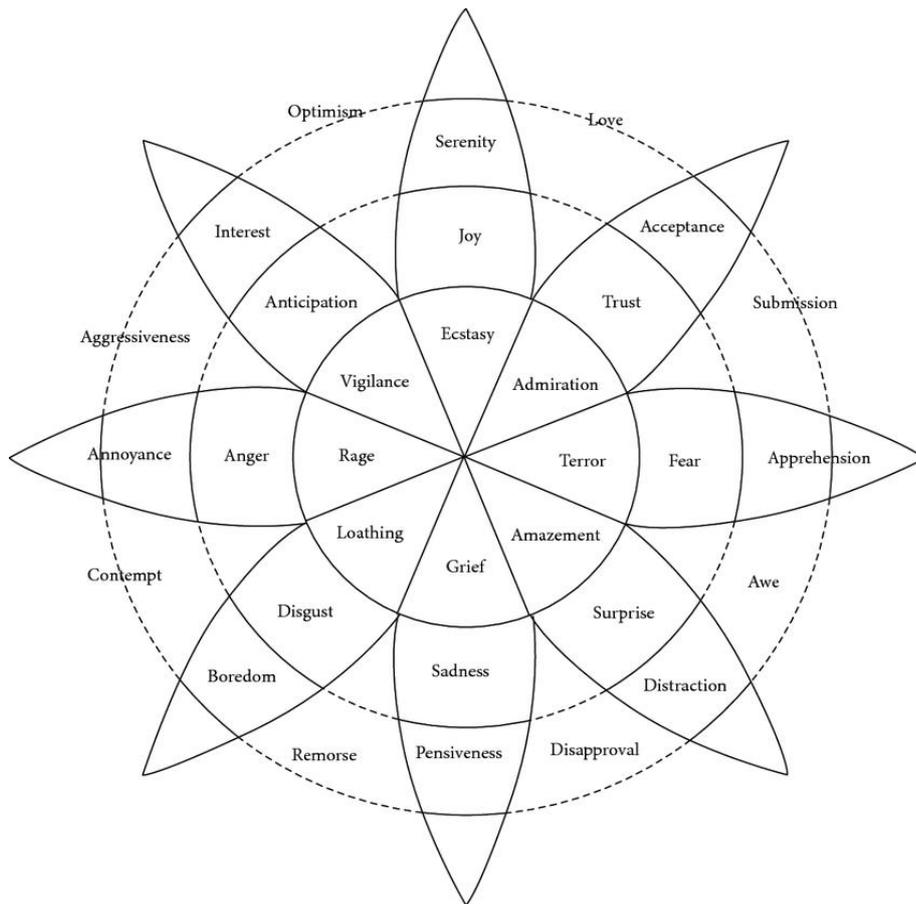
The emotion wheel is a tool you can use in many areas of life, from relationships to school to coming to terms with the things that affect you and moving forward. Ultimately, it promotes greater self-awareness and understanding.

This is an emotion wheel, the darker the colour, the more intense the emotion. Each emotion has another emotion on the opposite side of the wheel. For example, joy is the opposite of sadness and trust is the opposite of disgust. The emotions that are not in colour are a combination of the two emotions either side of it.



You can use the wheel to put words to what you might be feeling.

Task: Colour in or highlight the parts of the wheel you are feeling right now (hint - you can feel more than one thing at a time!)



It can be helpful to start to build up what the emotions feels like in your body. Do your shoulders hurt when you feel angry? Or maybe your eyes ache when you feel sadness. These body cues can help you to recognise when you are becoming overwhelmed, and help you know when to put strategies in place to delay or distract away from self harm.

Task: Over the next week, use the wheel to note what you feel throughout the day. Note down around the wheel what your body is doing when you feel different emotions – there is a picture on the next page that may help you think through from head to toe.

Body scans are a great way to get in tune with your body's cues – have a search on youtube for one that works for you. Click the link below to get you started...

[3 Minutes Body Scan Meditation - Mindfulness For Kids And Adults - YouTube](#)

Body scan prompts

Head: Achey or numb?

Buzzing or still?

Cloudy or clear?

Breathing: heavy, shallow,
fast, slow?

Heart rate: fast, slow or
somewhere in between?

Temperature:

Hot, cold or
just right?

Hands:

Relaxed?

Clenched?

Sweaty?

Eyes: Itchy? Achey? Tired?

Wide or about to close?

Blurry or clear?

Throat: Thirsty? Achey?

Scratchy? Thirsty?

Neck and shoulders: Tight?

Shoulders up by ears or

down low? Achey?

Relaxed? Able to move

freely or stiff?

Stomach:

Relaxed or

clenched?

Butterflies?

Hungry?

Legs: Achey? Relaxed or

fidgeting/bouncing? Tired?

For all: Is this a new or normal feeling? Overall, do I
feel relaxed or tense? Do I feel tired or energetic?

Coping strategies for different emotions

Anger and Frustration

- exercise
- hit cushions/punch bag
- shout and dance
- scream as loud as you can
- shake
- bite on bunched up material
- tear something up into hundreds of pieces
- smash a watermelon
- play loud music and dance energetically
- go for a run
- squeeze a stress ball
- throw/kick a ball against a wall
- write a letter to the person your

Sadness and Fear

- tell someone how you feel
- wrap a blanket around you
- have a warm bath/shower
- spend time with an animal
- walk in nature
- let yourself cry or sleep
- listen to soothing music
- massage your hands/arms
- lie in a comfortable position and breathe in - then breathe out slowly, making your outbreath longer than your in-breath. Repeat until you feel more relaxed.
- Do some stretches/yoga/Pilates

Shame

- spend time with people you feel close to/make you feel good
- stop spending time with anyone who treats you unkindly
- recognise when you are trying to be perfect and accept that making mistakes is part of being human
- remind yourself that there are reasons for how you behave - it is not because you are 'bad'

Numb and Disconnected

- flick elastic bands on your wrists
- hold ice cubes
- smell something with strong odour
- have a very cold shower
- jump up and down
- name 3 things you can see, hear, smell and taste
- spot 3 things green, blue and brown around you

Needing to feel in control

- write lists
- tidy up/ re-arrange your room
- have a throw-out
- write a letter saying everything you are feeling, then tear it up or change the ending
- weed a garden
- clench then relax all your muscles
- imagine how you feel as one colour and shape, then change the colour and shape
- make something

Self-hatred

- think of three positive characteristics about yourself (what would others say?)
- think of a good think you have done this week
- write a letter from the part of you that feels the self-hatred, then write back with as much compassion and acceptance as you can
- find creative ways to express the self-hatred, - through writing songs or poetry, drawing, movement or singing
- do physical exercise (like running or going to the gym) to express the anger that is turned in on yourself

Rate your feelings

Rating scales can be a really helpful way to help you keep a note of what coping skills work. There is an example below and some blank templates on the next few pages.

Example:

I FEEL ...Angry.....

On a scale of 1-10 with 1 as calm and 10 as rage. What is the intensity of the feeling you feel:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

List the coping skill(s) you used when you felt this way:

- shout and dance
- squeeze a stress ball

On a scale of 1-10 the intensity of the feeling after using the coping skill:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Would you use this coping skill(s) again? And if so, when?

When I feel angry at my sister

When I feel angry at myself

PAUSE HERE AND TAKE SOME TIME OVER THE NEXT WEEK TO PRACTICE THE SKILLS OF RECOGNISING AND NAMING EMOTIONS AND WHAT THEY FEEL LIKE FOR YOU. USE THE COPING SKILLS ON THE LAST PAGE TO HELP YOU 'SURF THE WAVES' OF THESE EMOTIONS.

MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR SAFETY PLAN OF THE SKILLS THAT WORK FOR YOU

WHEN I FEEL

On a scale of 1-10 with 1 as mild and 10 as very intense, what is the intensity of the feeling you feel:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

List the coping skill(s) you used when you felt this way:

On a scale of 1-10 the intensity of the feeling above after using the coping skill:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Would you use this coping skill again? And if so, when?

WHEN I FEEL

On a scale of 1-10 with 1 as mild and 10 as very intense, what is the intensity of the feeling you feel:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

List the coping skill(s) you used when you felt this way:

On a scale of 1-10 the intensity of the feeling above after using the coping skill:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Would you use this coping skill again? And if so, when?

Recap...

So far you have looked at what is self-harm and some of the reasons why young people self-harm.

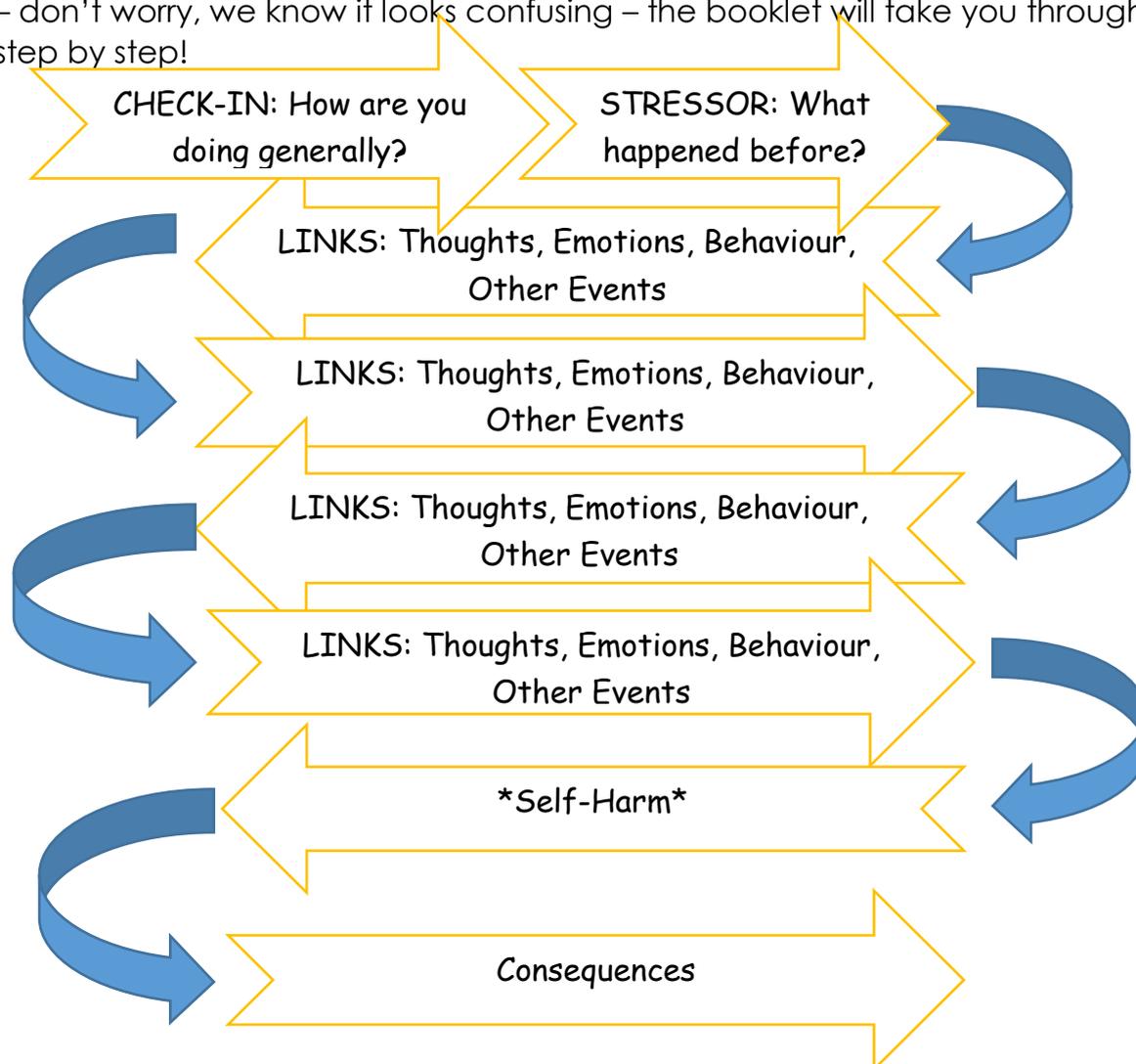
You have explored emotions, what and how you feel and tried some coping skills to help you manage these feelings.

Now, you are going to look at understanding your own self-harming behaviour.

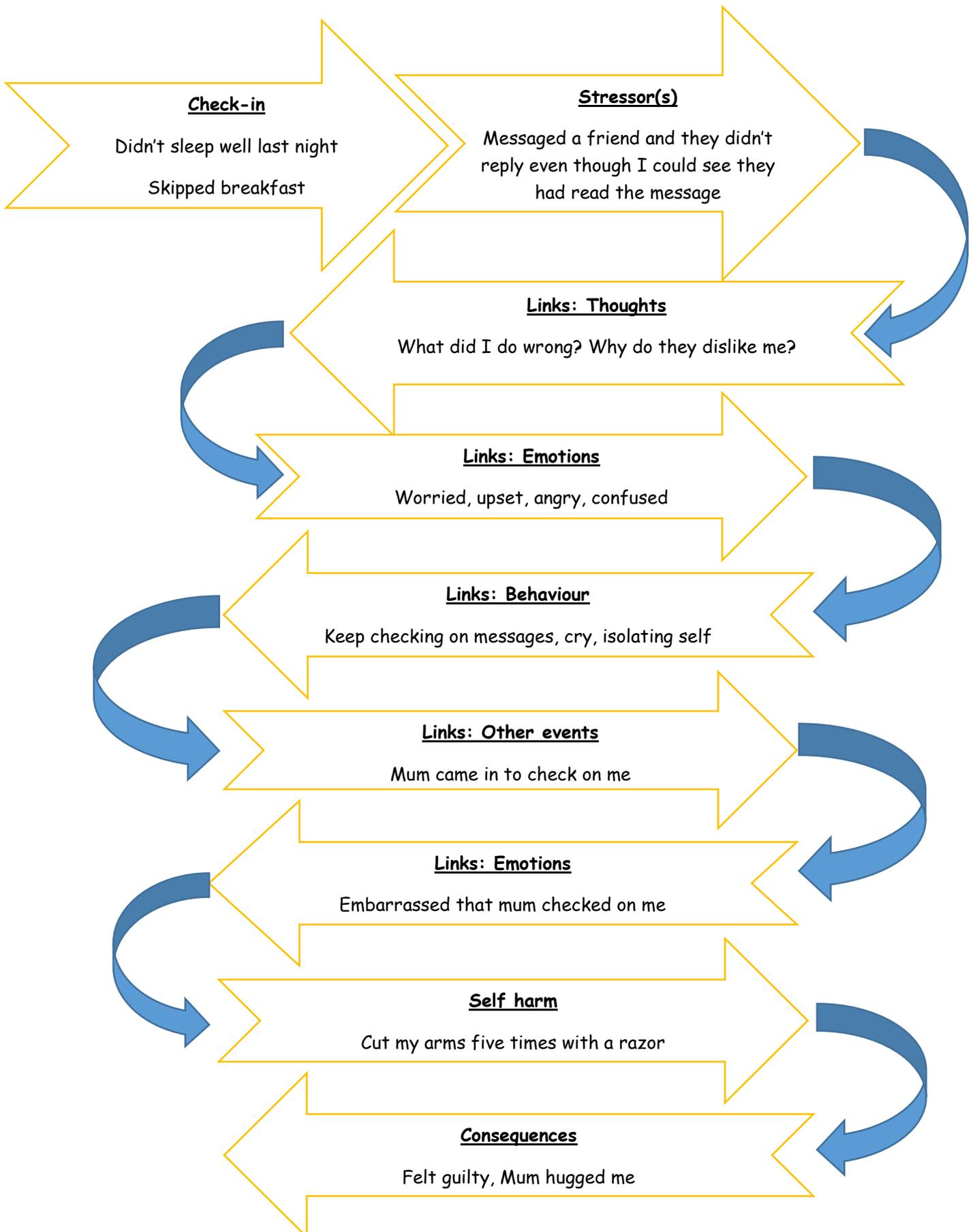
Understanding your own self-harm: Chain Analysis

It is important to understand the chain of events that lead to the urge to self-harm. By using chain analysis, you can identify what the triggers are and when you are at risk of using self-harm. Once you are able to notice these factors, you'll have more choice in how to respond.

The diagram below gives you an idea of what we are going to be looking at – don't worry, we know it looks confusing – the booklet will take you through it step by step!



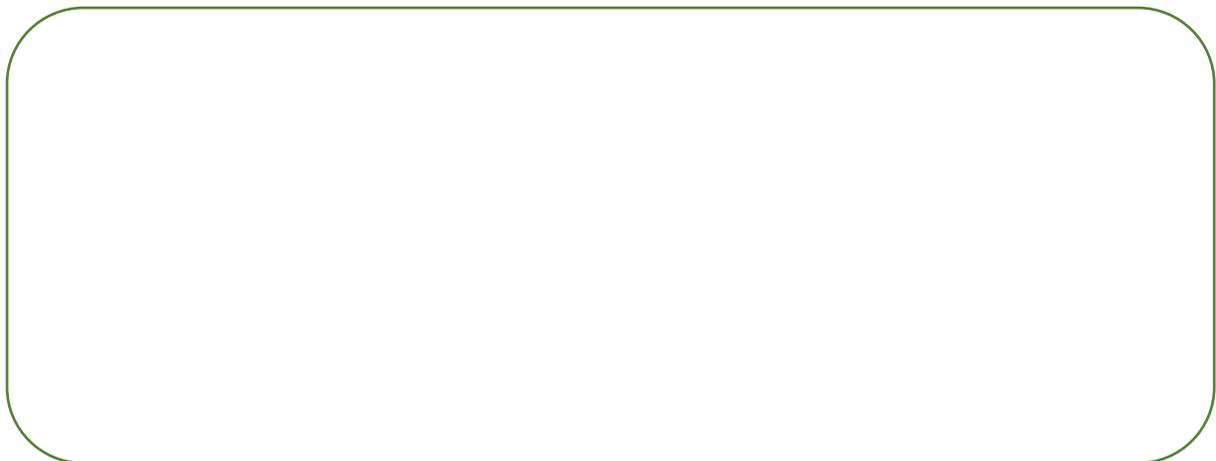
Example:



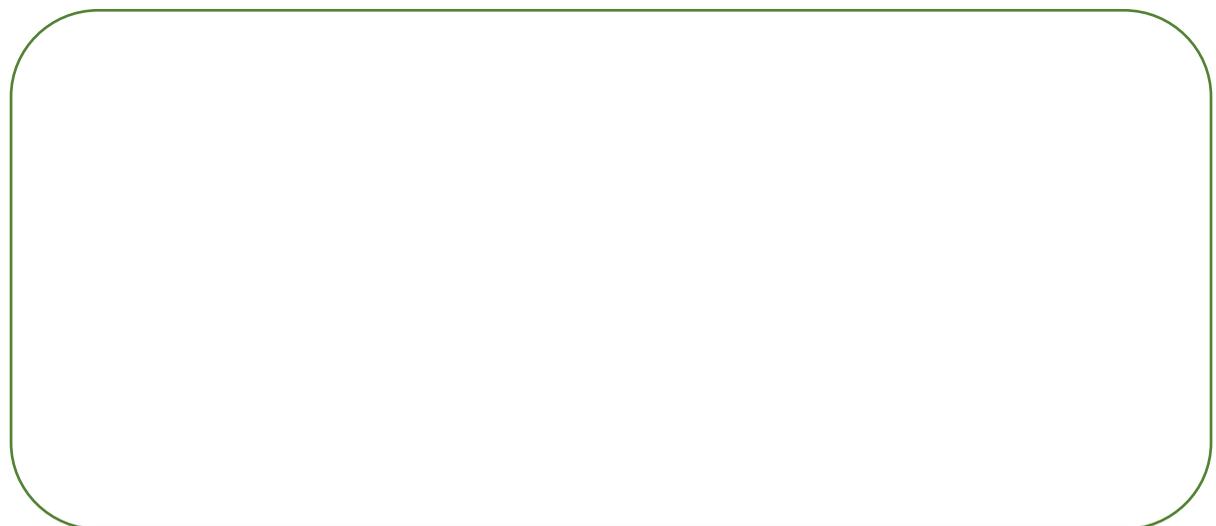
Task: Think about the last time you used self-harm and answer the following questions. Remember to be kind to yourself. Notice if you are starting to feel overwhelmed and go back to page 11 to pick a coping skill to use. Come back when you are ready.

Check-in: If we are not feeling great to start with, our ability to cope with stressors during the day is reduced. It can be helpful to think about whether there was anything already setting you back. Did any of these apply to you at the time?

- Tired
- Feeling unwell
- Problems eating
- Injury
- Substance/alcohol use
- Other



Stressor: What happened during the day? (i.e. Someone ignored you, your mum told you off for having a messy bedroom, or maybe you didn't do very well in a test).



Links: What emotions, thoughts and other events link this prompting event to the self-harming event? The example chain on page 15 may help you to understand this part more.

Emotions	Thoughts
What I did (before harming)	Other things that happened
Any other thoughts, emotions, behaviours or events (before harming)?	

Consequences: The final part is thinking about what happened after you harmed. These might be intentional or unintentional consequences. Once you have a list, you can think about whether you see them as positive or negative consequences.

What happened? <i>(think about your feelings, actions, body sensations, what other people did)</i>		
<i>Example: I felt guilty</i>		x
<i>Example: Mum hugged me</i>	x	

THERE ARE A FEW TEMPLATES ON THE NEXT PAGE FOR YOU TO USE OVER THE NEXT WEEK BUT PAUSE HERE FOR TODAY. PICK A COPING SKILL FROM PAGE 11 TO FINISH UP – NOTE HOW IT WENT BELOW.

After that activity, I FEEL

On a scale of 1-10 with 1 as mild and 10 as very intense, what is the intensity of the feeling you feel:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

List the coping skill(s) you used:

On a scale of 1-10 the intensity of the feeling above after using the coping skill:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

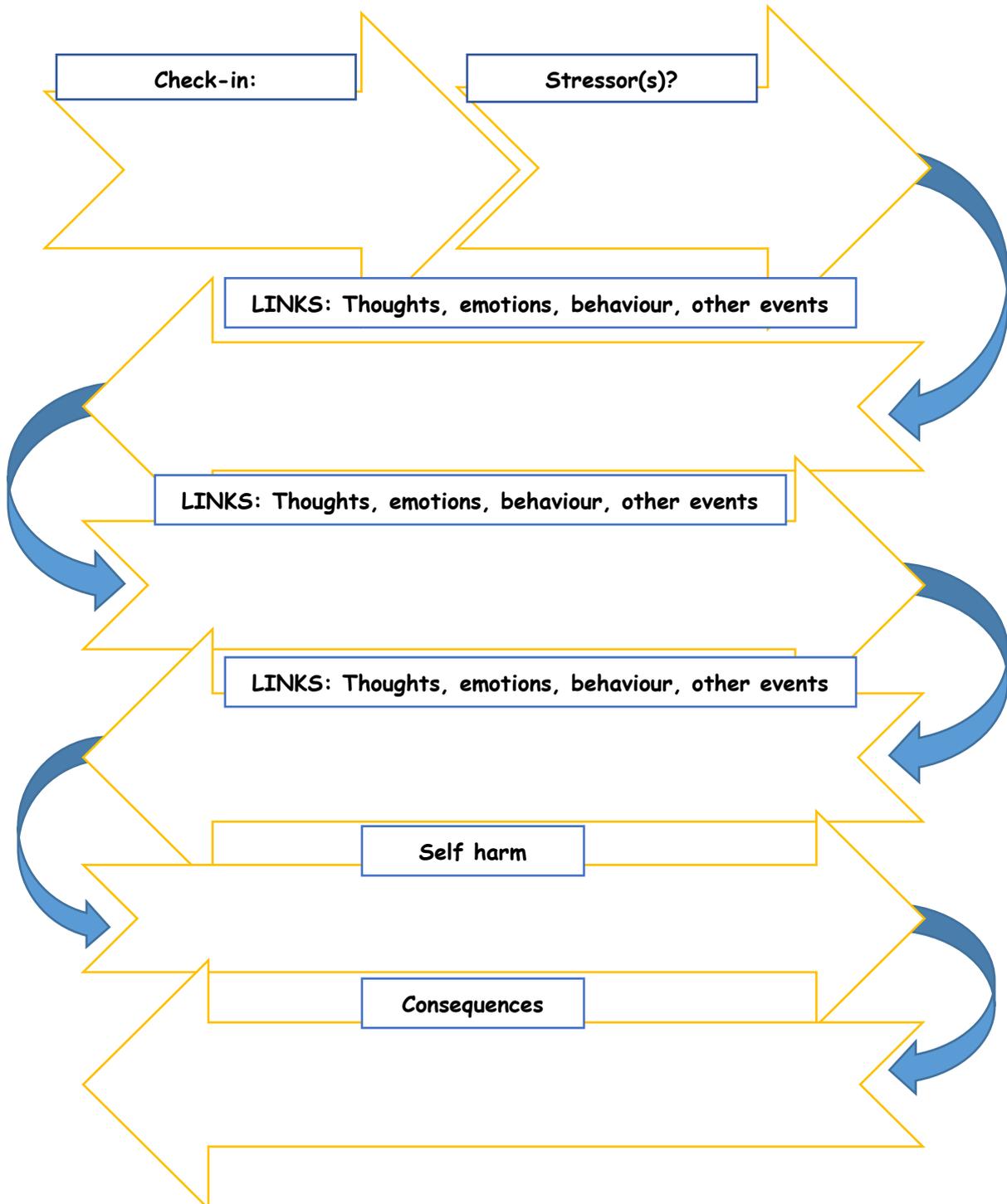
Would you use this coping skill again? And if so, when?

TAKE SOME TIME OVER THE NEXT WEEK TO FILL IN THE TEMPLATE CHAINS ON THE NEXT FEW PAGES. THIS WILL TAKE PRACTICE - KEEP LOOKING BACK AT THE EXAMPLE AND PROMPT QUESTIONS ON THE LAST FEW PAGES. DON'T FORGET TO BE KIND TO YOURSELF AND ADD IN COPING SKILLS PRACTICE AS YOU GO.

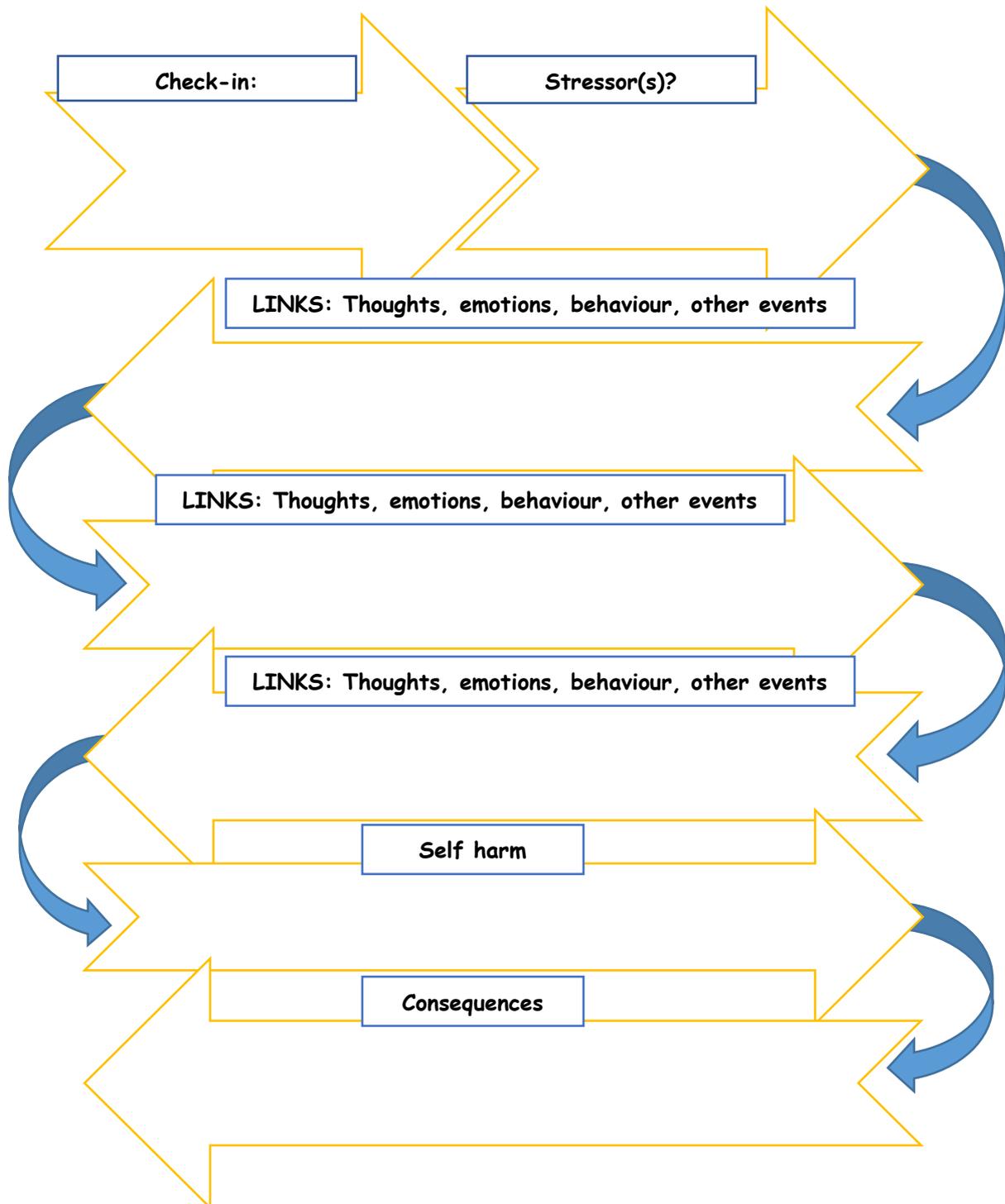
MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR SAFETY PLAN (PAGE 5) OF ANYTHING YOU NOTICE THAT INCREASES YOUR URGE TO HARM

Template Chain Analysis

Task: Use the blank chain analysis pages over the next week. Remember what emotions you felt, what you thought, what you did and what happened next, the more detailed the better. Add as many links as you can. You could also use the prompts to write in a journal if you prefer.



Template Chain Analysis



How do you break the chain?

You have already looked at some coping skills on [page 11](#). Below are some more specific skills to help manage the urge to harm.

Using your senses (Self Soothe)

Your senses can be used to soothe and help break the 'links' in the chain and manage urges to harm. Think of it as adding new positive links that add space between the prompting event and you harming. Self soothe can also be used after harming, as a way of being kind to yourself, rather than getting caught up in negative feelings.



Visual – Photographs of happy times, places, people who make you happy. Or it could be pictures of places you want to visit. You could put in a colouring book and pens or a sketchpad. Or you could jot down on a piece of paper to go and look at something that brings you joy.

Touch – You may add a fluffy toy, a stress ball, some play - dough, Lego or some hand cream. Squishies are a popular choice or you may jot down on a piece of paper to go and pet your pet. Maybe wrapping yourself in a blanket could be an option for you or putting a cold flannel on your forehead.



Smell – Smelly candles, squishies, hand cream, incense, nail polish, a card with your favourite perfume or aftershave sprayed on it. You may even have a note to tell yourself to go and have a cuppa and smell that or anything drink/food related.

Taste – A packet of your favourite sweets, lip balm, chocolate or again a note telling you to go and have a giant mug of your favourite drink. How about a hot chocolate sachet?



Hear – Keep a list of all the songs that make you happy as a guide to tell you to go and play those songs. Or if you prefer, have a note to yourself to go and listen to some nature sounds whether it's on YouTube or out in the fresh air.

Move – Rock yourself gently, do some yoga, dance, jump, swim, go for a walk.

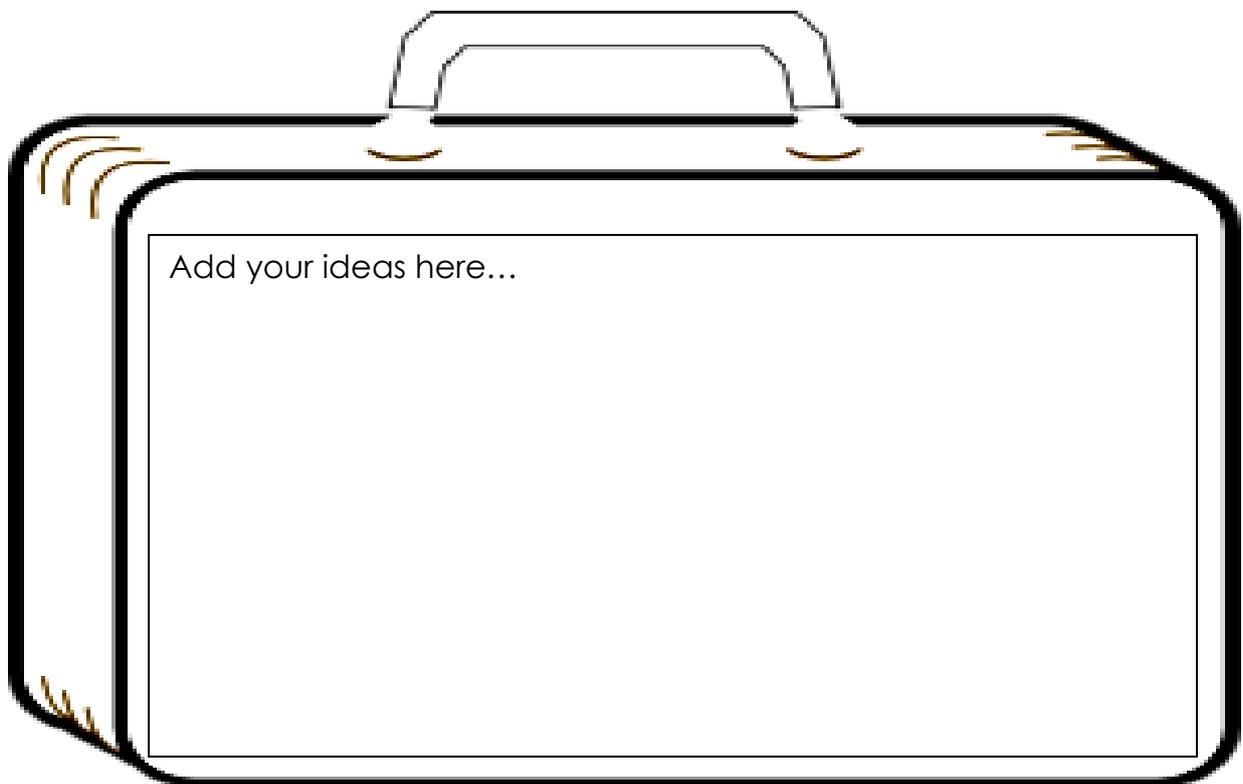


Self Soothe box

Some young people find it is helpful to make up a soothe box so when the urge to harm comes, you have everything you need to jump straight into self-soothe.

Soothe boxes are personal, everyone's will look different. Some people like to have a big box at home and a small pencil case size box they can take around with them.

Task: Use the ideas on the previous page to think about what you would put in a soothe box, or what you could add if you already have one. Set a time over the next week to go shopping or collect items from around your house and get it ready. Remember the rating scales on page 13 and only add things that help you to feel better.



Managing the physical symptoms of distress with TIPP skills

Temperature

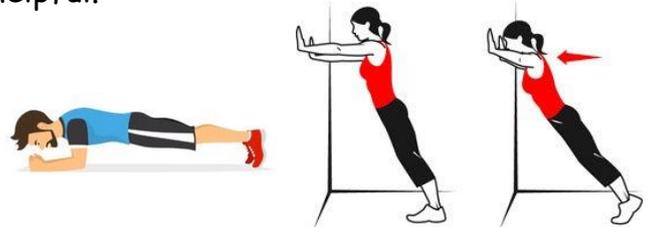
Tip the temperature of your face with cold water to calm down fast. Holding your breath, put your face in a bowl of cold water, or hold a cold pack to your eyes and cheeks (hold for 30 seconds), or splash cold water on your face.

Caution: *Ice water decreases your heart rate rapidly. Intense exercise will increase heart rate. If you have a heart or medical condition, lowered base heart rate due to medications, take a beta blocker or if you have an eating disorder, consult your GP before using these skills.*

Intense Exercise

To calm down your body; engage in intense aerobic exercise, if only for a short while (10-15 minutes). Try running, walking fast, skipping, star jumps, playing sport, dancing to music.

Pressing against a wall, or doing a plank are also regulating activities that you may find helpful.



Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Tense and release each muscle group from toe to head. Tense for 5 seconds, release over 5 seconds and then notice the difference for 5 seconds. Notice the tension, notice the difference when relaxed.

There is a script you can follow on the next page, and you can find guided videos on YouTube.

How to do Progressive Muscle Relaxation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nZEedqcGVzo>

Paced Breathing

Slow your pace of breathing down to about 5-7 breaths per minute.

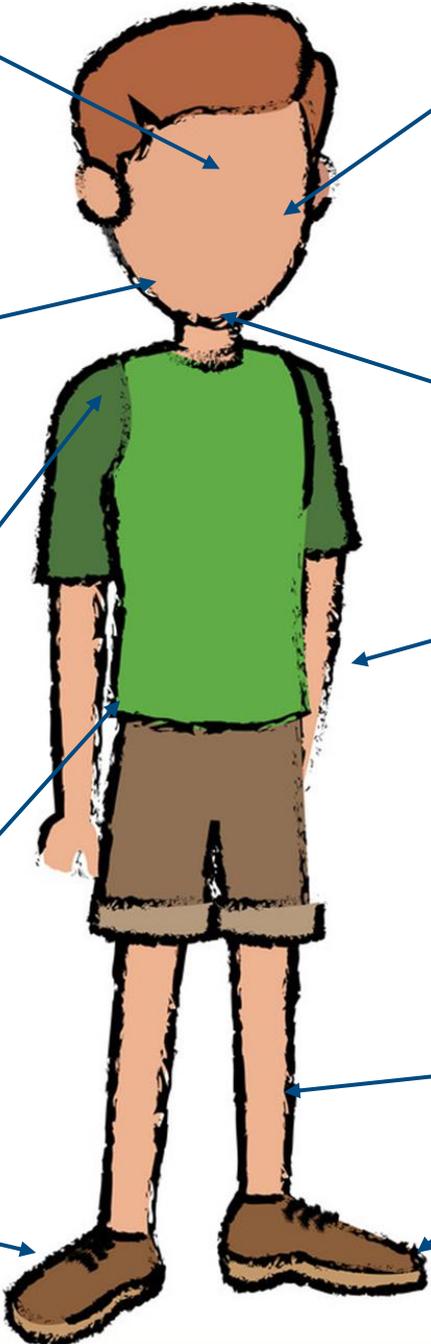
Breathe in deeply from your belly for 5 seconds

breathe out more slowly than you breathe in, for 6 seconds. You can increase this to 8 seconds if you feel comfortable doing so.

Do this for 1-2 minutes until you feel calmer.

YouTube have paced breathing videos you can follow. There are also breathing pacers included in the free Calm and Headspace apps.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation



Forehead:
Scrunch up your forehead like you are thinking hard, squeeze it together. Now relax (hold for 10 sec)

Eyes:
Squeeze your eyes tight like you are about to blow out the candles on a cake & make a wish! No peaking (10 sec)

Cheeks:
Puff your cheeks out as far as you can. Make them bigger, like you have a mouth full of food, Now relax (hold for 10 sec)

Mouth:
Pretend you are chewing a big piece of gum. It's really hard to chew, keep chewing it (10 sec)

Shoulders:
Try and touch your shoulder blades together! Squeeze tight, you're almost there. Now relax (10 sec)

Arms:
Make your arms straight and stiff as possible, like your frozen. Now relax (10 sec)

Lower Back:
Sit up super straight and try to be as tall as possible, taller, taller, and relax (10 sec)

Legs:
Make your legs as straight as you can. Pretend you are frozen again. Then Relax (10 sec)

Feet:
Press your feet into the ground as hard as you can, push, push and relax (10 sec)

Toes:
Pretend you are at the beach, squish your toes in the sand, and relax (10 sec)

Task: Either follow the instructions above, or click on the link below to be guided through progressive muscle relaxation. Remember to rate how you are feeling before and after the activity. Add it into your personal plan if it's something that works for you.

[How to do Progressive Muscle Relaxation - YouTube](#)

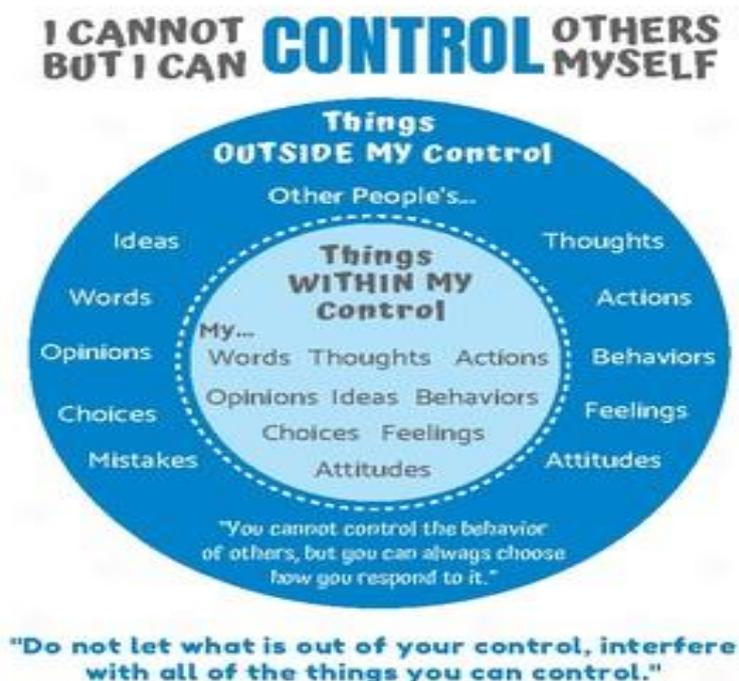
PAUSE HERE

**SPEND THE NEXT WEEK PRACTICING THE SKILLS YOU HAVE LEARNT SO FAR:
NOTICING AND NAMING FEELINGS AND HOW THEY FEEL IN YOUR BODY
USING CHAIN ANALYSIS AFTER YOU HAVE HARMED
SELF SOOTHE (MAKE UP A SOOTHE BOX TOO IF YOU CAN)
TIPP SKILLS
PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION**

DON'T FORGET TO RATE HOW YOU FEEL BEFORE AND AFTER USING A SKILL AND MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR SAFETY PLAN (PAGE 5) OF THE COPING SKILLS THAT WORK BEST FOR YOU, AS WELL AS THE FACTORS THAT MAKE YOU FEEL WORSE.

What's in and out of your control?

Not everything is within your control; there will be some problems that you are able to solve, and there will be some that you can't. Stopping your sister from being annoying, changing people's strongly held beliefs or making it a sunny day are all things out of your control. Applying the coping skills and self-care tips in this booklet are things within your control.



Task: Think about a challenging situation or problem that has been a prompting event for you to use self-harm. What was in your control in that situation and what wasn't?

Things you could control:

What about the things you can't control?

There are a few ways you can respond to the things that are out of your control.

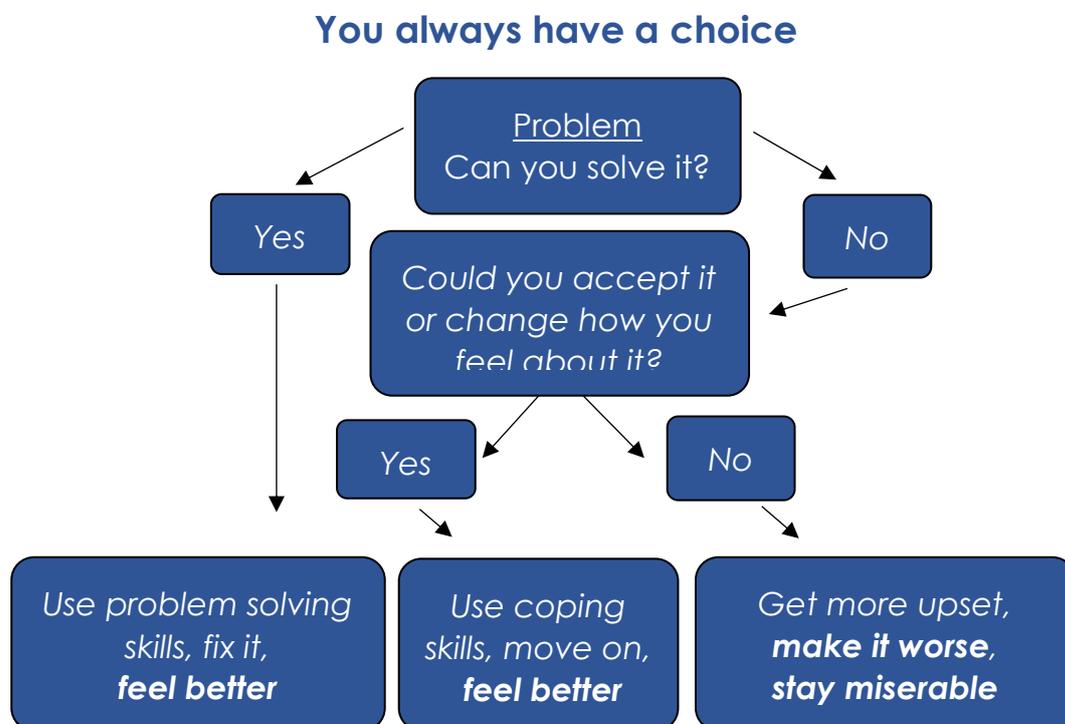
1. Solve the problem
2. Change how you feel about the problem
3. Accept it (see radical acceptance below)
4. Stay miserable
5. Make it worse

It is really important to remember that **the choice of how to respond, is yours.**

Radical Acceptance is when we accept reality, even if we don't like it, and even if we can't change or make it better.

If a person has a broken leg and can't play in a really important sports game they've spent ages training for, they would understandably be upset and disappointed. However, if they don't accept that this is reality and find ways to move on, they will probably also become angry at the situation. They may lash out at people or perhaps cause arguments with friends making it all much worse which will leave them feeling even more miserable.

If we can choose radical acceptance of difficult situations, we can then move on to try and make ourselves feel better, without making things worse. The more we practice this, the better we will cope in future situations.



Doing the Opposite

This skill can help you to change or reduce the intensity of the emotion you are experiencing. Every emotion comes with an urge to do something, for example when you experience fear, you may have the urge to run away, or if you experience sadness or low mood, you will probably want to stay in bed or isolate yourself. The reality is, that research says that we can reduce feelings of low mood by being active, or socialising with friends even when you don't feel like it.

Have a read of the opposite actions below. There is space for you to reflect on each emotion and how you might illicit the opposite action. There is a task at the end to help you think on this a little more over the next week.

Fear → Approach

The natural urge when we feel scared is to **run away or avoid something**. The opposite action would be to **approach it**. If you're scared of talking in front of people, a good way to reduce that fear is to practice doing it. You will feel scared, but after a while that fear will reduce. Facing fears can get our heart rate racing, so we need to be armed with ways to cope in the moment. The TIPP skills to help you, for example splash your face with water.

It's really important to note that we are not saying you should approach things that are dangerous. It might be that 'approaching' an adult or telling someone the danger is the opposite action.



- When was a time that you have felt afraid?
- What did you do?
- How could you have used an opposite action to 'approach' fear?

Sadness → Engage / get active

When we feel sad, the urge we have is to **avoid** social situations or things we used to enjoy because we don't feel up to it. To improve our mood, we can keep active and **engage**, even when we don't feel like it. Remember to use the self-soothe techniques that includes all the senses, such as listen to uplifting music (page 21).



- When was a time that you have felt sad?
- What did you do?
- How could you have used the opposite action to 'get active'?

Anger → Quiet and calm

Anger is difficult to overcome, the urge to rush in, **shout and fight** the thing that is making you angry is usually strong! The opposite action of **calmly and quietly walking away** will give the space you need to come back later to address the situation. This approach is also more likely to lead to the outcome you want, rather than making things worse! The TIPP skills (page 29) can help distance yourself from the situation and manage the physical symptoms of anger. Try holding ice cubes to your cheek bone or doing some star jumps to use up some of that adrenaline.

Something calm could be going for a walk, doing mindful colouring or listening to calm music or a meditation. Being a calm in a frustrating situation is a skill that needs practice. One way to build this skill is to keep a note of three positive things you notice every day.

- When was a time that you have felt angry?
- What did you do?
- What would an opposite action have looked like?

Opposite Action Diary

You have spent the last few weeks working really hard to be able to notice and name feelings. You have also hopefully developed some coping skills that you know work for you. Now is the time to think about how you bring these together with the opposite actions

Task: Over the next week, notice when you feel negative emotions. If you were able to use an opposite action in the moment, fantastic! Add in what happened after the opposite action. If you weren't able to, that is ok – this takes practice. Have a think about how you could have used opposite action and make a plan for next time.

Feeling	What was the situation?	What did you want to do?	Opposite Action (What you did, or ideas for next time)	What happened after?

YOU HAVE REACHED THE END - WELL DONE!

YOUR TOOLKIT IS NOW TOPPED UP WITH WAYS TO HELP YOU NOTICE AND COPE WITH HOW YOU FEEL, HOPEFULLY WITHOUT CAUSING HARM TO YOURSELF.

IT TAKES TIME AND PRACTICE TO BE ABLE TO USE THESE SKILLS WELL. IT IS OK IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO USE THEM EVERY TIME. TAKE A BREATH, BE KIND TO YOURSELF, TALK TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST, REVIEW AND RENEW YOUR PLAN AND KEEP GOING...

YOU GOT THIS!

Twenty Ways to Relax

You deserve a rest after all the hard work you have been doing...pick one or two ideas from the picture below before packing up for the day 😊



Additional support

We can all use some extra support to help us through difficult times. Here are some suggestions

Some helpful places to go online:







Emotional Wellbeing Service
Cardiff and the Vale









Some mindfulness apps we like:



< Calm



HEADSPACE



< StopBreatheThink



SMILING MIND

Some other apps we like:



COMBINED MINDS

Combined Minds to help friends and family support a young person's mental health



CLEAR FEAR

Clear fear to help with anxiety management