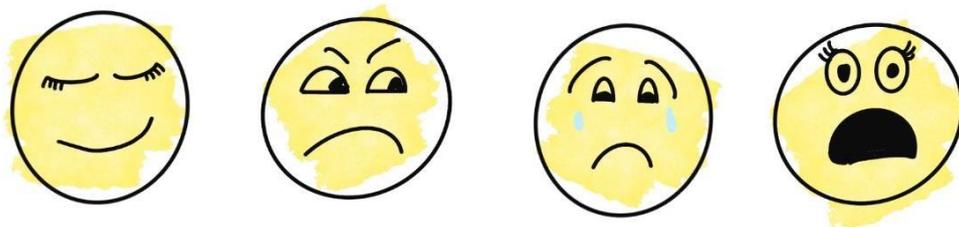


Feelings are Funny Things: Developing Emotional Literacy with Storytelling

Six session group programme for secondary school staff to use to support the development of children's emotional literacy



Developed by the Resilience Project; adapted from the 'Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit'

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The current manual was developed by the Resilience Project from 'Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit' authored by Dr Steve Killick (Clinical Psychologist and Storyteller) and Phil Okwedy (Storyteller and Teacher).

This 6 session secondary school age programme was developed by Chloë Viney (Resilience Worker) under supervision of Dr Gwen O'Connor (Clinical Psychologist, Resilience Project).

Other versions of this programme:

A primary school version of the programme is also available, as well as Welsh versions for both primary and secondary age groups. To access these, please contact the Resilience Project; Resilienceproject.Cav@wales.nhs.uk

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INTRODUCTION

Feelings are Funny Things

Using Storytelling to Explore Feelings and Emotions

Understanding our emotions and how to manage them is a crucial skill that children and young people need to develop to help them cope with the demands of day to day life. Children's emotional understanding varies greatly even across those in the same year group or class. Furthermore, during times of uncertainty, children and young people may find it more difficult to understand and process their emotions. There are also some groups of children and young people who may have had less opportunity to master these skills, such as those who are exposed to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) or developmental trauma. These sessions start when children are at and can promote children and young people emotional health through developing understanding about emotions, their impact on our thoughts and choices.

What is 'Feelings are Funny Things'?

Feelings are Funny Things is group based intervention which uses storytelling and a PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) (D. Hughes, 2017) approach to deliver a variety of exercises to develop children and young people's emotional literacy and wellbeing.

The current manual of six session plans were developed by the Resilience Project from the storytelling toolkit authored by Dr Steve Killick (Clinical Psychologist and Storyteller) and Phil Okwedy (Storyteller and Teacher). The programme draws on a variety of research and psychological theory into children and young people's development. See '*Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit*' (S. Killick and P. Okwedy, 2020) for further information on the origins and development of the approach.

Why use storytelling to develop emotional literacy?

There are many benefits to using storytelling to develop emotional literacy. For many people, stories are enjoyable, making learning seem fun. Stories allow for a range of skills to develop such as listening, promoting imagination and developing empathy. Stories also allow the child or young person to consider emotions and feelings of people and characters they may not know. As such, using a story allows some distance enhancing ability to reflect on the characters within and emotions in a safe and playful way.

What do each of the sessions include and how long are they?



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Each of the six sessions includes a warm up activity, at least one story or tale and a variety of exercises based around that story or tale. All exercises and stories are aimed at understanding



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Feelings are Funny Things - Secondary

emotions. The sessions plans aim to provide a starting point and ideas for running sessions but can be adapted to meet different group's needs. Session length can be adapted but are designed to run for between 45 and 60 minutes.

How many children or young people can be in a group?

You can do these sessions in small groups or with a whole class depending on your needs, however the group works best with groups between 6 and 30 children or young people. The aim is to encourage talking about feelings and emotions, some children or young people may need more encouragement than others therefore having a children with a range of abilities in groups is helpful.

Do I need any resources to do this?

The 6 programme overview (on pages 6 and 7) contains all the information for resources you will need at a quick glance. All 6 session plans include a detailed session plan with more in depth details of how to complete each exercise.

Do I need any training to run these sessions?

You can run these sessions by following the plans attached to this document. There is also a 'Key Things to Remember' section attached to this document.

Further information on training and advice can be given by the Resilience Project, by emailing Resilienceproject.Cav@wales.nhs.uk

THINGS TO REMEMBER

Top Tips for delivering the 'Feelings are Funny Things' Programme

- ✚ Use a PACE approach (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) when working with children and young people.
 - **Playfulness** = '*This is about creating an atmosphere of lightness and interest when you communicate. It means learning how to use a light tone with your voice, like you might use when storytelling, rather than an irritated or lecturing tone. It's about having fun, and expressing a sense of joy*' (DDP Network, 2020). For example Using games and humour such as "I bet I can pull the silliest angry face"
 - **Acceptance** = '*Acceptance is about actively communicating to the child that you accept the wishes, feelings, thoughts, urges, motives and perceptions that are underneath the outward behavior [whilst you may not accept the behavior itself]. It is about accepting, without judgment or evaluation, her inner life. The child's inner life simply is; it is not right or wrong*' (DDP Network, 2020). For example, if they are angry about something, accept that they are angry, do not try to change their minds but rather address it: "I can see that you are really angry right now" or "Wow, you are really cross"
 - **Curiosity** = '*...Adults are conveying their intention to simply understand why and to help the child with understanding. The adult's intentions are to truly understand and help the child. Curiosity involves a quiet, accepting tone that conveys a simple desire to understand the child: "What do you think was going on? What do you think that was about?" or "I wonder what...?"*'(DDP Network, 2020). For example wondering aloud with reasons with the child rather than assuming "I wonder if the reason you are so cross is because you wanted to finish drawing and I asked you to get ready for assembly"
 - **Empathy** = '*Lets the child feel the adult's compassion for her/him. Being empathic means the adult actively showing the child that the child's inner life is important to the adult and he or she wants to be with the child in her hard times*' (DDP Network, 2020)'. For example: "I can see how hard it is when I ask you to stop drawing, we're going to do this together'.
- ✚ Telling stories is more than just reading pages from a book. How you deliver the story impacts children and young people's engagement. Whenever possible try to relay the story from memory rather than reading the story from a book. This will allow you to consider your hand movements, eye contact and address the audience directly and allow them to use their imagination.
- ✚ Think about the tone of voice you are using. You want to use a 'storyteller voice' e.g. whispering when the characters are in a quiet place, different voices for characters, loud voice for specific words 'bang'.
- ✚ Introduce stories in light ways for example: '*I heard this really odd/weird story the other day about...*', '*I got told this funny old story once, see what you make of it*'.
- ✚ These session plans are just a guide. Don't be afraid to follow the group's lead and drop the structure. Sometimes you need to be flexible and follow the direction of the group.

SESSION FORMAT

Each session will follow a similar format;

1. Aim

What is the purpose of the session? What do we want the students to think about or learn?

2. Equipment and materials

What do we need to run the session? Paper, pens, props etc.

3. Key information

Some background information and theory around the topic of the session.

4. Introduction to session

A brief suggestion on how to introduce the session, recap the previous session, and ask about their progress with the take home activity.

5. Warm up exercise

Games are an important way of helping young people regulate themselves ready to learn and engage in storytelling activities. They can be fun and help children relax and feel safe in the group environment. Warm ups included use physical, interpersonal and non-verbal communication skills such as eye-contact.

6. Story

Each session will be based around a different story that the leader will tell. In each session plan there is information about key themes / emotions that may arise from the story. The stories can be found in the resources section at the end of the programme.

7. Exploration of story

There will be a chance to inquire about the feelings within the story, with question prompts (written in *italic*) for leaders which are specific to the story. This is then followed by an activity with different themes or aims each week, with the intention of promoting and enhancing emotional literacy.

8. Regulating exercise

In the same way that it is important for students to feel settled when starting a group it is also important that they finish and leave feeling calm and regulated, hence the importance of the closing regulating activity. These activities also help students learn skills they can use in future to deal with strong emotions and find a calm and peaceful state ready for learning.

9. Take home activity

A small task for students to practice between sessions. Often a regulating exercise that they have practiced during the session. Some will have worksheets for students to take home (see resources).

SIX SESSION PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

| Session number | Session topic | Aims | Activities | Resources |
|----------------|---|--|---|--|
| Session one | Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet (Feelings are Funny) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore feelings, thoughts and actions through a story To develop a shared emotional vocabulary for the group To have fun and enjoy being part of the group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eye contact clap Story – Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet Feelings are funny Finger breathing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Story - Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet Large flip chart paper (or A3) Marker pens |
| Session two | The Meat of the Tongue (Emotion groups) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help students identify the primary emotion groups To develop a vocabulary for varying intensity of feeling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,2,3 clap Story – The Meat of the Tongue Emotion group sort Making a fist breathing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group rules List of feelings Story - The Meat of the Tongue Feelings cards A4 Primary Emotions & other |
| Session three | The Seasons of Life (Happiness) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand positive feelings To start to consider ways to experience these To introduce strength of feelings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Names Story – The Seasons of Life Explore Happy Emotions Strength of Feeling Finger breathing and On tip toe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group rules Story – The Seasons of Life Flipchart paper / Pen 'Happy' feeling cards 'My Gratitude Journal' worksheet |



Feelings are Funny Things - Secondary

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| <p>Session four</p> | <p>The Black Cloud of Wally (Sadness)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore feelings around sadness • To identify how thoughts lead to emotions and actions • To explore alternative thinking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group counting • Story – The Black Cloud of Wally • Alternative Thinking • High Intensity Exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group rules • Story – The Black Cloud of Wally • Flipchart paper / Pen • ‘Sadness’ ‘Anger’ feeling cards • Alternative thinking worksheet |
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Feelings are Funny Things - Secondary

| Session number | Session topic | Aims | Activities | Resources |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Session five | The Fearsome Ghost (Anxiety / Fear) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the emotion fear / anxiety To introduce fight or flight To become aware of diaphragmatic breathing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,2,3 clap Story – The Fearsome Ghost Fight, Flight, Freeze Belly Breathing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flipchart paper Pens Group Rules Story – The Fearsome Ghost Flipchart paper with body outline Anxiety/Fear feelings cards |
| Session six | The Lost Axe (Anger) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore feeling of anger To explore strength and intensity of anger through drawing To practice diaphragmatic breathing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eye contact clap Story – The Lost Axe Draw anger Belly Breathing & Poem to finish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group rules Story – The Lost Axe 6 stages of anger worksheet Pencils / Coloured Pencils Anger feelings cards |



SESSION ONE - EYES, EARS, HANDS AND FEET

Aims

- To explore feelings, thoughts and actions through a story
- To develop a shared emotional vocabulary for the group
- To have fun and enjoy being part of the group

Equipment and materials

- Story - Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet
- Large flip chart paper
- Marker pens
- Feelings cards

Key Information on 'feelings are funny things'

- Feelings/emotions are a part of being human, and they come and go
- Learning to manage them is a lifelong process
- Feelings are neither right or wrong but that our experience of them is subjective
- Thoughts are the words that run through your head
- Actions are the things you do, or way you behave
- Feelings, Thoughts and Actions can all influence each other.

Introduction to session and warm up (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Explain the aims of the programme</p> | <p><i>'We are going to explore and hopefully understand more about our emotions, thoughts and beliefs and how these influence the choices we make. We will talk about feelings and how they are funny things.'</i></p> |
| <p>Eye contact clap with name</p> <p>Aim: to encourage eye-contact (promotes relationships building) and focus. It can help to settle the group.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange students in a standing circle. 2. The objective is to send a 'clap' around the circle. 3. The leader starts by turning to the right, making eye contact with the student next to them, and then claps and says their name. The student then turns to the student on their right and repeats the stages of making eye contact, clapping and saying their name. 4. The clap should pass round the circle until it returns to the leader. |
| <p>Development</p> | <p>When two students make eye contact, they try to both clap at the same time. Note – some students will clap in front of another students face. This is an opportunity to ask students to be more considerate and talk about what it feels like to be on the receiving end of such a clap.</p> |

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| | For the first session you may want to spend more time on games to make sure the group feels relaxed. Particularly if you've got some more time than 50 minutes. |
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Group rules (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Set boundaries</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Pen Flipchart Paper</p> | <p>Once the students have warmed up and are more relaxed, ask them to generate and agree a list of group rules. Place these on display at the start of each session as a reminder to everyone.</p> <p>Suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be respectful to each other (Try to be specific about what that looks like, as the students for their suggestions '<i>What does 'being respectful look like?'</i>') E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen when somebody is talking, making eye contact, not talking over them • Being polite, not swearing or saying nasty things to or about someone • Not laughing at someone's answer (being non-judgemental) 2. Confidentiality within the group (unless leaders feel you or someone else is unsafe) 3. To be able to take time out with an adult if I am feeling upset, angry etc. 5. To take part and have fun |

Story – Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet (10 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| Story | <p>Tell the story 'Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet'. Remember telling stories are more than reading from the page. The young people will likely be more engaged if you are able to relay the story from memory.</p> <p>Key Themes / emotions that may arise :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excited / Nervous – exploring the world• Annoyed / Angry – arguing with each other• Embarrassed – for being 'foolish'• Angry / disappointed / jealous – the deer is eaten by the discombobulator even though they caught it• Joy – to be connected with each other |
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| | <p>Peaceful / Calm – no longer arguing</p> <p>You can use these emotions / feelings to be curious and wonder aloud if children struggle to answer questions in the exploration of story activity. <i>‘I wonder if the eyes and ears were nervous, or maybe excited to be exploring the world alone. I imagine they were both excited AND nervous. What do you think?’</i></p> |
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Exploration of story (20 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Inquire about feelings in the story</p> <p><u>Questions</u></p> <p>The nature of emotions can be explored further through questions.</p> | <p>Ask students about what emotions were there either in the story, or in their responses to listening to the story, or both.</p> <p><i>‘How did the story make you feel?’</i></p> <p><i>‘What feelings or emotions did you notice in the story?’</i></p> <p><i>‘How do you think the ears, eyes, hands, feet felt when they were exploring the world?’</i></p> <p><i>‘Do you think their feelings changed in the story? Why?’</i></p> <p><i>‘What might the characters be thinking?’</i></p> <p><i>‘Did their thoughts and feelings make them act a certain way?’</i></p> <p><i>‘How did you feel when the great discombobulator ate the deer?’</i></p> <p><i>‘How might the body parts have felt at the end of the story, when they are all put together?’</i></p> |

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| <p>Feelings are Funny</p> <p>Aim: To develop a shared emotional vocabulary for the group</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Pens Flipchart paper Feelings cards</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On flipchart paper, put two columns one labelled FEELINGS, the other FUNNY. 2. As emotions or feelings are given by the students, write them down on the paper. 3. Everything that is clearly a feeling or emotion goes in the 'feelings' column. 4. If answers are given that are figures of speech, or more complex attitudes they are put in the funny column for further investigation. For example, '<i>angry</i>' would go in the FEELINGS column but '<i>flip my lid</i>' would go in the FUNNY column. <p>This exercise helps to discriminate between metaphors and idioms like 'over the moon' or 'fuming' (often used to communicate feelings), attitudes or actions such as determined. It can also discriminate between feeling and emotion; for instance we can 'feel hungry' but that is a physical</p> |
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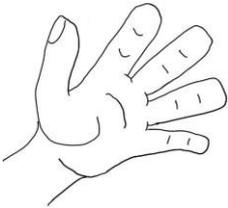
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| | <p>sensation not an emotion. The purpose here is not to identify student responses as right or wrong but that what constitutes a feeling or emotion is not always straight forward.</p> <p>Alternately, if students are struggling to create a list the Feelings cards (see resources) can be used. These cards can be printed, cut out, laminated, and used as prompts. You could first show a word (e.g. furious) and ask if they can think of other words that mean something similar. You can then generate the list that way.</p> |
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Development

This exercise helps assess and develop student’s level of emotional recognition and vocabulary. The list can be developed over further exercises and sessions as new feelings are identified. If possible it should stay available for students to see and read to help develop their awareness of feelings.

In discussing feelings in this and subsequent activities it is useful to emphasise features of emotions such as their physical components, that they can be felt in the body and can feel pleasant or uncomfortable, that they can vary in strength and that they give an impulse to act or behave in a certain way. There are activities later in the programme that focusses specifically on strength of feeling and physical sensations.

Regulating exercise (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Finger Breathing</p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notice how you are breathing in and breathing out 2. Hold your hand in front of you with your fingers spread apart (see picture). 3. Run your first finger along the thumb and fingers of your outstretched hand 4. Breathe in as you go up the finger and thumb, breathe out as you come down. Maintain a slow unhurried pace. 5. When you have done all the digits return to the first and start again 6. Repeat for 5 minutes |

Take home activity

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| Practice Finger breathing | <p>Ask students to practice the finger breathing exercise throughout the week. This can be done when they wake up in the morning, and before they go to bed at night. If they want to practice it during the day, they can.</p> <p>Ask them to acknowledge how they feel before, during and after the exercise.</p> |
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SESSION TWO – THE MEAT OF THE TONGUE

Aims

- To help students identify the primary emotion groups
- To develop a vocabulary for varying intensities of feelings.

Equipment and materials

- Group rules
- List of feelings
- Story - ‘The Meat of the Tongue’
- Feelings cards (See resources or create your own using the list made by students)
- A4 Primary Emotions (HAPPINESS, SADNESS, ANGER, ANXIETY/FEAR and OTHER) (See resources)

Key information on emotion groups

- The commonly recognised primary emotions / universal human emotions are Happiness, Sadness, Fear, Anger as well as Surprise and Disgust
- Secondary emotions like ‘disappointment’ or ‘regretful’ have a thinking component
- Feelings within the emotion groups are like a spectrum, ranging in intensity
- There is no right or wrong way to categorise emotions, as they are subjective to each person (how you feel frustration may be different to someone else)
- Students may disagree with which category a feeling goes into, so the above point needs to be reinforced through out

Introduction to session (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Recap & Aims of the session</p> <p><u>Resources</u> Group Rules List of feelings</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display group rules and list of feelings from previous week 2. Ask students what they remember from last week 3. Ask students how they got on with the take home activity. ‘<i>Were there any situations where you used the finger breathing exercise</i>’ ‘<i>how did it make you feel?</i>’ 4. Explain that today is about exploring the different families of feelings. |

Warm up exercise (10 minutes)



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| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>1,2,3 clap</p> <p>Aim: to encourage concentration, connection and playfulness.</p> | <p>It is useful to model the exercise and to get students who have grasped it to model it for the rest of the class.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put students into pairs 2. One student says '1', the second says, '2' and the first says, '3'. The second student starts the sequence again by saying '1' and so it continues for a few moments 3. Then instead of saying '3' the student replaces the number with a clap. 4. Then '1' can also be replaced with a foot stamp. |
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Story – The Meat of the Tongue (10 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Story</p> | <p>Tell the story 'The Meat of the Tongue. Remember to try and tell the story rather than reading from the page.</p> <p><u>Key Themes / emotions that may arise:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curious - 'Interested to see this' • Happiness / joy / connected – 'chatting and laughing with eachother' 'full of life' • Jealous – of the other couple • Lonely, sad, bored – 'she never smiled, let alone laughed' • Angry / Annoyed / Furious– wife was 'fed-up' and sultan demanding to take the poor man's wife • Amused – 'had to stop himself from laughing' • 'Wonder and delight' <p>You can use these to wonder aloud if students struggle to answer questions in the exploration of story activity. <i>'If I was the Sultan or his wife, I imagine I would feel quite jealous seeing the other couple, chatting and laughing. It's hard when we feel jealous'.</i></p> |

Exploration of story (20 minutes)

5 minutes – **Inquiry about feelings in story**

15 minutes – **Emotion group sort**

| Activity | Instructions |
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Inquire about feelings in story

1. Ask students what emotions were there either in the story, or in their responses to listening to the story, or both.

'What feelings or emotions did you hear in the story?'

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| <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Emotions list from last week</p> | <p><i>'How did the story make you feel?'</i></p> <p><i>'What feelings do you think the Sultan felt throughout the story?'</i></p> <p><i>'What about the two wives, how did their feelings differ from each other?'</i></p> <p><i>'What does the phrase being 'Fed-up' mean to you?' (A good example of something that may be more 'Funny' than a feeling from session one)</i></p> <p><i>'Would you have preferred the life of the sultan or the poor man? Why?'</i></p> <p><i>'Why do you think it's important to talk to each other and share stories?'</i></p> <p>2. Add any new feeling/funny words to the list of feelings from last week</p> |
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| <p>Emotion group sort</p> <p>Aim: To help students identify the primary emotion groups and develop a vocabulary for varying intensity of feeling.</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Feelings cards</p> <p>A4 emotions / other sheets</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get the group to sit in a circle. Give each child a card which they mustn't show to others yet. 2. You can ask what they think the four most important emotions are and talk about how an emotion like happiness has lots of different feelings within it. 3. Place the 5 A4 sheets with the Primary Emotions (HAPPINESS, SADNESS, ANGER, ANXIETY/FEAR) and OTHER (for those feelings that don't fit into any of these major categories) around the room and introduce the idea of the Emotion group sort. Emotions in OTHER may be associated with 'Surprise' and 'Disgust' which are also seen as being part of the 6 universal human emotions. 4. Explain that when you tell them, the student should show their card to the group and the group should decide which 'family' the feeling word should go in; either HAPPINESS, SADNESS, ANGER, ANXIETY/FEAR or OTHER. When they have decided the student who has the card puts it on the appropriate sheet. Start with any student. 5. Then go to the student to the right. Student number 2 then does the same and it continues until the whole group has put their card into one group or another. 6. Then look at each family and what feelings have been put into each family. The group can discuss each family and see if the group as a whole can agree with the decision made. If there are anomalies such as 'terrified' being put into the Anger family then |
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| | <p>the group discuss why it is where it is and why it could be somewhere else. The aim is to illustrate feelings are complicated and generate discussion rather than identify 'rights' and 'wrongs'.</p> |
| <p>Whole class activity</p> <p>If doing this activity as a whole class, divide the class into groups of four. Give each student a number (between 1 and 4). Rather than discussing as a whole class, follow the same activity within their small groups, starting with Student number 1.</p> <p>Development</p> <p>Further exercises can be developed from this format using a sorting activity, for example, the activity could aim to explore coping strategies. You could replace the A4 emotions sheets with 'Unhelpful' 'Helpful' 'Unsure' or 'Both' action choices. Students can identify coping strategies and discuss which category they think they would put it in. It would be helpful to create example coping strategy cards in case students find it difficult to think of their own. This might look like 'Going for a walk' 'Talking to someone you trust' 'Isolating yourself from peers' 'Drinking alcohol'.</p> | |

Regulating exercise (5 minutes)

| <u>Activity</u> | <u>Instructions</u> |
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| <p>Making a Fist</p>  | <p>Model making a fist breathing to students, by reading the steps aloud and following each step yourself.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Become aware that you are breathing in and breathing out then open and clench your fist in time to breathing in and out. 2. Then place your hand on your stomach to be aware of your breath passing in and out. 3. As you become aware of the rhythm drop the hand movements and focus on your breath. 4. Notice that thoughts and feelings will come into your mind- that's fine, that's what minds do, so just acknowledge them and bring your attention back to your breath. |

Take home activity

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| Practice fist breathing | Ask students to practice the make a fist breathing exercise throughout the week. Ask them to try and use it when they feel some of the emotions in the 'Anger' or 'Fear/Anxiety' emotion group. Again, ask them to consider how it makes them feel? Does it help them to become calm again? |
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SESSION THREE – THE SEASONS OF LIFE

Aims

- To understand positive feelings
- To start to consider ways to experience these
- To introduce strength of feeling

Equipment and materials

- Group rules
- Story – The Seasons of Life
- Flipchart paper / Pen
- ‘Happy’ feeling cards
- ‘My Gratitude Journal’ blank worksheet (1 per student)
- Completed example of gratitude journal

Key information on happiness

- Refers to many different positive emotions like ‘joy’ ‘hope’ ‘excitement’
- These feelings can positively motivate us towards what we value and find important
- It can be a state of satisfaction and pleasure
- Can also be a problem if we are excessively happy all the time as it is not realistic to be happy all the time. Part of being resilient is to be able to recognise and manage difficult emotions.

Introduction to session (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|--|--|
| <p>Recap & Aims of the session</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Group Rules</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask students if they remember the 4 primary emotions (happiness, sadness, anger, fear/anxiety) from last week (Remind them if they cannot remember). 2. Ask students if they can remember any emotions that went into ‘Other’ (surprise, disgust) 3. Ask students how they got on with the take home activity (breathing to fist clenching and opening). Allow students to share their experiences. 4. Explain that today is about exploring positive emotions 5. Display group rules |

Warm up exercise (10 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|---------------------|---|
| Action Names | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students stand in a circle 2. The leader starts by saying their name and making an action (The action can be a gesture e.g a clap, click, jump etc.) or an expression of an emotion e.g. making a shocked face). The group repeat the name and action. 3. The student to the right then says their name and action and so on round the circle. |

Story – The Seasons of Life (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|--------------|--|
| Story | <p>Tell the story ‘The Seasons of Life’. Remember it’s more engaging to tell it, with hand gestures and eye contact.</p> <p><u>Key themes / emotions that may arise:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adventurous/Excited – ‘each sent on a quest’ • Annoyed / Frustrated / Sad – first son saw an ugly, bent tree • Joy/Happiness/Content– tree ‘looked so beautiful’ • Hope – the tree changes and grows throughout the seasons / it’s a metaphor for life • Pride – finishing their quests <p>You can use these to be curious and wonder aloud, if students struggle to answer your questions in the exploration of story activity. <i>‘I know when I finish a task or job or activity, I feel really proud of myself. I wonder if the brothers felt the same finishing their quests?’</i></p> |

Exploration of story (25 minutes)

5 minutes – **Inquiry about feelings in story**

15 minutes – **Exploring ‘Happy’ emotions**

5 minutes – **Strength of feelings**

| Activity | Instructions |
|----------|--------------|
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Inquire about feelings in story

Ask students what emotions were there either in the story, or in their responses to listening to the story, or both.

'How did the story make you feel?'

'What emotions do you think each of the brothers might have felt and why?'

'Who felt the happiest / most disappointed?'

'Would they have felt different if they went on their quest at a different time?'

'Which tree would you have preferred to see?'

'Do you think we judge people or situations based on one experience?'

'What do you think the overall message of the story was?'

Explore 'Happy' emotions

Aim: to understand positive feelings and to start to consider ways to experience these

Resources

Flipchart paper / Pen

'Happy' feeling cards

1. Start to create a new list of positive emotions from the answers the students give but also refer back to emotions cards from last week that students connected to the 'HAPPINESS' A4 sheet. Try to expand the emotions list from 'Happy' or 'Excited' or 'Calm'. By doing this, it will start to introduce the idea that intensity of emotions can vary, which will lead into the strength of feeling activity.

Examples of emotions in the happy group:

Calm, Relaxed, Content, Grateful

Joy, Cheerful, Delighted, Pleased, Proud, Love

Excited, Ecstatic, Elated, 'Over-the-moon'

Interested, Curious, Hopeful, In awe / wonder, Amused or Laughter

You can revisit the idea of Feelings or Funny. For example, 'over-the-moon' or 'laughter' or 'love'. *'Are these emotions/feelings?' 'Does laughter or love always mean happiness?'* Again, answers are not right or wrong but a reminder that feelings / emotions are not always straight forward.

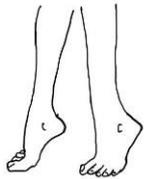
2. Ask students to share what things make them feel some of these positive emotions. They could be an activity / hobby / object / relationship / value or belief that makes them feel calm, grateful, elated etc. The leader should always model answers first;

Example;

'A hobby I really LOVE is art. I feel CALM and a sense of JOY when I am painting, and I feel PROUD when I see the finished product of something I've been working on. When I see somebody else's work that I admire, I am in complete AWE.'

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| <p>Strength of Feeling</p> <p>Aim: to introduce intensity of feeling</p> | <p>It is helpful to understand the intensity of feelings. Sometimes responses echo very broad emotion categories such as 'happy' or 'sad' and these can vary considerably in the strength of feeling.</p> <p>A useful way of exploring the strength of emotion is by asking students to rate the emotion on a 1-10 scale. This can help strengthen the idea that emotions can fluctuate in strength. This can be adapted for different dimensions. For happy, here is an example;</p> <p>'On a scale of one to ten, where would you put each emotion. 1 is really calm and ten is ecstatic with joy. You can explore strength through a variety of ways e.g. going through each emotion out loud, drawing a scale of 1-10 and writing emotions along the line, have a rope going along the floor and labelling one end 1 and the other 10 or creating a straight line of coloured Lego blocks, each block meaning a different number between 1 and 10.</p> |
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Regulating exercise (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Finger Breathing</p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Become aware that you are breathing in and breathing out 2. Hold your hand in front of you with your fingers spread apart (see picture). 3. Run your first finger along the thumb and fingers of your other hand 4. Breathing in as you go up the finger and thumb, breathing out as you come down. Maintain a slow unhurried pace. 5. When you have done all the digits return to the first and start again |
| <p>On Tiptoes</p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With the group standing either individually or in a circle, ask them to close their eyes and to become aware of their breathing. 2. As they breathe in they rise up to stand on tiptoes. As they breathe out they return to having the soles of their feet on the ground. 3. Encourage a slow pace to establish a calm breathing pattern with the group rising and falling as they breathe together. |

Take home activity

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| <p>Gratitude Diary</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>My Gratitude Journal worksheet (blank copy each)</p> <p>Completed worksheet example</p> | <p>Martin Seligman developed an exercise to help make people more aware of how gratitude can impact on our wellbeing and happiness levels. Encourage students to follow this activity at home. The leader should complete the activity too.</p> <p>Give each student a copy of a blank 'My Gratitude Journal' 2 sided worksheet (see resources) to take home. Read out the following instructions (the instructions are also written on the worksheet);</p> <p><i>Every day for the next week, take a few moments to think of three things you are grateful for that day. Write the three things down. They can be big like sports or football, or small like the smell of coffee in the morning. They can be permanent like your house or passing like a beautiful sunset one evening. They can be people, objects, activities, food, anything you are thankful for, or anything that makes you happy and smile. Think about how the activity makes you feel. Also, take time in wondering what you could do to make more of it or to experience it again.</i></p> <p>It may help to share a completed worksheet to model the activity. You as the leader can fill in your own or use the example given (see resources).</p> <p>If it is appropriate to share this in the next session, it can start some interesting conversations and can also impact on mood.</p> |
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SESSION FOUR – THE BLACK CLOUD OF WALLY

Aims

- To explore feelings around sadness
- To identify how thoughts lead to emotions and actions
- To explore alternative thinking

Equipment and materials

- Group rules
- Story – The Black Cloud of Wally
- Feelings / Funny list
- Flipchart paper / Pen
- ‘Sadness’ ‘Anger’ feeling cards
- Alternative thinking blank worksheet (2 sided for each student)
- Completed worksheet example

Key information on sadness

- Relates to feelings like ‘low’, ‘miserable’ or ‘lonely’
- Sadness is often a response to loss or change
- It communicates to others we need support
- It connects us to those we love with compassion

Introduction to session (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|---|--|
| <p>Reflect on gratitude diary & aims of the session</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Group Rules</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display group rules 2. Ask students how they found the gratitude diary, and ask them to share one each (if they want to). <i>‘What emotions did you have when you were writing it?’ ‘Did you feel different before and after? If so, what did you feel?’ ‘If you didn’t do it that’s ok, but was there anything that stopped you?’</i> 3. Explain that today you will be exploring another one of the emotion groups or ‘family of feelings’. As the session focused on sadness ensure, you remind the group; <i>‘If there is anything that makes you feel uncomfortable (upset, frustrated etc...) and you feel you need some space away from the group, remember you can leave the room with an adult’</i>. If a child does need to leave the room, it is important that an adult supports them to feel regulated and comfortable (for example; sitting with them, empathising, being curious and possibly using breathing exercises previously practiced in group), so they are able to return to the group if they wish. |

Warm up exercise (10 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Group counting</p> <p>Aim: to encourage focus and working as a team</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange students in a standing circle. 2. The objective is to count from 1 to 10 as a group 3. The leader explains the aim of the task and instructions. 4. The leader will start by saying “one.” 5. Any other person will continue by saying “two” and so on until you reach “ten”. 6. However, if any two players say a number at the same time the group must start again at “one”. 7. <i>So for example, (Name of student) might start with “1”, (name) says “2”, (name) then says “3” but then (name) and (name) both say “4” at the same time. Which means we start back at 1.</i> |
| <p>Development</p> <p>If as a group you are able to count to 10, try to reach, 15 or 20.</p> | |

Story - The Black Cloud of Wally (10 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| Story | <p>Before telling the story, ask students <i>'Try to listen out for Wally's thoughts, what does he think? 'What is going through his mind?'</i> We will talk about it at the end'</p> <p>Tell the story 'The Black Cloud of Wally'.</p> <p><u>Key themes / emotions that may arise:</u></p> <p>The story explores the relationship between thinking and sadness and has exercises to go with the story. This story can be used for helping students identify how thoughts lead to emotions and actions.</p> <p>The story can be stopped towards the end to identify thoughts that make Wally feel worse and to find realistic but more positive thoughts that can be put in their place (see exploration of story – alternative thinking).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lonely – 'alone in his room' ' nobody knew how he felt'• Embarrassed – 'laughed at him'• Annoyed/Angry/Frustrated – arguing with family / 'mum doesn't care'• Stupid / Ugly |
|--------------|---|

Feelings are Funny Things - Secondary

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Bad mood’ having a ‘bad day’ • Nervous - ‘Sick in his stomach’ • Depressed – ‘wish I’d never been born’ • Parents were angry and worried • Helpless – ‘I have no control over it’ • Hope – when he practices positive thoughts <p>You can use these to be curious and wonder aloud, if students struggle to answer your questions in the exploration of story activity. <i>‘I wonder what Wally meant by being in a bad mood or having a bad day? I wonder if Wally’s bad day is different to my bad day?’</i></p> |
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Exploration of story (20 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Inquire about feelings in story</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Feelings / Funny list</p> | <p>Ask students what emotions were in the story, or in their responses to listening to the story, or both. These can be added to the ‘Feelings / Funny’ list.</p> <p><i>‘How did the story make you feel?’</i></p> <p><i>‘What emotions were named in the story?’</i></p> <p><i>‘What does it mean to have a ‘bad day’ or be in a ‘bad mood’?’</i> (This is a good example of something that is ‘Funny’ rather than a feeling)</p> <p><i>‘How do you feel about Cai?’ ‘I wonder if any of you have a friend like Cai?’</i></p> |

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| <p>Alternate Thinking</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Flipchart paper</p> <p>Pens</p> | <p>Then begin to explore thoughts. Ask students to identify some of the negative thoughts that Wally had and write these on the flipchart paper, leaving a space beneath each other to insert alternative thoughts after. (Wally's negative thoughts are highlighted in bold in the stories section). After you have a number ask what those thoughts would make Wally feel and how he would act with that feeling. What happened when Wally had negative thoughts? (A grey cloud would appear and grow larger, and darker).</p> <p>Then begin to discuss alternative thoughts and what happened when Wally had more positive thoughts? (The cloud became lighter)</p> <p>Using the list of negative thoughts, see if students can identify alternative thoughts – ones that are realistic but more positive, reflecting a learning mindset (meaning you see challenges as opportunities for growth) that is more motivating. You can record these in a different colour underneath.</p> |
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| | <p>As the leader, you should first model an answer. This can be the example from the story; <i>‘Wally changed thoughts like, ‘No one likes me,’ to ‘Some kids like me and some kids don’t and I’m going to spend my time with the ones that do’.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Here are some more examples; (Negative = N, Alternative = A)</p> <p>N = ‘Oh, I can’t do anything right. It’s been such a terrible week’ A = ‘I made some mistakes, but today is a brand new day’</p> <p>N = ‘My mother is mean to me’ A = ‘My mother just wants me to get the best education’</p> <p>N = ‘I wish I’d never been born. Everybody would be better off without me’ A = ‘Some days are really hard, but other days I am really glad to be alive’ or ‘If I wasn’t here, my friends and family would miss me’.</p> <p>Students may need scaffolding to develop thoughts but when some have been generated these can be evaluated for their effect on mood and actions.</p> <p><i>‘How would these alternative thoughts impact our mood?’</i></p> <p><i>‘Does thinking positively always help if we are sad, annoyed etc?’</i></p> <p><i>‘Would alternative thoughts change the way we act?’</i></p> |
| <p>Ending the Story</p> | <p>You can bring the exploration of story activity to a close by giving an end to the story;</p> <p><i>“Well, you might want to know how the story ends and I can’t say that it finished happily ever after, but Wally’s cloud did get a lot smaller. He had good days and bad days, just like everybody else but now he knew there were things he could do that could change that black cloud.”</i></p> |

Regulating exercise (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| High intensity exercise | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ask students to find a space in the room2. Explain that <i>'some emotions like sadness, reduce our energy and might make us feel shut down or like we don't have motivation to do anything. It helps to do an activity that raises your heart rate</i> |
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| <p>Aim: to regulate students back to calm, to counter the possible sadness from the session</p> | <p><i>slightly, to get us back into a place where we are calm and happy enough to learn or engage in something'</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Tell students that <i>'we are going to do a few quick exercises to get our hearts beating just little bit faster'</i>. 4. Ask students to do 5 jumping jacks, 5 wall push ups and 5 high knees, 5. End with some slow, deep breaths |
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Take home activity

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| <p>Practice alternative thinking</p> <p><u>Resources</u> Alternative Thinking Worksheet (blank copy each) Completed worksheet example</p> | <p>Give each students a black 2 sided copy of the 'Alternative Thinking' worksheet (see resources). Ask students to try to notice how they feel throughout the week. If there are any times where they have negative thoughts like Wally? If they do, they should record them on the worksheet in the left hand side thought bubbles. See if they can change their thoughts to something alterative / more positive in the right hand side thoughts bubbles. Ask them to have a think about how it feels. <i>Does it affect your mood? If so, how?</i></p> <p>It may help to share a completed worksheet to model the activity. You as the leader can fill in your own or use the example given (see resources).</p> |
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SESSION FIVE – THE FEARSOME GHOST

Aims

- To become aware of diaphragmatic breathing.
- To explore the emotion fear / anxiety
- To introduce fight / flight / freeze

Equipment and materials

- Flipchart paper
- Pens
- Group Rules
- Story – The Fearsome Ghost
- Flipchart paper with body outline
- Anxiety/Fear feelings cards
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEHwB1PG_-Q – Fight/Flight/Freeze

Key information on anxiety and fear

- Fear can vary from worry to terror.
- It is a protective emotion that keeps us safe, but in excess can stop us doing things
- Anxiety is an emotional response to perceived danger (for example actual physical threat or perceiving not being accepted by others)
- Anxiety can restrict our confidence and limit the things we do
- It can interfere with enjoying the present/pleasant activities as much as we could.
- Our anxieties/fears can make us want to avoid, be over-controlling or even over-think many situations.
- We must often face our fears to gain experience and emotions like courage can only really exist in the presence of anxiety.
- Facing our fears helps us learn that anxiety comes and goes and helps us learn ways to manage it
- Looking at ways of managing anxiety helps young people build useful skills and stories can often illustrate the emotion of anxiety.

Warm up exercise (10 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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Feelings are Funny Things - Secondary

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| <p>1,2,3 clap</p> <p>Aim: encourages concentration, and connection</p> | <p>It is useful to model it and to get students who have grasped it to model it for the rest of the class.</p> <p>1. Put students into pairs</p> |
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| | <p>2. One student says '1', the second says, '2' and the first says, '3'. The second student starts the sequence again by saying '1' and so it continues for a few moments</p> <p>3. Then instead of saying '3' the student replaces the number with a clap.</p> <p>4. Then '1' can also be replaced with a foot stamp.</p> |
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Introduction to session (10 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|--|--|
| <p>Introduce anxiety / fear</p> <p><u>Resources</u> Flipchart paper Pen Group rules Anxiety/Fear feelings cards</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display group rules, ask how they got on with the take home activity (alternative thinking). Ask them to share an example each, if they want to. 2. Ask students to think of a cave man/woman having left the safety of the cave and exploring the forest. Then they hear a twig break and become aware that tiger is close by. The body prepares for action. 3. <i>“What would be the main emotions of the caveman/woman be?”</i> Write these emotions on the flipchart paper. You could leave space at the bottom of the page for a 1-10 scale for ‘strength of feeling’. <p>Primary Emotion = Anxiety or Fear</p> <p>Secondary Emotions (varying in intensity) = Unsure, Tense, Uneasy, On edge, Worried, Apprehensive, Nervous Panicky, Alarmed, Jumpy, Startled, Distressed Afraid, Scared, Frightened, Terrified, Petrified</p> |

Development – Strength of Feeling

Students could rate the strength of feeling similarly to session 3. *'On a scale of 1-10, 1 being only slightly fearful to 10 being the most fearful, where would each emotion go?'*

Use questions to explore reasons behind their answers.

'What makes terrified more fearful than nervous?' – Exploring strength

'Which of these emotions do you feel most often / which is the most uncomfortable?' –

Applying emotions to their own experiences

'Does ... feel different to ...in our bodies? ...How?' – Expand knowledge of physical sensation relating to strength of emotion e.g. worried versus frightened

Story – The Fearsome Ghost (10 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|---------------------|---|
| <p>Story</p> | <p>Tell the story ‘The Fearsome Ghost’. Remember to try and <u>tell</u> the story rather than reading from the page.</p> <p><u>Message of the story:</u> our fears grow larger when we run away from them</p> <p><u>Key Themes / Emotions that may arise:</u></p> <p>Anxious / Anxiety / Fear – theme throughout Worry – ‘worry gives a small thing a long shadow’ Scared – ‘a woman comes running down the road’ Determined / Brave or Courageous - man carries on going despite the fear, befriends the ghost</p> <p>The story also explores the physical sensations of anxiety and fear: ‘Heart racing’, ‘knees trembling’, ‘butterflies in his stomach’ Unable to move (paralysed)</p> |

Exploration of story (20 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|----------|--------------|
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Inquire about feelings in story

Ask students what emotions were in the story, or in their responses to listening to the story, or both. You can add new emotions to the list on flipchart paper from the caveman activity.

'What feelings did you notice in the story?'

'What do you think the characters in the story felt?'

'Have you every felt similar to the characters in the story?'

'What did each of the characters do when they were afraid?'

'What did the boy mean by...'

- *'Well, worry gives a small thing a long shadow'* – feeling of anxiety makes things appear worse
- *'Anxiety is like a ball. However high you throw it up, it always comes back down* – Feelings of anxiety can go up and down / fluctuate
- *'I always thought you should make friends with the thing that scares you,'* – Fears get smaller when they are faced

Fight, Flight, Freeze

Resources

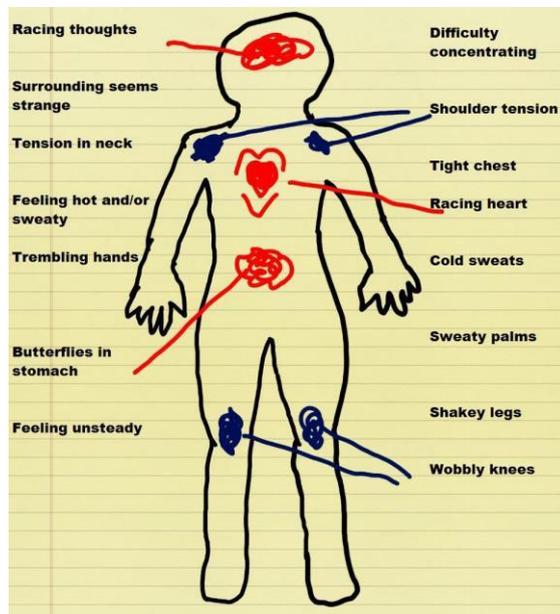
Flipchart paper with body outline drawn

1. Ask for volunteers to draw the outline of a person on flipchart paper
2. Ask students what might be some of the physical sensations the characters in the story would experience. What about the caveman who heard a sound? Draw onto the outline. (See picture below)
3. You can then go onto explore what the person might be thinking and what they might do.

This is also an opportunity to talk about what we do in response to anxiety – including the ‘Fight-Flight-Freeze’ response mechanism of the human body. *‘There are three common things we do in responses to anxiety. Does anyone know what they are?... They are known as fight, flight and freeze’.* Go on to explain each one, or alternatively there is a video below that you can play that explains it; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEHwB1PG-Q>

- Fight – confront the threat (physically or verbally) e.g. punching / arguing
- Flight – run from the danger e.g. run away, hide, escape into music or game, ignore the problem
- Freeze – unable to move / shut down

It is important to note that these behaviours / physical sensations are often also seen in anger. Often, feelings of anxiety are masks by rage or anger.



Taken from ‘Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit’

Regulating exercise (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|--|---|
| <p>Belly Breathing</p> <p>Aim: to become aware of diaphragmatic breathing. This is a deeper, slower breathing which can help the mind and body feel calm and relaxed. As the lungs fill with air it pushes the diaphragm into the belly causing it to rise.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce this as an exercise that can help regulate them back to a calm, relaxed state when they are feeling anxious or any of the emotions covered today. When they feel any of the physical symptoms and sensations, which indicate they may be in fight / flight, they can practice this exercise. 2. Have students sit on a chair, with their feet flat to the floor. 3. Ask students to close their eyes or fix their eyes on a point on the floor and keep the arms by their side. 4. Slowly read the following aloud; <i>‘Place one hand on your belly, right under your ribs. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm moving in and out as you breathe. Place your other one hand on your chest, this will allow you to check that your chest does not rise. Breathe in slowly through your nose. Hold your breath for 3 seconds. Breathe out slowly through your mouth for the count of 5. Repeat 3 times, and then open your eyes when you feel comfortable.’</i> |
| <p>Development</p> <p>This can also be done by having students lay down and use a beanbag, a scrunched ball of paper or any small object to place on their tummy to see the rise and fall in time with their breathing.</p> | |

Take home activity

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| <p>Practice belly breathing</p> | <p>Ask students to try to notice how they feel throughout the week. Do they feel any physical sensations of fear or anxiety. If they do, they could practice the belly breathing.</p> |
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SESSION SIX – THE LOST AXE

Aims

- To explore feeling of anger
- To explore strength and intensity of anger through drawing
- Practice diaphragmatic breathing

Equipment and materials

- Group rules
- Story – The Lost Axe
- Pencils / Coloured Pencils
- Blank 6 stages of anger template (for each student)
- Example 6 stages of anger for leader
- Anger feelings cards
- Feelings are funny things poem

Key information on anger

- Can range from frustration to rage
- Helps us to stand up for ourselves and fight for fairness and justice
- Can lead to aggression so knowing how manage it is important
- It is often what we see on the surface, but underneath is often anxiety
- Activities that discharge energy are helpful when regulating anger

Introduction to session (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|---|---|
| <p>Reflect past sessions</p> <p><u>Resources</u> Group Rules</p> | <p>1. Display group rules, ask how they found the belly breathing take home activity.</p> <p>2. Ask students <i>'What emotions have we covered so far? Is there anything else we've covered that isn't an emotion?'</i></p> <p>- Happiness, Sadness, Fear/Anxiety</p> <p>- Thoughts, feelings, actions</p> <p>3. Ask students <i>'What do you think the last session is about? What do you think we've missed?'</i></p> |

Warm up exercise (10 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
|---|---|
| <p>Eye contact clap</p> <p>Aim: to encourage eye-contact and focus. It can help to settle the group</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange students in a standing circle. 2. The objective is to send a 'clap' around the circle. 3. The leader starts by turning to the right, making eye contact with the student next to them, and then claps. The student then turns to the student on their right and repeats the stages of making eye contact and clapping. 4. The clap should pass round the circle until it returns to the leader. |
| <p>Development</p> <p>When two students make eye contact, they try to both clap at the same time. Note – some students will clap in front of another students face. This is an opportunity to ask students to be more considerate and talk about what it feels like to be on the receiving end of such a clap.</p> | |

Story – The Lost Axe (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| Story | <p>Tell the story 'The Lost Axe'. Remember you can add your own parts to the story to make it more engaging.</p> <p><u>Key themes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates unhelpful ways of thinking such as jumping to conclusions or thinking we can read things from people's expression.• Useful story for exploring the triggers, thoughts and actions associated with anger. <p><u>Emotions:</u></p> <p>Annoyed / Angry / Furious – axe had been stolen Guilty – 'looked like a criminal' / when the farmer realised he was wrong</p> <p><u>Thoughts:</u></p> <p>The boy stole his axe 'He looked guilty' 'He was just laughing at him' 'About what he would like to do to that boy'</p> <p><u>Actions:</u></p> <p>Blamed the boy Went to get a saw</p> |
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Exploration of story (20 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Inquire about feelings in story</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Flipchart paper/pens Anger feeling cards</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask students what emotions were in the story, or in their responses to listening to the story, or both. <i>'What feelings did you notice in the story?'</i> <i>'What do you think the farmer felt when he thought his axe was stolen?'</i> <i>'How would the boy feel, being accused of something he didn't do?'</i> <i>'How did the story make you feel?'</i> <i>'Was the Farmer right to feel that way?'</i> <i>'How do you think the farmer felt at the end of the story?'</i> 2. Write down list of words that come under the 'Anger' group. Use anger feeling cards or examples below if students struggle to think of ideas. <p>Examples;</p> <p>Irritated, Annoyed, Frustrated, Cross, Aggravated</p> <p>Outraged, Mad, Livid, Fuming, Seething, Resentful</p> <p>Rage/Enraged, Boiling, Furious, Infuriated, Vexed</p> <p>Or phrases like; 'Out-of-control', 'In a frenzy', 'Lost my temper' (for these phrases you can refer back to the idea of feelings being 'funny' from the first week – not always as simple as a one word emotion)</p> |

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| <p>Draw your anger</p> <p>Aim: To explore strength and intensity of anger through drawing</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Blank 6 stages of anger</p> <p>Example of completed 6 stages of anger</p> <p>Pencils / Coloured Pencils</p> | <p>Some students will have difficulty with expressing anger, so it can be helpful by using a visual metaphor to help rate the intensity.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask students to think about what their anger looks like. It may be an erupting volcano, a firework being lit, a tidal wave, red mist, a cartoon like The Hulk or Anger from Inside Out, etc. 2. The leader should model the next activity to the students first, either using their own completed '6 stages of anger' sheet or by using the following example (see resources for A4 example); <p><i>'These are my 6 stages of anger...</i> (explain each stage, what it looks like (using a metaphor / simile, what it looks like, what feeling it is)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Calm or Relaxed – a nice day in the park with a green tree. 2. Irritated – someone starts to light the end of the firework. 3. Frustrated – the firework is starting to now spark 4. Furious – The firework is fully lit and soaring through the sky |
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| | <p>5. Rage – The firework has now exploded and you can see it lighting up the sky</p> <p>6. Tired and guilty - (What happens after) Black smokey sky (This will be different for everyone but afterwards people can reflect on what happened. Reflecting afterwards can often leave people feeling low, upset or remain frustrated, maybe at themselves, or others)</p> <p>3. Ask students to make their own 6 stages using something visual like a firework. Ask them to think about what they look like at each stage. What things do they do? E.g. run away, shout, shut down, cry. What thoughts go through their head?</p> <p>Students can share their ideas at the end (if they want to).</p> |
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Development

Open up a discussion about regulating ourselves back to a state of calm. Student will have their own ideas. You can refer back to breathing exercises in the programme: Finger Breathing, Fist Breathing, On Tip Toe, Belly Breathing

Particularly for feelings associated with anger, activities that disperse / channel negative energy in a safe way, can be helpful. For example; Ripping up paper, punching or screaming into a pillow, write what has made you feel angry and scribbling over it.

Regulating exercise (5 minutes)

| Activity | Instructions |
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| <p>Belly Breathing Aim: to become aware of diaphragmatic breathing. This is a deeper, slower breathing which can help the mind and body feel calm and relaxed. As the lungs fill with air it pushes the diaphragm into the belly causing it to rise.</p> <p><u>Resources</u> Feelings are funny things poem</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell students that you are going to practice the belly breathing exercise from last week. It can help us when we feel angry / annoyed also. Remind them of the fight / flight response discussed last week. 2. Have students sit on a chair, with their feet flat to the floor. 3. Ask students to close their eyes or fix their eyes on a point on the floor and keep the arms by their side. 4. Read the following aloud; <i>'Place one hand on your belly, right under your ribs. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm moving in and out as you breathe. Place your other one hand on your chest, this will allow you to check that your chest does not rise. Breathe in slowly through your nose. Hold your breath for 3 seconds. Breathe out slowly through your mouth to the count of 5. Repeat this while I read something to you.'</i> 5. While students are relaxed practicing belly breathing, slowly read them the feelings are funny things poem (see resources) |
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6. Once the poem has finished, ask them to open their eyes.

Development

The poem is great way to end the programme as it pulls together a lot of the content from the sessions. However, instead of or in addition to the poem you can ask students to think about what has been their favourite thing about the programme. This might be a story, an activity, a whole session. Put students in pairs and ask them to draw their favourite part of programme (you will need paper and coloured pens / felts). They can then share it with their partner explaining what it is and why it is their favourite. They can exchange drawings so they can take the picture home with them to keep as a memory of the group.

The leader should model this first by drawing their favourite thing and sharing it with the group.

Additional session ideas

You may have the opportunity/time to run more than 6 sessions. The Feelings are funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit has some additional activities you can use, which can be found via the website <https://feelingsarefunnythings.org/>

RESOURCES

The following resources (1-5) were created by Chloë Viney (Resilience Worker - Resilience Project). All other resources in the programme are from 'Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit'.

1. Feelings Cards

These can be printed and cut out and laminated. You can also make your own feelings cards to add to the list, using examples in the session plans. For session 3-6, cards need to be categorised into the primary emotions (happiness, etc.).

2. Primary Emotions

(For use in session 2 – emotions group sort activity)

- a) Happiness
- b) Sadness
- c) Anger
- d) Anxiety/Fear
- e) Other

3. My Gratitude Journal worksheet

(Session 3 take home activity)

- a) 2 page blank worksheet to print/photocopy for students
- b) 2 page completed worksheet example

4. Alternative Thinking worksheet

(Session 4 take home activity)

- a) 2 page blank worksheet for students
- b) 2 page completed worksheet example

5. 6 stages of anger worksheet

(Session 6 activity)

- a) 1 page Blank worksheet for students
- b) 1 page completed worksheet example

6. Feelings are Funny Things poem

(From 'Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit')

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Lonely

Mournful

Low

Devastated

Upset

Gloomy

Miserable

Depressed

HAPPINESS

SADNESS

ANGER

ANXIETY /
FEAR

OTHER



Gratitude Journal

INSTRUCTIONS

Every day for the next week, take a few minutes to think of three things you are grateful for that day and write them in the boxes. They can be big or small, permanent or passing. They could be people, food, objects, activities, anything that makes you feel thankful, happy, excited. Take some time to think about how writing them down, made you feel.



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EXAMPLE

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Gratitude Journal

INSTRUCTIONS

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My Gratitude Journal

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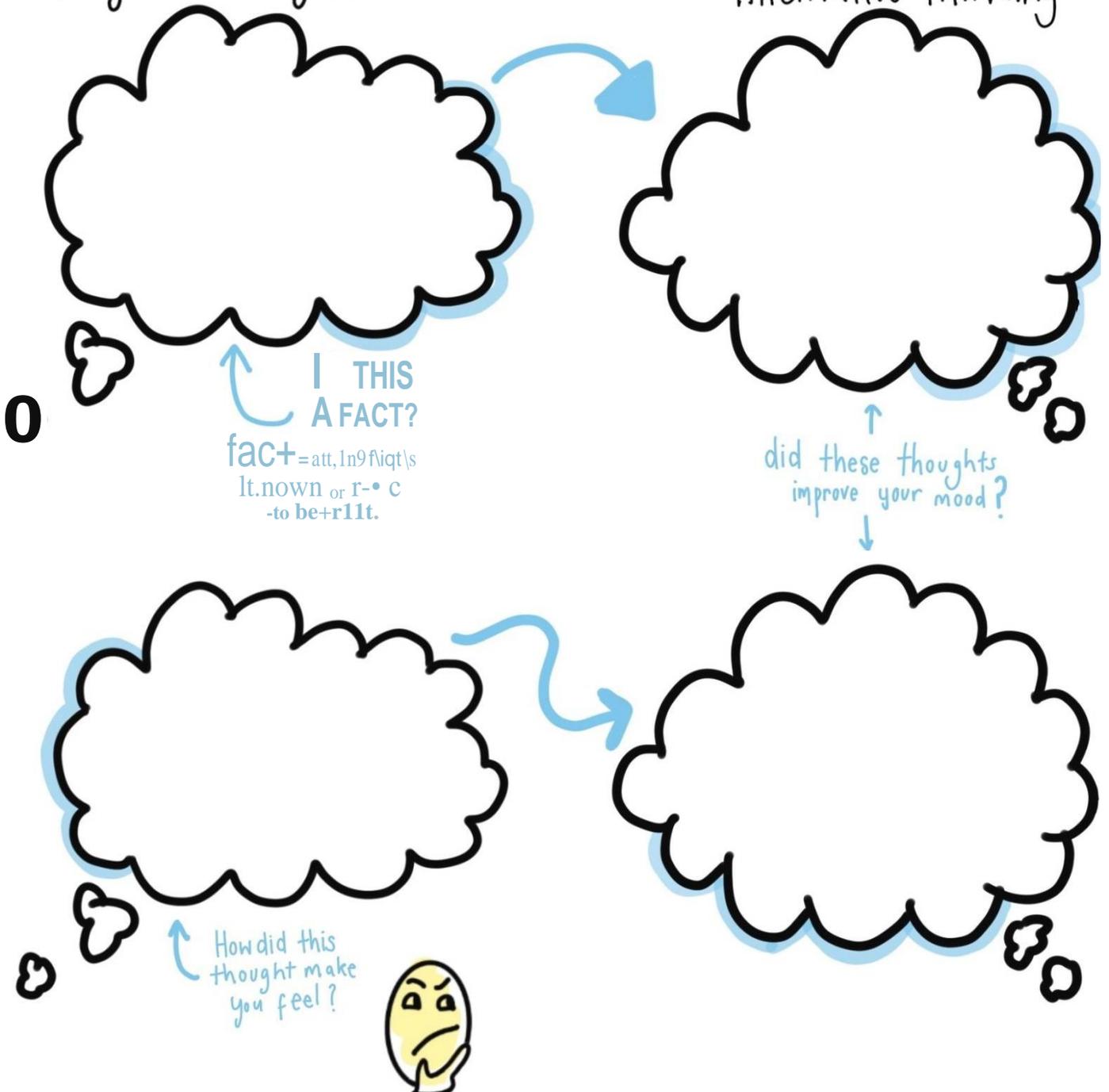
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Alternative Thinking

Over the next week, try to notice what thoughts come into your head at times when you are feeling low or upset. Are any of these thoughts negative? In the thought bubbles on the left, record any negative thoughts you have. In the bubbles on the right, try to change that thought into something more positive. There are also some questions for you consider whilst completing the activity.

Negative thoughts

Alternative thinking



Alternative Thinking

Negative thoughts

Alternative thinking

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do these thoughts
make you act
or behave in a
certain way?

Now see if you can change your negative thoughts to more positive ones... without using the worksheet!

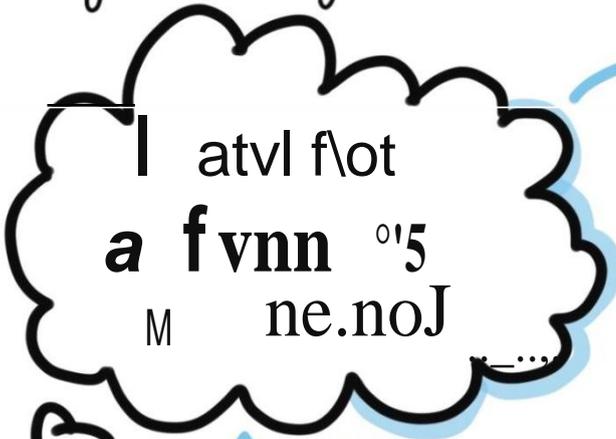
EXAMPLE

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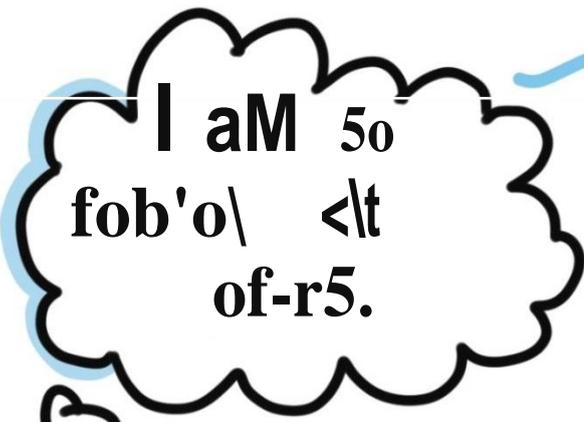
Negative thoughts

Alternative thinking



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did these thoughts improve your mood?



How did this thought make you feel?



Example

Alternative Thinking

Negative thoughts

Alternative thinking

I can't do this task. I give up.

This task is difficult. I am going to ask — for help.

— is in a mood with me

— doesn't seem themself today. I wonder if somethings wrong?

do these thoughts make you act or behave in a certain way?

I can't be bothered to go to the gym today.

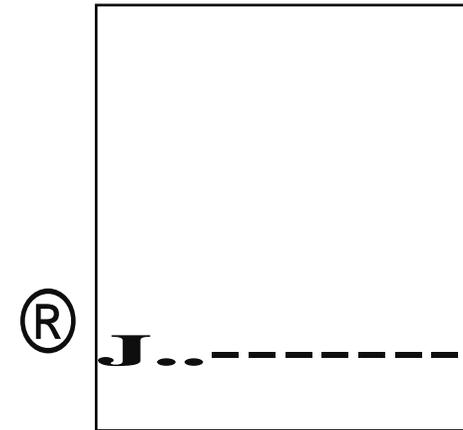
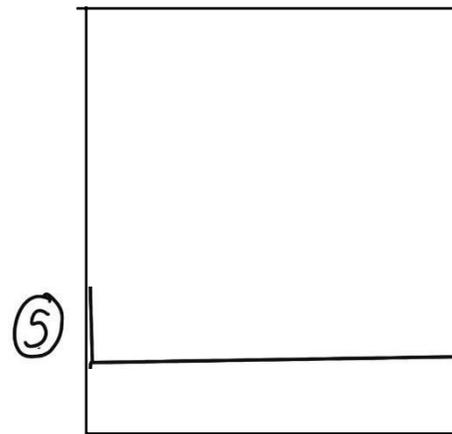
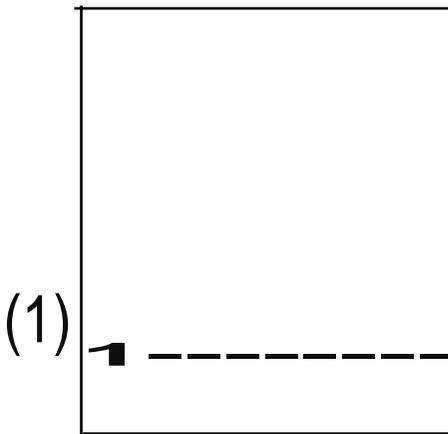
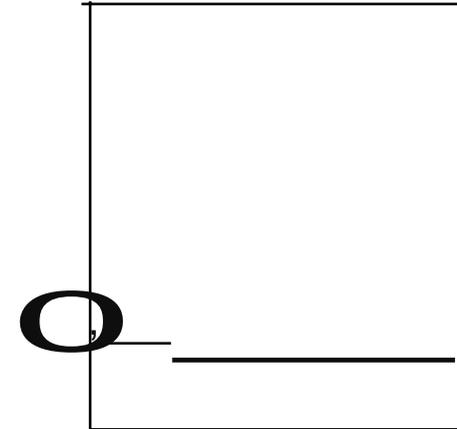
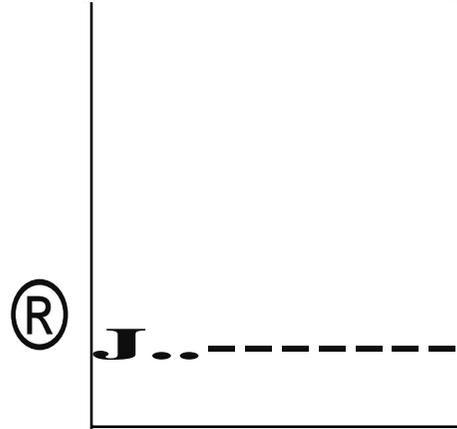
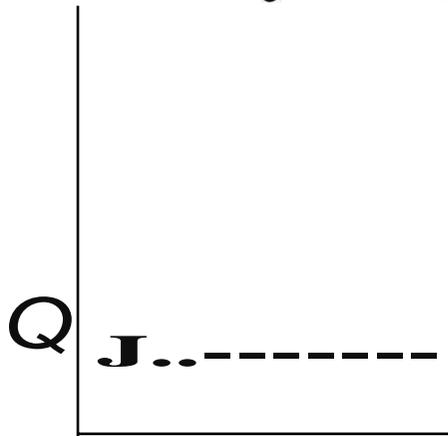
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Now see if you can change your negative thoughts to more positive ones... without using the worksheet!

My 6 stages of ANGER

Draw your 6 stages of anger and label each stage with a word that represents the intensity

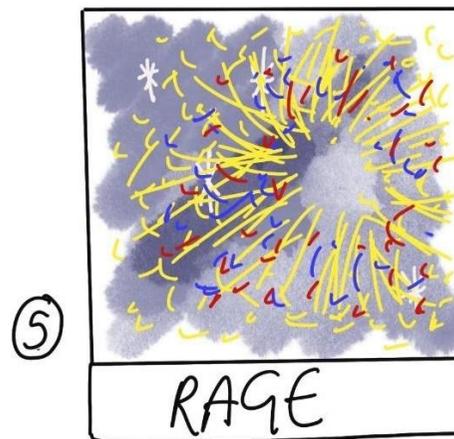
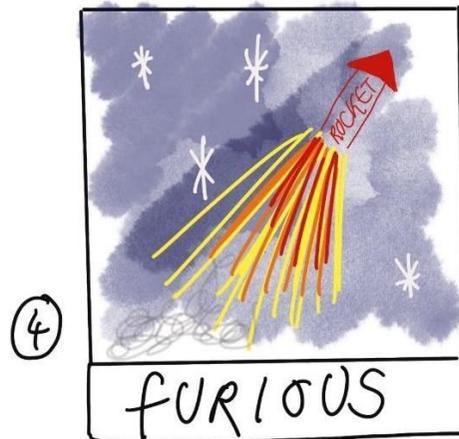
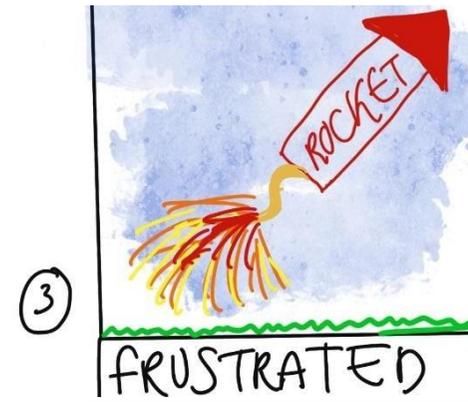
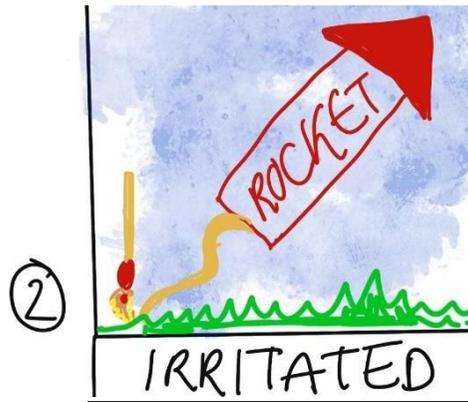
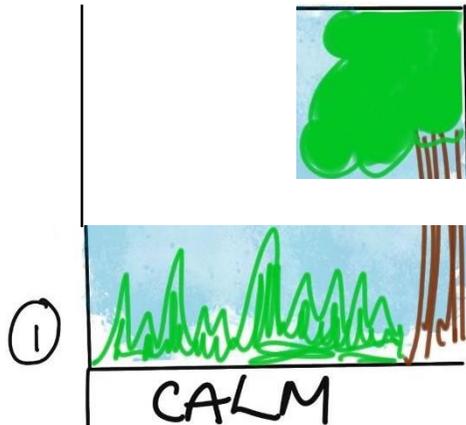


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Feelings are Funny Things

Feeling that you're not as good as someone doesn't mean you are not as good as them.

Feeling stupid doesn't mean you are stupid.

Feeling not good enough doesn't mean you are not good enough.

A feeling is not a fact – it comes from what you've thought – a thought can make you feel and a feeling might give you something to think about.

It's what you decide to do that matters. Make your actions based on what's important to you – the things you value.

Notice your feelings – Let them be and let them go.

'Just keep going – No feeling is final.'

STORIES

The stories used are from the 'Feelings are Funny Thing: A Storytelling Toolkit' (with the exception of 'The Seasons of Life')

1. Ears, Eyes, Hands and Feet
2. The Meat of the Tongue
3. The Seasons of Life
4. The Black Cloud of Wally
5. The Fearsome Ghost
6. The Lost Axe

Story 1 - Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet

(This is the bones of the story, meaning that it is in brief form and allows the storyteller to 'fill in' the parts within). You can be as descriptive as you wish, for example 'a pair of eyes' can be expanded upon)

Our eyes, ears, hands and feet are all connected but it hasn't always been so. Once they used to go about in their own tribes.

A pair of eyes went to see the world and a pair of ears went to explore it as they had heard so much about it. They met up and decided to hang out together.

At the same time a pair of hands were feeling their way whilst a pair of feet went walkabout. They met and decided to hang out together.

Then the eyes and the ears met the hands and the feet. They decided to go hunting together and went into the forest.

Ears heard a sound. Eyes saw a deer. Feet walked them closer. Hands threw a spear.

They killed the deer but started to argue about who deserved it the most. They were about to fight. A passing owl heard them argue. The body parts asked the owl to decide but the owl suggested they saw the Great Discombobulator. The Great Discombobulator listened to them argue, told them to be quiet and said she would give her judgement after she had eaten the deer.

The Great Discombobulator said she ate the deer to teach them a lesson. They had all played a necessary part. To stop them being so foolish again she gave them a body with arms, legs and a head so they would always go around with each other. She would also give them a mind and only one mouth so no one could hear them argue.

Story 2 - The Meat of the Tongue

(This is the bones of the story, however you can reword aspects of it however you wish. For example you may change the description 'voluptuous and shapely' to whatever adjectives you prefer. You could pause during different parts of the story to ask students a question or to guess what comes next. Some suggestions have been written in the story which look like this = **what do you think...**)

There was once a Sultan and one day, whilst he was walking amongst his people in the local bazaar disguised in ordinary dress, he saw a man and a woman, clearly husband and wife and clearly quite poor, talking together. He saw them chatting and laughing with each other and the woman well she was so radiant and full of life, so voluptuous and shapely too. He was especially interested to see this as his own wife who stayed in the palace all day, although she had once been beautiful was now thin and gaunt. She would hardly eat anything and she never smiled, let alone laughed.

The husband and wife separated to go to different stalls in the market. The Sultan went up to the man.

'Your wife, she is so happy but you look so poor. Tell me how this is so. My own wife, even though I give her all the riches you can imagine, is always sad.'

'It is simple,' replied the man. 'I feed her meat of the tongue. It keeps her very happy is what a woman needs.' **you could pause here and ask students what they think the meat of the tongue might mean. But then carry on with the story**

'Tongue meat. It is that simple? Thank you, I know what to do.' And the Sultan left the man and returned to his palace. He instructed his chef to prepare a dish of tongue meat.

The chef found a good piece of lion tongue, fried it up with garlic and spices. He tasted a little himself.

'Exquisite,' he declared, 'Par excellence. At least for tongue meat it is.' And the dish was served to the Sultan's wife. It did not seem to make much difference so the Sultan declared it should be a diet of tongue meat until his wife improved. So the woman was served a diet of a different tongue every day. Over the next few weeks she had tongue of giraffe, buffalo and tiger, elephant, squirrel and rat, zebra, crocodile and antelope. **You could pause after tiger or elephant and look to students to complete the list**

But it didn't make any difference. In fact, it seemed to make things worse. The poor woman now seemed even more fed-up and had not enjoyed her food.

The Sultan went and looked for the man whose advice he had taken. Eventually he found him.



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Welsh Government



'You told me that all it needs to make a woman happy is tongue meat. I have fed my wife on it and isn't hasn't helped. In fact, it has made thing worse. So, as I am the Sultan and you are not, I will tell you what we are going to do. I am going to take your wife back to the palace with me and you can have my wife. That is the way that you will get to keep your head!'

And so it was the two wives were exchanged. The Sultan's wife went to live with the man and his wife went to the place.

And so things continued, the poor man's wife was at the palace and fed on the tongue meat and the sultan's wife went to live with the poor man. But within a few months it was the Sultan's wife who was now full of laughter. She had put on weight and looked so healthy. The poor man's wife was now looking thin and gaunt, she hardly smiled let alone laughed even though she had all the luxuries of the palace.

The Sultan was now quite enraged. He went back to the poor man and said, 'I have now fed my wife and yours on tongue meat and it has not done them any good. Now tell me, what is your secret what are you not telling me?'

The poor man had to stop himself from laughing. 'Your Excellency, what I meant by the meat of the tongue was that every day I talk to my wife, I tell her the funny things that have happened to me during the day, I tell jokes and stories too, full of wonder and delight. I sing and she talks right back to me. Two tongues wagging. That is the meat of the tongue.'

And so the Sultan came to realise what it was he must do to keep his wife happy. It could not be bought but it could be given.



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Welsh Government



Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan
INTEGRATED HEALTH
& SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP
PARTNERIAETH IECHYD
& GOFAL CYWDETHASOL INTEGRIG
Cardiff & Bro Morgannwg

Story 3 - The Seasons of Life

(This is the bones of the story, so you can add more detail. For example you may want to go into more detail about their quests and describe what their journeys were like. You could pause during different parts of the story to ask students a question or to guess what comes next. Some suggestions have been written in the story which look like this = **you could ...**)

There was a man who had four sons. **You could ask students to make up the names of the son – and their names were...** He wanted his sons to learn to not judge things too quickly. So he sent them each on a quest, in turn, to go and look at a pear tree that was a great distance away.

The first son went in the Winter, the second in the Spring, the third in Summer, and the youngest son in the Autumn.

When they had all gone and come back, he called them together to describe what they had seen.

The first son said that the tree was ugly, bent, and twisted.

The second son said no – it was covered with green buds and full of promise.

The third son disagreed, he said it was laden with blossoms that smelled so sweet and looked so beautiful, it was the most graceful thing he had ever seen.

The last son disagreed with all of them; he said it was ripe and drooping with fruit, full of life and fulfilment.

The man then explained to his sons that they were all right, because they had each seen but one season in the tree's life.

He told them that you cannot judge a tree, or a person, by only one season, and that the essence of who they are – and the pleasure, joy, and love that come from that life – can only be measured at the end, when all the seasons are up.

If you give up when it's Winter, you will miss the promise of your Spring, the beauty of your Summer, fulfilment of your Autumn.

You could ask students what they think the message of the story is, before you read it out. Be mindful not to tell students that their answer was wrong

Don't judge a life by one difficult season. Don't let the pain of one season destroy the joy of all the rest.

Story 4 - The Black Cloud of Wally

(This story is adapted from 'The Black Cloud' in 'Using Trauma Focused Therapy Stories' by Pat Pernicano (2014). It focusses on negative thoughts and how they influence our feelings and actions. Wally's negative thoughts have been highlighted in bold)

Wally was alone in his room. He had had a terrible week. He had hurt someone with his words, broken his mother's best chair, had an argument with his friend and the other students had all laughed at him. To top it all his father had lost his job. He was feeling very low and thought to himself, '**Oh, I can't do anything right. It's been such a terrible week.**'

When Monday came Wally did not want to go school but his mother made him. On his way to school he thought, '**My mother is mean to me.**' The next day he was sick and didn't go to school for three days. He was better on Friday but still didn't want to go school but his mother his made him. Under his breath, he said '**I hate my mother. She doesn't care. She's mean,**' and a little puff of black smoke came out.

His Mum heard what he said and replied, 'Maybe I am but you're going to school whether you like it or not.' So Wally went to school that day and when he came home that night, his mother asked about his day. '**No one likes me,**' said Wally, '**I'm stupid and I'm ugly.**' 'No, you're not,' said his mum. 'You're fine just the way you are. Now go to bed.' As he lay in his bed Wally felt that **nobody knew how he felt** at all.

On Saturday, Wally's dad was in a bad mood and Wally **didn't think things were going to get better any time soon.** So he spent the whole day in his room. Outside, it was cloudy and it was raining and it was another bad day. And because it was such a bad day he started chewing and biting anything he could find which made his mother cross with him. And Sunday was even worse!

When Wally woke up on Monday morning he was feeling sick in his stomach but his mother made him go to school. As he walked he thought to himself, '**My life is so frustrating and I just have terrible luck**'. And as he thought that, a small grey cloud showed up just above his head. It was just like all the other clouds in the dark overcast day. Wally thought to himself, '**Nobody likes me and nothing I do is going to make it any better**'. And as he thought that, the small cloud grew darker. He thought to himself, '**I wish I'd never been born. Everybody would be better off without me,**' and with these thoughts the cloud turned black.

Everywhere that Wally went that little black cloud went. Even if it was a sunny day there would still be a black cloud casting a shadow over Wally's head. Everything he ever did he had to do it with that black cloud over his head.

Wally decided that he would stay in his room and he wouldn't come out however much his brothers or his parents asked him to. Wally's parents were angry at first, then they got worried that they couldn't get him to go to school. He forgot what the sunshine was like.

One day his old friend Cai, who lived down the road came over to hang out and said to Wally, 'I've missed you at school. Sorry for being nosy but why don't you get rid of that black cloud?' Wally looked at him and said, 'I couldn't get rid of it even if I wanted to. **I have no control over it.**'

Cai said, 'I used to have a cloud like that but I learnt how to get rid of mine. If you smile and say something positive the cloud will get lighter. If you say something grouchy or negative it will get darker. If you change what you think the cloud might even go away altogether.'

Wally did not believe his friend but he decided to try it out so he could at least prove Cai wrong. He said out loud, '**I wish I'd never been born,**' and he saw that the cloud turned even blacker. Then he said, 'Cai is a good friend,' and he saw that the cloud became a little bit lighter. He then thought to himself, 'Maybe Cai is right, I might be able to make this a bit better.' As he thought this the cloud turned even lighter still.

'See,' said Cai, 'Look what's happening!' 'I guess I do have some control over the cloud' said Wally and he started practising saying things in a more positive way. He changed thoughts like, '**No one likes me,**' to 'Some kids like me and some kids don't and I'm going to spend my time with the ones that do'. He changed, 'Things will never get better,' to 'I'll do what I can and see what happens?'

Story 5 - The Fearsome Ghost

(Edited from the Fearsome Giant to be more appropriate for secondary school age.

The original can be found in 'Telling Tales: Storytelling as Emotional Literacy' by Taffy Thomas and Steve Killick. You can pause during the story and ask students what they think certain phrases mean. There are some suggestions in the story like

this = **What do you think ... means?**)

A young man is travelling home. He doesn't have far to go but he must cross the mountains and there is only one road.

He sees a man running down the road. The man tells him that there is a ghost at least 10 feet tall, who is blocking the road through the mountains and that he shouldn't travel further. "I must", says the young man. "Aren't you worried about the ghost?" asked the man. "*Well, worry gives a small thing a long shadow,*" says the young man and continues on his journey.

You can ask students what they think the phrase 'Worry gives a small thing a long shadow' means

A little while later, a woman comes running down the road and tells him there's a ghost, at least 20 feet tall, and that he shouldn't go further. "I must" says the young man, "That's where my home is". The woman says "Aren't you anxious about the ghost?" The young man replied, "*Anxiety is like a ball. However high you throw it up, it always comes back down,*" and he continued on his journey.

He sees another man running towards him. This man shouts breathlessly and says "There is a ghost, at least 30 feet tall, who is blocking the road. Turn around and run away." "*I always thought you should make friends with the thing that scares you,*" said the young man and he carried on towards the mountain. **You may want to ask students what they think the phrase 'make friends with the thing that scares you' means**

When he came to the mountain the ghost appeared. He was 40 feet tall. The young man felt scared but he knew he had to make friends with this ghost if he wanted get home. He decided to keep walking towards him.

He felt his heart racing, his knees tremble and there were butterflies in his stomach. He tried to take a step but his leg just went backwards. Every time he tried to walk towards the ghost he went backwards. He noticed that with every step backwards the ghost got that much bigger.

He summoned his courage and took a step towards the ghost. The ghost got smaller.

He took another step, and another. The ghost got smaller and smaller with every step. Soon the young man was in front of the ghost and the ghost was now only one foot high.

“What is your name?” said the young man.

“My name is Fear” said the ghost. And the young man did make friends and he took him home and always gave him a place at the table.



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Story 6 - The Lost Axe

(This is the bones of the story, allowing the storyteller to 'fill in' the parts within). You can be as descriptive as you wish, for example describing the farmer and the young man, or by asking students to describe them. *'A young man named ... who had ... hair etc).*

Once, in Ancient China, there was a farmer. He went to his shed to look for his axe. But he just couldn't find it anywhere.

He went outside and saw his neighbour's son. The farmer suddenly realised that it must have been him who had stolen the axe.

The more he looked at the boy the more he could see that he was criminal. He looked guilty. He could tell by the way the young man looked away from him.

One day the young man said, 'Hello', but the farmer thought he was just laughing at him. The farmer kept on thinking about what he would like to do to that boy. He played out what would happen in his mind if he accused the young man and knew the young man would deny it even though he had taken it.

However, the farmer had to go back to his shed to get a saw. While he was looking for it, he found his axe. He realised it had been there all the time.

Whenever he saw the boy he realised he looked exactly the same as before but now he knew that he had not stolen his axe. What had changed was not the young man's appearance or behaviour but the facts.

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Killick, S. and Okwedy, P. (2020) *Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit*.

Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit is available to download in English and Welsh by going to the website <https://feelingsarefunnythings.org/>



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