



Care Cards



For young people aged 16 to 18 years

A pocket-sized toolkit of information, tips, and calming activities to help you understand your feelings, manage difficult moments, and support your wellbeing.

Use them on your own or with a trusted adult.

Young People's
Mental Health
Research Centre



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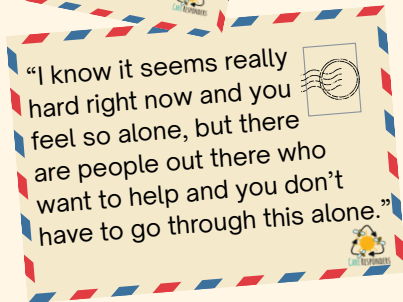
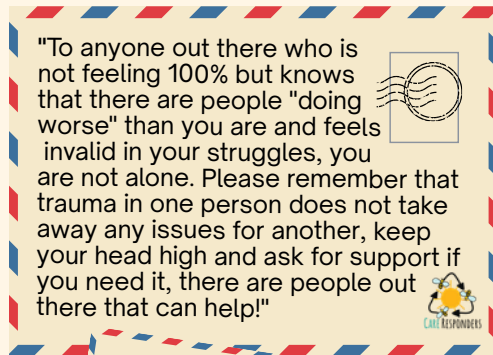
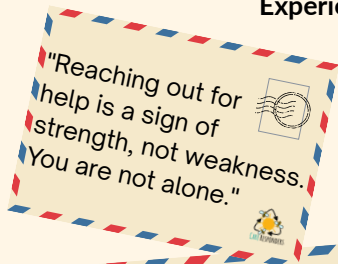


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Advice From Other Young People

These quotes were kindly shared by members of the Care Responders Lived Experience Young People's Advisory Group.

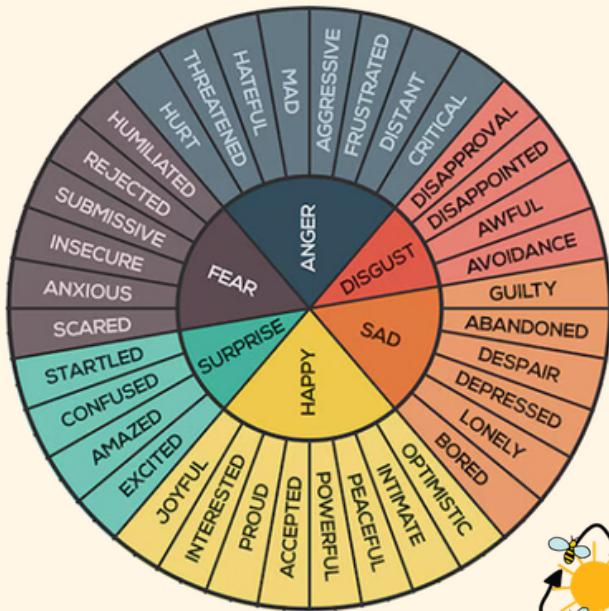


Feelings Wheel

Try thinking of emotions like colours.

Basic feelings in the centre, with more detailed emotions as different shades around them.

The wheel can help you link a simple feeling to a more specific emotion.



Making Sense of a Crisis

A mental health crisis doesn't just affect how you feel emotionally. It can affect your **thoughts**, your **body**, and your **behaviour**.

Thoughts   **Body**   **Behaviour** 

Racing thoughts
Overthinking
Finding it hard to
focus
Expecting the worst

Difficulty sleeping
Headaches
Feeling sick
Tiredness
A racing heart

Avoiding people
Staying in your room
Crying
Taking risks
Losing motivation



Self-Harm

When urges to self-harm feel overwhelming, it may seem impossible to think about doing anything different. It can help to have a few different strategies to help distract you.



What you could do instead:

- Move to a different environment
- Tear something up like a newspaper or an old book
- Clench and relax your muscles
- Listen to loud music
- Let yourself cry or sleep
- Squeeze a rubber ball really hard
- Call Samaritans on 116 123



Self-Harm – What to do Next

If you've self-harmed, it's important to get some support.



Self-harm is often used as a way of coping with difficult or overwhelming feelings, but support is available and you don't have to manage it alone.

If you have hurt yourself:

Try to pause, slow your breathing, and remember not to judge yourself.
If you can, tell someone you trust (friend, parent, teacher, or another adult).

If you're on your own:

Contact someone you trust.

If the injury is serious, call 111 for advice or 999 in an emergency

After self-harm, it's normal to feel scared, confused, or low



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Panic Attacks

Sometimes you might suddenly feel overwhelmed, anxious, or frightened, even when you're not in immediate danger.

This could be a **panic attack** which is your body's **fight-or-flight response** activating unexpectedly. It can feel intense, but it will pass.

You could feel **out of control**

Your might notice your **heart racing**

You could feel **shaky or dizzy**

Your breathing might be **uncomfortable or faster**



Slow your breathing to help your body settle.

Try and tell someone how you're feeling.



Distressing Sensory Experiences

Sometimes young people hear voices or sounds that other people can't hear, see things that other people can't, or feel like someone or something is nearby when others don't. This can feel scary or confusing, but lots of young people have experiences like this.

These experiences can be more likely if you are:

- Going through a stressful time
- Not getting enough sleep
- Coping with the loss of someone
- Being bullied
- Dealing with other upsetting life events

Try saying:

"I am safe."

"I can get through this."

"This feeling will pass."





Distraction Techniques



Be the boss: You can tell the voices to be quiet or tell them you will talk to them later.

Block out difficult voices or sounds:

- Listen to music you enjoy.
- Use headphones or ear defenders.

- **Count** quietly to yourself and **focus on the numbers** until they are all you can hear.
- You can also **repeat a favourite word** at different volumes.

Tell a Safe Adult: You don't have to deal with this alone. Talk to a parent or teacher about how you're feeling.



Language Used in Mental Health

Confidentiality?

Information is private unless there are safety concerns

CAMHS?

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

Inpatient?

Staying in hospital to get extra support

Support network?

People around you who care about you and can help

Discharged?

A service feels you no longer need their support

Safety plan?

Things we can do to help you stay safe

Healthy Minds?

Adult mental health services





4-7-8 Breathing

4

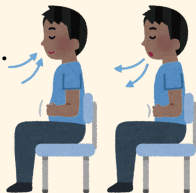
Inhale through your nose for 4 seconds.

7

Hold your breath for 7 seconds.

8

Slowly **exhale** through your mouth for 8 seconds.



Repeat this process 3-4 times, allowing yourself time to settle and refocus.

*If holding your breath feels uncomfortable or makes you feel panicky, skip the hold and just focus on making your exhale longer than your inhale



Square Breathing

1

Breathe in through your nose for 4 counts.

2

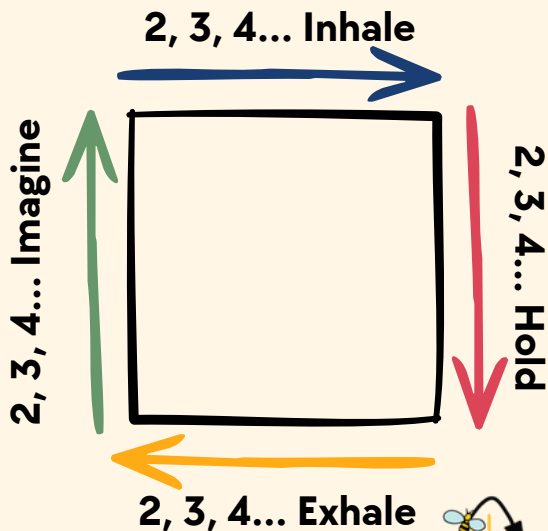
Hold your breath for 4 counts.

3

Breathe out through your mouth for 4 counts.

4

Imagine drawing a square with each step.





Muscle Relaxation

Find a Comfy Spot:

Sit down or lie down somewhere you like.

1

Tighten and Relax:

Start with your toes. Squeeze them tight, and then let them relax.

2



Repeat:

Do the same with your legs, hands, arms, shoulders, and face.

3

Breathe:

When you squeeze, breathe in. When you relax, breathe out.

4





Mindfulness Exercises

Drawing: This allows you to focus on the present moment, express emotions creatively, and give your mind a break from overwhelming thoughts.



Puzzles: Challenging your mind can encourage focus and concentration on one task. This creates a healthy distraction and allows you to focus on a single task at a time.

Yoga: Practising yoga combines movement and breathing exercises to help increase body awareness and create a sense of calm.



Journaling: Writing things down can help clear your mind and explore your thoughts without judging them. Trying to do this regularly offers a way to feel more organised and aware of your needs.





Grounding Technique

5

things you can **see** (a chair, a tree, a phone)



4

things you can **touch** (your clothes, your hair)



3

things you can **hear** (traffic, typing, birds)



2

things you can **smell** (perfume, hand soap, fresh air)



1

thing you can **taste** in your mouth (water, gum)



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