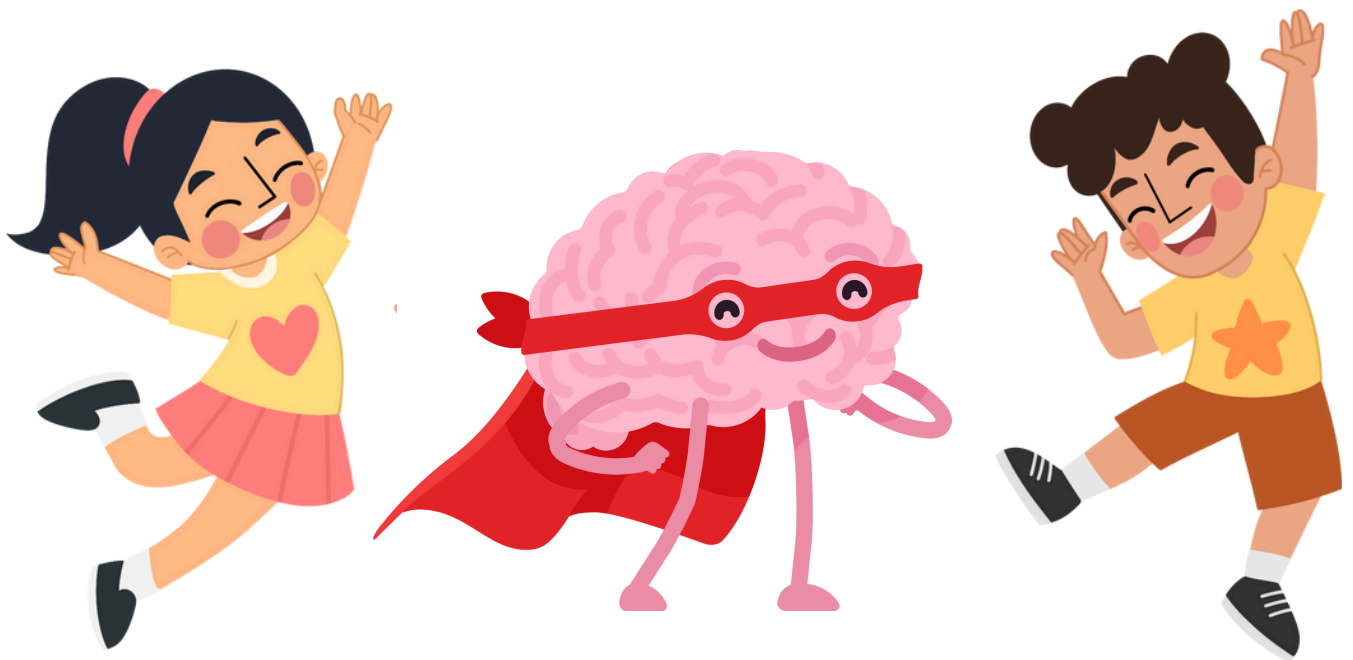


MIND MATES

EMOTIONAL LITERACY GROUP



PARENT INFORMATION GUIDE

MIND MATES

What is mind mates?

Mind mates is a group designed to support young people to understand and manage their emotions with a specific focus on managing worries. The programme uses a cognitive behavioural therapy approach, this involves the introduction & practice of skills.

This booklet will give you an overview of the sessions and the backpack skills taught. In order for skills to become helpful it is important young people practice them, it would be great if you could support your child in practicing the skills taught.

Session 0- session introduction, getting to know each other.

Session 1- understanding our emotions & connecting emotions to our bodies.

Session 2- learning about our thinking and survival brain- red & yellow zones.

Session 3- learning about the blue and green zones.

Session 4- learning about our worries focusing on future worries.

Session 5- focusing on how to manage current worries using problem solving.

Session 6- recap of all the key skills and how to use them in future.



SESSION 0 PLAN



Learning Aims:

- To introduce sessions
- To set group agreement
- To get to know each other

HELLO **ALL ABOUT YOU!**

MY NAME IS...

I GO TO... (SCHOOL/COLLEGE)

YOU CAN CALL ME:

I AM IN YEAR...

WHEN WE MEET YOU CAN TELL ME ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE ME TO KNOW ABOUT YOU

THIS OR THAT?

WOODLAND	BEACH
CATS	DOGS
SWEET	SAVOURY
TV SERIES	FILMS
NIGHT OWL	EARLY RISER

A PLACE I'D LOVE TO TRAVEL TO

WHAT HELPS ME TO CHILL OUT

MY FAVOURITE FOOD

DO YOU HAVE ANY PETS?

MY FAVOURITE COLOUR

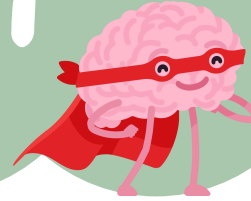
MY FAVOURITE SEASON

Sort skills into backpack (skills which boost me up or calm me down)



No skills to be added to the back pack during session 0.

SESSION 1 PLAN



Learning Aims:

To learn how to describe a range of emotions

To learn how our emotions can affect our bodies and brains

To use some body clues can help us spot our emotions

WHAT ARE EMOTIONS?

Emotions give us information that something important is happening, they can help us to stay safe or to change a situation if we need to. Emotions are helpful when they **MATCH** the situation!

Emotions are necessary for our survival and part of their job is to keep us safe. e.g. anxiety or fear helps us to quickly recognise danger.

Be aware that you can have more than one feeling at a time and this can be **CONFUSING!**

BELLY BREATHING



Place one hand on your belly, and one hand on your chest. Breathe in through your nose and count to 5. Breathe into your belly, feeling your hand rise.

Then breathe out through your mouth (like blowing through a straw) for another 5 counts.

Repeat 3 times!

Sort skills into backpack (skills which boost me up or calm me down)



BELLY BREATHING

SESSION 2 PLAN



Learning Aims:

To learn about our thinking brain and survival brain
To learn about our yellow and red zones.

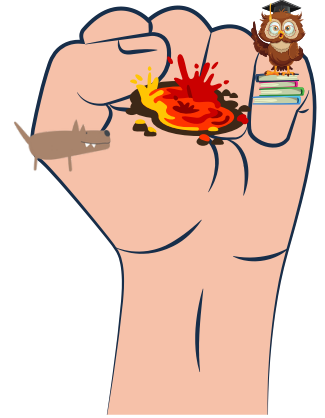
·Video- How Kids Can Deal with Anxiety | Cosmic Kids Zen Den - Mindfulness for kids (YouTube- play from 1-45 to 6-30)

Focus on there being 2 parts of the brain, the guard dog and wise owl. These parts of the brain control how we react to situations.

YELLOW ZONE;

In our yellow zone we might be feeling nervous, worried, frustrated, angry or even excited. Our emotions are heightened and getting too big. We are starting to lose control and not think straight.

Our thinking and survival brain are starting to lose connection & our guard dog is getting louder so the wise owl can't concentrate.



RED ZONE;

In our red we might be feeling panicked, angry, elated or terrified. Our emotions have gotten too big and are out of control, we are not thinking before acting, lid has flipped, over the top emotions.

We will feel out of control, our behaviour might be out of control, our guard dog has taken over. We need to calm down.

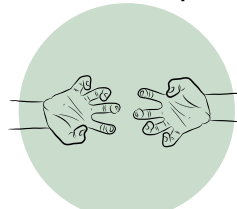
Sort skills into backpack (skills which boost me up or calm me down)



SAFE SPACE IMAGERY



PALM PUSH



FINGER PULL



ARM MASSAGE

SAFE SPACE IMAGERY SCRIPT



Imagine a special place you can go to in your mind when you feel stressed, upset or worried. In this place you know you will be completely relaxed, completely safe and completely happy.

It might be a real place or moment you have happy memories of, or a place you are imagining or even a mixture of the two! It's up to you!

1. Sitting up straight in your chairs, get your body comfortable and gently close your eyes.
 2. Slowly take three deep breaths, in through your nose and out through your mouth
- NB -Pause briefly after each instruction to allow the students time to think and imagine
3. Imagine you are in this place. This calm, happy place.
 4. Try to picture it as clearly as possible - What can you see around you? What colours and textures can you see? Is there anyone else there?
 5. What is the light like? Can you hear anything? Is it quiet or loud? The sounds make you feel relaxed and happy.
 6. What can you feel? Can you feel the sun on your skin or a light breeze or the feeling of soft sand or fresh cool grass under your toes?
 7. Can you smell anything nice and relaxing in this special place where you feel completely calm, happy and safe?
 8. Take a moment to look and imagine as much detail as possible so it feels really real.

(wait a minute or two, then ask them to open their eyes)

Brief Feedback – what was it like creating a safe space in your head? How did it make you feel?

SESSION 2

OVERVIEW



SAFE SPACE IMAGERY

Imagine a special place you can go to in your mind when you feel stressed, upset or worried. In this place you know you will be completely relaxed, completely safe and completely happy.

It might be a real place or moment you have happy memories of, or a place you are imagining or even a mixture of the two! It's up to you!

SESSION 2

OVERVIEW



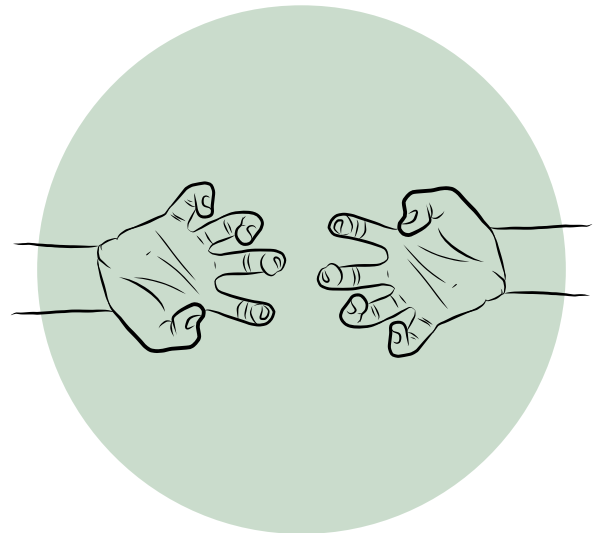
PALM PUSH

Face your palms together and push firmly and hold for 10 seconds. This is a good way of getting rid of extra nervous / frustrated energy.

FINGER PULL

Put one palm up and the other palm down, facing each other. Lock your finger tips together (except thumbs) and pull them apart as hard as you can.

Hold for at least 10 seconds.



ARM MASSAGE

Starting with your wrist or shoulder, squeeze firmly enough that you can feel it strongly but not enough to hurt yourself.

Do this motion going up and down the arm 5 times, do the same on the other arm. Or, give yourself a hug - far enough that your palms almost touch your sides, squeeze firmly and hold for 10 seconds.



SESSION 3 PLAN

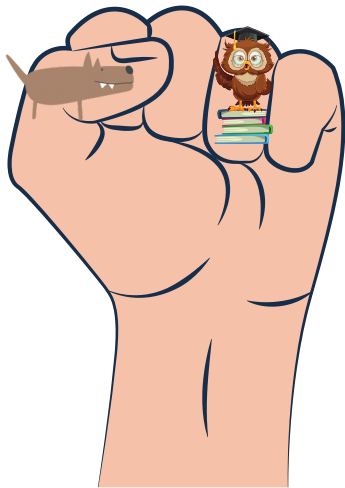
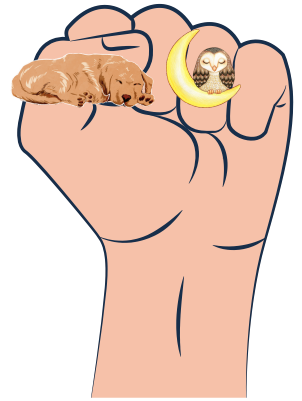


Learning Aims:

To learn about our blue and green zones

BLUE ZONE;

The blue zone is when we feel sad, tired, bored, poorly. We might feel like we have no motivation and that everything feels like a big effort. In this zone we might feel like we need a rest and to reset ourselves. Our guard dog and wise owl are asleep, they need waking up! Remember the blue zone is when we are feeling sluggish- we need to pull over to regain some energy.



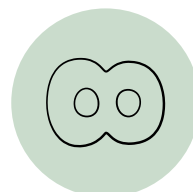
GREEN ZONE;

The green zone is when we feel calm, content and focused. We will feel in control and ready to face the day. Our guard dog and wise owl are working together. In the green zone we are feeling in control.

Sort skills into backpack (skills which boost me up or calm me down)



CHAIR PUSH UP



LAZY 8 BREATHING

SESSION 3

OVERVIEW



CHAIR PUSH UPS

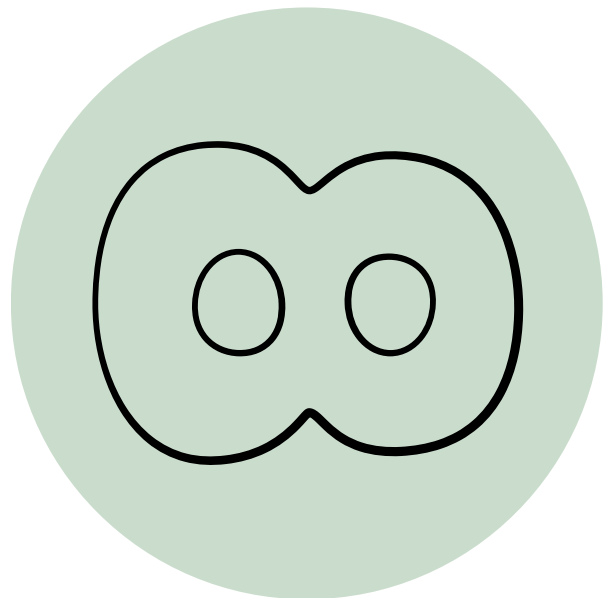
Some activities can help us whether we have too much energy in our bodies or too little – like Chair Push up's.

Sitting with upright posture in a chair, put your hands on the side of the seat. Lift and hold yourself off the seat for 3-5 seconds and then slowly lower back down into the chair.

LAZY 8 BREATHING

This is a breathing exercise that we can use to help look after ourselves. Place your finger in the middle of the 8 and begin slowly tracing your finger around it. As you move around one side of the 8, breathe in, and as you move to the other side, breathe out.

Repeat several times.



SESSION 4 PLAN



Learning Aims:

- To learn that there are different types of worries
- To learn how to distract from future based worries
- To learn new skills to add to our backpacks

Current or Future worries.

There are different types of worries, and different ways of managing those worries.

Current worries are about current problems, that are happening and affecting you right now, and that there is often a practical solution for. These tend to be less common, but do happen and do need some action taken towards them. For example, "I have just had an argument with my friend, and now we aren't talking".

Future worries are when we worry about something in the future, or something that hasn't happened yet. With these worries there isn't an action or solution that we can make right now, no matter how hard we try! For example, "what if the bus to school is late tomorrow?"

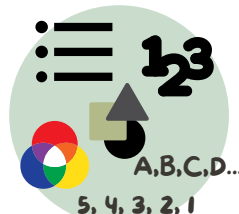
If we notice we are having future worries, we need to remind ourselves that no matter how much we worry, we can't change the outcome.

I could think about, and worry about, the bus being late tomorrow. Whether I spend 10 minutes thinking about it, or 3 hours, if the bus is going to be late, it will be late!

Sort skills into backpack (skills which boost me up or calm me down)



WORRY TREE



DISTRACTION



HAND MASSAGE



DEEP BREATHING

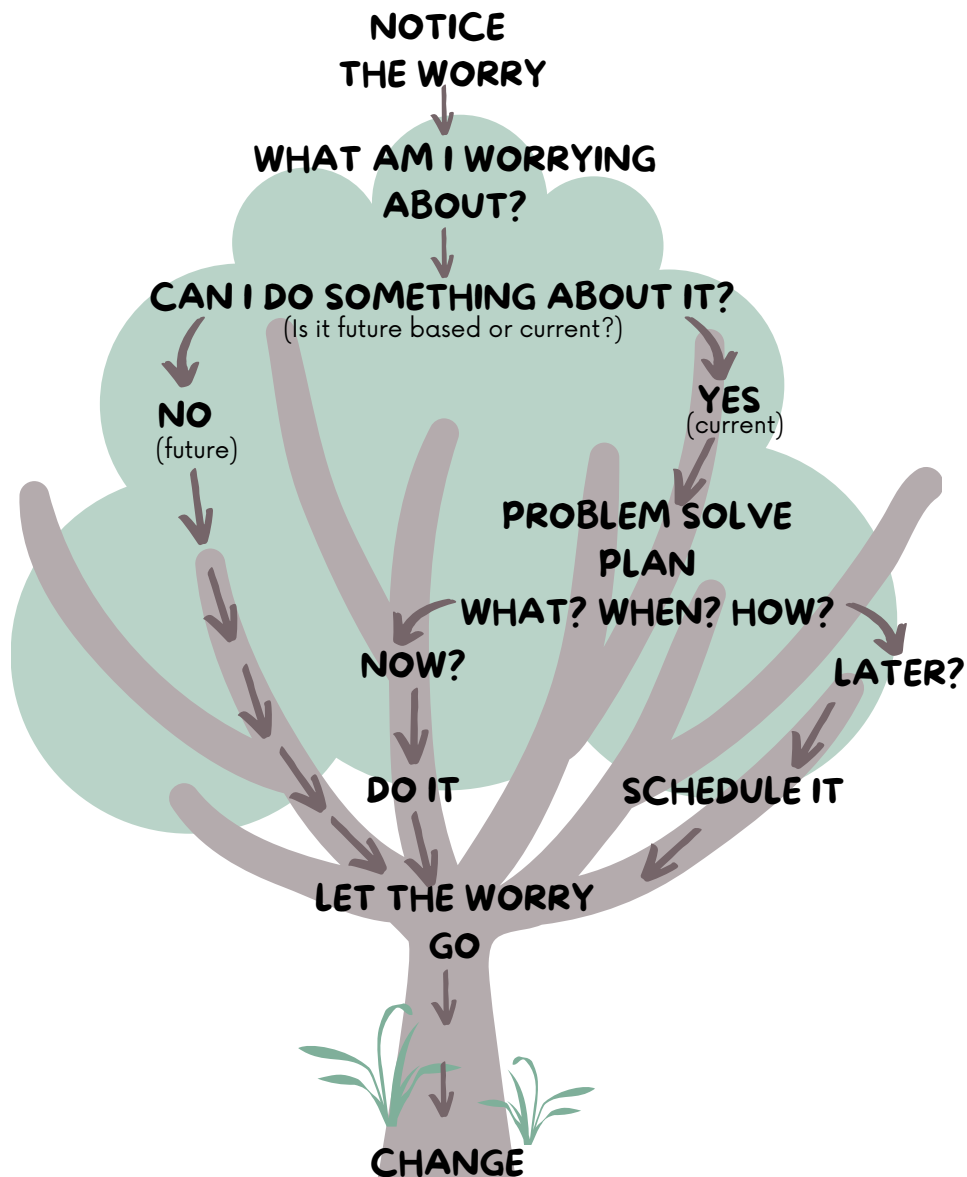
SESSION 4

OVERVIEW



THE WORRY TREE

The Worry Tree can help us to work out what kind of worry we are having, and what we need to do next.



SESSION 4

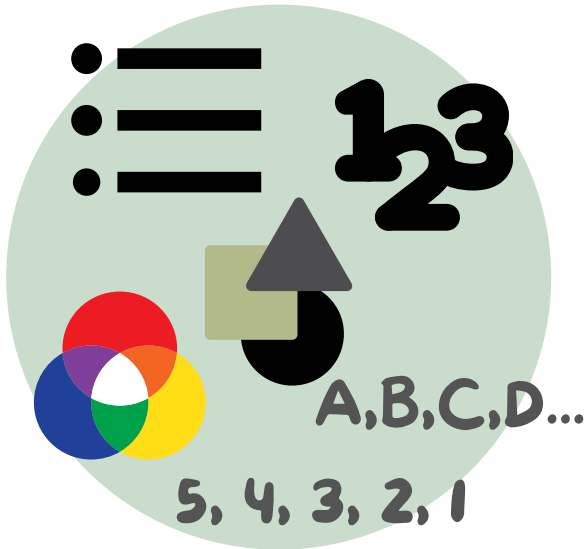
OVERVIEW



DISTRACTION GAMES

Sometimes we find ourselves in situations that feel difficult, but we can't do much to change them at the time.

Distraction/Mind Games to help distract us until the wave of big feelings passes a bit, and gives us something to concentrate on other than our worries..



HAND MASSAGE

Press the palm on your other hand using your thumb. Do this 5-10 times and repeat on the other hand.



DEEP BREATHING

Take nice slow, deep breaths and that you breathe out for longer than you breathe in. You can use finger taps to count if that helps (tapping each finger to thumb on the same hand).



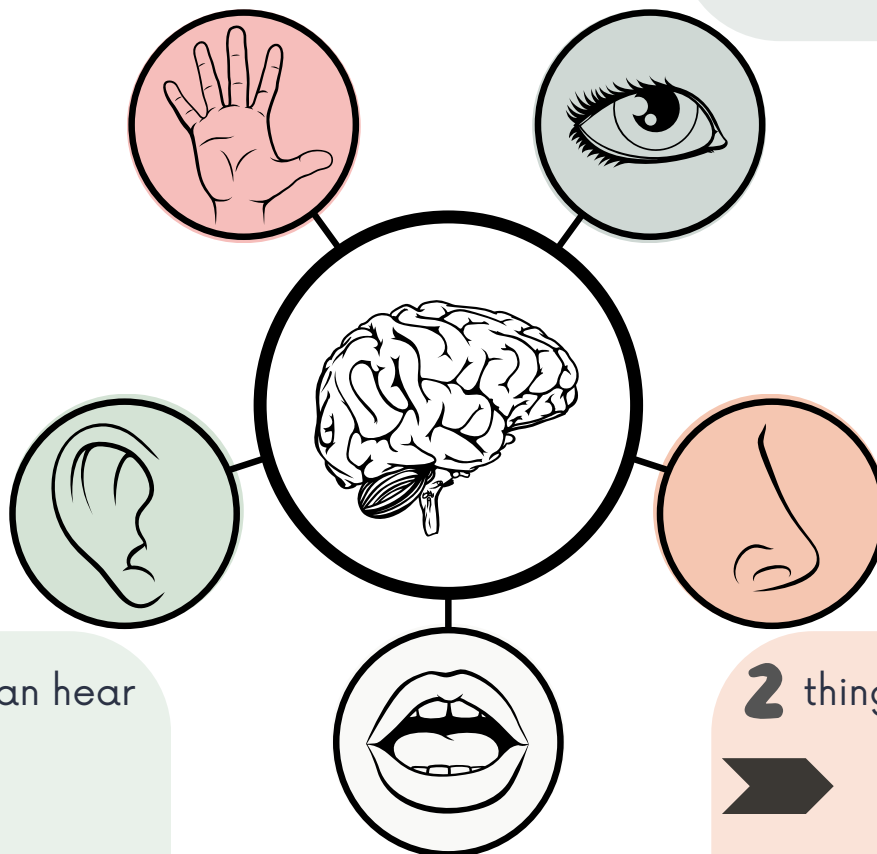
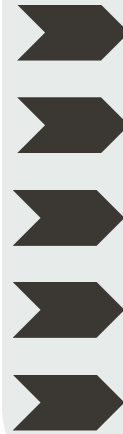
SESSION 4

SENSES 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

3 things you can touch



5 things you can see



4 things you can hear



2 things you can smell



1 thing you can taste



SESSION 5 PLAN



Learning Aims:

- To recap the difference between current and future worries
- How to manage practical worries using problem solving
- To stop and think about how big our problem is and what our reactions are

Sometimes our guard dog brain can get confused and tricks our survival brain into thinking that small or medium sized problems or worries are really big, dangerous emergencies! One way we can manage this is to stop and ask ourselves 'how big is this problem?'

Red zone reactions match emergencies, yellow zone reactions match medium or big sized problems, and green zone reactions match small problems or glitches. If we notice we are having a red zone reaction to something that isn't an emergency, we want to try and get our thinking brain back in charge as soon as possible. We must do this before we can problem solve because we need our thinking brain for this!

We can use STEP to solve our problems!

S

T

E

P

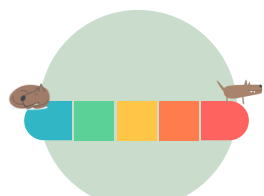
Say the problem

Think of solutions

Explore consequences

Pick and Plan!

Sort skills into backpack (skills which boost me up or calm me down)



THE PROBLEM THERMOMETER



PROBLEM SOLVING



"I..." STATEMENTS

SESSION 5

PROBLEM THERMOMETER

Sometimes our guard dog brain can get confused and tricks our survival brain into thinking that small or medium sized problems or worries are really big, dangerous emergencies! One way we can manage this is to stop and ask ourselves 'how big is this problem?'

When we do this we can then match our reactions to the size of the problem, this helps to keep us calm and in control.

Examples (all dependent on the situation and the person)

I dropped my pencil

I forgot my PE kit

I had an argument with a friend

We are moving away so I have to move schools

I fell over and broke my arm!



1

2

3

4

5

Tiny Problem

Something which is a bit annoying but it is not the end of the world - no one is impacted



Glitch

Calm, in control, safe

Medium Problem

Something which is impacting us. We might want to change something.



Little problem

A little worried or frustrated, uncomfortable



Medium problem

Nervous, frustrated, confused, sad



Big problem

Worried, confused, angry



Emergency

Something that definitely needs help or to change. It impacts others as well as ourselves

Emergency

Scared, hurt, very upset,

SESSION 5

PROBLEM SOLVING

S

Say the problem

Say specifically what the problem is and without blaming yourself, or other people.

T

Think of solutions

The best solution is not always the first one that pops into your head – especially if you have flipped your lid and your Guard Dog Survival brain is in charge.



At this stage it doesn't matter if they are good solutions or not, just think of as many as you can to really get your thinking brain online!

E

Explore consequences

Think of the PRO'S AND CON'S of each solution, and the effect on yourself and others.

SESSION 5

PROBLEM SOLVING

SOLUTION

PROS

CONS

--	--	--

SESSION 5

PROBLEM SOLVING

P

Pick and Plan!



Pick the best solution and make a plan.

What are you going to do and when?

Is there anyone you need to help?

Are there any things you need to do first?

Is there anything that might get in the way?

★ ★ REVIEW ★ ★

After we have tried our solution it is important to take a moment to think about how it went.

Did the solution solve the problem? How did it affect me, and others?

Is there still a part of the problem that needs solving?

What have I learned?

SESSION 5

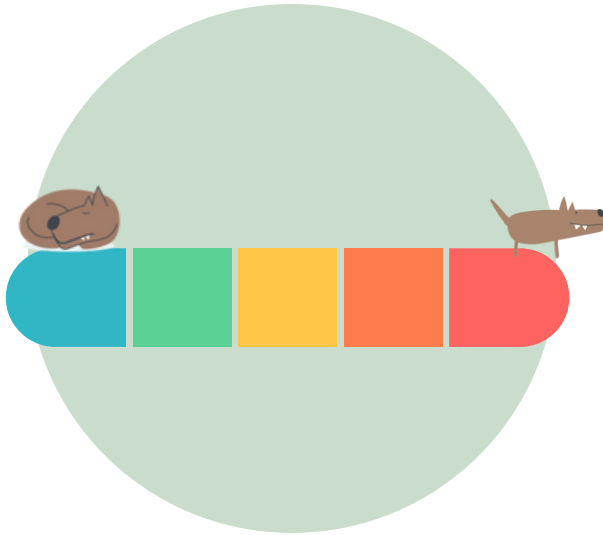
BACKPACK SKILLS



PROBLEM THERMOMETER

The problem thermometer helps us to think about how big our problem really is, and then how big our reactions need to be in response.

We want to make sure we are not having red zoned reactions, to tiny problems!



PROBLEM SOLVING

Next time you have a current worry and you don't know what to do, use STEP to help you to think of solutions and pick the best one.

Don't forget to make a plan, and then review how things went!



"I ... " STATEMENTS

"I ... " STATEMENTS

Using an "I ... " Statement can help us explain how we feel, and why.

"I feel frustrated because I am struggling to understand the task"

SESSION 6 PLAN



Learning Aims:

- To pull together the key principles of Mind Mates
- To review the Backpack skills to assemble your own backpack
- To plan how you might use these skills in class/in future
- To celebrate and mark the end of working together

CALM KIT

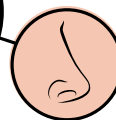
Things that activate your senses can be especially good like a smell or the touch of something that makes you feel really calm and safe. This is because they talk directly to your whole brain – even helping a barking Guard Dog Survival Brain to calm down!!

Stress ball, nail file, soft clothing, hand lotion, beads, pop-it, fiddle toys, play doh/slime



Photos of loved ones, images of places you'd like to be/go, something you like the look of

Calming noises saved on a playlist (can put a picture in the box as a prompt), a CD, musical instrument



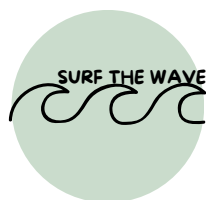
Scented candle, oils, bath salts/bomb, lotion, food, perfume, scratch and sniff stickers



Chocolate, sweets, mints, hot chocolate sachet, popping candy



Sort skills into backpack (skills which boost me up or calm me down)

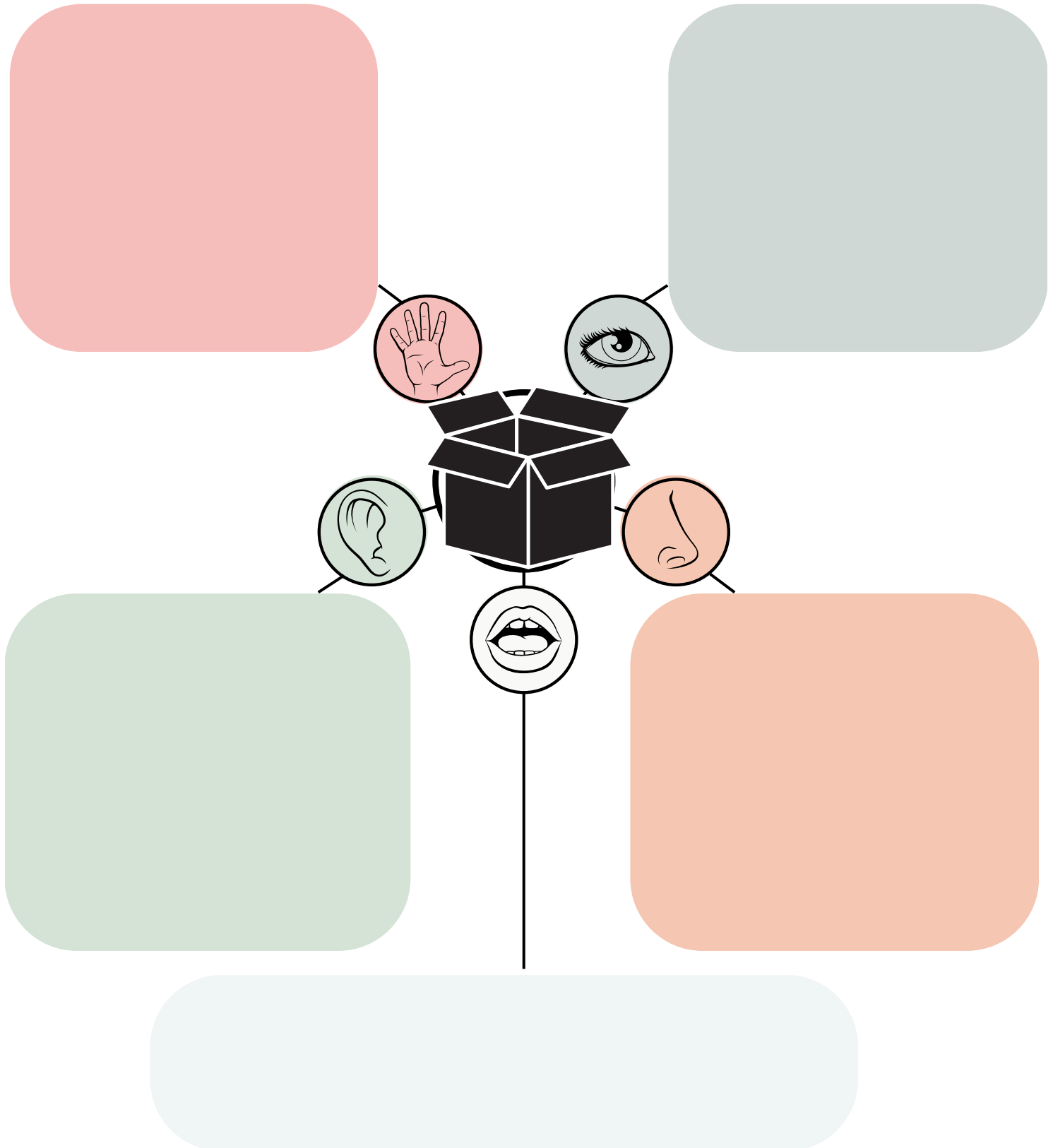


SESSION 6

MY CALM KIT

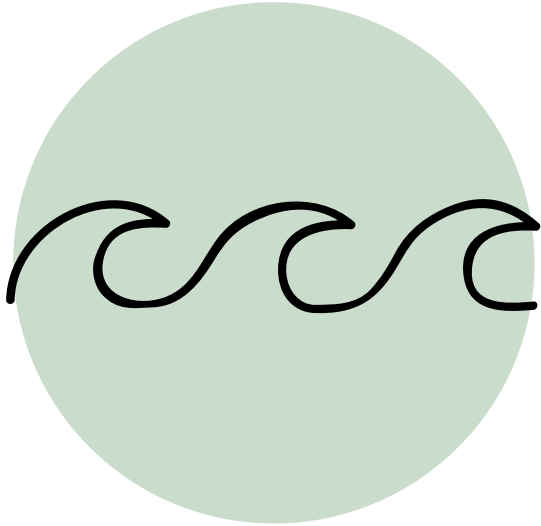
WHAT SHOULD I PUT IN IT?

Any items which can help you to feel calm or self-soothe.
It can be useful to think of all your senses:



SESSION 6

BACKPACK SKILLS



SURF THE WAVE

Surf the Wave means trying to wait until the feeling has passed before deciding what to do..

IT'S OK TO FEEL THIS WAY
IT'LL PASS
I'M GOING TO BE OK

SELF CARE

To look after your brain you have to look after your body. Think about eating healthily, moving around, getting enough sleep, spending time outside, and doing things you enjoy.



CALM KIT

Calm kit encourages us to be calm to ourselves. We can find different calming activities to support each of our senses.

The Mental Health Support Team (MHST) offer Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to support young people in school or college with anxiety or low mood. If you feel this is something you would like to access, speak to someone in your school/college who can discuss with the MHST link worker.

If you need to talk to somebody right now, these organisations can help:



NHS
111

Samaritans
116 123



In emergencies, call 999