

# Taking Care of Me

**A SELF-CARE GUIDE FOR TEENS:  
HELPING ME TO PUT ME FIRST,  
BE HAPPY & STAY HEALTHY**



ScHools INreach Emotional  
Wellbeing Service



# Self-Care



## WHAT IS SELF-CARE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

It is important to take care of our body, but it is also essential to **take care of our mental health too.**

Many of us are familiar with feelings of worry, stress, sadness or low mood every now and then. Relationships with friends, family, our home lives, worries about school and the news can all contribute negatively to the way we feel; this is completely understandable and normal.

So what can we do when we're having these difficult feelings? Well, there are lots of self-care activities that we can try to help keep our mental wellbeing in good shape.

**Self-care is about all of the things that you can do to keep yourself feeling good or help yourself to feel better on the not so good days.**

**Self-care can look different for everyone.**

**Some examples might be: being with friends, playing sports, using art, dancing or spending time with pets.**

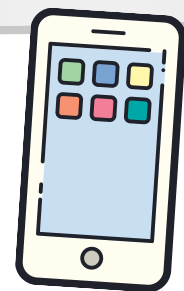
**Basically, anything that makes you smile and feel good!**



### *The Broken Phone Analogy*

Not practicing self-care is like continuously using a broken phone. Yes, it works, but it doesn't work as well as it could if it were in good condition. It glitches sometimes, and unless it is treated, it will continue to glitch. Eventually, it will stop working.

Permanent phone damage can be prevented by covering the phone with a case or keeping it out of the water. Taking action quickly increases the chances of a full recovery. Similarly, practicing self-care by creating healthy habits reduces our stress. This helps us to strengthen our relationships, gain mental and physical energy, and improve our grades and/or work performance.



**Use this booklet to try out some different self-care activities for yourself. See what activities you prefer; not everything works for everyone. Remember: It's okay to ask for help when you need it.**

# Planning & Prioritising Self-Care

**Remember to set aside some time to plan your favourite self-care activities!**

Scheduling in self-care will help you to remember how often you want to do it and remember the importance of it.

Creating a self-care plan will also help you to keep track of what activities work best for you.

We have included activities in this booklet that have helped others, but you may already have some of your own ideas already.

**Sometimes it is easier to break activities down into four categories:**



**PHYSICAL**



**SOCIAL**



**EMOTIONAL**



**PRACTICAL**

# Healthy Habits



## S L E E P

**Good sleep is important for good mental health.**

**Try to:**

Stick to a routine

Listen to sleep music

Try not to use technology 1 hour before bed

Have sweet stuff earlier in the day

Avoid energy drinks if you can



## F O O D

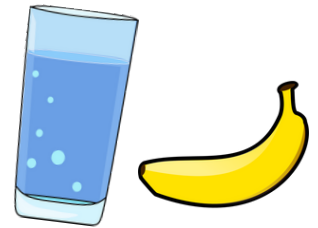
**The things we eat and drink can influence our mental health.**

**Try to:**

Limit sugar intake

Drink up to 8 glasses of water a day

Remember your 5-a-day



## E X E R C I S E

**Exercise doesn't have to be sweaty and painful.**

Can you do a fun activity?

Can you walk the dog?

Can you go for a walk with friends?

Can you dance to your favourite songs?



## N A T U R E

**Spending time in nature can be wonderful for our mental health.**

**Try to:**

Spend time in green spaces

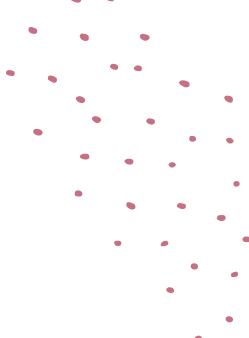
Do some gardening

Notice the different birds










Do hobbies outside



# What Do I Enjoy?



An important part of self-care is finding out & remembering our favourite things,  
as they can help to keep us happy.  
This is about you, and the things that you love.

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

If you get stuck, there is a list of suggested activities on page 20

# What Do I Enjoy?

Uplifting music and physical exercise can give our mood a boost!

This is because our brain chemicals called **endorphins** are released when we exercise.

## MY FAVOURITE SONGS TO DANCE TO:



1

2

3

4

5

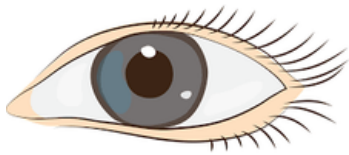
6



# Mindful Moments

Being mindful means being aware of what is going on around you and how you are feeling.

When you are feeling overwhelmed or experiencing difficult thoughts or feelings, it is helpful to notice:



**FIVE**

Things you can see

---

**FOUR**

Things you can hear



**THREE**

Things you can touch

---

**TWO**

Things you can smell



**ONE**

Thing you can taste





# Breathing Exercises

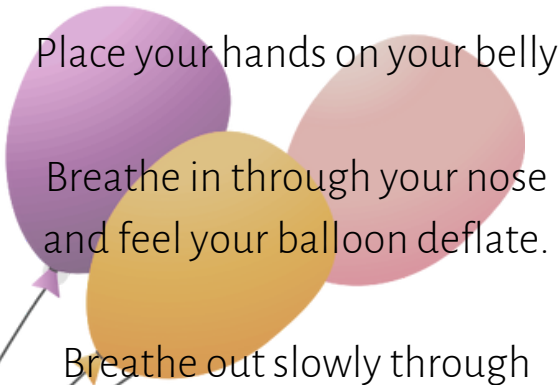
## BALLOON

Imagine your belly is a balloon

Place your hands on your belly

Breathe in through your nose and feel your balloon deflate.

Breathe out slowly through your nose and feel your balloon inflate.



## DRUM

Imagine your breath is like a marching band and you are beating it very slowly.

Breathe to the beat.

Breathe in to the beat of four.

Breathe out to the count of four.



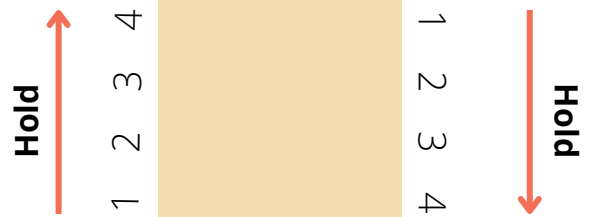
## SQUARE

Using the breath to focus the mind

**Breathe in**



1 2 3 4

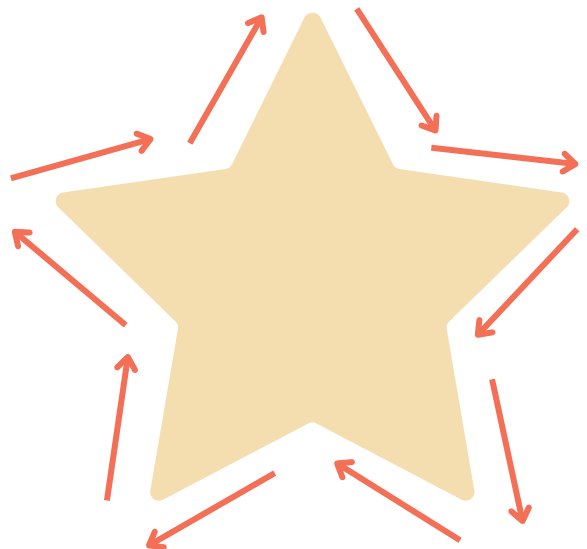


**Breathe out**



## STAR

Trace the star with your finger. Breathe in and out slowly as you trace around the star.







# 30 DAY Creative Challenge

*A creative challenge for you to try each day!*

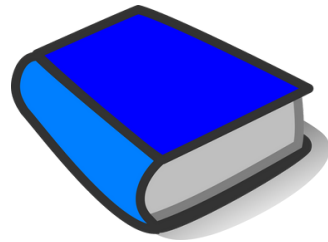
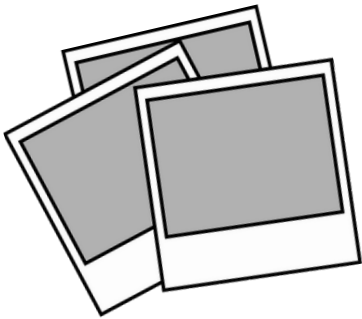
<p><b>DAY 1</b></p> <p>Draw a picture of something that makes you laugh or smile.</p>	<p><b>DAY 2</b></p> <p>Try to juggle.</p>	<p><b>DAY 3</b></p> <p>Spend a day wearing your favourite colour.</p>	<p><b>DAY 4</b></p> <p>Write a thank you note to someone who has been kind to you.</p>	<p><b>DAY 5</b></p> <p>Plant a flower or herb garden on your window sill.</p>
<p><b>DAY 6</b></p> <p>Learn to make origami.</p>	<p><b>DAY 7</b></p> <p>Learn to cook a new recipe.</p>	<p><b>DAY 8</b></p> <p>Find out what song was number one your last birthday and perform it!</p>	<p><b>DAY 9</b></p> <p>Learn how to say hello in ten languages.</p>	<p><b>DAY 10</b></p> <p>Create a vision board.</p>
<p><b>DAY 11</b></p> <p>Organise your bedroom</p>	<p><b>DAY 12</b></p> <p>Learn a magic trick with playing cards.</p>	<p><b>DAY 13</b></p> <p>Write a short story for your favourite movie character.</p>	<p><b>DAY 14</b></p> <p>Create a collage with your favourite pictures.</p>	<p><b>DAY 15</b></p> <p>Create a dance to your favourite song. Challenge others to learn it too.</p>
<p><b>DAY 16</b></p> <p>Create your own jigsaw puzzle.</p>	<p><b>DAY 17</b></p> <p>Learn how to spell your name in British Sign Language.</p>	<p><b>DAY 18</b></p> <p>Make something really tall with somebody!</p>	<p><b>DAY 19</b></p> <p>Write a song about your feelings.</p>	<p><b>DAY 20</b></p> <p>Rearrange your bedroom</p>
<p><b>DAY 21</b></p> <p>Eat something you've never tried before!</p>	<p><b>DAY 22</b></p> <p>Do something kind for your neighbour.</p>	<p><b>DAY 23</b></p> <p>Research your family tree.</p>	<p><b>DAY 24</b></p> <p>Create a music playlist to share with others.</p>	<p><b>DAY 25</b></p> <p>Build a house of playing cards.</p>
<p><b>DAY 26</b></p> <p>Design your own magazine.</p>	<p><b>DAY 27</b></p> <p>Design a family shield.</p>	<p><b>DAY 28</b></p> <p>Learn a yoga pose.</p>	<p><b>DAY 29</b></p> <p>Create a bucket list.</p>	<p><b>DAY 30</b></p> <p>Create a hope box of things and items which make you smile.</p>

# Self-Soothe Box

A self-soothe box is a box that is **personal to you.**

It is filled with things that can help you to feel better when you're experiencing difficult thoughts or feelings.

You could even create your own self-soothe box as a self-care activity!



Many people find it helpful to use items that feel good to each of the **five senses.**



Hear

See

Smell

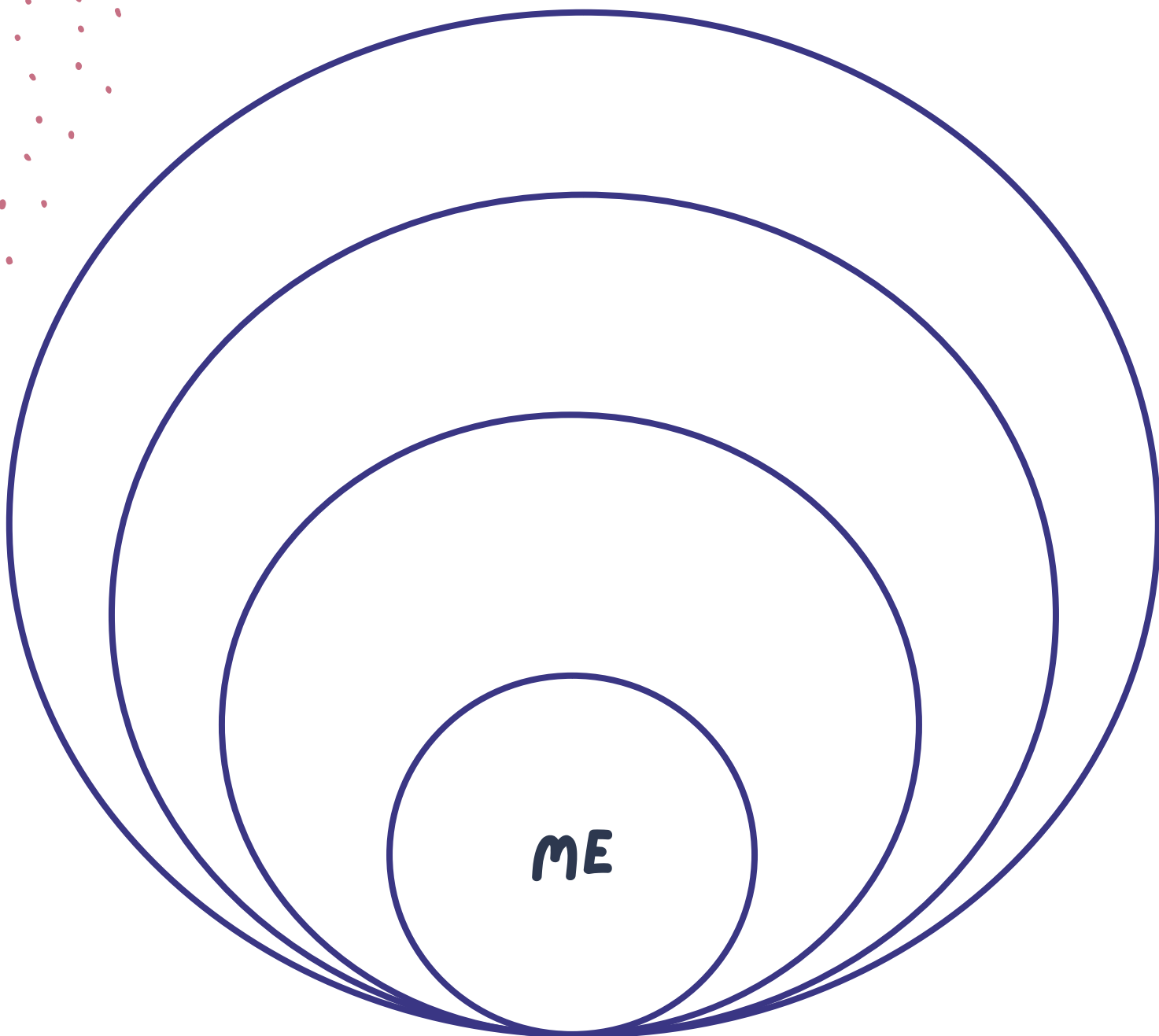
Touch

Taste

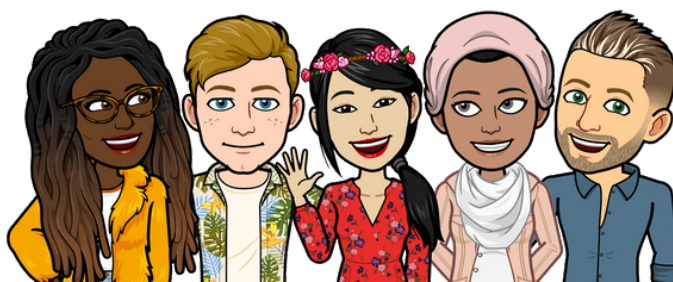


# My Circle of Support

Use these circles to write down the names of anybody who can help to make you feel better when you are having difficult feelings. This could be family, friends, teachers or even a pet!



ME





# The 7 Day Learn to Love Yourself Challenge

Sometimes we forget to remember all of the wonderful things about ourselves.

*Have a go at writing one positive thing about yourself each day.  
These might be "I am loving", "I am kind" or "I am caring".  
You decide!*

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

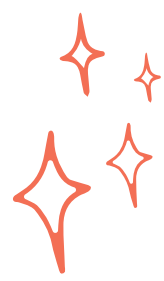
***When you've finished, cut out each box and  
keep them in your self-soothe box.***

***Feel free to keep writing more on a separate piece of paper!***





# My Self-Care Plan



## ACTIVITIES TO TRY:



1

4

2

5

3

6

## THE ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED THE MOST:







# My Self-Care Plan

**WHAT ARE THE MAIN THINGS THAT CAUSE ME TO HAVE DIFFICULT FEELINGS?**

**WHICH ACTIVITIES WILL HELP WITH THESE FEELINGS?**

**WHAT MIGHT BE A BARRIER TO MY SELF-CARE?**

**SOMETHING ELSE I COULD TRY:**



# Daily Planner

Date:

Mood:



## Goal for Today

## To-Do List

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

## Routines

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

## Notes

# Daily Planner

Date:  Mood:

**Goal for Today**

**To-Do List**

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

**Routines**

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

**Notes**



# Weekly Planner

**Time to plan your favourite self-care activities.**

*Scheduling in self-care will help you to prioritise this time just for you. Remember, your mental health is important.*

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY



# Activity Ideas

- Draw or paint
- Learn a new topic
- Read a book
- Take photos
- Watch YouTube
- Stargaze in the garden
- Write a poem
- Play cards
- Watch a movie
- Do a puzzle
- Play an instrument
- Play in the garden
- Listen to music
- Bake a dessert
- Play a board game
- Make origami
- Try a new food
- Dance
- Play video games
- Relaxation
- Video call family or friends
- Read a magazine
- Watch a TV series
- Create a playlist with your friends
- Take part in a photography challenge with your friends
- Join a local youth group
- Try some relaxation techniques
- Have a pamper evening
- Burn some essential oils
- Create a self-soothe box
- Write a short story

# Helpful Videos on Self-Care



# Helpful Apps



Calm Harm



Clear Fear



HEADSPACE

# Where Can I Find More Help?

If you or someone you know needs help right now, you should, if possible, try to talk to a parent or carer or a trusted adult such as your GP.

If talking to an adult is not possible, you can find a list of organisations which offer 24-hour support by text, email and phone:

Childline  
0800 1111  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Samaritans  
116 123  
[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

Emergency Services:  
999

*This booklet was created by the Cwm Taf Morgannwg School In-Reach Emotional Wellbeing Team (SHINE) who are based in Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).*