



Supporting transition
to secondary school



Be Proud |



Be Kind |



Be Ready

How to Cope with Change

We experience lots of changes during our lifetimes. For example, changing classes, moving house or changes to our friendships. Change can be positive and negative but no matter how large or small a change is, it's important to look after our wellbeing.

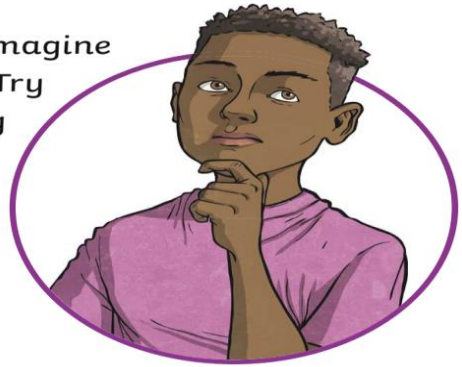
It can be challenging to support your wellbeing when you're dealing with stressful situations. Here are some techniques you can use before, during and after a particularly difficult task or situation.

Before You Are Going to Face Something Challenging

Challenge Negative Thoughts

You may feel more worried if you imagine the worst thing that could happen. Try to challenge those thoughts by asking yourself these questions:

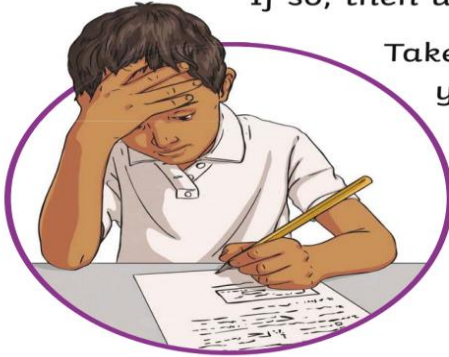
- What if that didn't happen?
- What else might happen instead?



The 90-Second Rule

Do you feel panic rising?

If so, then use these 90 seconds to slow things down.



Take some deep breaths in and out to slow your heart rate and calm your body.

Write down any worries you have and choose a place to keep them, like a jar or folder. This can help you imagine you're leaving your actual worries behind with your notes.

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2

Before You Are Going to Face Something Challenging

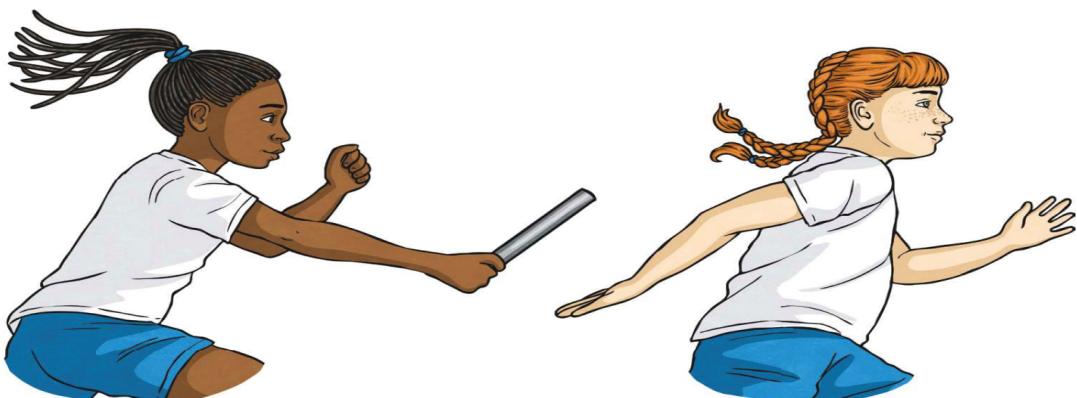
Repeat a Motto for Encouragement

Mottos are often used by athletes before a race and can be a good way to change how you think about something. You can repeat a motto out loud or write it down. Here are some examples you might like to try:

'I am doing the best that I can do.'

'I have done this before; I can do it again.'

'I can make it through this – it won't last for ever.'



During

Many changes that happen are outside your control but remember that you can control how you react to them.

The 90-Second Rule

Speak more slowly and reduce the volume of your voice.

Take ten deep, slow breaths.

If you can, take a short walk for a minute or two to get away from the situation and give you time to think.

If you can't step away from the situation, try counting backwards from 100 in fives.

Taking this time can help you think more clearly.



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4

During

One Minute for You: Tense and Relax

Tensing and releasing your muscles (for example, squeezing your hands tightly and then releasing them) can help you feel more in control of your mood.



Breathe in and tense (squeeze) one muscle group (such as your hands, face, shoulders or legs) for five seconds. Breathe out and release the muscle group, imagining any worries you have leaving your body.

Relax for ten seconds and move on to a different muscle group.

Finally, tense your entire body and then relax. Take a deep breath and focus on feeling calm.

Refocus

If you sense difficult, uncomfortable feelings, switch your attention to something else.

Focus on a simple task, for example doing some tidying up or mindful colouring

Switching your attention in this way – or taking a 'break state' – can help you refocus.



After

After a challenging situation, make sure that you make time to relax.

Reflect on what happened today. You could write down your thoughts if you would like to.

Think about three things that were difficult. Recognise that although they were difficult, you got through them.

Reflect on three things that you feel pleased about and celebrate your achievements.

Focus your attention on something different. How will you rest and recharge? Can you watch your favourite programme, get lost in a book, play outside or do some mindful colouring?

Practise Being Thankful

Being thankful is all about recognising and appreciating the positive things that have happened that day or week. You can do this by writing a list of the good things about today or drawing them. Recognising that there is something positive, even on the hardest days, can help you feel more balanced and can boost your wellbeing.



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6

After

Move

Exercise can be a good way to relieve stress. Being active makes your brain release feel-good chemicals, called endorphins, which can help distract you from any worries. Think about going for a walk, run, bike ride or taking part in some other sport or exercise.



Mindfulness

Mindfulness is something you can learn which involves making a special effort to notice what's happening in this moment – in your mind, body, and what's around you – without judging anything. It aims to help you feel more self-aware, calmer and less stressed. It can also help you feel more able to choose how to respond to your thoughts and feelings, including difficult and unhelpful ones. For example, try seeing if you can breathe in through your nose for four counts, hold it for two counts and breathe out through your mouth for seven counts. Repeat this for as long as you want.



After

Get a Good Night's Sleep

Sleep has a really important role in helping you recover from anything you've found difficult. Not getting enough sleep can affect your mood, concentration and energy levels.

Make sure that you are going to bed at a reasonable time and that you have a chance to unwind without technology before bedtime.



Put Worries on Paper

Writing down any worries or concerns you have can be a powerful way of clearing your mind. Keep a notepad by your bed and set aside five minutes at the end of the day to jot down your thoughts.

Find What Works for You



Everyone is different and so different activities will suit different people. Try a range of activities, such as going for a walk, calling a friend or reading a book, and see which ones make you feel refreshed and recharged. You could make a list of the activities that help you recharge and feel more like yourself.

After

Talk about How You Are Feeling

Talking about how you feel can make a huge difference. Think about who you can talk to if you need to – it might be someone at home, at school or a trusted adult.

Mind offers support and advice for children and young people via their website.



Childline offer a free helpline, email service and online and phone counselling service for children and young people in the UK, currently from 9am until midnight.

The Mix offer a helpline, email, live chat, telephone counselling service and crisis text line for anyone under 25 years old needing support.

