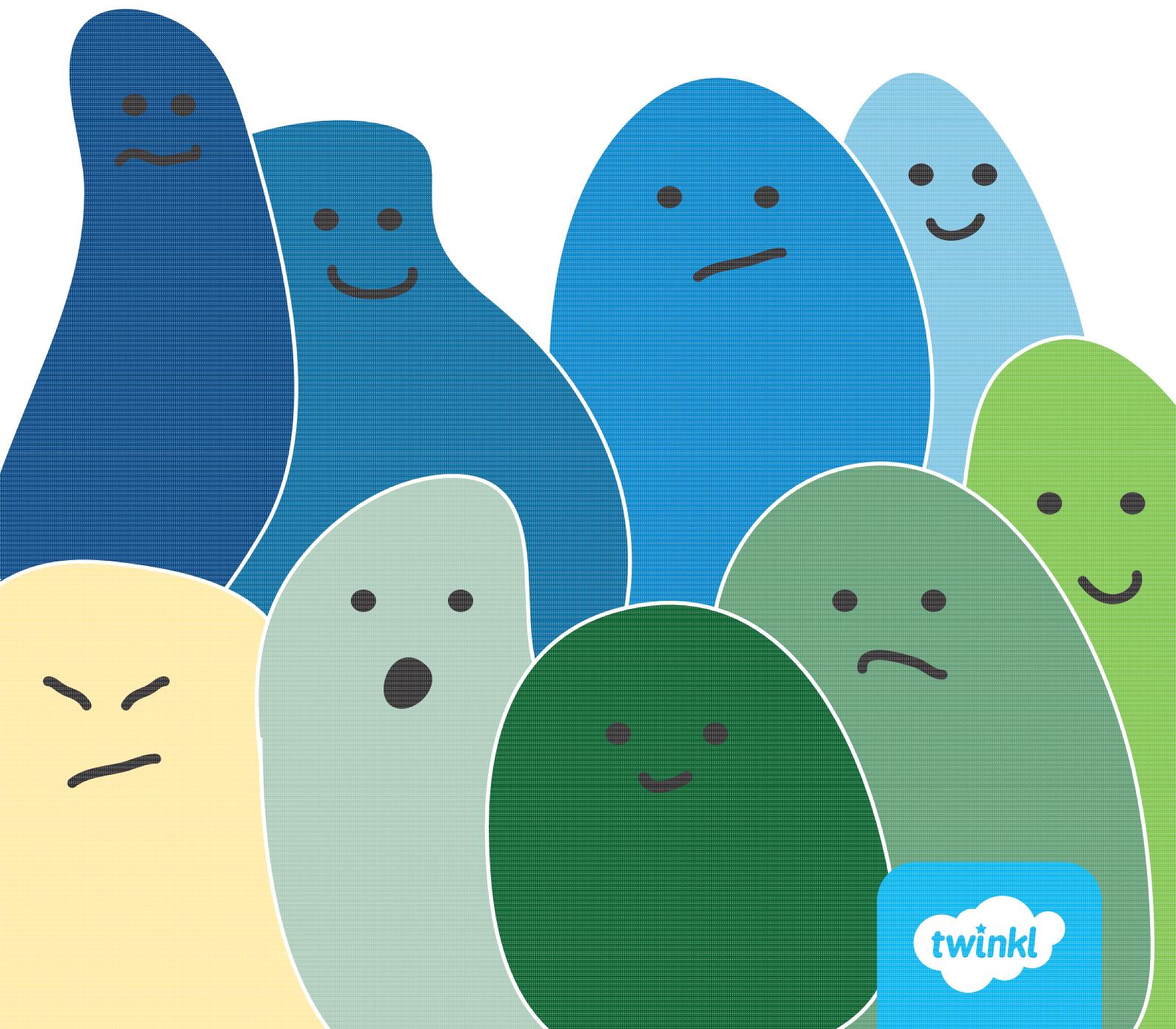


Teenager's Guide on How to Cope with Feelings



Teenager's Guide on How to Cope with Feelings

- ▶ Growing up can be difficult; your body changes and so do your emotions.
- ▶ You may find you have strong opinions about different issues.
- ▶ You may be excited about the future and discover new interests.
- ▶ You'll be learning lots of new things every day.

Not all of these changes feel positive though. You may find that some of your new emotions don't make you feel good. You might feel worried, angry or lonely. This resource is designed to help you develop strategies to cope with these new emotions.

It's also really important to remember that you are not alone. Remember, there are people who care about you, who understand what you are going through and who want to help. It's important to talk to an adult who you trust if you feel you need help.

Understanding

Why do I feel different now?

As you grow up, you may find some of the following affecting how you feel:

- Hormonal changes due to puberty. Your body is producing hormones that are responsible for the physical changes you will experience during puberty. But, some of these hormones can also affect your mood and change how you feel.
- Anxiety around physical changes. Experiencing changes to your body shape as you become an adult can cause some teenagers to worry about their appearance. Some worry that they are changing faster than their friends, while others worry that they are changing at a slower rate.

- Rapid periods of growth that can make you feel tired. All these hormonal and physical changes can make it hard to get out of bed in the morning. Your body is incredibly busy coping with all the changes.
- Feeling the need to become more independent. Teenagers often enjoy becoming more independent and may look for more activities to do without their family.
- Wanting to develop your own sense of identity, perhaps through music or clothes.

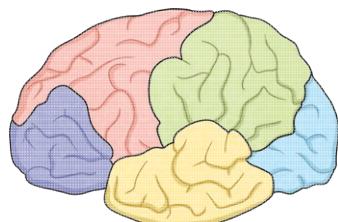
Can you think of anything else that affects your mood?



Every day we have thousands of thoughts. Some are positive and make us happy, others are negative and can make us feel upset. Our thoughts trigger our emotions.

These emotions, or feelings, can influence the way we behave.

So our thoughts, feelings and behaviours are all linked. We call this the cognitive triangle.



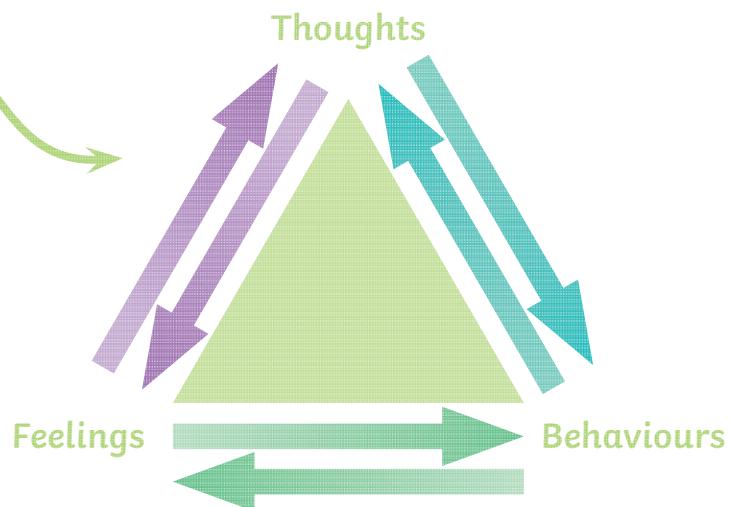
The word cognitive refers to the process of thinking and other mental processes - which means things we do with our minds.

Our cognitive functioning includes memory, judgement, reasoning and emotional responses.

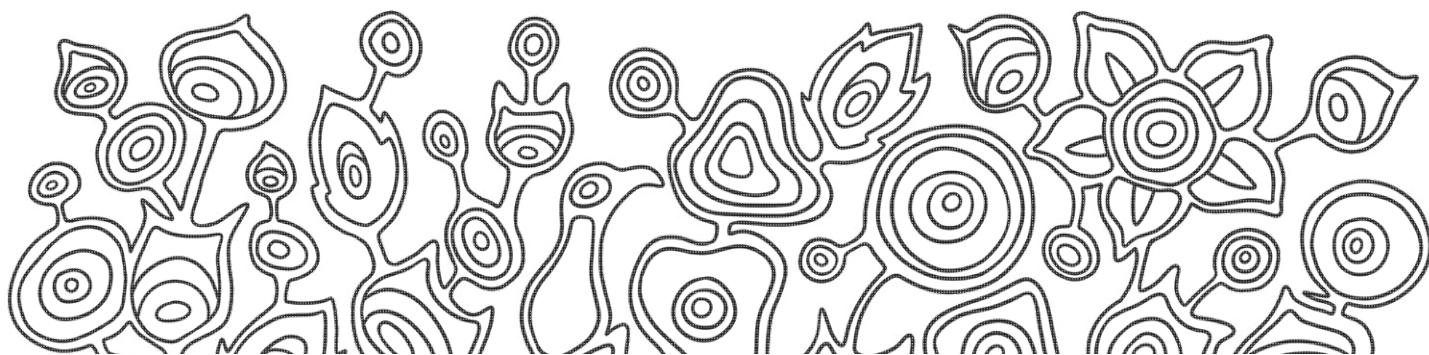
This diagram shows how our thoughts, feelings and emotions are all connected.

The way we feel can influence our behaviour. If we feel nervous, anxious or upset we might behave in a different way to how we would normally.

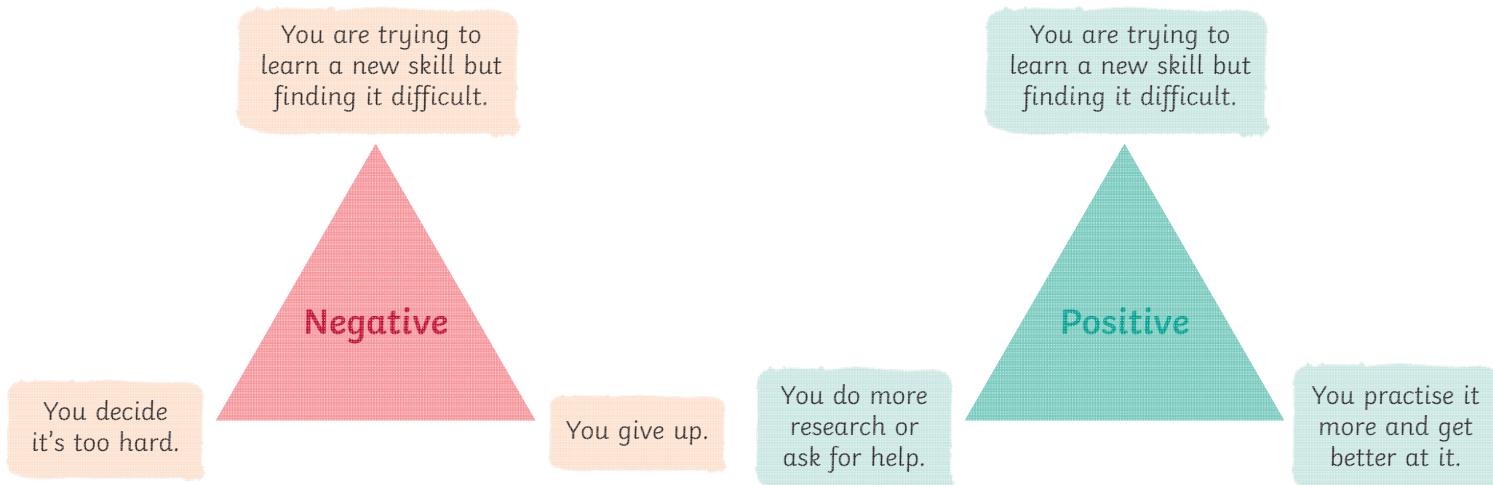
Think about the following situations. How might they make someone feel? How would that feeling affect their behaviour?



Thought	Feeling	Behaviour
Your sports team has reached the final in an important competition.		
You are going to a new Home Ed meet and are worried you won't know anyone.		
Your friend has a new puppy. You have always wanted a dog.		
You are trying to learn a new skill but finding it really difficult.		
Your best friend is spending lots of time with someone else.		

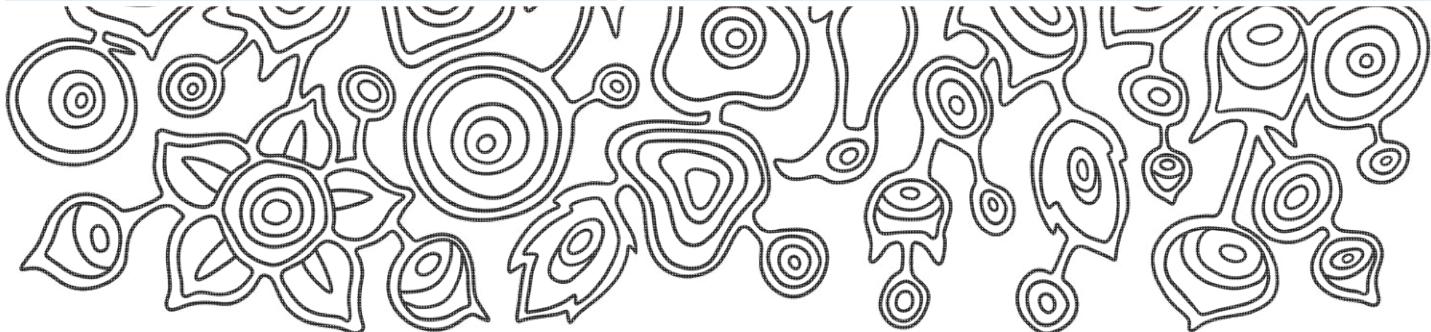


Negative thoughts lead to uncomfortable emotions and behaviours. If we change our thoughts to positive ones then it can lead to positive feelings and behaviours.



Have a look at the thoughts again. How could you make them positive?

Thought	Positive Feeling
Your sports team has reached the final in an important competition.	
You are going to a new Home Ed meet and are worried you won't know anyone.	
Your friend has a new puppy. You have always wanted a dog.	
You are trying to learn a new skill but finding it really difficult.	
Your best friend is spending lots of time with someone else.	



How to Cope with Uncomfortable Feelings

The cognitive triangle shows us that we can have some influence on how we feel. There are also other things we can do that can help us to feel better. Here are five ideas known as the five ways to wellbeing.

Connect

Being around people whose company you enjoy, sending a friend an email or phoning them can all help people feel connected to others. Feeling connected to others is proven to increase happiness.

Think of a way you could connect with someone:

Get Active

Exercise is proven to reduce depression and stress. Go for a walk or a jog, or put some music on and have a dance.

Think of a way you could get active:

Be Aware

Being in the moment and aware of what is going on around you can help you to understand yourself better. Being mindful allows you to recognise your own motivation and actions, which in turn helps you to control uncomfortable thoughts.

Think of a time you can set aside to reflect on your day:

Keep Learning

Continuing to learn, being curious and seeking out new experiences and information has been connected to a decrease in depression. People who set themselves challenges or goals often report being happier than those who don't.

Think of a challenge you could set yourself:

Be Generous

Giving doesn't have to be about donating money, you can also give your time to help friends and family or your local community. People who regularly perform acts of kindness report being happier.

Think of something kind you could do:

Communicating your feelings



While mindfulness can help you to understand yourself, it's important to also talk about how you are feeling. Keeping a journal can help you to be more aware of your feelings. There's a [Daily Reflective Journal for Home Education](#) that will help you with this.

If your emotions are very strong and making you unhappy, it's really important that you talk to a trusted adult about how you feel. There are also organisations that you can speak to, such as [YoungMinds](#), or your GP can refer you to experts who will be able to help.

Disclaimer

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