

My Building Positive Self Esteem Workbook



for secondary aged students 12+

Aims and goals:

- To understand low self esteem
- To learn strategies to improve my self esteem
- To be able to challenge my inner critic
- To recognise my strengths and qualities

Introduction to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)

This workbook can help young people learn to take care of their own mental health using cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which will help children to break unhelpful thought patterns that may be making them feel more anxious or sad.

CBT is a type of talking therapy that has been proven to help people of all ages to focus on how thoughts and emotions can affect our behaviour.

Throughout the book there are exercises (where you see the pencil diagram) for you to complete.

If you feel at anytime that you need further support, please see the numbers at the back of this workbook or contact your GP or school nurse.

If you are having any thoughts of hurting yourself please tell a safe adult immediately.





What is self esteem?



Self esteem is how we see ourselves and the value we place on our skills and abilities.

Your self esteem can affect how you:

- Like and value yourself as a person
- Are able to assert yourself
- Recognise your strengths and positives
- Feel able to try new or difficult things
- Show kindness towards yourself
- Move past mistakes without blaming yourself unfairly
- Take the time you need for yourself
- Believe you are good enough
- Believe you deserve happiness.



When we have good self esteem we feel happy, confident and believe in ourselves.

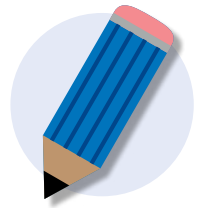
But when we have low self esteem we may feel sad or unhappy about ourselves and may lack the confidence to tackle challenges.

If you have low self esteem, you may focus more on your mistakes rather than what you have done well.



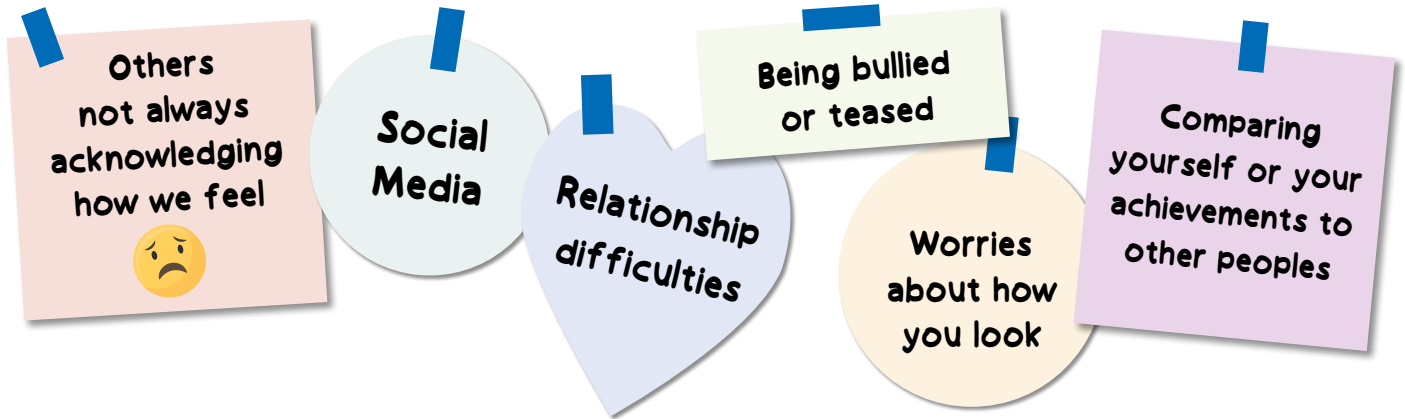
When we feel this way about ourselves this is when we need to take action and put things in place to build our self esteem back up!

What affects your self esteem?



Lots of things can impact on someone's self esteem, this can be different for each individual and will often change overtime. On the sticky notes you will find some ideas of things that can affect someone's self esteem.

You may find your low self esteem has different triggers, and that is normal.

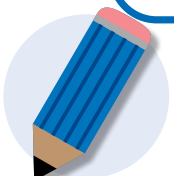


Try this!

Can you identify the things that help build and breakdown your self esteem?

Things that build my self esteem

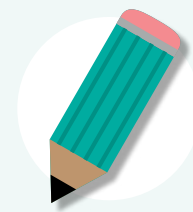
Things that breakdown my self esteem



This pencil symbol represents activities you can do at home. You will find these throughout the workbook.



How does low self esteem affect you?



It can be difficult for somebody with low self esteem to recognise what they are good at and identify what they like about themselves. Use the table below to identify how low self esteem affects you.

Do you experience any of the following?	Please tick if this applies to you
1 I often think negative things about myself	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 I compare myself to others	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 I often blame myself for things	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 I find it difficult to make decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 I take things very personally even if they are not intended that way	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 I find it difficult to accept compliments or praise from others	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 I am very critical of myself or things I do	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 I find it difficult to see the positives or good in myself or things I do	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 I put others and / or their feelings before my own	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 I don't like to try new things, or join in certain activities in case I get it wrong or don't perform well	<input type="checkbox"/>



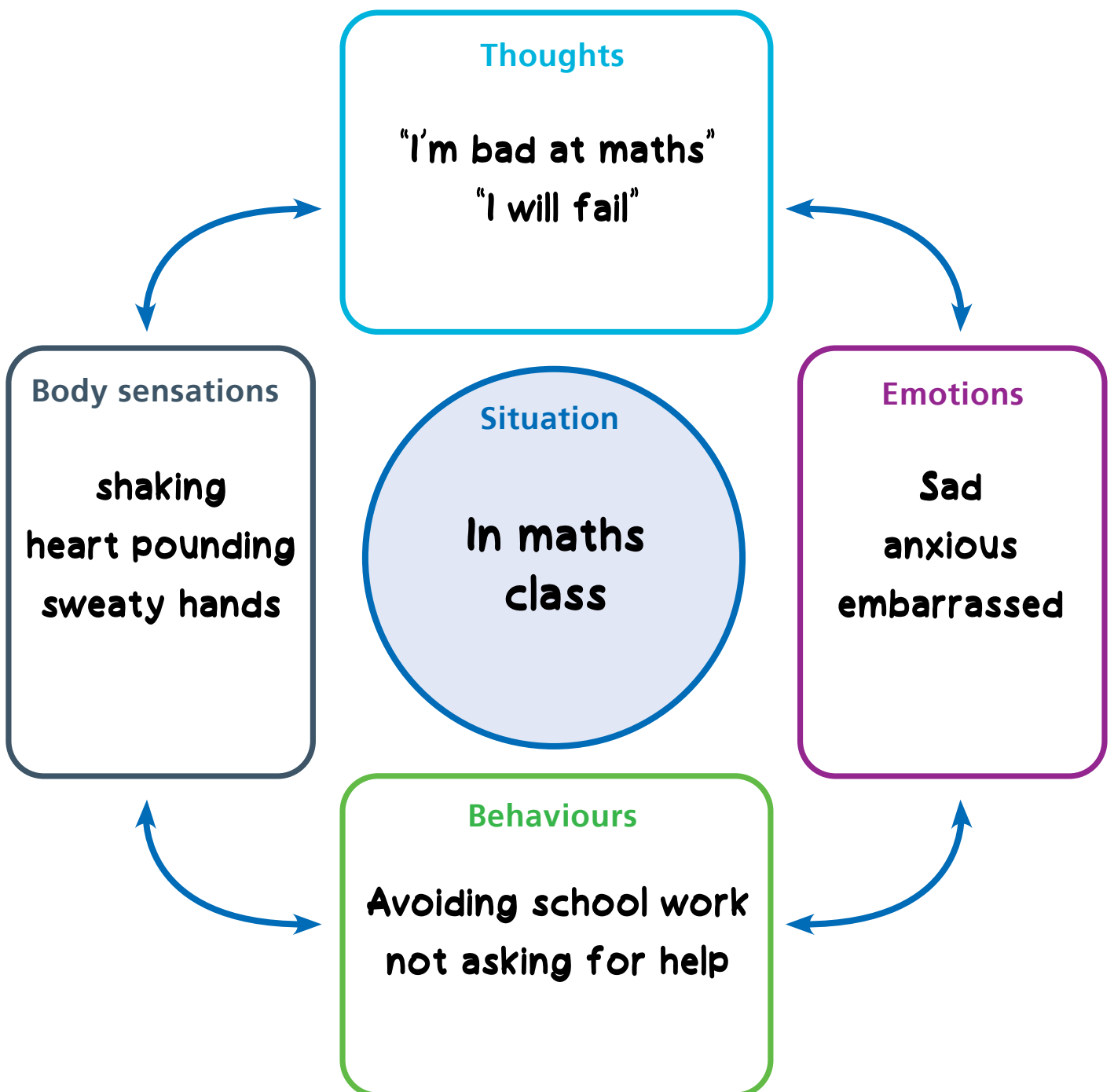
If you have ticked any of the above boxes, this may be a sign that you may find it useful to work on building positive self esteem

What maintains our low self esteem?

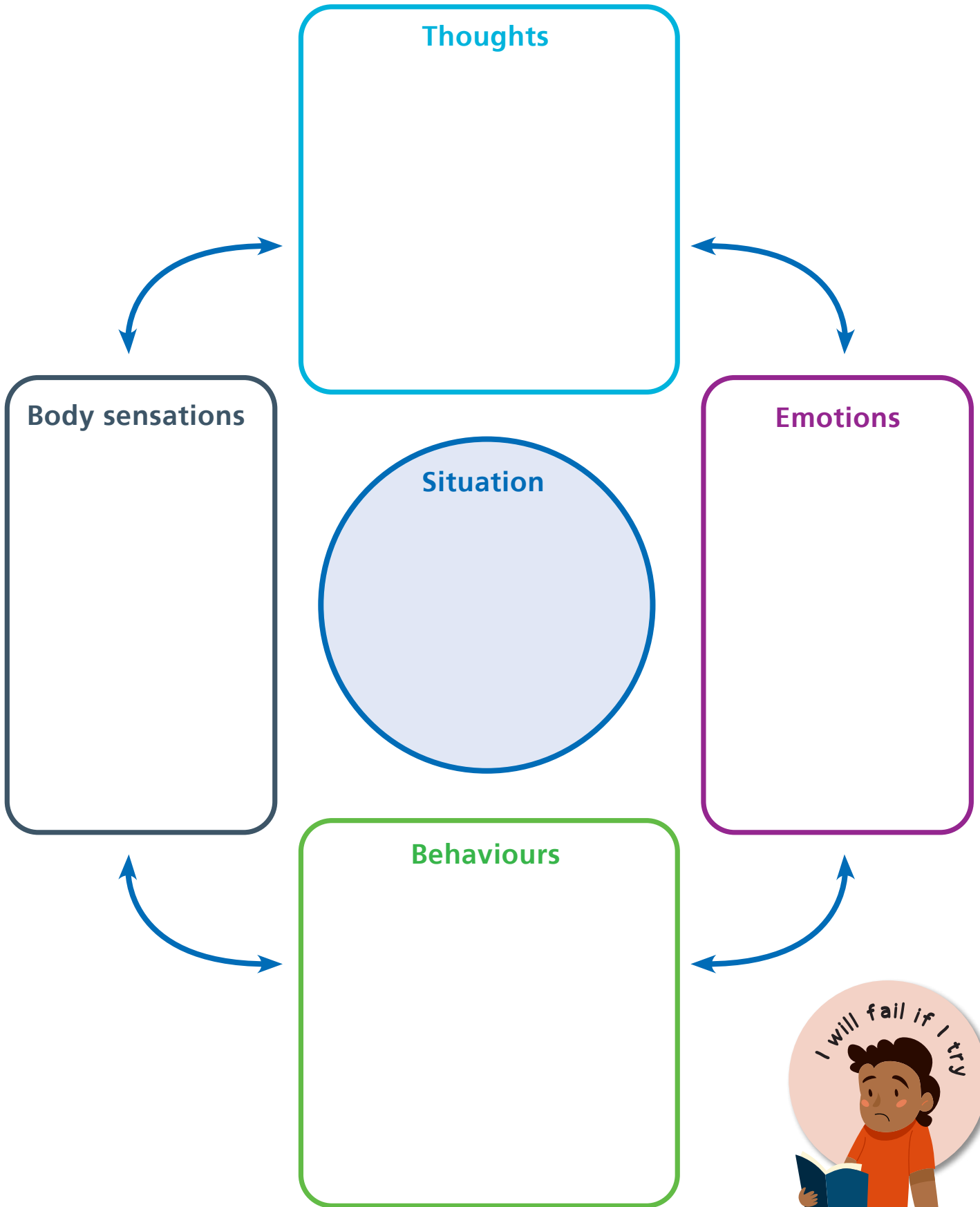
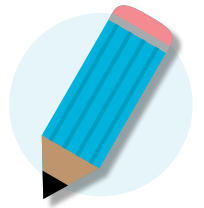
Low self esteem can often be kept going by the negative thoughts and beliefs we have about ourselves. These can be triggered by various situations, becoming a vicious cycle that we need to break.

These feelings and thoughts are normal when experiencing low self esteem

We can break this cycle by changing our thoughts or our behaviours (what we do). Using the 5 areas can help you understand what keeps your low self esteem going. Here is an example.



Why not try creating your own 5 areas below.



Challenging our inner critic

Our inner critic can tell us that we are not good enough or that we are stupid, even though there is no evidence to back this up.

Everyone experiences negative thoughts at times, but when we are feeling low in self esteem, these thoughts can maintain the negative cycle. When we start to notice our thoughts having a negative impact, it is important that we challenge our inner critic to help break the cycle.

Asking yourself the following questions can help you to challenge those pesky negative thoughts.

Are you comparing yourself to others unfairly?

What is another way of looking at this?

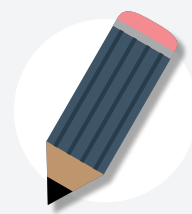
Will I feel this way in 1 week, 1 month or 1 year from now?

What advice would I give someone else?

What would a friend or family member say to me?

Are you ignoring the positives?





Try this!

If negative thoughts arise, write them down in the table below and try to create a positive alternative to challenge that negative thought.

Negative thought

"I'm going to fail this test"

Positive alternative

"I will be proud of myself if I try my best"





SHARP specs

Everyone experiences negative thoughts at times, but when we are feeling low in self esteem, these thoughts can maintain the negative cycle.

When we start to notice our thoughts having a negative impact, it is important that we challenge our inner critic to help break the cycle.

S

SET TIME

Set some time aside each day to notice the positives, perhaps a few minutes at the same time of day, or set a reminder alarm 3 times during the day.

H

HUNT DOWN

Hunt down those times that went well, when you said or did something positive, or when something positive happened or was said to you. Don't dismiss things as being too small or insignificant!

A

ACKNOWLEDGE

Acknowledge when some things didn't go so well. It's normal to feel sad or disappointed, but ask if you're still using those Gloomy specs and still focusing too much on the negative.

R

RECORD

Every day, write down at least 3 positive things that happened that day. This is one way of positive data logging. We will talk about this more next.

P

PLAN

Plan ahead for the next day positive things that you can do, things that you enjoy. Even the little things can make a big difference to how you feel about yourself. An activity diary can be a really useful tool to help you with this.

How to achieve a balance?



Use the template below to plan positive activities to boost your mood.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7am - 10am							
10am - 1pm							
1pm - 4pm							
4pm - 7pm							
7pm - 10pm							

Positive Data Logging

During times of difficulty, being aware of the positives is a great way to be thankful for all the amazing things we have.

Taking time each day to write down positive things (as suggested in the **R** of **SHARP** specs) has been shown by research to help improve your mood.

There are lots of different ways you can start to hunt down and acknowledge the positives, about what is happening both in your life and your own positives.



Gratitude Jar

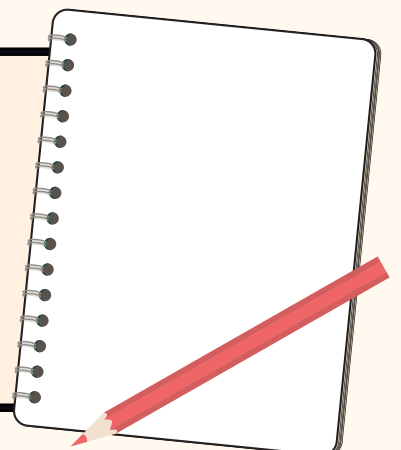
A really good way to find the positives is to create a gratitude jar. Find an old jam jar or something similar and decorate it how you like.

At the end of each day think of three things that you are grateful for, write them down and place them in the jar. These could be things about yourself, other people or anything that makes you happy.

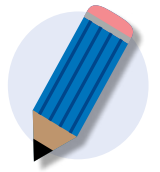


Keeping an evidence log

Another way to positive data log is to keep track of the negative beliefs and thoughts your inner critic is saying and log all the evidence that shows this thought or belief is not true.



Positivity Journal



Another thing you could try is writing a positivity journal, this could be in a notebook or on an app. Why not start yourself off by filling in the journal questions below:

Two compliments to myself

1.
.....
2.
.....

Three good things that have happened to me this week:



1.
2.
3.

Who made you feel good this week?



Five things I am grateful for

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.



What was challenging this week?



Have you reached any goals?



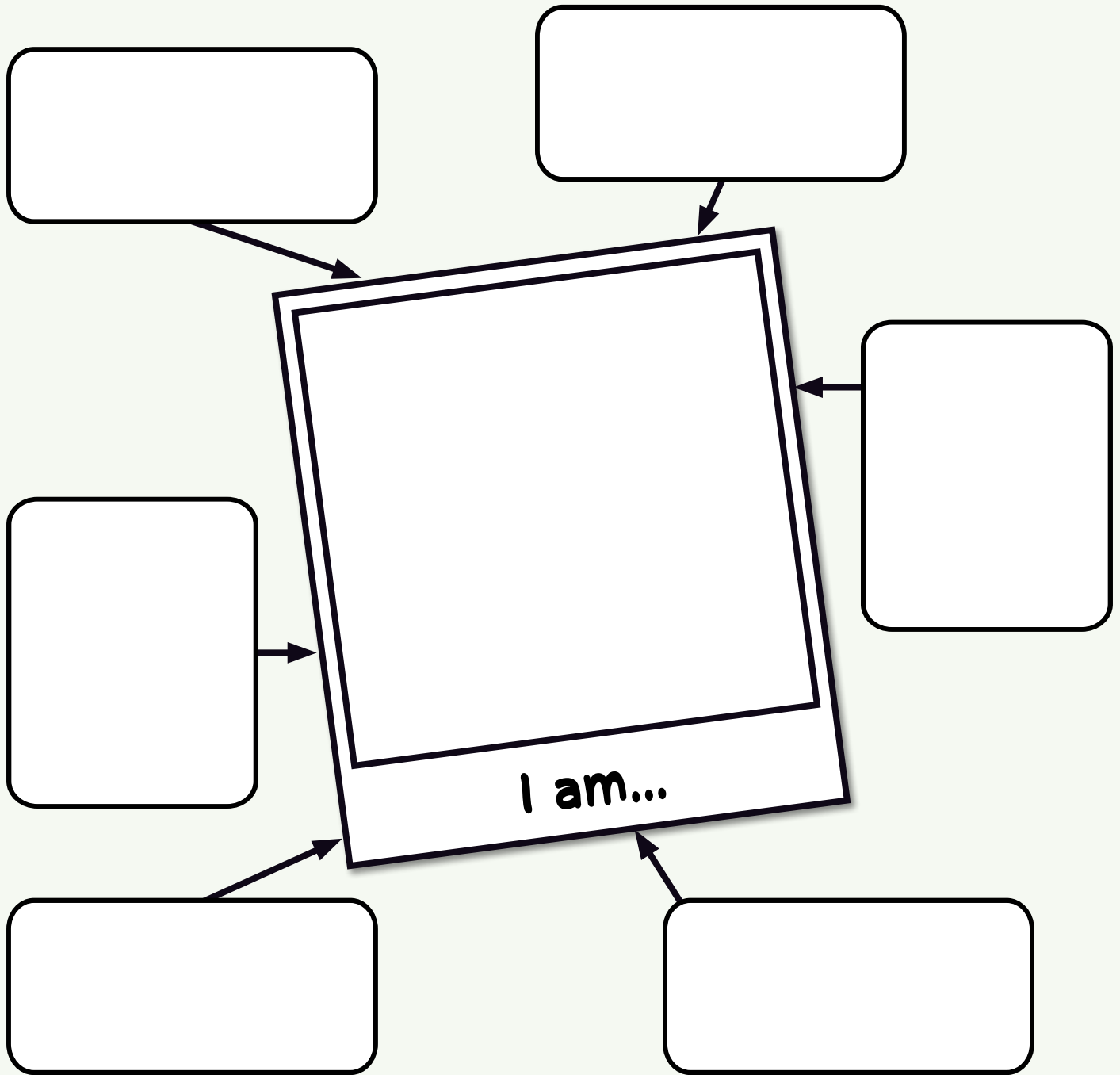
A memory to remember

Your strengths and qualities

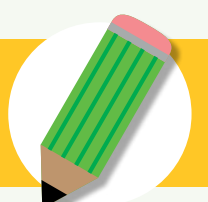
When you feel low in self esteem you can find it hard to recognise the things you are good at and the skills you have.

Take a moment to think about how you are treating yourself on a daily basis. It's important that you remind yourself of all that you can do and all the positive things that make up who you are.

If you are struggling to identify your strengths, why not try asking a loved one?



If you are feeling really creative why not try drawing yourself in the middle of the polaroid.

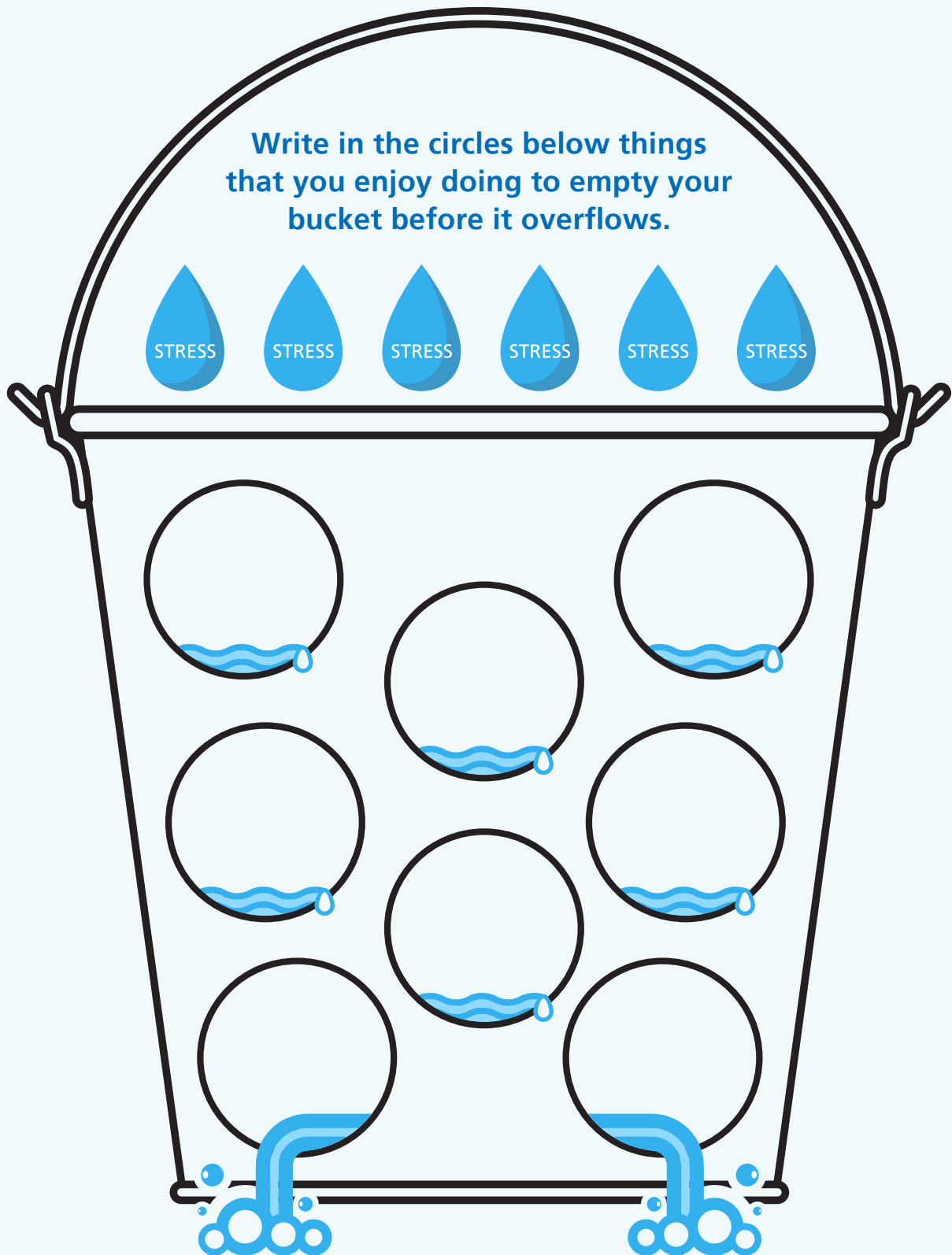


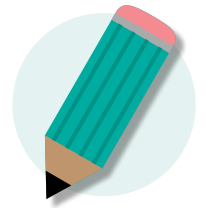
Feeling good!



Sometimes life challenges can leave us feeling a bit overwhelmed. Imagine your stress as water going into this bucket. Eventually, if it continues to fill, it will overflow. This can look like an angry or emotional response, and you may feel like you have lost control.

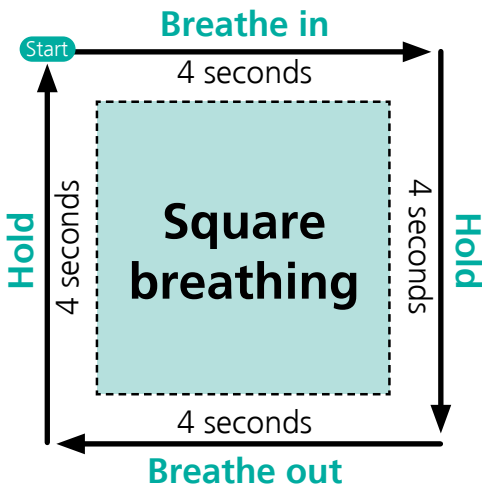
It is really important that you spend time each day doing things you enjoy to improve how we feel. This can release the water from our stress bucket and support us to feel calm.





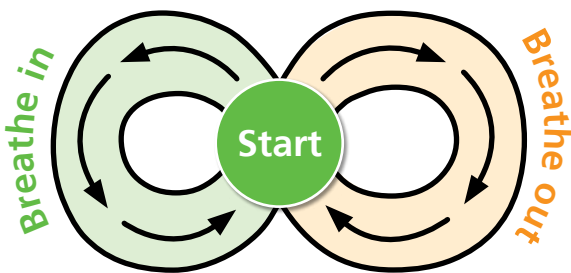
Relaxation

We can use relaxation methods to help calm strong feelings and re focus our minds to the here and now. Here are a few methods to try:



Square breathing

- Step 1:** Starting at the top left hand corner of the square, sit upright and slowly inhale through your nose for a slow count of four. Pay attention to the feeling of the air filling your lungs.
- Step 2:** Hold your breath for another slow count of four.
- Step 3:** Exhale slowly and deeply through your mouth to the count of four. Feel the air leave your lungs.
- Step 4:** Hold your breath for the same slow count of four before repeating this process until you feel calm.



Lazy eight breathing

Trace the lazy eight with your finger starting in the middle and taking a deep breath in through your nose. As you cross over to the other side of the eight slowly let your breath out through your mouth. Keep breathing around the lazy eight until you feel calm.



Colour breathing

Visualise your colour either in the form of a light or a mist. Here is an example.

Blue = Calm. See it in front of you around you and enveloping you. As you breathe become aware of the colour; imagine the colour spreading throughout your body and notice the effects it has.

If you want, you can breathe out a negative colour such as **Red = Anger** and feel this emotion leaving your body.



Staying well plan

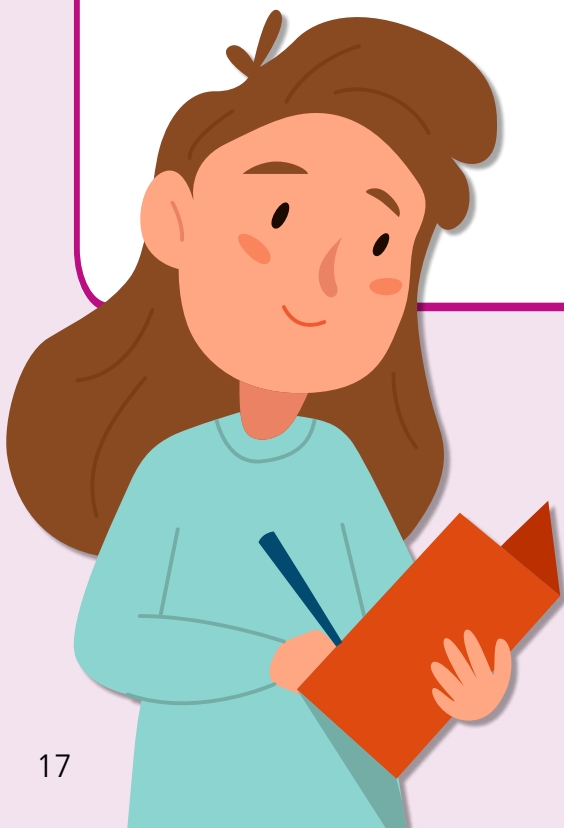
What have I learned?

What am I proud of?

What are my triggers?

What can I do to help myself?

Who can I go to if I need support?



Remember

It's totally normal to have a setback and it's important to know that we all have good days and bad days.

This plan helps with those bad days by reminding you of what you have learnt and who you can turn to!

Useful websites and numbers



Do you need urgent help with your mental health?



Call **111** and select a mental health option

HOPELINE247
0800 068 41 41

Are you, or is a young person you know, not coping with life?

For confidential suicide prevention advice contact **HOPELINE247**.

Call: **0800 068 41 41**
Text: **07860 039 961**

www.papyrus-uk.org

THE MIX
Essential support for under 25s

Essential support for under 25s. Get advice about relationships, drugs, mental health, money and jobs.

0808 808 4994

4pm to 11pm Monday to Friday

One to one chat and message, visit www.themix.org.uk

 **LISTENING EAR**
someone to talk to

A charity to help those who've been bereaved, suffered loss or experienced separation.

0151 488 6648

www.listening-ear.co.uk

kooth

www.kooth.com

SAMARITANS

116 123

YOUNGMINDS
fighting for young people's mental health

www.youngminds.org.uk

childline
0800 1111

Additional info

We have other workbooks available. Please ask your local mental health support team.

We really appreciate your feedback to help us improve our service for you. Please fill out a short survey once you have completed this workbook.