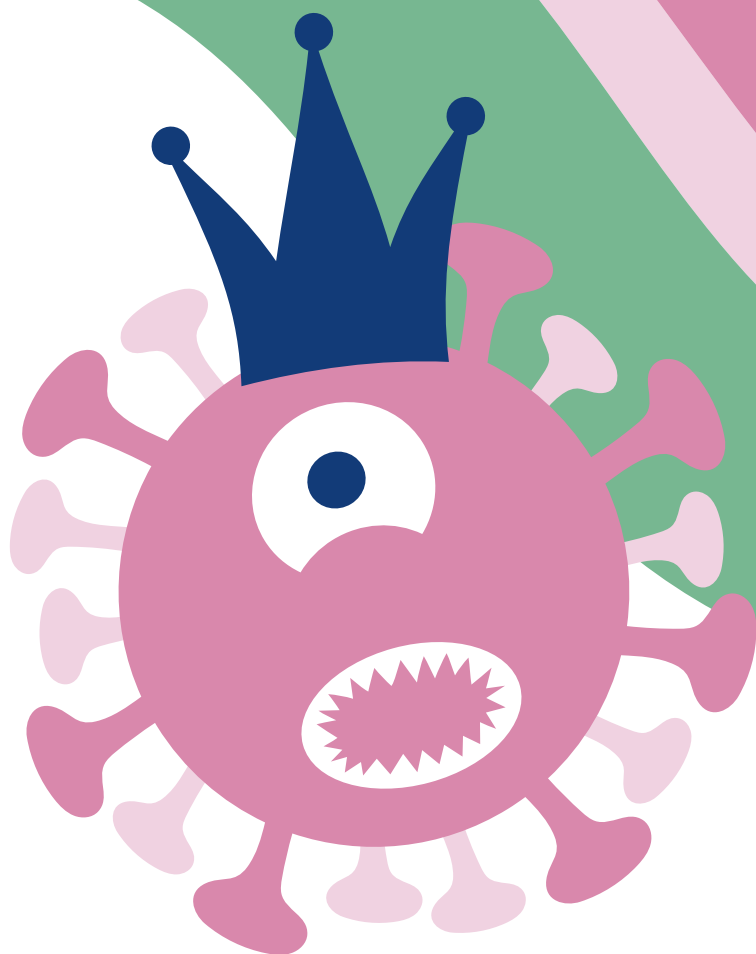


# It's ok to worry about COVID-19

A resource pack **for teenagers (12 years and over)** to help manage difficult feelings about the coronavirus that causes COVID-19





This pack was created by  
the Early Intervention team  
in Child and Adolescent  
Mental Health Service  
(CAMHS) in NHS Grampian

Click on a title  
to jump straight  
to that page

# Contents

## Part 1: The basics on COVID-19

How can this resource help me?	03
Everyone is talking about COVID-19	04
How to keep yourself safe	05

## Part 2: Social media and anxiety

Social media strategies	07
Muting social media accounts	08

## Part 3: Let the worry go

I'm worried about coronavirus—what can I do?	12
The worry tree	13
Tackling negative thoughts	14
Automatic negative thoughts	15
Relaxation	
<i>Relaxing the mind using mindfulness</i>	17
Mindful breathing meditation	18
Lake visualisation	19
Mindful showering	20
Mindful eating	21
Muscle relaxation exercise	22
Distract yourself from your worries	23
Activities you can do at home	24

## Part 4: Staying healthy at home

Healthy sleeping habits	26
Exercising at home	27
Further resources	28

Part 1:

# The basics on COVID-19

# How can this resource help me?

This resource was designed to support your emotional wellbeing. It will show you ways you can keep your body and mind healthy.



# Everyone is talking about COVID-19

What you need to know about the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

You have probably heard of coronavirus before, or COVID-19, the illness it causes. In fact, it might feel like they are all everyone is talking about! One reason why we are hearing so much about them is because people are sharing information to try and help us to know how we can keep ourselves safe.

We have so many ways to share this information and we have easy access to this information right at our fingertips through our smart phones, tablets and social media. Although this is meant to be helpful for us it can feel overwhelming when we are seeing and hearing it being talked about all of the time.

It is really important to remember that not all sources of information are created equal. Anyone can write what they like on social media and even websites that you think are reliable can get their facts wrong too sometimes. Just because someone says or posts something online it doesn't mean it's true.

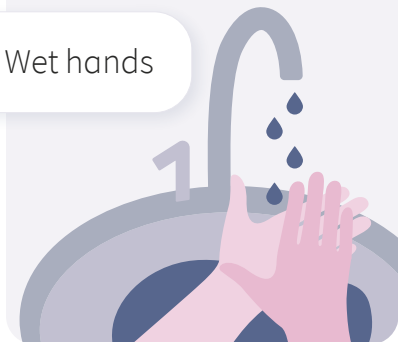
**Can you think of something someone said, or posted online, that you now know was untrue?**



# How to keep yourself safe

Things you can do to help you avoid contracting coronavirus.

**1.** Wet hands



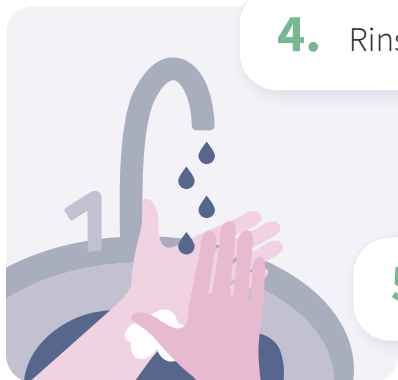
**2.** Apply soap



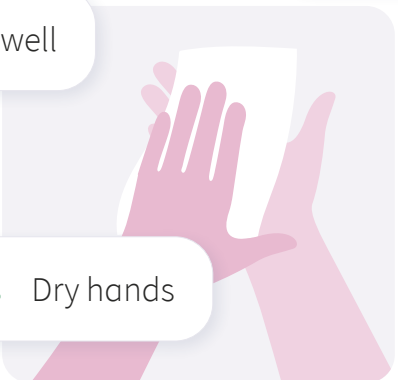
**3.** Wash hands for 20 seconds



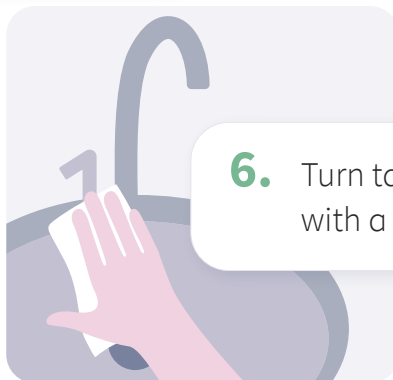
**4.** Rinse well



**5.** Dry hands



**6.** Turn tap off with a towel



## Cover your mouth

When you cough/sneeze, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue.

Or cough/sneeze into your elbow, not your hands, and remember to throw your used tissues in the bin.

## Wash your hands

Especially after going to the bathroom, blowing your nose, and before eating.

## Don't touch your face

Try not to touch your mouth, eyes and nose. If that's hard to do keep your hands busy with something else like a ball or squeeze toy.

Part 2:

# Social media and anxiety



# Social media strategies

Use these strategies on social media when you're feeling anxious.

If you are feeling worried as a result of the media coverage there are steps you can take to limit your exposure to coronavirus coverage:

- + Turn off any automatic updates on your phone
- + Avoid or limit your use of social media
- + Give yourself permission to limit or end conversations with other people that are making you feel more worried. Try politely saying "I feel like coronavirus is all anyone is talking about at the moment...could we talk about something else?"
- + Change the settings on your social media accounts so that posts about coronavirus aren't appearing on your home feeds —the following pages will show you how to do this



# Muting social media accounts

Unhelpful content can be muted on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to varying degrees. This can help you manage worries you may have.

## Muting unhelpful words on Twitter

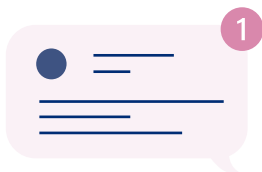
### Iphone (app)

1. Go to your Notifications tab.
2. Tap the gear icon.
3. Tap “Muted” words.
4. Tap “+Add muted or phrase”.
5. Type in the word or hashtag you’d like to mute (for example: #COVID-19).
6. Alternatively, long press the word as it appears on a tweet and press “Mute”.



### Android (app)

1. Go to your Notifications tab.
2. Tap the gear icon.
3. Tap “Muted” words.
4. Tap “+Add muted or phrase”.
5. Type in the word or hashtag you’d like to mute (for example: #COVID-19).



## Muting unhelpful pages or accounts on Facebook



### Iphone and Android (app)

Unfortunately you can't mute certain words, but you can mute pages or people if they are sharing or posting content you don't want to see.

1. Click on the three dots at the top right of the post you do not wish to see.
2. Press "Snooze for 30 days".
3. Alternatively you can "Hide all" or "Unfollow".

### You can also prioritise whose posts you see:

1. Go onto your menu—this is usually the three lines at the top right on the Facebook app.
2. Scroll down to "Settings & Privacy".
3. Press "Settings".
4. Scroll down to the heading "News Feed settings" and choose "News Feed preferences".
5. Press "Prioritise Who to See First".
6. Choose who you want to see at the top of your News Feed.
7. Press "Done" at the top right.



**Under your News Feed Settings you can also see who you have hidden posts from, or unfollowed.**

## Avoiding recommended content on Instagram

Unfortunately, Instagram does not allow you to block posts or comments left on other users' posts that contain words, phrases or hashtags that you wish to avoid. If you are experiencing distress as a result of content on Instagram it is advisable that you cut

down on the time you spend on Instagram, choose social media sites that do allow you to filter out content you do not wish to see (such as Twitter) and avoid the 'explore' feature that recommends content to you.

### Turn off 'explore'

1. Go to your profile.
2. Click on the hamburger (the three lines at the top right) of the screen.
3. Click on 'Settings'.
4. Click on 'Privacy'.
5. Click on 'Comments'.
6. Click on 'Manual filter'.
7. The manual filter bar will turn from grey to blue, then in the space that says 'words separated by commas...' type in words and phrases that you do wish not to see, separating each word or phrase using a comma.



Part 3:

# Let the worry go

# I'm worried about coronavirus...

What to do when you're anxious because of coronavirus and the disease it causes, COVID-19.

Lots of people are feeling worried about coronavirus right now- even adults! This is a very normal way to feel when lots of changes happen quickly and it just means that the part of your brain that wants to keep you safe is functioning in the way that it's meant to. Often though people find themselves worrying about things that they have little or no control over—no matter how much worrying they do.

**Is there anything I can do for my worries about coronavirus?**

**Yes, there is!**

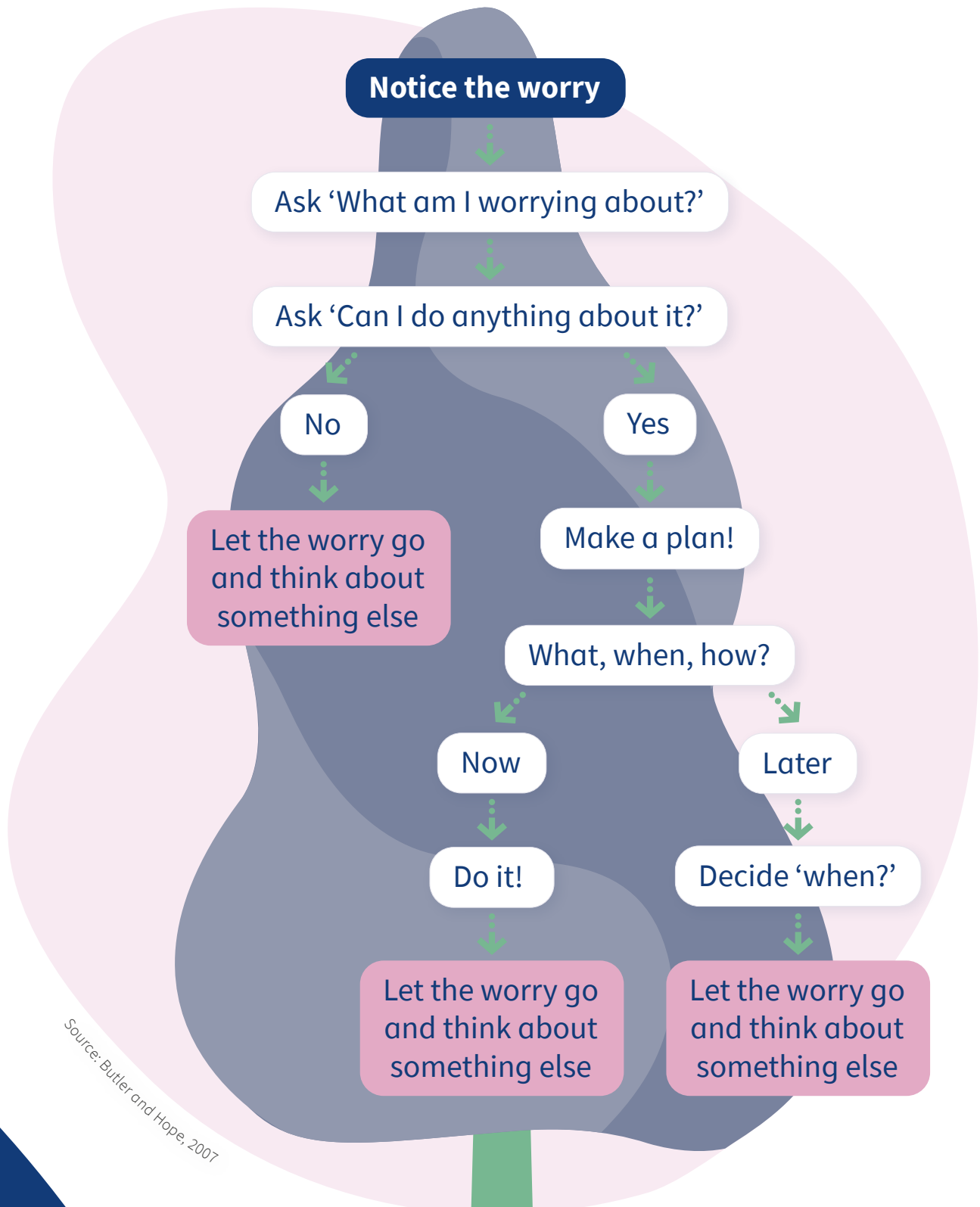
**Ok—what's my plan then?**

**There are two things that you can do as part of your plan to tackle your worries about the coronavirus:**

- 1.** Follow the 'how to keep yourself safe' advice on page five.
- 2.** Once you are keeping yourself safe, you can use the strategies in the rest of this booklet to 'let the worry go'.

# The worry tree

When you have a worry, follow this “worry tree” to decide what to do.



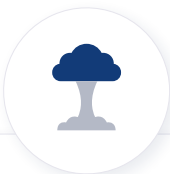
# Tackling negative thoughts

Changing the way you feel by changing the way you think.

The way we think affects the way we feel. When we think negatively, we feel bad. When we think positive thoughts, we feel good! No-one wants to think negatively but most of the time it happens automatically.

Sometimes simply acknowledging the thought is there, without engaging with it or judging yourself for having it, is enough to help it pass. If not, there are strategies you can use below to beat it.

## Notice when you have one of the following kinds of unhelpful thoughts



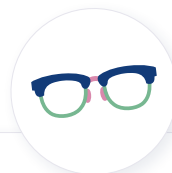
### Blowing things up

Negative things are sometimes blown out of proportion and seem bigger than they really are. People sometimes call this “making a mountain out of a molehill”.



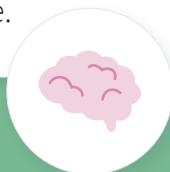
### Fortune telling

Sometimes we guess what will happen in the future. In reality no-one can predict the future.



### Feeling thoughts

When we feel a strong negative emotion, it can trick our brains into believing that must mean that something must be wrong—even when that’s not true.



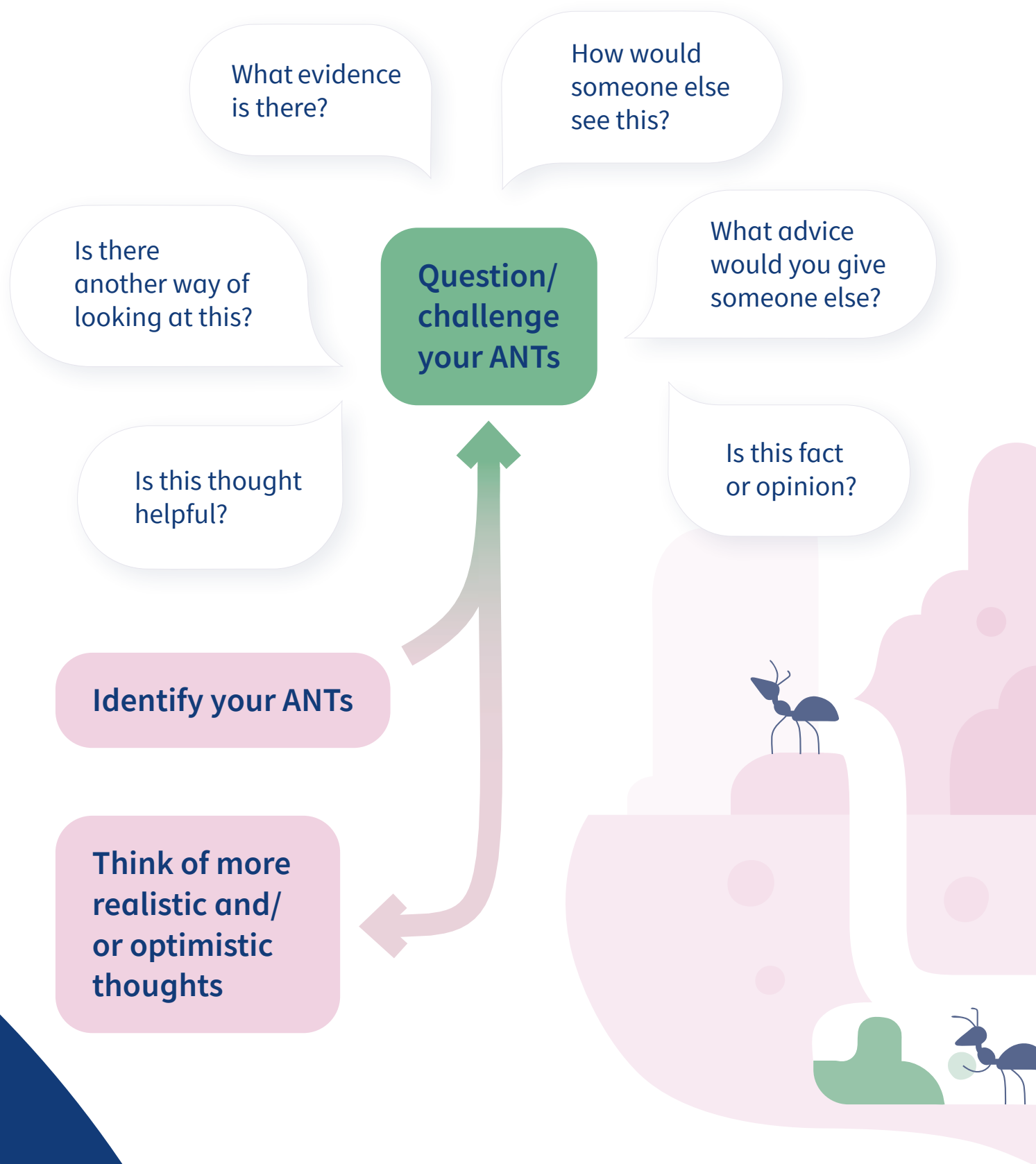
### Seeing things through negative glasses

Negative glasses only let you see the negatives in a situation. Even if things have gone okay, negative glasses will still see the bits that didn’t go as well as you would have liked.



# Automatic Negative Thoughts

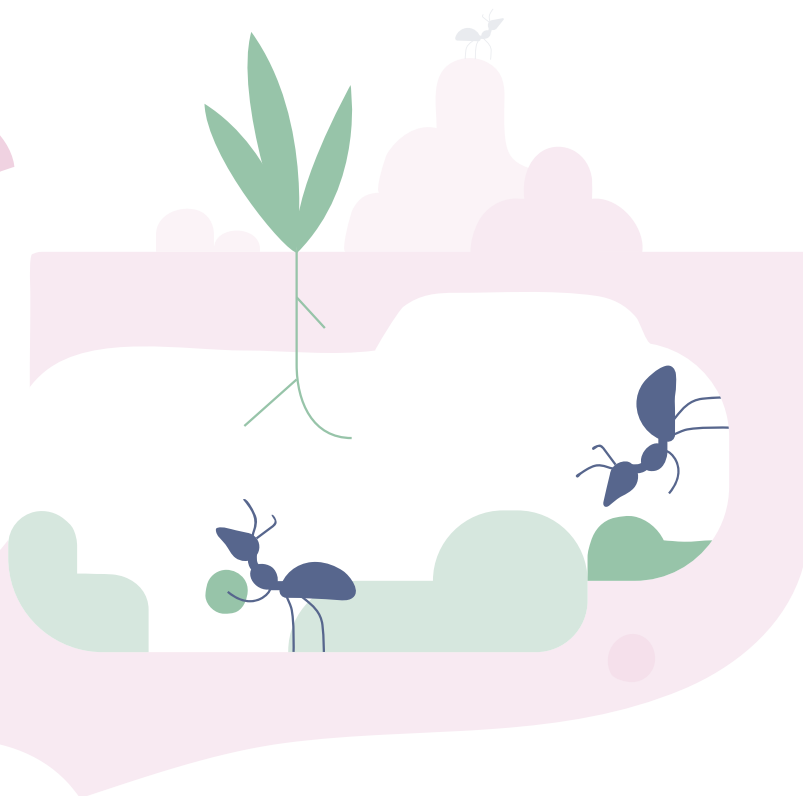
When you find yourself having Automatic Negative Thoughts **(ANTs)** you can challenge it using the diagram below.



# Other ways to tackle ANTs

Methods to check your Automatic Negative Thoughts.

- + **Challenge your thoughts:** Imagine you are collecting evidence for a court case to prove that your negative thought isn't true. Think of a time where you were sure something bad was going to happen but it didn't. Ask yourself how you would look at the situation differently if you were feeling happy and calm.
- + **Consider other, less scary, outcomes:** What are other ways the situation could resolve itself?
- + **Imagine positive outcomes:** Think of positive ways that the situation could be resolved.
- + **Practice looking for the positives:** Write down three good things every single day. These could be good things that have happened to you, things you did well or things that you're grateful for. They could even be good things that have happened somewhere else in the world.
- + **Take a time out:** Instead of trying to tackle the thought when you're feeling bad, wait until later when your feelings are less intense and see if you feel differently.



# Relaxation

Find the best way for you to relax using the following activities.

There are lots of different ways you can relax and different people find different things relaxing. Some people like using strategies to calm the mind, some prefer to relax their bodies, and others like to do activities to distract themselves from thinking too much. The following section gives you different ways to relax.

**Give them a try  
and see what ones  
work for you!**

## Relaxing the mind using mindfulness

It's natural for our minds to wander. Unfortunately, when we get caught up in thinking too much we miss enjoying the present moment we are in.

Mindfulness can be tricky at first. Our minds are used to wandering, and we will often be tempted to fix on a thought or a feeling. When you first try these exercises, you will probably find that your mind wanders after a minute or two. That's normal—minds do that! Don't give yourself a hard time, remember you are still learning.

The more you practice mindfulness, the better you train your brain to pay attention and the easier it will get.

Skill level:  
**Beginner**

## Mindful breathing meditation

**1.** Sit up in a comfortable way. Close your eyes.

**2.** Notice your breathing as you inhale and exhale normally. Just pay attention to your breath as it goes in and out. Can you feel the place where the air tickles your nostrils? What about when your breath comes out over the lips?

**5.** Sit for a few minutes, just paying attention to your gentle breathing. See how relaxed you can feel just sitting, breathing in and out.

**3.** Pay attention to how the breath gently moves your body. Can you notice your belly or your chest moving as you breathe?

**4.** Try to take longer, slower breaths that fill your belly up with air. Notice how the belly expands and rises as you inhale, and falls as you exhale.

**6.** When your mind starts to wander and think about something else, gently guide your attention back to your breathing. If it helps you focus think the word 'relax' or quietly hum in time with each exhale, or say to yourself "I'm breathing in" on the inhale and "I'm breathing out" when you exhale.

**And that's it! When you're ready, you can open your eyes.**

## Lake visualisation

**1.** Take a deep breath in and gently close your eyes.

**2.** Imagine yourself relaxing by a beautiful, calm lake. The breeze softly blows over the lake, watch the thousands of tiny ripples it creates on its surface. Listen to the birds singing happily in the trees. Feel how warm the sun is on your skin. Your surroundings are so calm, let that calm feeling wash over your entire body and mind.

**3.** Now it's time to release any worries, negative thoughts and emotions, and stress you have been keeping inside. Imagine them floating out of your body, up, out, and away. Watch them float into a cloud and then watch the cloud floating away, carrying them away with it. As you watch them leave your body, imagine the empty space they have left inside you.

**4.** Now imagine you are surrounded by a beautiful, sparkling light. Take a deep breath in, as you breathe in see yourself inhaling that sparkling light. The light represents love, peace, and calm and enters the empty space you made inside of you. Take a few more deep breaths, filling up your body with good energy. Feel the light travelling around your body, healing you and filling you with positivity. Sit for a few minutes, just paying attention to your gentle breathing. See how relaxed you can feel just sitting, breathing in and out.

**Now when you're ready, open your eyes and have a big stretch.**

Skill level:  
**Beginner**

## Mindful showering

**1.** Run the shower and step in.

**2.** Under the shower, focus on how the water feels as it falls onto your head and runs down your body. Notice the water warming and relaxing your muscles. Feel the soft, bubbly sensation of your soap as cleanses and moisturises your skin. As you wash, keep your movements slow, allowing yourself time to feel the different sensations.

**3.** Listen to the sound of the water as it lands on your body and on the floor. Imagine any negative thoughts, feelings, and stress being washed away by the water, imagine them running off you and down the drain.

**4.** Now take a deep breath and smell your soap. What does it smell like? Breathe in deeply, and breathe out slowly, allowing your whole body to relax further.

**5.** When you have finished showering, take a moment to appreciate the soft dry towel as it presses against your wet skin.

**Now take a moment to appreciate the natural feeling of cleanliness and relaxation before you move on with your day.**

## Mindful eating

Get a piece of fruit (e.g. an orange, an apple, or even something as small as a raisin). Your job is to eat the fruit slowly, without rushing while giving your full attention to what you're eating.

**1.** Start by holding the fruit. Roll it in your hand. Notice how it feels in your fingers. If you hold it firmly, is it squishy? Is it juicy?

**2.** Hold the fruit near your nose. What does it smell like?

**3.** Notice how the fruit looks. Pay attention to whether the skin is smooth or bumpy. Notice the different colours.

**4.** Now go ahead and taste your fruit. Notice how it feels on your tongue, and against your teeth. Notice the flavour, the texture, and the juiciness as you chew each piece slowly. Take your time as you chew, taste, smell, and feel each bite of the fruit.

# Muscle relaxation exercise

An exercise to help you relax your body.

Muscle relaxation exercises simply involve squeezing each of your muscles in turn for five seconds and then relaxing them for ten seconds before moving on to the next muscle.

The best place to do this is in a quiet room where you won't be disturbed. You can lie down to do this or just sit in a comfortable position.

**Take 3 deep breaths**

**1.** Squeeze your foot for 5 seconds. Relax.

**4.** Shrug your shoulders for 5 seconds. Relax.

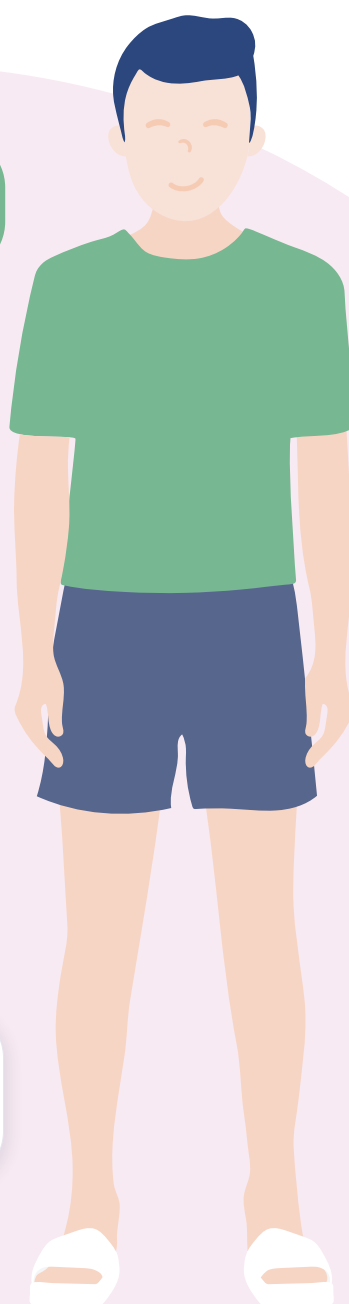
**2.** Squeeze your leg for 5 seconds. Relax.

**5.** Shrug your arms and hands for 5 seconds. Relax.

**3.** Squeeze your stomach for 5 seconds. Relax.

**6.** Squeeze your whole body for 5 seconds. Relax.

**Take 3 deep breaths**





# Distract yourself from worry

Try these exercises when you need to distract yourself from your worries. Turn it into a competition with your friends or family!

- + Name all the objects you see.
- + Describe the steps in performing an activity you know how to do well. For example, how to shoot a basketball, prepare your favourite meal, or tie a knot.
- + Count backwards from 100 by 7.
- + Pick up an object and describe it in detail. Describe its colour, texture, size, weight, scent, and any other qualities you notice.
- + Spell your full name, and the names of three other people, backwards.
- + Name all your family members, their ages, and one of their favourite activities.
- + Read something backwards, letter-by-letter. Practice for

at least a few minutes.

- + Think of an object and “draw” it in your mind, or in the air with your finger. Try drawing your home, a vehicle, or an animal.

**Using all your 5 senses is a great way to focus on your surroundings and bring yourself into the present moment**

## **Name...**

- + **5** things you can **see**
- + **5** things you can **feel**
- + **5** things you can **hear**
- + **5** things you can **smell**
- + **5** things you can **taste**

**Practice yoga**



**Cook or bake**



**Clean or  
re-arrange  
your room**

**Listen to music**



**Spend time  
with a pet**



**Paint or draw**



**Phone or  
message  
a friend**

**Try a home workout**

**Play an instrument**



**Sing or dance**

**Play a board game**

**Challenge yourself  
to an hour a day  
without technology**

**Watch your  
favourite TV  
show or movie**



**Have a bubble bath**

**Read  
a book**



**Make a list of the  
things you'd like  
to do in your life**

Part 4:

# Staying healthy at home

# Healthy sleeping habits

Are you having trouble sleeping?

Sleep is such an important part of all of our daily lives. You should think of it as being just as important as food and water for your overall health. The average teenager needs between 8 and 10 hours sleep every night and lots of things can interfere with us getting a good night's sleep. Follow the steps below to ensure that you are keeping yourself healthy and getting enough sleep.



Although it can be tempting to stay up late and have a lie-in when there's no school, **stick to your usual bed time and wake-up time.**



**Try not to use tablets/phone/TVs/games consoles an hour before bed.** Try one of the relaxing activities in this booklet instead.



**Try to avoid sugar and caffeine** (sweets, chocolate, fizzy drinks, tea and coffee) in the evening.



**Try to use your bed only for sleeping.** If you sit on it for playing on tablets, Xbox, Playstation etc, get a chair to use instead.

**Try to stick to a schedule throughout the day** to avoid napping out of boredom.



**Make sure you get some exercise** during the day!



# Exercising at home

Try one of the workouts below and Improve your self-esteem, mood and sleep quality.

Research has shown that regular physical activity can boost our self-esteem, mood and sleep quality, making us less stressed, anxious and depressed. Workouts don't have to be long or require a lot of space or special equipment. There are lots of exercises you can do at home and ways to make it fun.

## Prefer to be guided through a workout?

There are lots of free videos on Youtube. See the links on page 30.

## High intensity interval training

1	<b>Jumping Jacks</b>	20 seconds
	rest	10 seconds
2	<b>Push-ups</b>	20 seconds
	rest	10 seconds
3	<b>Crunches</b>	20 seconds
	rest	10 seconds

4	<b>Burpees</b>	20 seconds
	rest	10 seconds
5	<b>High Knees</b>	20 seconds
	rest	10 seconds
6	<b>Jog in Place</b>	20 seconds
	rest	10 seconds

**What's your name?** Complete the exercises below for each letter of your name.

**A** 10 jumping jack

**B** 5 push ups

**C** 1 burpee

**D** 20 high knees

**E** 5 crunches

**F** 10 mountain climbers

**G** 5 squats

**H** 10 front lunges

**I** 10 side lunges

**J** 10 second wall sit

**K** 5 calf raises

**L** 5 second plank

**M** 3 squat jumps

**N** 10 second jump rope

**O** 10 Russian twists

**P** 5 plie squats

**Q** 10 arm circles

**R** 10 skaters

**S** 10 second jog in place

**T** 10 butt kickers

**U** 5 inchworms

**V** 5 tricep dips

**W** 3 star jumps

**X** 5 bird dogs

**Y** 10 leg raises

**Z** 5 squat jumps

Source: [www.theysmell.com](http://www.theysmell.com)

# Further resources

Find more activities and support.

If you want to stay updated on the latest developments regarding coronavirus make sure you're checking only reputable sources of information (e.g. the [World Health Organisation](#), the [NHS](#), and the [Scottish Government](#)). Take everything else you read with a pinch of salt.

## Online support

### Get Self Help

Get Self Help compiles an extensive list of resources based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. You will find information about mental health and usable guides such as 'dealing with negative emotions', 'help for anxiety—now!' and 'if you're feeling distressed right now'.

### Big White Wall

Big white wall is a 24/7 online peer-to-peer support service for anxiety, depression and other mental health issues. It offers a range of therapeutic pathways, including peer and professional support and creative self-expression.

## Apps

### Smiling Mind

Smiling Mind is a meditation program to help bring mindfulness into your life. [Available on iOS and Android.](#)

### Mindshift

Mindshift can be used to help manage and reduce anxiety. It includes a feelings check in, chill zone with audio bodyscan, breathing exercises, coping cards, and a thought journal. [Available on iOS and Android.](#)

### Breathe2Relax

Breathe2Relax is a stress management tool that provides information on the effects of stress on the body as well as instructions and practice exercises to help users learn the stress management skill called diaphragmatic breathing. It can also help with mood stabilization, anger control, and anxiety management. [Available on iOS and Android.](#)

### Three Good Things

This simple tool lets you record three positive things about your day. This helps you to start looking for and focusing on the good things in your life. It records all your entries in one place, allowing you to look back through them whenever you need a positivity boost. [Available on iOS.](#)

### Brain Test

Brain test is full of tricky puzzles and brain teasers. Think of it as 'brain exercise'. It will challenge you to think outside the box and no two puzzles are alike. [Available on iOS and Android.](#)

### Merge Block

Merge block is a classic puzzle game where your task is to merge matching blocks together to make a bigger number. Sounds simple enough but as you progress the game speeds up and the blocks begin to stick together, you have to beat the clock and clear the rows before they reach the top or you lose. [Available on iOS and Android.](#)

### Woody Block Puzzle

Woody block puzzle is a relaxing artisan block puzzle to help you emotionally re-charge and reduce stress. [Available on iOS and Android.](#)

### Wordscapes

Wordscapes provides you with a random assortment of letters, your task is to fill in the crosswords puzzles using only letters available. [Available on iOS and Android.](#)

## Exercise resources

### Kassandra Yoga

Kassandra Yoga guides you through a gentle yoga stretching tutorial. How long? Ten minutes. Good for: Stretching out stiff muscles, flexibility and introducing you to deep relaxing breathing.

### Bodyweight Workout

Bodyweight Workout for Teens (a workout that uses your own weight to provide resistance opposed to using equipment) by 24strong has been designed for, and is demonstrated by, teenagers. There are ten different exercises, you do 45-seconds of each exercises followed by 15 seconds of rest. How long? Ten minutes. Good for: Building strength and cardiovascular fitness.

### Nicole Steen

Follow dancer Nicole Steen as she leads you through her Latin dance workout. It's fast paced but you can follow background dancer Tara who demonstrates simpler ways of doing each move until you've mastered them. How long? Thirty minutes. Good for: Cardiovascular fitness, learning a new skill, and having fun!

### POPSUGAR

In this POPSUGAR tutorial, boxing coach Milan Costich shows you how you can do some boxing at home. They use 2-5lb dumbbells in this video, if you have some—great! If not, you can use two bottles of water, two tins (e.g. beans) or forego the weights altogether and just punch with empty hands. How long? Fifteen minutes. Good for: Cardiovascular fitness, learning a new skill, and having fun!

### The Body Coach

You can join Joe's sessions at 9am Monday-Friday on his YouTube channel 'The Body Coach TV'.





If you feel your worries are getting bigger, you or your parent can contact:

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

**Breathing Space:** 0800 83 85 87  
<https://breathingspace.scot>

**NHS 24:** 111  
<https://www.nhs24.scot>

**Your local GP**

This resource may be made available, in full or summary form, in alternative formats and community languages. Please contact us on **0131 656 3200** or email **[altformats@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:altformats@nes.scot.nhs.uk)** to discuss how we can best meet your requirements.



NHS Education for Scotland  
Westport 102  
West Port  
Edinburgh EH3 9DN  
tel: 0131 656 3200  
**[www.nes.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk)**