

Toolkit: Managing Transition, Uncertainty and Change Summer Holiday Edition

Due to the Coronavirus crisis, we've all been through a period of huge uncertainty and change. Routines got disrupted and we experienced unpredictable changes in our lives - not within our control. When we don't choose change, it can be difficult to accept and manage. Now, as we transition into a new type of 'normal', this can bring new changes and challenges - even if we are looking forward to it!

Everyone manages transition, uncertainty and change differently. This toolkit is a guide to help you manage change in the healthiest way possible for you, during the summer holidays, as you start to think about going back to school.

Using this toolkit



- If you are a parent/carer or professional supporting a young person through this toolkit please see the guidance on page 11
- While reading this toolkit, lookout for the light bulb for tips and techniques to help you look after you and your daily wellbeing
- This toolkit is interactive – it may ask you to reflect on questions, write or draw your thoughts and feelings. Lookout for the thinking bubble for activities to do to help you understand your thoughts and feelings and the impact they have on you .
- Not all of the ideas will be helpful for everyone - try as many as you can and notice what really works for you. Use these to help you and share with others so you can build deeper connections with friends and family

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Quiz!

Test your knowledge about human behaviour! Think about your own experiences while you go through the quiz - they might help you decide on your answer.

Question

Answer

- 1 Humans can learn behaviour. [True/False](#)
- 2 Most people respond to change by:
 - a) freaking out
 - b) being calm
 - c) being confused
 - d) being scared
 - e) being excited
 - f) all of the above
- 3 Some emotions can last forever. [True/False](#)
- 4 Teenage brains jump to conclusions quicker than adult brains. [True/False](#)
- 5 Humans like things that are familiar. [True/False](#)

Once you're finished you can see the answers on page 10

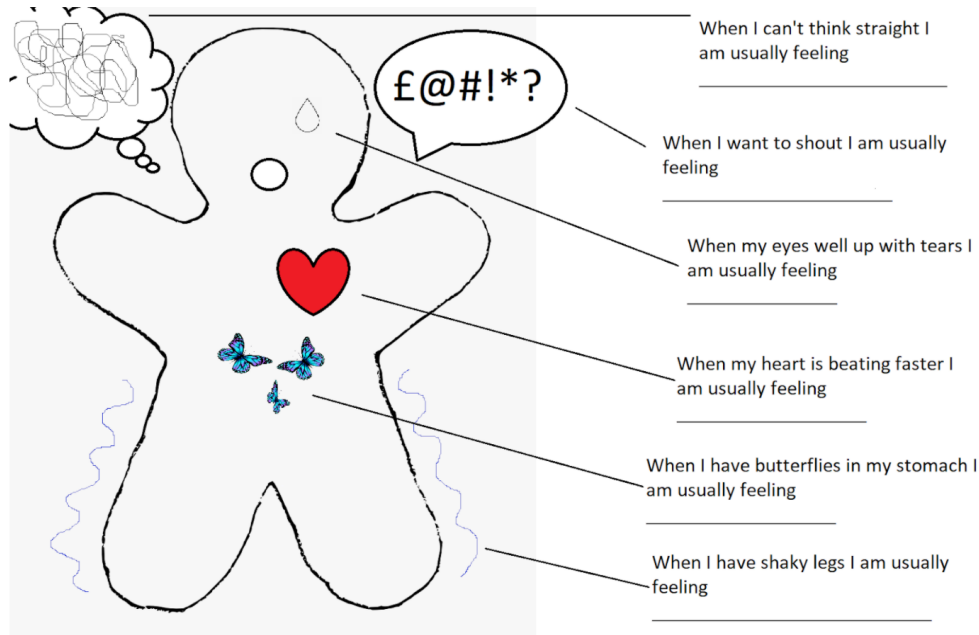


Our Body: Understanding our feelings

Our body is often what let's us know something doesn't feel right. It gives us helpful clues about how we feel.

The pandemic, lockdown, not being at school, not hanging out with friends - these changes can make us feel less safe - as if the ground is being pulled away from underneath us. Below are some common sensations people notice in their bodies.

What feelings do you usually have with each one?



When I can't think straight I am usually feeling _____

When I want to shout I am usually feeling _____

When my eyes well up with tears I am usually feeling _____

When my heart is beating faster I am usually feeling _____

When I have butterflies in my stomach I am usually feeling _____

When I have shaky legs I am usually feeling _____

How does knowing about the connection between body sensations and feelings help us?

Our body sensations give us a lot of clues about how we feel. It can be helpful to know what these clues mean, because the sooner we listen to the clues, the quicker we can do something about them.

The activities we suggest here are useful for those times when we notice that our body is giving us these clues.

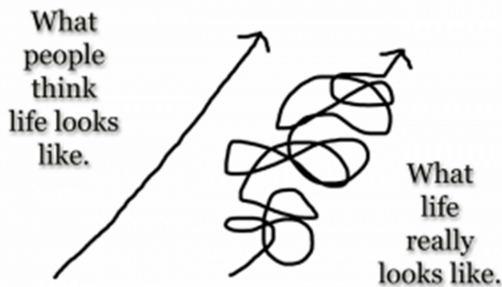


It's a good idea to stand up and move around at the end of each task. Listen to a song you love, shake your arms and legs about, stretch, do star jumps or walk around the space you're in a few times, take some deep breaths as you move around



Stages of Change: How do I manage change in my life?

“The only constant in life is change”



We all face multiple changes every day, sometimes every minute! Whether it's a change in the weather, what's going on around us, or our emotions - change is constant.

Spend 5 minutes thinking about how many things have changed for you already today. You can note them below or just reflect on them in your head.



Q: Were you surprised at how many you came up with? Were there some things that had more impact than others?

Change affects everyone and we each deal with it differently. This may be due to who you are as a person, your past experiences, or simply what mood you're in when change happens.

Think about times in your life when things have changed, e.g.

Moving schools Moving home The coronavirus pandemic starting

Going into lockdown Schools closing down Going through a breakup

Your parents or carers separating / divorcing Falling out with a friend

Getting a new sister/brother/pet Your phone getting lost, broken or stolen

Although all of these changes are normal and happen to many people, we might still react to these events and go through the Stages of Change to adapt to what has happened.

Have a look at the stages of change diagram - can you relate to any of these?



It's important to know and remember:

- Each stage can take time, depending on what the change was, who we are and the support we have around us.
- We don't always go through the stages in order - we might jump around a lot.
- Even if change is positive, we can still feel intense emotions - there are still always things we leave behind.

Finish the sentences below with your own experience of what you were feeling at the time. There are no right or wrong answers:

I was in the _____ stage of the change cycle when I first heard about coronavirus?

I was in the _____ stage of the change cycle when I was told schools were closing?

I was in the _____ stage of the change cycle when the UK first went into lockdown?

I am in the _____ stage of the change cycle now

I think I've experienced ____ out of 6 stages of the cycle during the pandemic

One thing that helped me manage these changes was _____

One thing that made all these changes harder was _____

One thing I've learnt about myself during this crisis is _____

One thing I would do differently in a similar experience would be _____

If you felt at all stressed, overwhelmed or triggered during this activity, go to page 6 for some breathing and grounding exercises in the coping strategies section.

Remember - we all deal with change differently. There are no right or wrong ways to feel, and using coping strategies and asking for support can make managing change easier. See the next section for more ideas.



It's a good idea to stand up and move around at the end of each task. Listen to a song you love, shake your arms and legs about, stretch, do star jumps or walk around the space you're in a few times, take some deep breaths as you move around



Coping Strategies: To calm, distract and support you

Here are tried and tested coping strategies to calm you, distract you, cheer you up and help you identify people to support you through challenging times. Try lots of different ideas before deciding which ones work best for you.

Tick this box if you try any of these activities

To Calm You

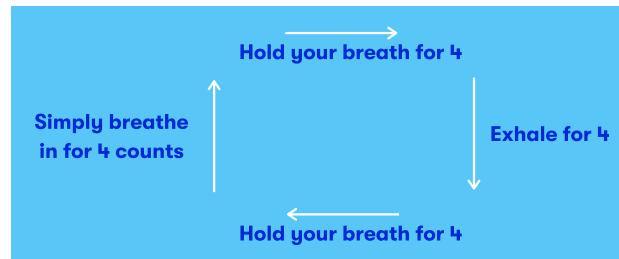


1) Breathing

Box breathing can help us feel less anxious and more relaxed, especially if we practice it. Simply breathe in (inhale) for 4 counts, hold your breath for 4, breathe out (exhale) for 4 and then hold your breath for 4. Try to repeat this at least 6 times.



Hints & Tips: It can help to imagine an actual box and count with your fingers for 4 beats - with each inhale, holding breath, exhale and holding breath again being one side of the box.



Tactical Breathing is used in the army because breathing this way literally calms your brain down. All you do is exhale (breathe out) for longer than you inhale (breathe in), e.g. inhale for 4, exhale for 8 (or whatever works for you). Try and do this for at least 9 breaths.



Hints & Tips: Imagine breathing in the word *Calm*, and breathing out the word *Stress* (say in your head 'calm' when inhaling, 'Stress' when exhaling' to help you relax more)

2) Guided Meditations

Try the 'Calm' app or 'Headspace'. They have lots of free sessions for managing stress, calming anxiety, feeling confident, soothing pain and staying focussed.



Hints & Tips: if you don't want to use an app you, type 'guided meditation' into YouTube and lots of options to try out will come up.



To Cheer You Up!



1) What makes you feel good?

It can be hard to remember positive things, or things that bring us joy, especially when we are feeling stressed, low, anxious or uncertain. Challenge yourself to think of 25 things that make you feel good (one for each letter of the alphabet) using the space below e.g.

A - AUNTY JOANNA
B - BAKING
C - CONNECTING WITH FRIENDS



Hints & tips: If you get stuck on a letter - like X - be creative eg. Xbox, X-iting trips, XL fries etc. If you have more than one thing that makes you feel good for each letter write as many down as you can. If people in your life make you feel good, write their names next to the letter they begin with.

A	N
B	O
C	P
D	Q
E	R
F	S
G	T
H	U
I	V
J	W
K	X
L	Y
M	Z

Next time you feel sad, overwhelmed, bored or uncertain pick a 'thing that makes you feel good' to do! Try and do at least 1 thing and connect with 1 person that makes you feel good every day during the summer holidays.

2) Half Smile

Have you heard people say that ‘smiling is contagious’? Well it’s actually scientifically true! Seeing other people smile or smiling ourselves sends signals to our brain that we feel good. As weird as it sounds, our brains can’t tell the difference between when we’re really smiling or faking a smile. This means you can actually trick your brain into thinking you feel great, and ‘fake it until you make it’!

All you do is make your mouth smile: turn up the corners of your mouth whether you feel good or not, and your mood will improve.



Hints & Tips: If you find it too hard to make yourself smile, find other things that make you smile / laugh - silly videos on YouTube, TikTok, watching comedy

3) Self Hug

Similar to smiling - physical contact also makes us feel good. When we are touched our brains release ‘feel good chemicals’. In fact there is a whole hormone in our bodies called the ‘Hug Hormone’ because it increases when we are cuddled. This hormone is released whether we are cuddled by someone else, or whether we give ourselves a hug.


So give yourself a big bear hug when you need one!

To Distract You



1) The 5 Senses Exercises

Noticing our environment around us in the present moment helps us stay calm and focussed when we are overthinking, feeling anxious or panicking. Look around you and notice:



The infographic is on a blue background and lists five senses with icons and examples:

- 5 things you can see** (eye icon): Textures, colours, details in pictures, plants, flowers etc
- 4 things you can hear** (ear icon): Birds, traffic, footsteps, dogs, children, breathing, rain etc
- 3 things you can touch** (hand icon): Feet on the ground, hands in your lap, clothes on skin etc
- 2 things you can smell** (nose icon): Food cooking, perfume, flowers, cut grass, fresh air etc
- 1 things you can taste** (tongue icon): Morning coffee, afternoon tea, toast, chocolate! etc

2) Mindful BIF Walking

BIF stands for Beautiful, Interesting and Funny. Go for a walk and take time to be curious. Keep walking until you find:

- Something Beautiful
- Something Interesting
- Something Funny

1) Identify your support network



We all need support now and then, but sometimes we find it hard to ask for help. Have a look at the image below and answer the questions.

"What is the bravest thing you've ever said?" asked the boy.



"Help," said the horse.

How easy is it for you to ask for help on a scale of 1-10 (where 1 is low and 10 is high)?

(Not easy) 1 _____ 10 (Really easy)

People struggle to ask for help because _____

Asking for Help is Brave - true or false?

The last time I asked for help was _____

Have a look at the words below and circle the top 5 things that you think are important qualities for a friend to have:

Trustworthy

Thoughtful

Always available

Non-judgmental

Nice and kind

Makes time for me

Knows me well

Cares about other people

A good listener

Honest

Makes me feel good

Reliable

Easy to talk to

Fun to be around

Loyal

Keeps secrets



2) Professionals

Remember, no matter how alone or rubbish you feel - there is ALWAYS support out there. You can contact:

- **Childline** - <https://www.childline.org.uk/> offers support for under 19s dealing with any issue. Their freephone number is 08001111 - open 9am - midnight.
- **The Mix** - <https://www.themix.org.uk/> offers support for under 25s. Contact them online - 1-2-1 chat option (through their website), Freephone number 0808 808 4994, and 24/7 crisis messenger - text THEMIX to 85258

We hope you found this toolkit helpful. We'd love to hear how it was for you - send any thoughts, ideas and feedback to thalia@khulisa.co.uk.

Lookout for the 2nd edition of our toolkit - Managing Transition, Uncertainty and Change: Back to School Edition

Quiz Answers!

Check how well you know human behaviour by scoring yourself - 1 mark for every right answer.

	Answer	Mark
1	True - all behaviour is learned, and can be unlearned!	
2	f) all of the above - Whether we are scared, confused, panicky, calm or excited - all responses are normal reactions to change. None are right or wrong and how we manage change depends on who we are as a person and our past experiences.	
3	False - emotions come and go and change constantly. We can feel 100's of emotions in one day. No matter how awful, intense or overwhelming an emotion, it will never last forever. It helps to remind yourself of this if you are feeling a particularly intense, difficult emotion.	
4	True - The last part of our brain to develop is the part that solves problems and makes decisions. This means teenagers are more impulsive, quicker to misinterpret information and jump to conclusions!	
5	True - Humans like the familiar and we prefer comfort food, enjoy watching the same film more than once, sit in the same chair, enjoy being with people we know more than strangers. This is because the familiar makes us feel safer than the unfamiliar (which can feel unknown and risky).	



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Using this resource as a Parent/Carer/Professional

If you are supporting a young person through this toolkit, we recommend:

- **Do all of the active aspects of the toolkit together with the young person.** Role model how the activity is done and share some of your own experiences of transition and change during the pandemic. This can help to normalise these experiences, create a sense of commonality ('we're in it together') and builds connection between you and the young person.
- **Do move around at the end of each section.** This helps regulate the body, balance emotional states and helps integrate learning. Make it fun - maybe see who can stretch highest or squat lowest - encourage young people to challenge you to do something they can teach you. This helps build their confidence in their own skills.
- **Use this toolkit with both individuals and groups.** If you plan to use the exercises with groups ask for an open group discussion about each topic before using the materials to gauge the existing knowledge in the room.

If a young person needs more support than this toolkit offers, please contact Khulisa for more information about our online interactive summer holiday webinar series.

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