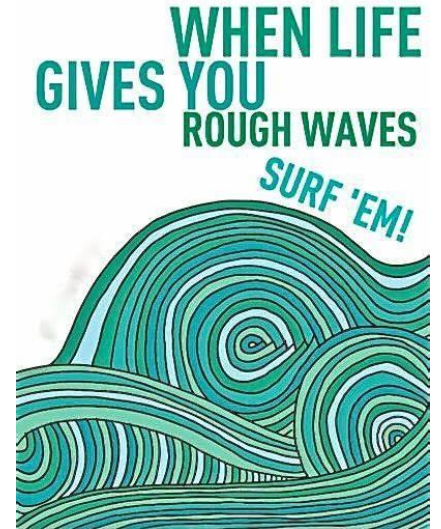


Riding the Wave of Emotion

MHST Stevenage

A workshop for young people



Emotions can be a Difficult Topic



Before we start...

We know the topic is often difficult to talk about



Anything you may be feeling is okay

Please do talk to a staff member afterwards if you would like to ask any questions and discuss anything further



Mental Health Support Teams Hertfordshire & West Essex Possible Feelings?



Sad?

Unsure?

Angry?

Relief?

Ashamed?

Nervous?

Fear?

Feeling blamed?

Dread?



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What are Emotions?

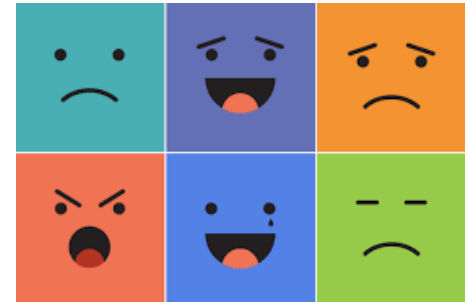


Emotion is often defined as a complex state of feeling that results in physical and psychological changes that influence thought and behaviour.

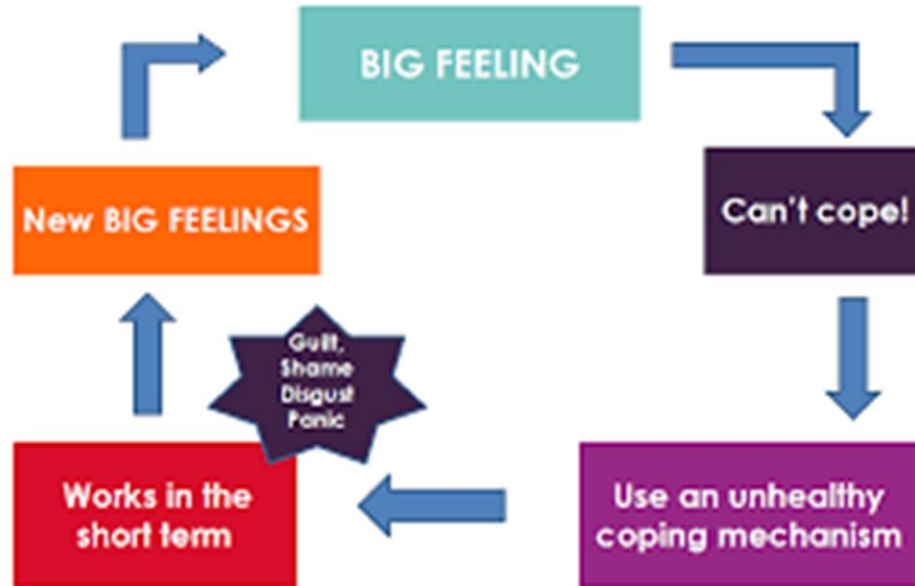


Where do difficult emotions come from?

- Life events, both good and bad, e.g. new school, new sibling, bullying, loss, medical diagnosis, covid
- Hormones
- Relationships
- Individual differences
- Thought patterns
- Change/uncertainty
- Physical Health, e.g. unhealthy diet and lack of exercise
- Identity
- Self-esteem
- Environmental factors, e.g. weather, music, social media
- Beliefs/Values



Finding it hard to manage emotions?



Why we use unhelpful coping strategies?

Unhelpful strategies can have a range of functions, which will be different for each person. Such as:

- To manage emotional upset
- To reduce tension
- To provide a feeling of physical pain to distract from emotional pain
- To express emotions such as hurt, anger or frustration
- A form of escape
- An effort to regain control over feelings or problems
- An attempt to punish oneself or others
- To elicit care from others
- To identify with a peer group



Unhealthy Coping Mechanisms



- Avoidance
- Over/under eating
- Unhealthy relationships
- Risky behaviour
- Self-harm
- Excessive sleeping
- Withdrawal
- Running away



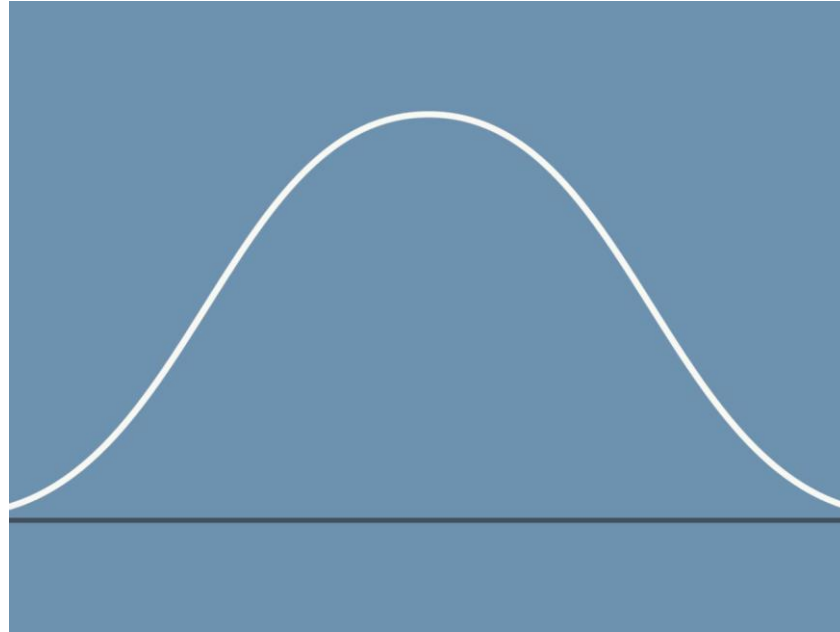
Does It Help?



Often unhealthy coping mechanisms only bring temporary relief. This means that later, when things start to build up again, we might feel like we have to use them again. It can be really hard to break out of this cycle. And it can be upsetting to think that this is our only way to cope. But there are lots of healthier ways to feel better.



Riding the Wave of Emotion



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Urge Surfing



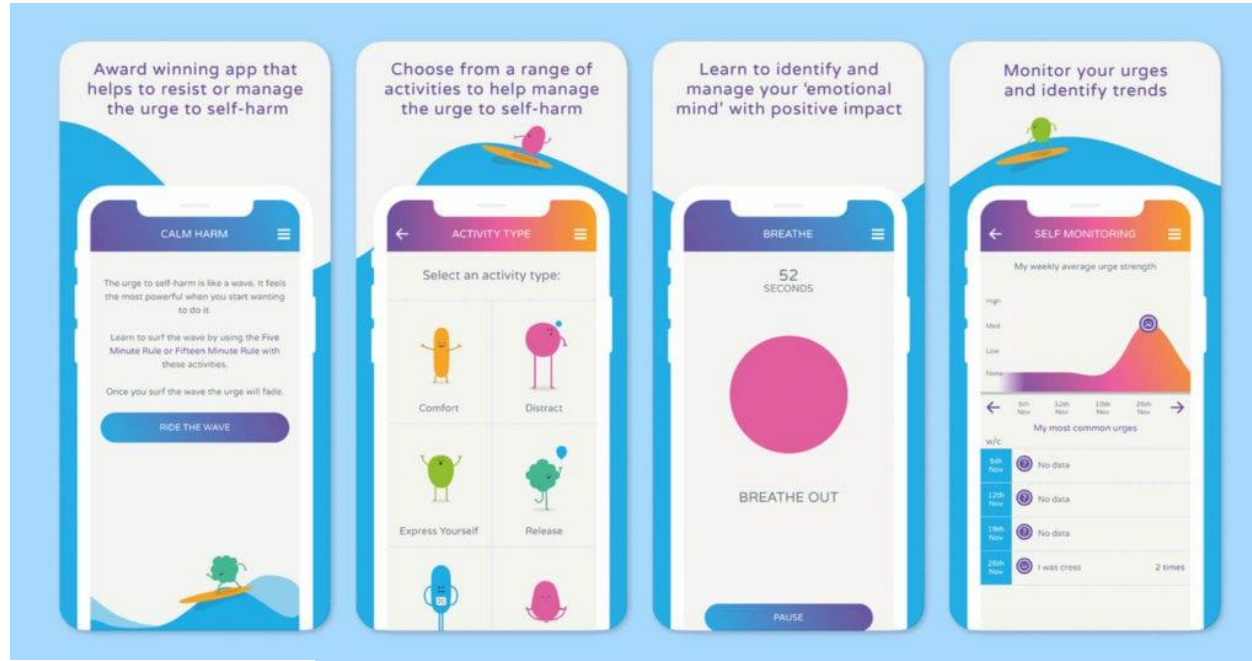
The urge to use unhealthy coping mechanisms often builds up over a period of time, it is useful to imagine this as a wave on the ocean. Once it reaches it's full height and power it recedes.

Imagine yourself surfing that wave, waiting for the wave to break. Allow yourself time and space to allow the wave to peek and experience it fade



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Calm Harm App



Choosing The Right Technique



In order to find techniques that will work for you it's important to identify what need unhelpful coping strategies is meeting for you.

Once we know this we can replace it with something that meets the same need but is more helpful 😊



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For example...

Using an unhealthy strategy as a form of **escape** and distraction from difficult emotions.. You may need to find other forms of helpful **distraction**

If you are trying to **manage** emotional upset and elicit **care** from others you may need to find other ways to provide **comfort** for yourself.

Should you use unhealthy strategies as a way to **express** emotions such as hurt, anger or frustration, or to release tension, it may be most helpful for you to find other ways to **release** these emotions that do not involve hurting yourself.



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Coping Strategies/Healthy Alternatives

Distraction:

- Watch a film or TV series
- Count backwards from 300
- Five senses exercise
- Read a book you're really interested in
- Play a computer game that absorbs your mind
- Write a list of all the places in the world you would like to go
- Write a list of all the experiences you would like to have (e.g. bungee jumping/sky diving/rock climbing)
- Design your dream house

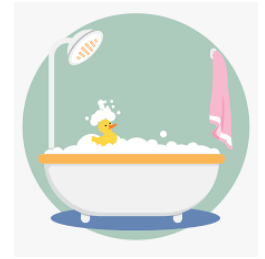
- Think about what car you will want to drive
- Plan all the things you want to achieve
- Write a diary/journal
- Draw
- Creative writing
- Paint
- Take some photos
- Sing to music as loud as you can
- Put on feel good music
- Make a memory box/scrap book



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Coping Strategies/Healthy Alternatives



Comfort:

- Have a bubble bath or shower
- Use aromatherapy oils
- Eat something enjoyable — chocolate (or whatever)
- Have an 'emergency box' with whatever helps you cope
- Buy something special
- Massage your hands/arms/feet (or the area you want to harm)
- Stroke a pet/cuddle a teddy
- Have a cup of tea
- Rock/hug yourself
- Give yourself a face pack & pampering session
- Manicure/pedicure



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Coping Strategies/Healthy Alternatives

Releasing Emotion:

- Breathing techniques
- Scribbling in red pen
- Hold ice in your hand for as long as you can
- Rub ice on the area you want to harm
- Step under a cold shower briefly
- Draw or write on the areas of your body you want to harm
- Write words on yourself
- Cry (allow yourself to cry)
- Hit a cushion against the wall or bed
- Punch a punch bag
- Throw things safely
- Go for a fast-paced walk
- Tear up newspaper or a phone book
- Put a finger in frozen food
- Run your hands under cold water



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RECAP:



6 STEPS TO MINDFULLY DEAL WITH DIFFICULT EMOTIONS



1

Turn toward your emotions with acceptance

Become aware of the emotion and identify where you sense it in your body.

Identify and label the emotion

To stay mindful, say to yourself, "This is anger" or "This is anxiety."

2



3

Accept your emotions

Don't deny the emotion. Acknowledge and accept that it is there.

Realize the impermanence of your emotions

Even if the emotion feels overwhelming, remember that it will pass.

4



5

Inquire and investigate

Ask yourself, "What triggered me? Why do I feel this way?"

Let go of the need to control your emotions

Be open to the outcome of your emotions and what unfolds.

6



The Gottman Institute

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Helpful Communication With A Trusted Person

- I feel.... (i.e. scared, worried, hurt, angry)
- When.... (the act/behaviour)
- Because.... (The consequence you think will happen)
- I would like.... (The action/behaviour you would like from the other person)



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'I' Statement Examples

I feel angry when work seems to take up a lot of your time because I really miss spending time with you, I would like us to be able to talk more and do fun things together.

I feel hurt when people say mean things to me at school because it makes me feel bad about myself. I would like some help with knowing what to do about this.



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What To Do If You Need Further Support

It is okay to ask for help, we encourage you to do this. Overwhelming emotions can often be too difficult to manage on your own.

Discuss with a trusted member of staff at school, your GP, and/or local Mental Health Service. You can call Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service 24/7 for advice on 0800 6444 101



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Take Home Messages

You are not alone!



Sometimes difficult emotions become too much to manage and we may get into unhelpful patterns of coping with this.

You can find other more helpful ways to fulfil your needs

Always reach out for help and support when you need it 😊



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I Challenge You...

After today's session I would like you all to do something nice for yourself this week. Anything that would feel like a treat 😊



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Signposting/ Resources



Information and support for young people:

- **ChildLine** Tel: 0800 1111
- **Papyrus** www.papyrus-uk.org
- **Young Minds** www.youngminds.org.uk
- **Samaritans** www.samaritans.org Tel: 116 123



Please be aware that the MHST is not an emergency mental health service, therefore if you are concerned for your safety please contact the Crisis team for support:

You can call Single Point of Access (SPA) on **0800 6444 101**. If you do not feel you can keep yourself safe and your life is at risk call 999 or go to A&E.