



Managing Thoughts and Feelings – A Guide for Students

Covid-19 has caused disruption to our lives. Many people have coped well, but some may find the change in routine and return to school stressful. It is normal to feel a range of emotions. It may take a little time to get used to your new situation. We all respond to change and stress in different ways, and use different coping strategies. During this time it is especially important that you look after yourself. Staying active, getting enough sleep, eating healthily, limiting your use of technology will help.

Here are some tips about how you can manage any thoughts or feelings that are bothering you about starting your new school/year.

It's natural to have lots of different thoughts and feelings when starting in a new school/year.

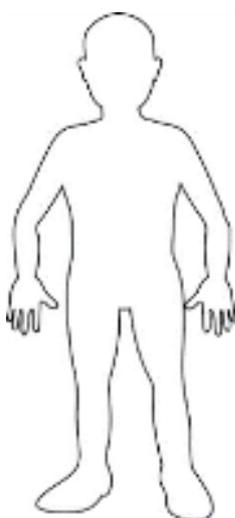


You might be thinking...

- I can't wait to see my old friends
- I can't wait to make new friends
- I have forgotten everything I learned in school
- I wonder what this year will be like
- I wonder what my new teacher(s) will be like

You might be feeling...

- Nervous
- Stressed
- Angry
- Relieved
- Worried
- Excited
- Nothing



Your body might feel...

- Tense
- Like you have butterflies in your tummy
- Tired or unable to sleep
- Tired or unable to sleep
- That you have headaches



What to do if your thoughts, feelings or sensations in your body make you feel bad:

- **Notice your thoughts.**

Are you focusing on the worst parts of school and ignoring the good parts? For example, are you thinking 'I have forgotten everything I've learned and I won't catch up', or 'I have lost touch with my friends, I will have no one to talk to'. If so try to challenge these unhelpful thoughts by saying:

- 'Is that really true?'
- 'If I have forgotten something can't I ask my teacher for help?'
- "Is it really true that I will have no one to talk to?"

When you challenge your unhelpful thoughts you can then replace them with more helpful, calming thoughts that make you feel; for example, 'I can ask a teacher for help', 'I can be friendly with classmates'.

- **It's good to talk!**

It really does help to talk. Choose somebody you trust and tell them how you are feeling. Talking about your feelings can make the feelings less strong.

- **Name it to Tame it**

Try to name your feelings and this will give them less power. Feelings come and go, you will not feel like this for ever. Remember, if you continue to be worried or your body feels bad you can talk to your G.P.

- **Notice your body.**

Are you tense anywhere in your body? Breathe into that area and imagine the area softening.

- **Ways to relax**

Practice calming strategies regularly such as breathing, visualisations, and mindfulness. See NEPS relaxation documents here and podcast [here](#).

- **Ways to help you take care of yourself**

Look at the self-care ideas on the next page and select ones that suit you.



50 Ways to Take a Break

Take a Bath

Listen to Music

Take a Nap

Go to a body of water

Watch the clouds

Light a candle

REST your legs up on a wall

Let out a sigh

Fly a Kite

Watch the stars

Learn something NEW

Read a Book

Listen to a guided relaxation

Sit in NATURE

Write a Letter

Take Deep Belly Breaths

MEDITATE

Call a Friend

Meander around Town

WRITE in a journal

Notice your Body

Buy some Flowers

Find a relaxing Scent

WALK Outside

Go for a run

Take a bike ride

Create your own coffee break

View some ART

Eat a meal in SILENCE

Turn off all electronics

Go to a Park

Pet a furry creature

Examine an everyday object with Fresh Eyes

Drive somewhere NEW

Go to a Farmer's Market

Forgive Someone

Read or watch something FUNNY

COLOR with Crayons

Make some MUSIC

Climb a Tree

Let go of something

Engage in small acts of KINDNESS

Do some gentle stretches

Paint on a surface other than paper

Write a quick poem

Read poetry

Put on some music and DANCE

Give Thanks

2x Move twice as slowly

2x Meander around Town

2x Find a relaxing Scent

2x View some ART

2x Read or watch something FUNNY

2x Engage in small acts of KINDNESS

2x Give Thanks

2x Put on some music and DANCE

2x Write a Letter

2x Listen to a guided relaxation

2x Take a Nap

2x Go to a body of water

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2x Light a candle

2x REST your legs up on a wall

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2x Buy some Flowers

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2x View some ART

2x Eat a meal in SILENCE

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2x Go to a Park

2x Pet a furry creature

2x Examine an everyday object with Fresh Eyes

2x Drive somewhere NEW

2x Go to a Farmer's Market

2x Forgive Someone

2x Read or watch something FUNNY

2x COLOR with Crayons

2x Make some MUSIC

2x Climb a Tree

2x Let go of something

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2x Paint on a surface other than paper

2x Write a quick poem

2x Read poetry

2x Put on some music and DANCE

2x Give Thanks

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