

Resources



Use **FACE**

- **F** **Focus on what is in your control.** The more focus you have on what is not in your control the more anxious or hopeless you can get. Focus on the here and now.
- **A** **Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings.** It's ok to do this. Don't try to push negative thoughts away as this can often make things worse. Observe what you're thinking or saying to yourself, give it a name and then change your focus onto something else.
- **C** **Come back into your body and connect.** Notice your posture, notice your breathing
- **E** **Engage in what you are doing.** Notice 5 things you can see around you, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell and perhaps 1 thing you can taste. Use your senses fully.

Helping young people cope

Self Harm Cycle

Young people are often caught in the Self Harm Cycle

Understanding this can help us support them where they are.



Samaritans

S.H.U.S.H listening tips



Show you care
Have patience
Use open questions
Say it back
Have courage

#1 Show you care

Focus on the other person, make eye contact, put away your phone



#2 Have patience

It may take time and several attempts before a person is ready to open up



#3 Use open questions

That need more than a yes/no answer, and follow up eg 'Tell me more'



#4 Say it back

To check you've understood, but don't interrupt or offer a solution



#5 Have courage

Don't be put off by a negative response and, most importantly, don't feel you have to fill a silence



 [samaritans.org/shush](https://www.samaritans.org/shush)

SAMARITANS

A registered charity





CURIOUS



APPROACHABLE



REFER



EMPATHY

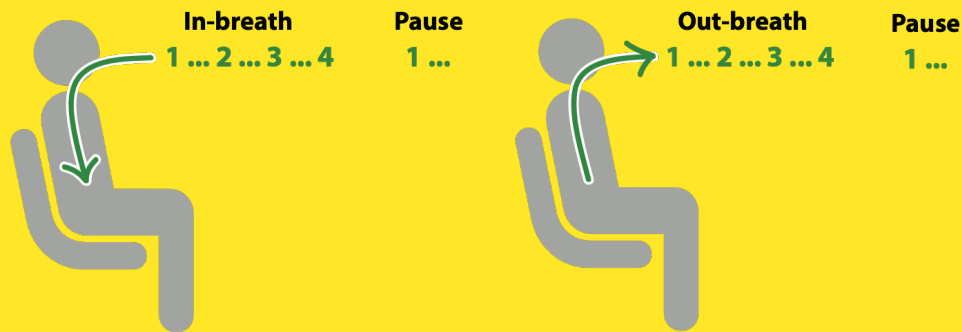


Helping young people cope

Breathing Techniques

Relaxed Breathing

When we are anxious or threatened our breathing speeds up in order to get our body ready for danger. Relaxed breathing (sometimes called abdominal or diaphragmatic breathing) signals the body that it is safe to relax. Relaxed breathing is *slower* and *deeper* than normal breathing, and it happens lower in the body (the belly rather than the chest).



How to do relaxed breathing

- To practice make sure you are sitting or lying comfortably.
- Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so.
- Try to breathe through your nose rather than your mouth.
- Deliberately slow your breathing down. Breathe in to a count of 4, pause for a moment, then breathe out to a count of four.
- Make sure that your breaths are smooth, steady, and continuous - not jerky.
- Pay particular attention to your out-breath - make sure it is smooth and steady.

Am I doing it right? What should I be paying attention to?

- Relaxed breathing should be low down in the abdomen (belly), and not high in the chest. You can check this by putting one hand on your stomach and one on your chest. Try to keep the top hand still, your breathing should only move the bottom hand.
- Focus your attention on your breath - some people find it helpful to count in their head to begin with ("In ... two ... three ... four ... pause ... Out ... two ... three ... four ... pause ...").

How long and how often?

- Try breathing in a relaxed way for at least a few minutes at a time – it might take a few minutes for you to notice an effect. If you are comfortable, aim for 5-10 minutes.
- Try to practice regularly – perhaps three times a day

Variations and troubleshooting

- Find a slow breathing rhythm that is comfortable for you. Counting to 4 isn't an absolute rule. Try 3 or 5. The important thing is that the breathing is slow and steady.
- Some people find the sensation of relaxing to be unusual or uncomfortable at first but this normally passes with practice. Do persist and keep practising.



Learning To Relax

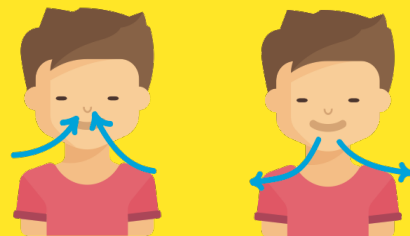
There are lots of ways that you can relax. Try some of these and see how they make you feel.

Calm breathing

If you make your breathing **slower, deeper, and more steady** then your body will relax.

1. Breathe in **slowly** through your nose.
2. Pause for a moment.
3. Then breathe out **slowly** through your mouth.

 Carry on breathing calmly for 2 minutes.



Relaxing your muscles

You can relax by letting the tension out of your muscles. A great way to do this is to **tense and then relax** all of the muscles in your body. Sit in a chair or lie on the floor and then:



1. Clench your fists... then release.
2. Tighten the muscles in your arms... then relax.
3. Push your shoulders back and up... then release.
4. Tighten the muscles in your tummy... then relax.
5. Tense the muscles in your legs... then release.
6. Curl up your toes and clench your feet... then release.
7. Scrunch up the muscles in your face... then relax.

Use the power of your imagination

Imagine **doing something** or **being somewhere** that makes you happy.

Close your eyes, take a deep breath, then imagine finding yourself in a place or doing something that makes you really happy. Picture all of the details – the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes. Notice all of the sensations. Notice how your body feels when you are in this place.

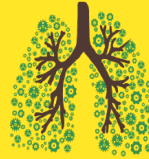


Grounding Techniques

With PTSD it is common to have intrusive memories of traumatic events. Even though these events happened in the past, when the memories come it can feel as though the events are happening again in the present. This can be extremely upsetting, and it is helpful to find ways that help you to 'ground' yourself back in the safety of the present moment.

Breathing

When we are anxious or upset our breathing becomes more rapid. We can feel better by deliberately slowing and relaxing our breathing. Anxious breathing is up in the chest, whereas relaxed breathing happens deeper in the belly.



Relaxed breathing instructions

- Breathe in slowly and steadily through your nose for a count of 4 – don't rush this!
- Pause for a count of 1.
- Exhale slowly and steadily for a count of 4 – breathe out gradually – try not to breathe out with a sigh.
- Repeat for a few minutes until you notice a change in how your body feels.
- If you get distracted, or if your mind wanders, just bring your attention back to how it feels to breathe in and out.

Smells

Smells are an incredibly powerful way of coming to our senses. If you are deliberately paying attention to a smell you are truly in the present moment. Try to find a smell that has positive associations for you – maybe one that reminds you of happy times, or a smell which you enjoy. Carry it with you and use it to bring yourself back to the present moment if you get caught up in an unwanted memory.

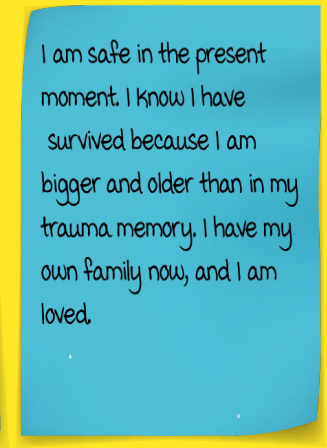
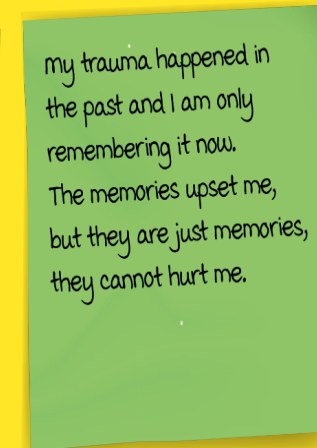
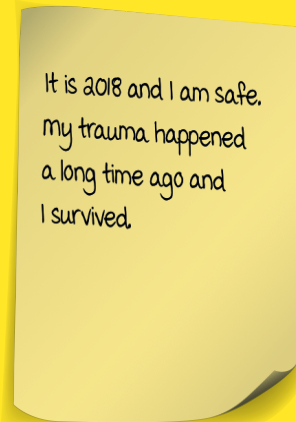
Helpful smells

- Small bottles of essential oils – e.g. eucalyptus, mint, lavender, lemon.
- Small dried flowers such as lavender.
- Perfume soaked on a tissue.
- Whole spices from the kitchen.



Grounding statements

Unwanted memories in PTSD can make us mentally 'time travel' back to the trauma, and we can sometimes forget that we are safe in the present. It can be helpful to write a 'grounding statement' to remind yourself that you are safe. You can carry it around with you and read it if you become upset. Useful statements talk about safety, or remind you of what is different now compared to then.



Useful Links

<https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/supporting-life-issues-and-young-people/supporting-our-members/mental-health/>

<https://www.scouts.org.uk/about-us/help-others/community/better-mental-health-for-all/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

