

Strategies

There are lots of ways to learn how to calm down or feel better when things aren't going well for you. Here are some strategies that you can learn:

Details

Activity

Games

Positive Talk

Box Them

Turn it Down, Off or Change the Channel

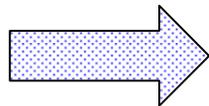
Choose one or two that you like best. It's a good idea to practice these a lot so that you get really good at them. Remember to say 'WELL DONE!' to yourself when you remember to use them or treat yourself, for example by doing something that you enjoy such as having a bubble bath, watching a favourite TV programme or playing with a pet.

Details

Talk to yourself in a calm voice so that noone can hear. Describe details of things you can see around you. It doesn't matter what you notice. Make it as detailed as you like. Here is an example:

"I'm in my English class sitting next to my best friend. The next class is Maths. The teacher is writing on the board. The teacher is wearing a black jumper, grey trousers and a white scarf. Above her head are four posters. The middle one isn't straight. On my desk is my jotter with today's date written on it. I have a blue pen and a pencil, and my pencil case is green. The girl in front is called Emily and she is wriggling."

Carry on until you notice that you are calming down. This is a good strategy to use when you are in a place with other people such as at school, or in a shop, or on the bus.

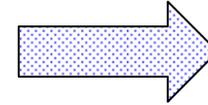


that feels better



Activities

Make a list of activities that you really enjoy. These might include reading, listening to music, watching TV, playing an instrument, listening to the radio, or doing a puzzle. When you start having a feeling that doesn't feel good, choose one of the activities to do. The more you practice this, the better you will get at it, and the more easily you will be able to calm down.



Games & Puzzles

You can help yourself calm down by occupying your mind with a puzzle. Try these, or make up your own:

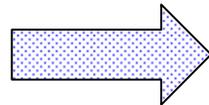
- ❖ Count backwards from 100
- ❖ Count forwards in 3s (1, 4, 7 etc)
- ❖ Spell the names of your friends backwards
- ❖ Name all the football teams you know
- ❖ Name countries starting with the letter 'A'

The more you practise doing this, the better it will work to help you feel calm.

Positive Talk

Make a list of good things you can say about yourself, and of times when you managed something that was difficult. Practise these in your head. Remind yourself of them the next time you have a feeling that doesn't feel good. Here are some examples:

- ❖ *I am good at maths sums*
- ❖ *I know I can do this*
- ❖ *I did this before even though I was tired*
- ❖ *I can make others laugh*
- ❖ *I am a really good swimmer*
- ❖ *I care about my family*



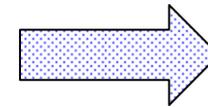
Box Them

Find a box or safe container to keep things in. Decorate it as you like and decide on a place in your room to keep it. Next time you have a feeling



that doesn't feel good, either draw a picture of how you feel or write a short story

about it. Later, when you feel calm, look at what's inside your box. You might find that you think about things differently. If you want, show a friend or parent what's in the box. If you talk about problems when you are calm, it's easier to sort them out.



Turn it Down, Off or Change the Channel

Pretend that you have controls like those on a TV for yourself. You can turn your feelings up, down, off, or change the channel. Practise turning your feelings up and down. See if you can get really good at turning them down with your control button. Or use the *Off* button to make the feelings die away. Or change the channel by thinking about something completely different.