

The
Exchange

Resources for Young People

3: Dealing with Difficult Feelings

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code to visit our website



exchange-counselling.com/interview-support-hub

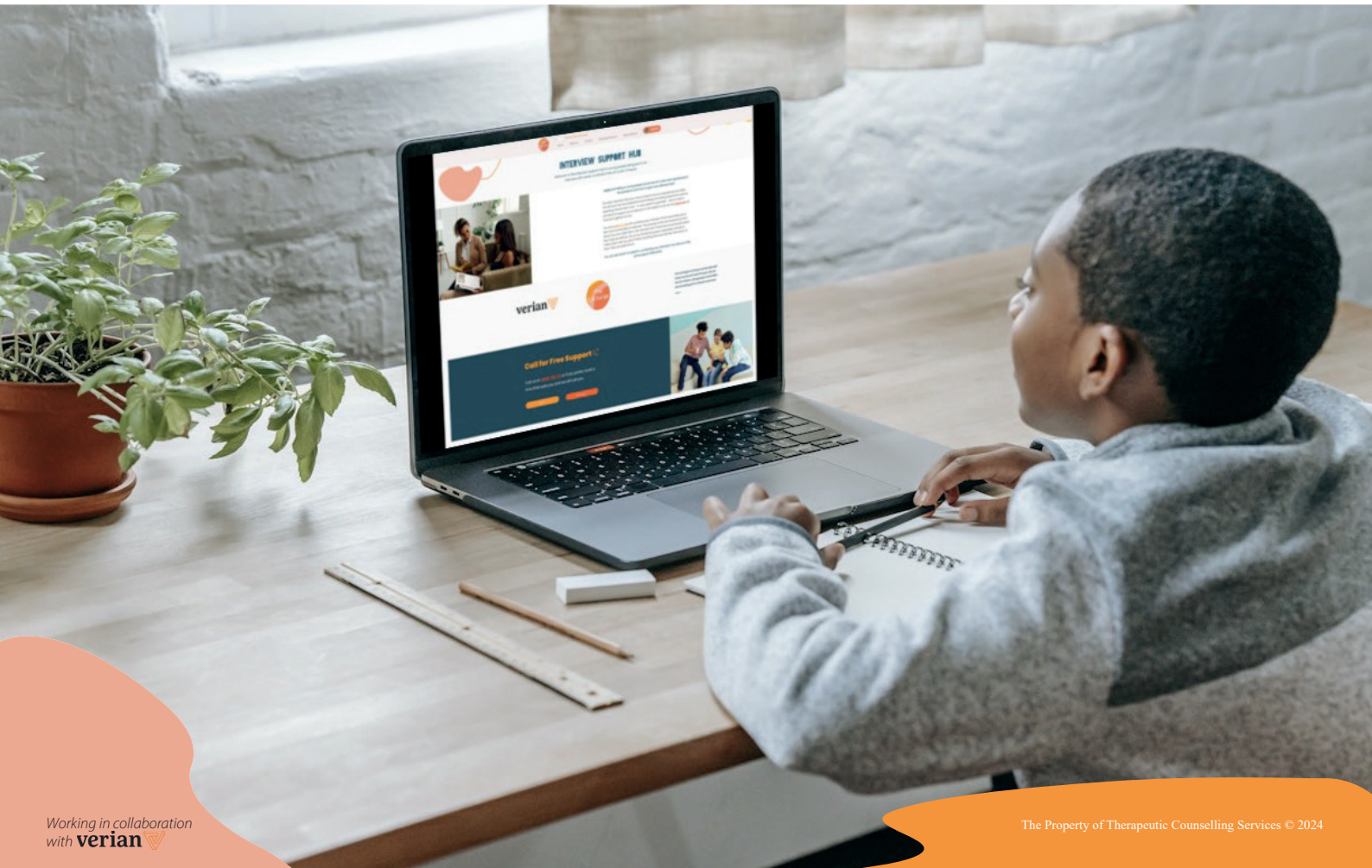
Resources for Young People

3: Dealing with Difficult Feelings

COVID was a difficult time for some people, you might've experienced the loss of a loved one, had family members who were unwell, were unable to see family & friends, or even felt an overwhelming anxiety by the whole thing. Remembering this time and having to talk about it might bring up these difficult emotions again.

This pack is full of resources to help you break down these difficult emotions and deal with them.

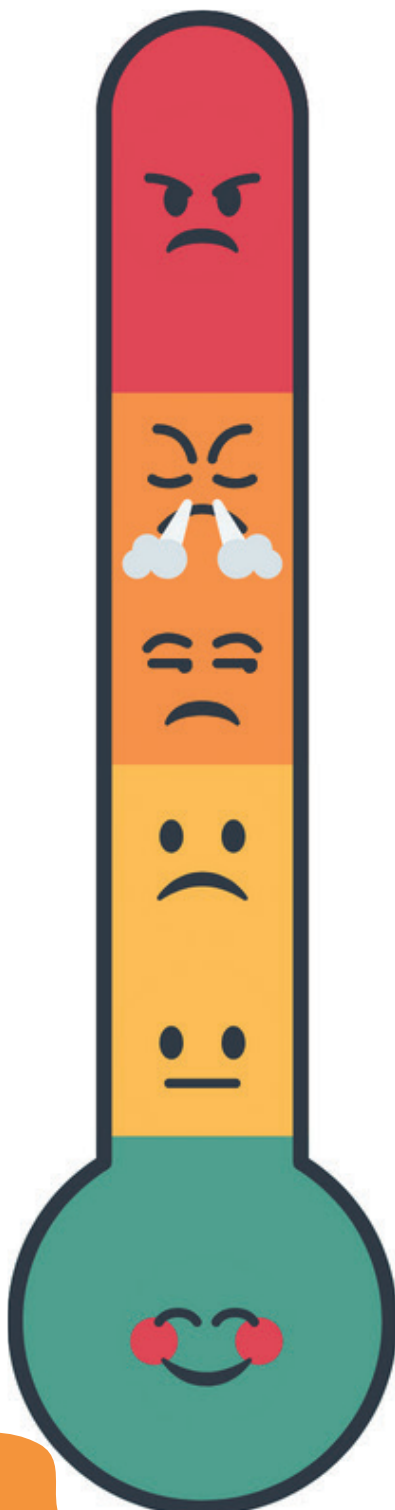
If you would like further support you can visit our Support Hub. From there you can call our helpline or make an online booking with one of our team.



Check In - Feelings Thermometer

COVID can be a reminder of difficult times for some people and remembering these times might bring up big feelings. Checking in with how we are feeling is so important, when you notice a big feeling coming up it is good to check in with ourselves before we react.

This activity is good to do before and after other activities or before and after your interview.



I feel overwhelmed.
I'm struggling to control my emotions.
I need space.

I feel angry.
Lots of things are irritating me.
I don't want to talk to anyone.

I feel irritated.
Some things are annoying me.
I am trying to control my emotions.

I feel sad.
I feel like quite low.
I need comfort and support.

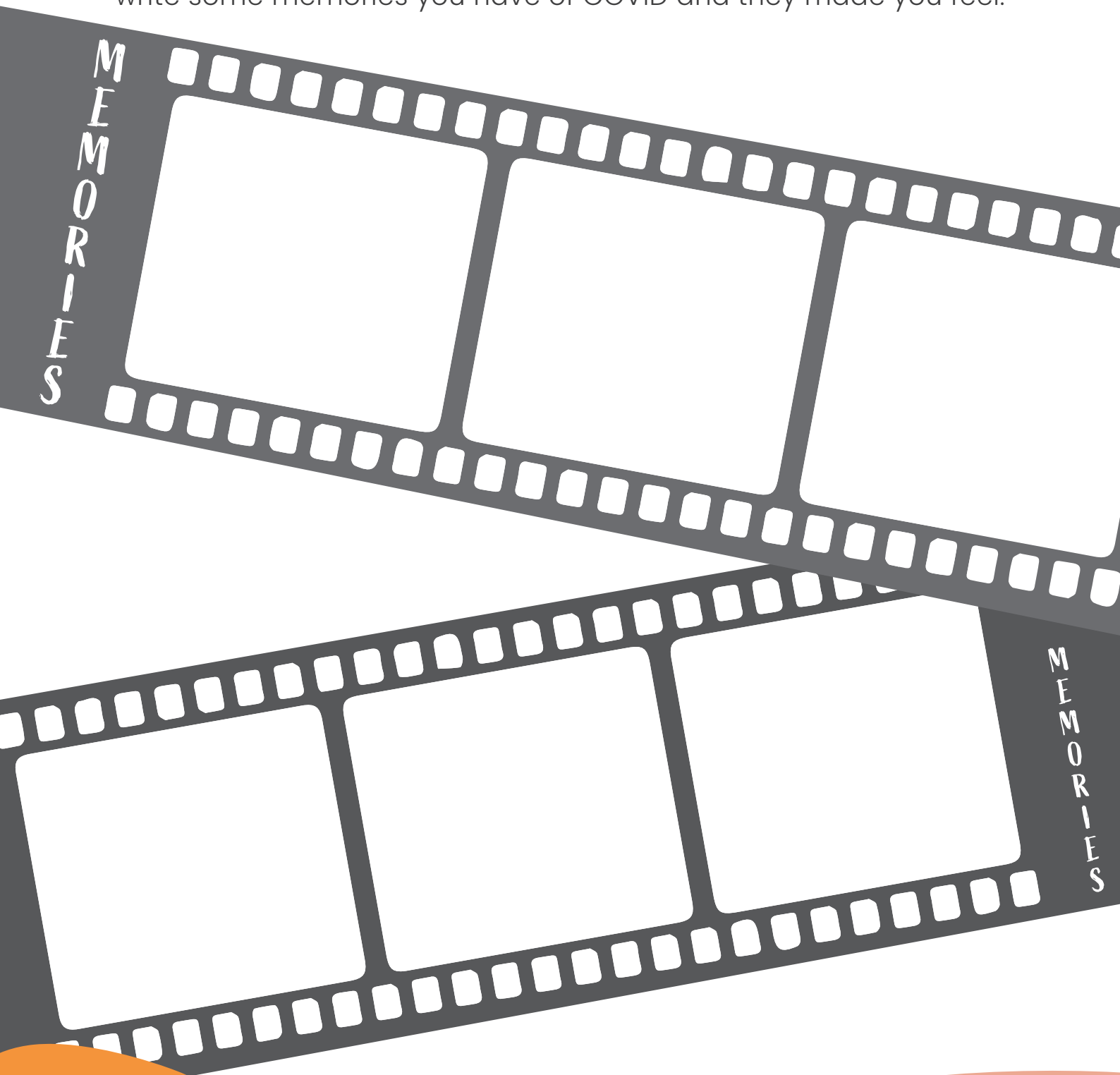
I feel okay.
I just feel a little worried.
I can cope with things as they are.

I feel happy.
I feel positive and optimistic.

Memory Reel

Trying to remember what happened during COVID can be confusing, it's hard to remember exact times and dates, or even roughly when things happened. Everything can feel like a blur of anxiety, sadness and happiness. It can be helpful to create a timeline of all these events to better understand your experience, this can let you see the low moments and focus on the highs.

It's not always pleasant to think of these low memories but it's helpful to be able to reflect and talk about them. Use the memory reel below to draw or write some memories you have of COVID and they made you feel.



Creek to Peak

Now think of these memories like a mountain range; the top of the mountains are the peaks, the high moments and the positive memories. When you're at the peak you have to come back down to the creek, those low moments, in order to be able to climb to the next peak.

Try plotting your memories on the timeline below, working in the order that they took place.



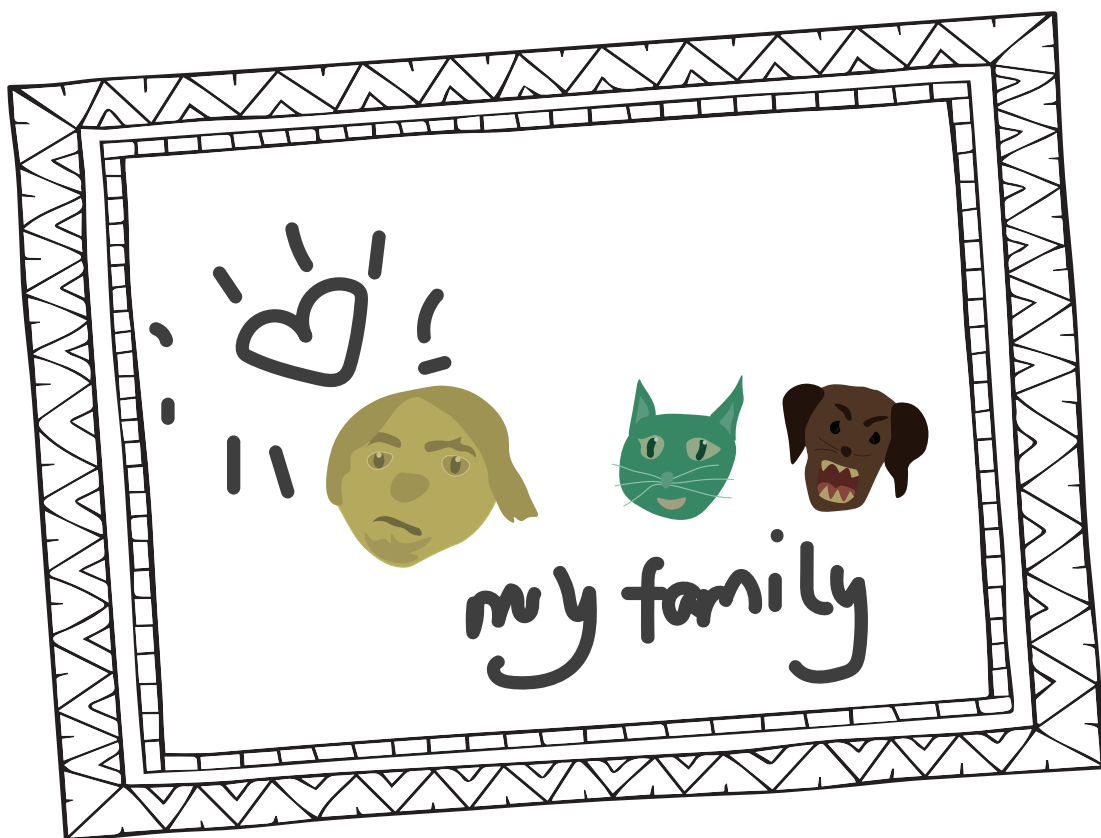
Then & Now

You may have experienced the loss of a loved one during COVID, or you may have felt a loss of your normal life and missing out on the things that you wanted to do. When there has been a loss it can feel like everything has changed, and change can feel challenging.

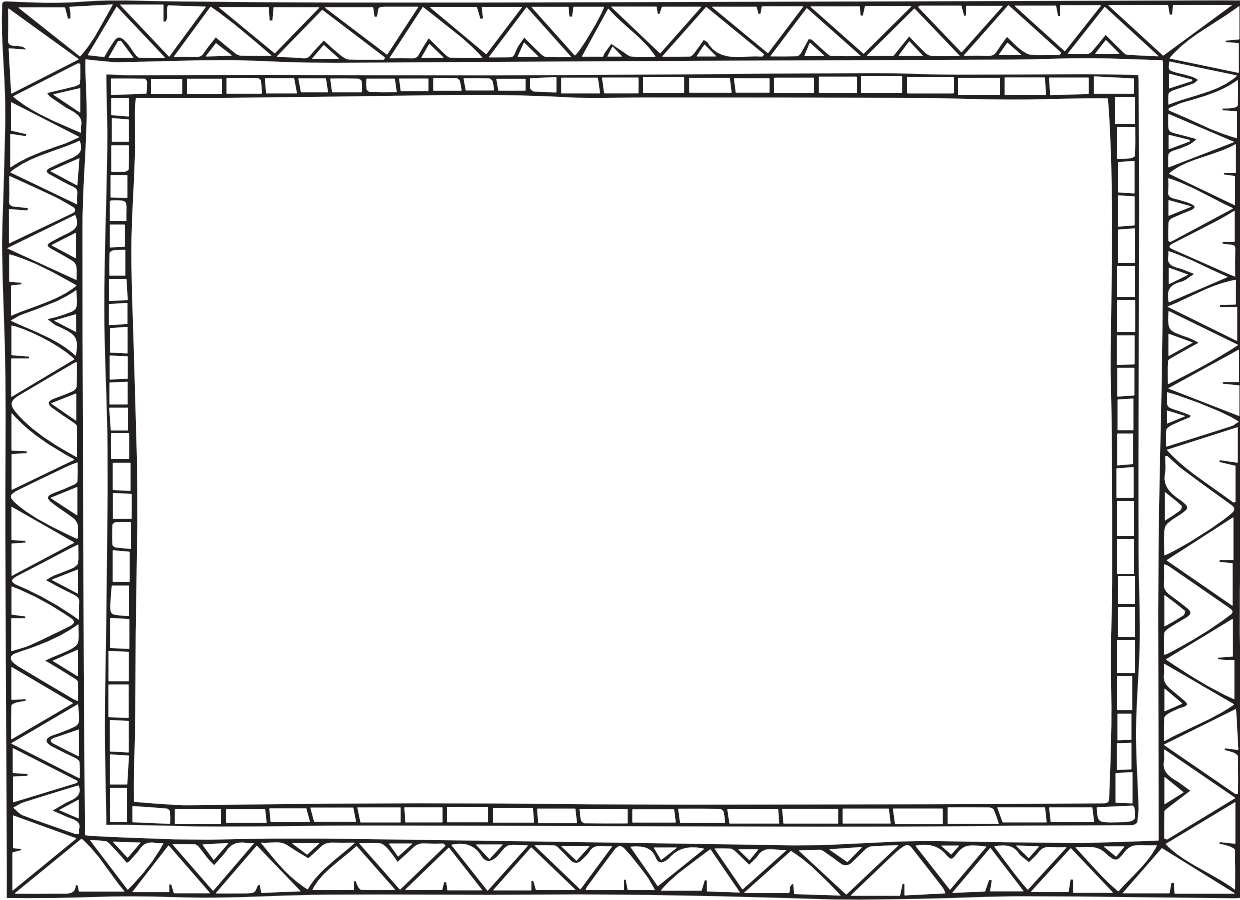
This activity can help you to understand the changes in your life, since this loss.

Start by drawing a picture of what life looked like before the loss – Picture of family, house, pets, a holiday, or Christmas time.

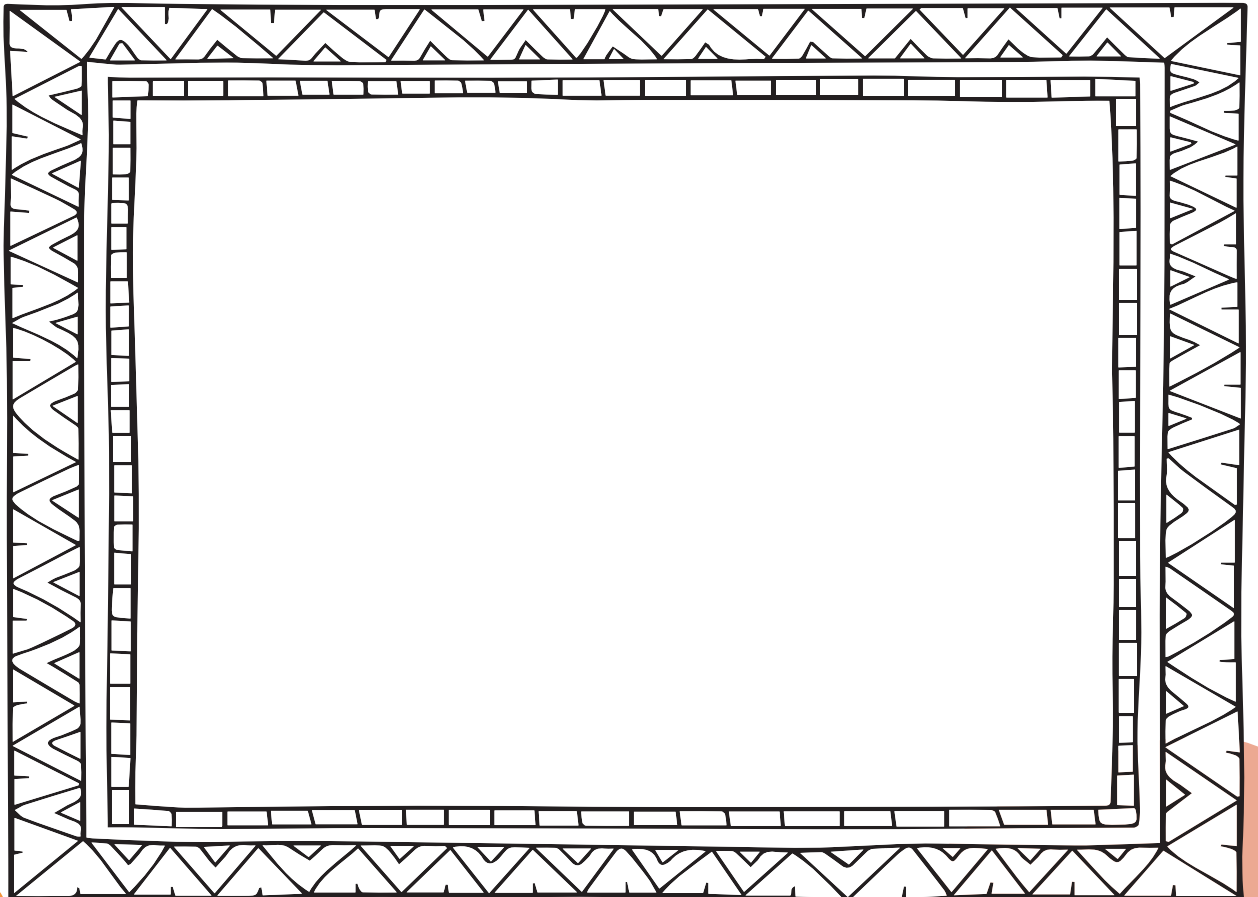
Then draw a picture of what life looks like now, can you notice any changes or any similarities? Is there a difference in colour, in how far people are standing apart, or in what home looks like now?



Then & Now

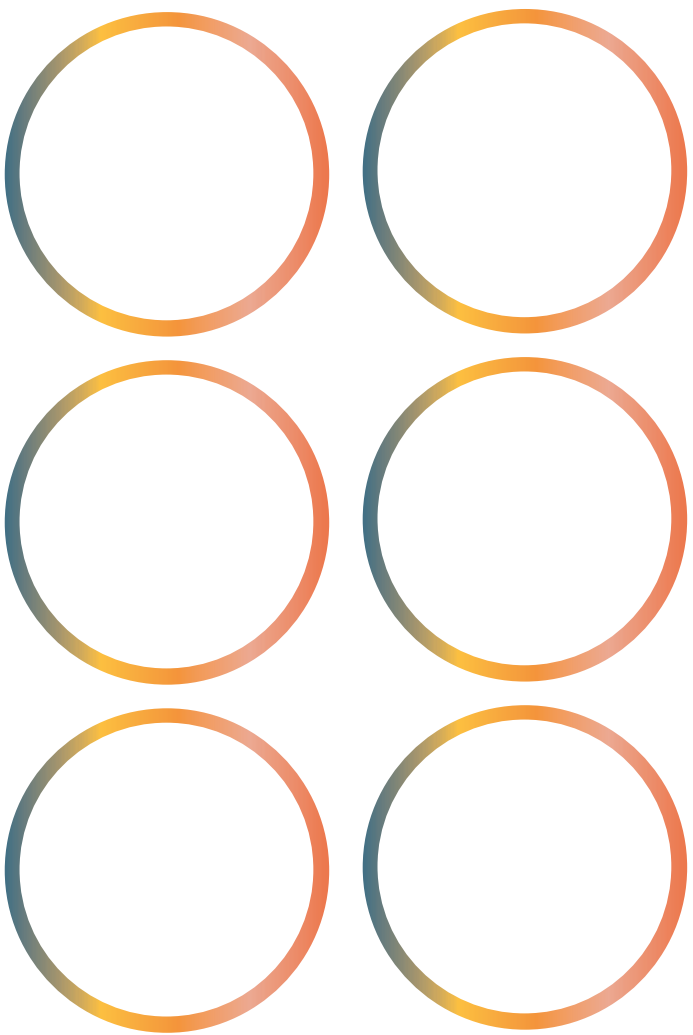


THEN



NOW

My Wishes- Regrets & Hopes



It is common to feel regret if you have experienced a loss or missed out on certain things during COVID. It can be helpful to talk about these “what if’s”, things that could have been said or done and to look to the future.

Write in the circles some things you wish you had done or said and didn’t get the opportunity to.

Now to help you move your thoughts away from the things you regret try think about your hopes for the future. Cut out and use the future tokens to lay over and change the regrets into hopes or gratitude. “In the future I hope to...”

My Wishes- Regrets & Hopes

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What Ifs

The worksheet features a central white rectangular area with a thick, hand-drawn black border. At the top of this area, the words "What Ifs" are written in a simple, outlined font. Below the title, there are six dashed teal circles arranged in two columns of three, providing space for users to write their thoughts or responses.

Traffic Light Postcards

You might be left feeling lots of different emotions about COVID and things like loss and anxiety could still be impacting you every day. When things are feeling a bit tough, it's good for us to find ways to share these with the adults we trust.

Imagine it like a traffic light; sometimes you might be feeling "red" and having a really bad day, or "amber" where you're able to manage your day but you're still feeling some difficult feelings, or you're feeling "green", and things are feeling good!

It's useful for the trusted adults in your life to know what can help at each stage of the traffic light; red, amber or green. Use the template to write some things that could help when you feel okay, not too bad or when you're struggling.

You can then share this with your trusted adults and point to what might help.

RED 😞

I would like to be left alone today

I would rather not talk about the person I miss

I might need some time away from class

I would like someone to sit with me today

AMBER 😐

Can you check in with me throughout the day

I'm finding today tough so might need extra support

It would be good to talk about the person I miss today

GREEN 😊

I'm happy to get on with things today

I would like to share memories about the person I miss

Can you keep an eye on me today

It would be good to talk about how I feel

Traffic Light Postcards

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RED 😞

--	--	--	--

AMBER 😐

--	--	--	--

GREEN 😊

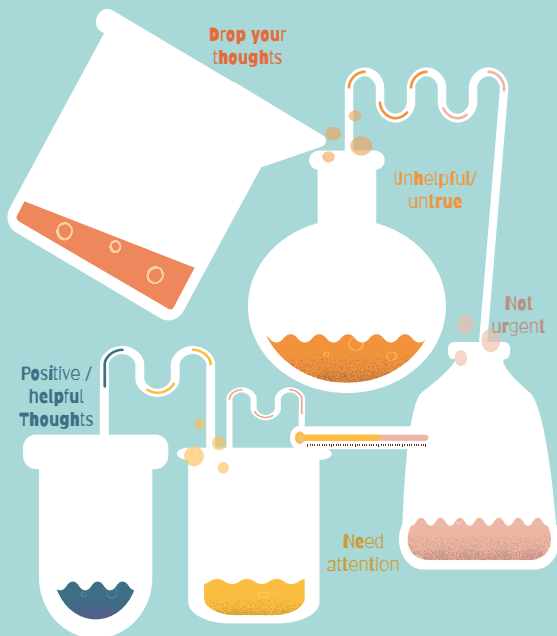
Think Tank

COVID might've brought up many different anxious thoughts; feeling anxious to be around people again, feeling anxious that this might happen again or even feeling anxious about you or your loved ones getting sick. These thoughts can be overwhelming and unhelpful.

When we have overwhelming thoughts it's good to filter these out and understand what's helpful and unhelpful.

Write these thoughts into the Think Tank below, then filter out what's unhelpful/untrue, thoughts that aren't urgent, and ones that need attention. Once you've filtered these out, you're left with the positive and helpful thoughts.

Try our next activity "Make Time to Worry" to help with the unhelpful thoughts.



Use the Think Tank Worksheet to filter your thoughts...

then

Write the unhelpful ones below to use when you "Make Time to Worry" on the next page

1

2

3

Think Tank

Drop your thoughts

Unhelpful/
untrue

Not
urgent

Positive /
helpful
Thoughts

Need
attention

Make Time to Worry


Thinking about COVID can leave us with lots of unhelpful thoughts. Our Think Tank is a good way to filter what thoughts are helpful and what ones are unhelpful. These unhelpful thoughts won't just disappear so it's good to allocate some time to thinking about these and then trying to flip them.

Try writing these unhelpful thoughts below and allocate some time to think about the worry, no more than 10 minutes.

Set a timer with your allocated time, during this time you can write about the worry, rate how important it is, how realistic it is and how helpful it is. Then try flipping the worry, instead of thinking the unhelpful thought try changing it into a more helpful thought.

Write 3 worries below

Time allocated to consider the worry (10 mins max)

1		
2		
3		

	1	2	3
Rate each one from 0-10			
HOW IMPORTANT IS IT?			
HOW REALISTIC IS IT?			
HOW HELPFUL IS IT?			

Instead **of thinking...**



I'll flip my **thought** into...

Be Kind to Myself– Empathy Card

It can be hard to remember and talk about the things that happened during COVID, the loss & anxiety can feel overwhelming. Sometimes we might feel like we need to push through and feel better quickly, we can be hard on ourselves sometimes.

When this happens it's better to treat ourselves with more empathy. Imagine if your friend was feeling like this you would want to treat them with kindness and compassion, so why not show that to yourself?

Try creating an "empathy" card for yourself. You can design the card to give yourself a boost and some encouragement. You can then pop it in an envelope and you can visit it anytime that you need some self-compassion and empathy.

You got this!



Sending Hugs

Be Kind to Myself– Empathy Card

