

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 you can learn:

Details

Activities

Games & Puzzles

Positive Talk

Bin It or Box It

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 doing them. Remember to say 'WELL DONE!' to yourself when you use them! You can also ask an adult to help you remember to use them

Details

Talk to yourself in a calm voice so that no one 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:

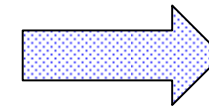
"I'm in my bedroom and I can hear my mother downstairs. My carpet is blue and I have a blue cover on my bed. There are three posters on the wall. One of them is torn. I can see two houses out of my window. It is a sunny day and I can hear the wind rustling the trees. I can hear a car going down the road. I have books and toys in my room and my playstation is on. I am going to have tea in about an hour."

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.



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:

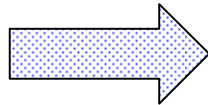
- ❖ Count backwards from 100
- ❖ Count forwards in 3s (1, 4, 7 etc)
- ❖ Spell the names of your friends backwards
- ❖ Name all of the football teams you know
- ❖ Name animals starting with the letter 'C'

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

Positive Talk

Make a list of good things 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 making friends*
- ❖ *I know I can do this*
- ❖ *I did this before*
- ❖ *I can try when I really want*
- ❖ *I am helpful*
- ❖ *I care about my family*



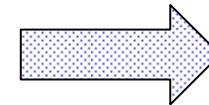
Box Them

Find a box. Decorate it as you like with drawings, colours or stickers. Decide on a place to keep it. Next time you have a feeling that doesn't feel good do one of these things:

- ❖ Pretend to 'grab' your feeling and 'put' it in the box.
- ❖ Draw a picture of how you feel and put it in the box
- ❖ Write a few lines about how you feel and put it in the box



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 your Mum or Dad 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. Decide where your imaginary control buttons are. Practise turning your feelings up and down. See if you can get really good at turning them down with your control button. Or change the channel with your other button by thinking about something completely different. Or use the *Off* button to make the feelings die away.