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Feeling steady when things feel uncertain
A guide for students

Sometimes, things happen in the world that can feel scary or confusing. Even if nothing dangerous is happening at your school or home, your brain and body might feel on alert. This is normal. It is your nervous system trying to keep you safe.

You might notice that you:

- Feel worried, restless, or tense
- Get angry or frustrated more easily
- Find it hard to concentrate in class
- Feel tired or want to be alone
- Check your phone or the news more often

These feelings are normal. They are your body's way of reacting to uncertainty.

How to help your body and brain feel safe:
When you notice big feelings, you can use simple tools to calm your nervous system.

Belly breathing:
Place one hand on your stomach. Take a slow breath in through your nose so your belly rises. Slowly breathe out through your mouth. Try to inhale for 4, exhale for 6. Set a timer & repeat for 2 minutes.

Psychological sigh:
Take 2 short breaths in through your nose, then let out a long, slow exhale through your mouth.

Grounding with your senses:
Notice 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.

Emotion check-ins:
Use an emotion wheel or simply name how you feel. Just noticing your feelings can help them feel less overwhelming.

These tools help your brain and body notice that you are safe right now. When you practise them, your feelings become easier to manage, your thinking clears, and it's easier to focus and learn.

Besides using calming exercises, there are other helpful ways to support your body and brain every day.

When things feel uncertain or stressful, your brain and body need extra care. One of the best ways to stay steady is by looking after the basics: eating regularly, getting enough sleep, moving your body, and staying connected to people you trust. These small, everyday habits help your nervous system settle and make it easier to think clearly and manage big feelings.

Keeping routine

Routines make your body and brain feel safe. Try to:

- Follow regular wake-up and bedtimes
- Eat meals at predictable times
- Stick to school and study schedules
- Make time for movement and rest

Even small routines help your brain feel steadier.

Talking about how you are feeling

It's okay to share how you feel. You can talk to:

- A parent or caregiver
- A teacher or counsellor
- A friend you trust

You don't have to solve everything - talking helps your brain feel safer.

Looking after yourself

You can also do small things to feel calmer:

- Take breaks from screens and news
- Move your body, stretch, or walk
- Do something you enjoy, like drawing, reading, or listening to music
- Use your breathing or grounding exercises

Find examples of kindness & be kind too

When things feel out of control in the world, it helps to look for the people who are doing good. You might see people donating food, helping neighbours, or being kind online. You can help your own brain feel stronger by being kind too.

Research shows that when we do something kind for others, like helping a friend with homework, checking in on a sibling, or simply saying thank you to a teacher, our brain releases "feel-good" chemicals that lower stress. Doing small, kind things doesn't just help the other person; it reminds your nervous system that you have the power to create a little bit of safety and goodness right where you are.

It's normal to feel upset or worried sometimes. Your body and brain are just trying to keep you safe. Keeping routines, noticing your feelings, and practising calming tools can help you feel steadier.

You don't have to solve what's happening in the world - your job is to take care of yourself, stay connected to people you trust, and focus on what you can control today - have a proper meal, get to bed on time, go for a walk, talk to someone safe. When you take care of your body, you're also taking care of your mind.

How to take a mindful moment

What to do



Observe

What feelings do you notice? Where do you feel them in your body?



Describe

Can you describe this feeling without judgement or critisism?



Participate

How can you acknowledge your feelings, while also staying present in the moment?

How to do it



1 thing at a time

Concentrate on 1 task at a time with as much attention & awareness you feel able to give.



Let go of judgement

Be kind! Judgments can intensify emotions, so try to describe rather than judge.



React effectively

Try not to let your emotions control your behaviour: take a deep breath to help you focus on what you are doing

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