

NAVIGATING EMOTIONAL WAVES: SUPPORTING YOUR TEENS TO MANAGE THEIR EMOTIONS



Click to learn more about each emotion



ANGER

ANXIETY



DISAPPOINTMENT

LONELINESS

SADNESS

STRESS

○ ANXIETY

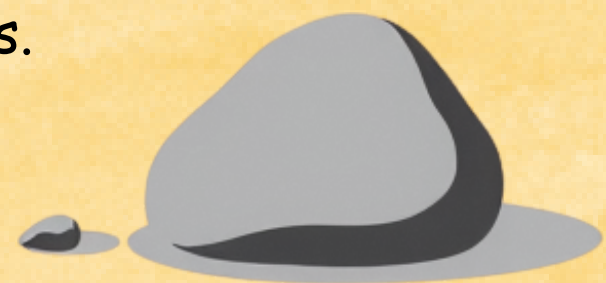


Everyone experiences anxiety from time to time. It can be helpful as it alerts us to potential dangers and helps us prepare for important events, triggering our natural fight, flight or freeze response. However, when anxiety becomes overwhelming, persistent, or interferes with daily activities, it may require attention and support.

It Is Not Always About The Big Things

Anxiety often rises from small, seemingly insignificant moments - like the fear of a friend not responding to a text or the dread of an upcoming school project.

Understanding that anxiety does not always link to major events helps us approach it with more compassion and strategy with our teens.



The “Box Breathing” Technique

1

Inhale for a count of 4,



2

hold for 4 counts, exhaling for 4 counts,



3

and holding again for 4 counts




4

Repeating this for a few minutes can significantly reduce anxiety



The "5 Senses Grounding"

1 Focus on the present moment using your 5 senses.



2 4 things you can touch,



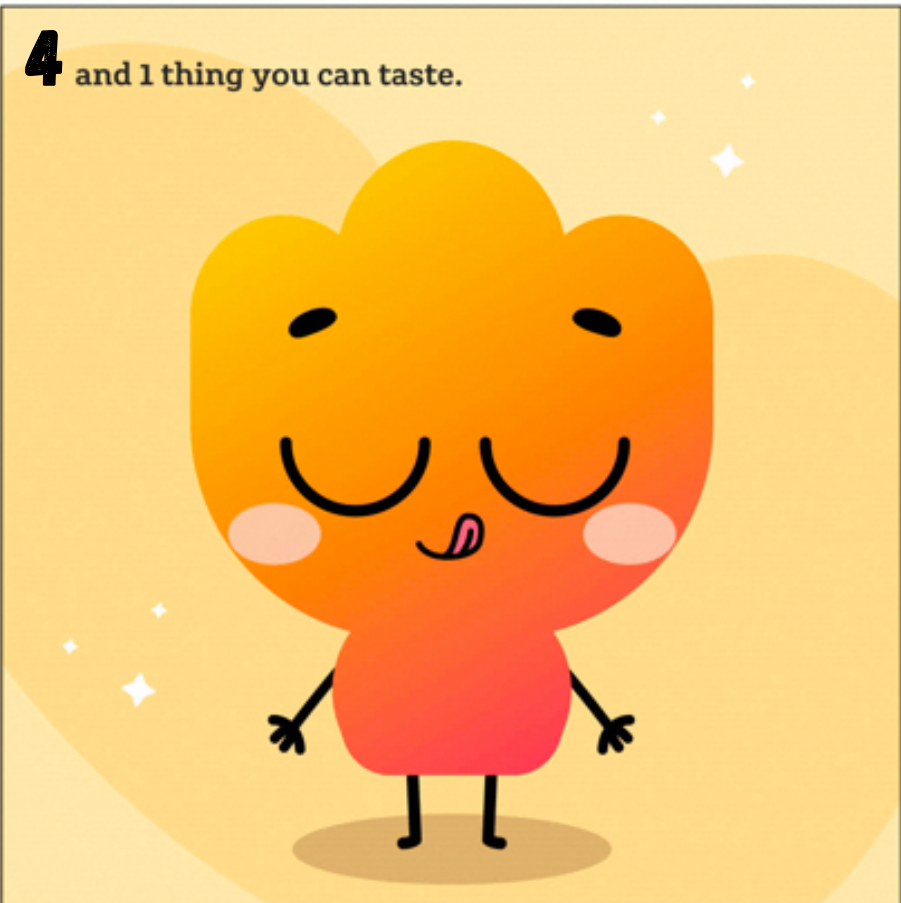
3 3 things you can hear,



4 2 things you can smell,

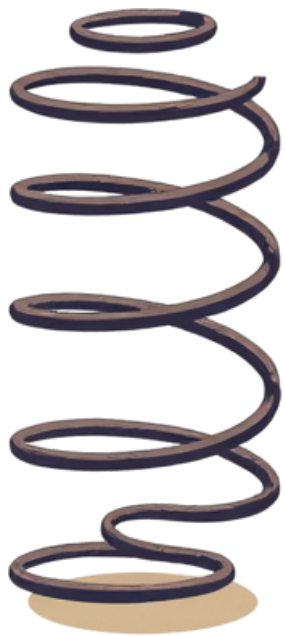


4 and 1 thing you can taste.





STRESS



Stress is a natural response that everyone experiences when facing challenges or demands. It is our body's way of preparing us to handle difficult situations by increasing our alertness and energy.

Stress Can Boost Resilience— If It Is Managed

Productive stress motivates and energises us to perform at our best by sharpening focus, enhancing problem-solving abilities, and providing the mental energy needed to meet challenges like exams or presentations.

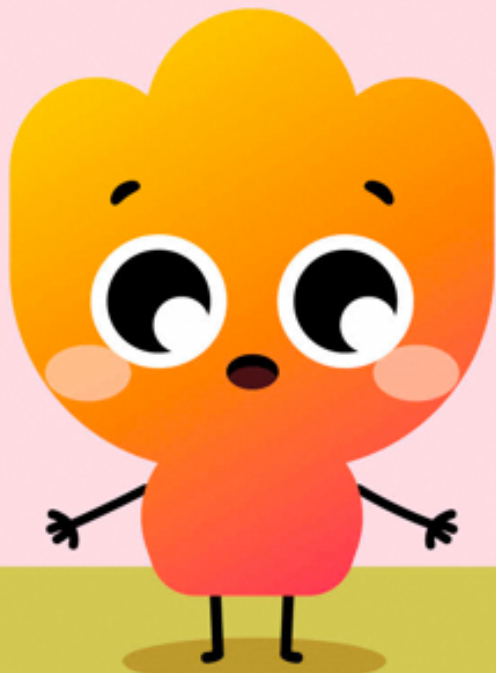
When teens face manageable amounts of stress, it can help them develop greater resilience, confidence and coping skills. The key is finding the balance: too much stress, and they burn out; too little, and they miss out on building important life skills.



Tense and Relax

1

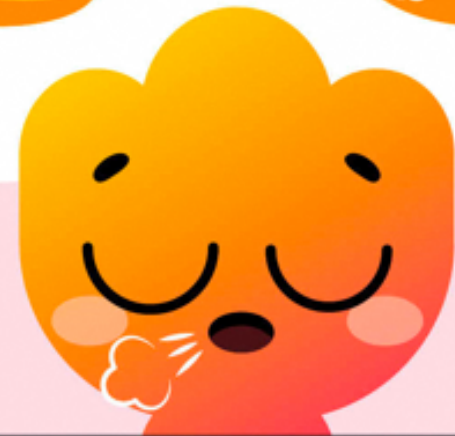
Tense and then release each muscle group in the body to reduce physical tension and promote relaxation.



2

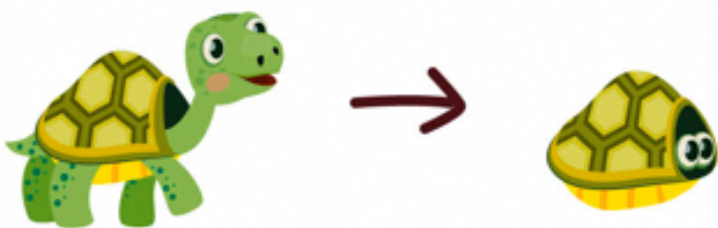
For example:

(Face) Think of the scrunched face emoji. Scrunch it as much as possible. Hold it for 5-10 sec. Relax and breathe in ... then out.

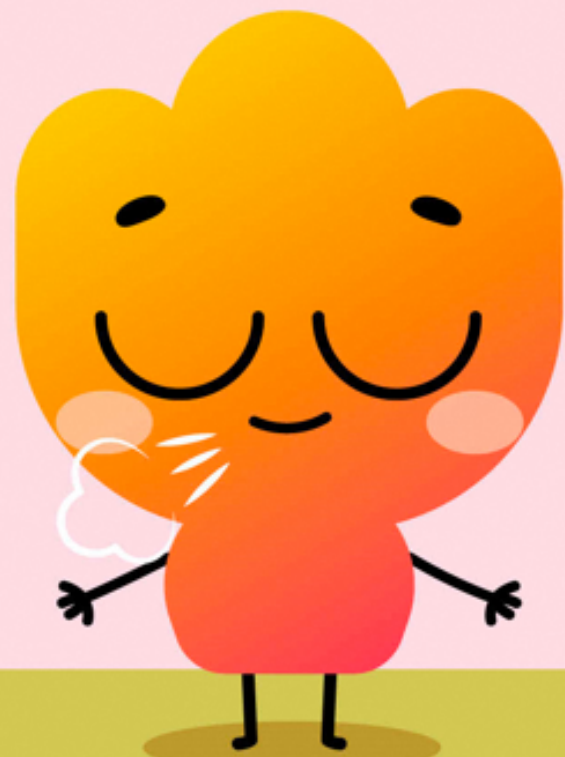


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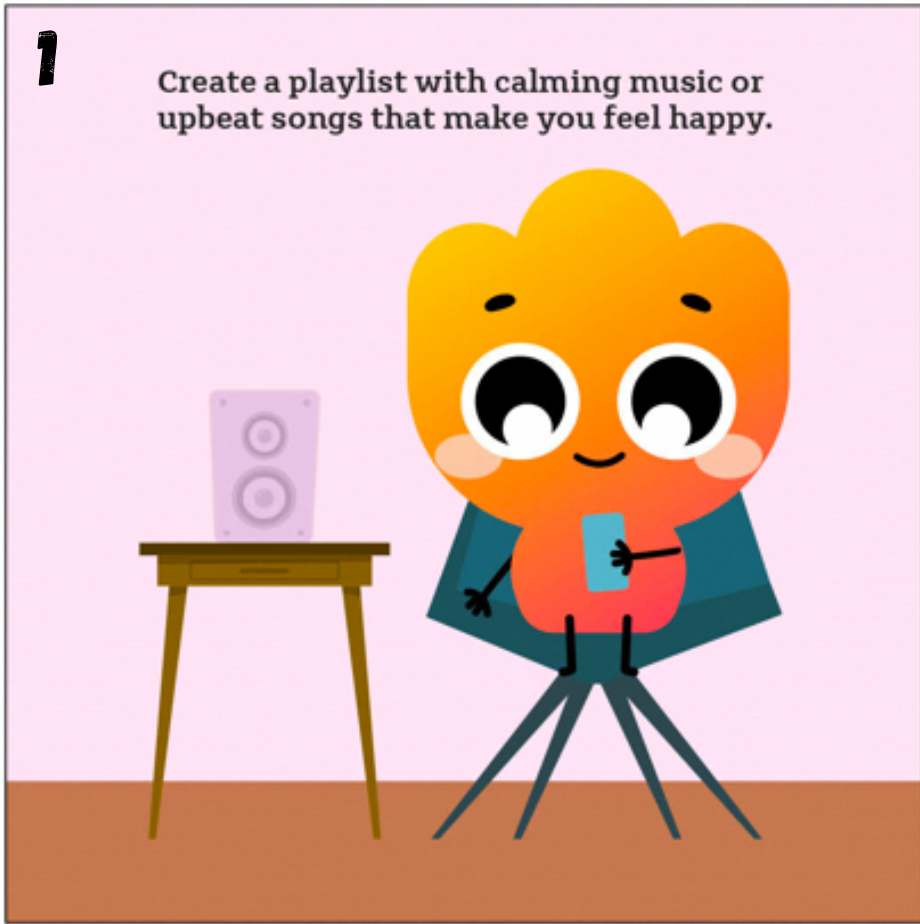
(Shoulders) Picture a ninja turtle getting back to its shell. Pull shoulders up like you want to retreat into your body. Hold it for 5-10 sec. Relax and breathe in ... then out.



4



The “Power of Music” playlist

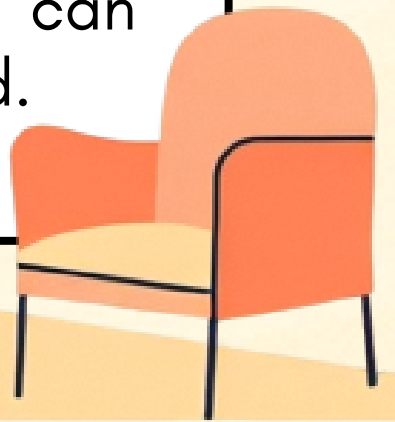




LONELY



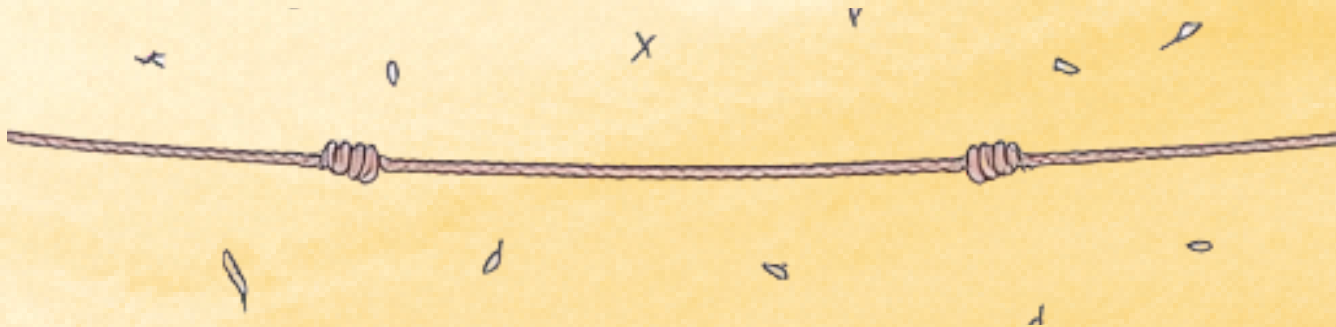
Many people feel lonely from time to time, especially when adjusting to a change in environment, such as going to a new school or class. Some people feel lonely because they have greater difficulty making friends. However, it is also possible to feel lonely when we are surrounded by friends and family. Despite the illusion of connection online, social media can actually heighten feelings of loneliness. The curated, idealised versions of others' lives can make us feel more isolated and disconnected.



Loneliness Is Not About Being Alone

Teens may feel lonely even when surrounded by people, especially if they feel like others do not truly understand them.

Building deep, meaningful connections is more important than simply having a large circle of friends to fend off loneliness.



The “Art of Connection”

1

Building connections with people who share the same interests and values



2

can lead to fulfilling and supportive relationships.



3

Practising active listening and showing empathy

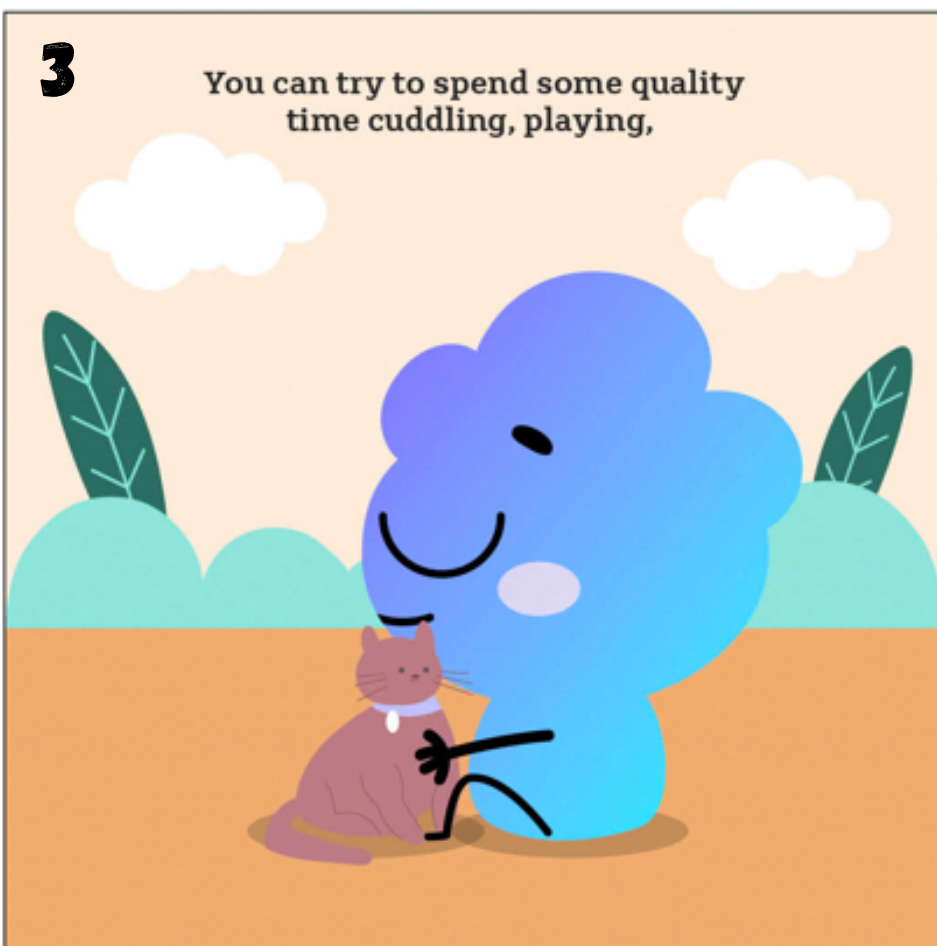
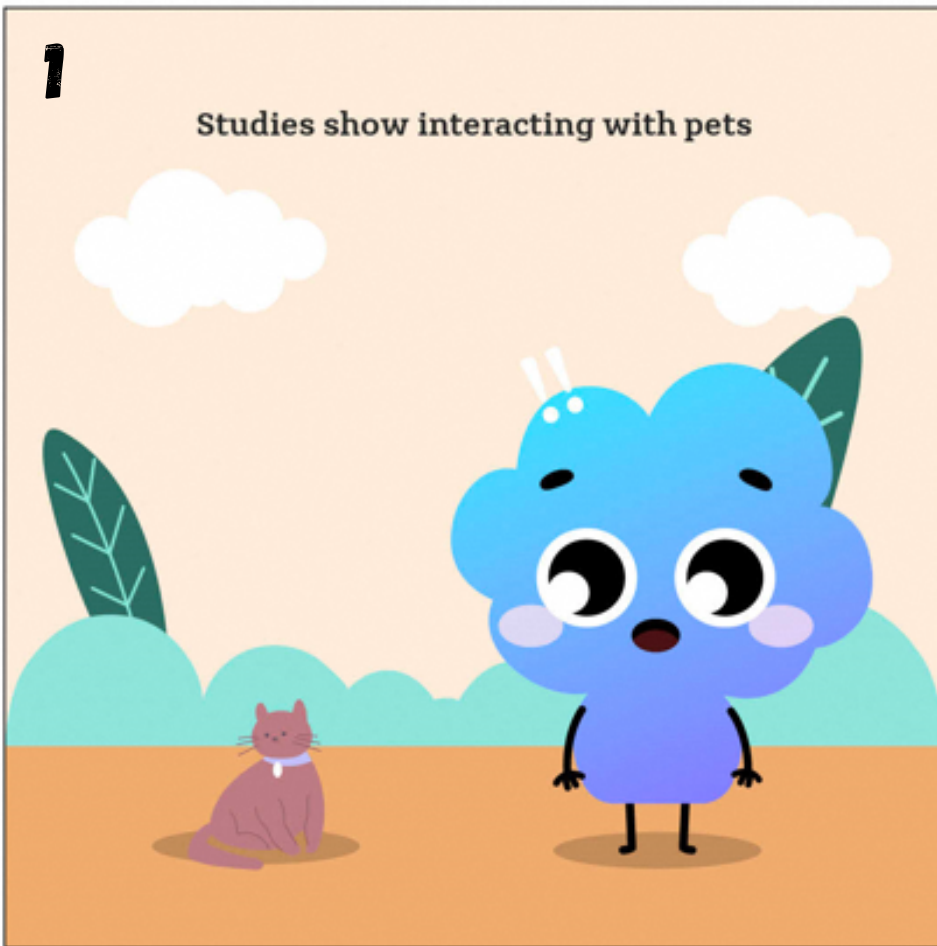


4

helps in connecting with others.



The "Pet Project"





SAD



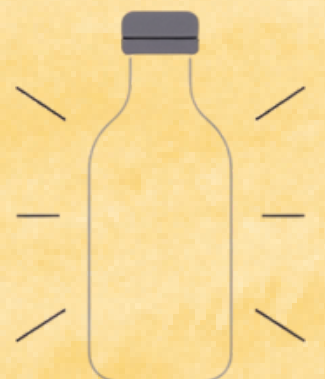
People may experience sadness from time to time. It is a natural and healthy emotion that everyone experiences as a normal response to loss, disappointment, or difficult life circumstances. However, deep and prolonged sadness can be unhealthy and may become a problem when we cope in unhealthy or harmful ways.

Suppressing Sadness Can Lead to Emotional 'Bottling Up'

Sadness can indicate that teens are developing emotional maturity as they learn to navigate more complex social situations and understand themselves better.

Teens who try to push their sadness aside without addressing it often build up emotional pressure.

Over time, this can manifest in anger or even physical symptoms like headaches. Helping teens express and manage sadness in healthy ways prevents it from "bottling up".



The “Scribble It Out” Journaling

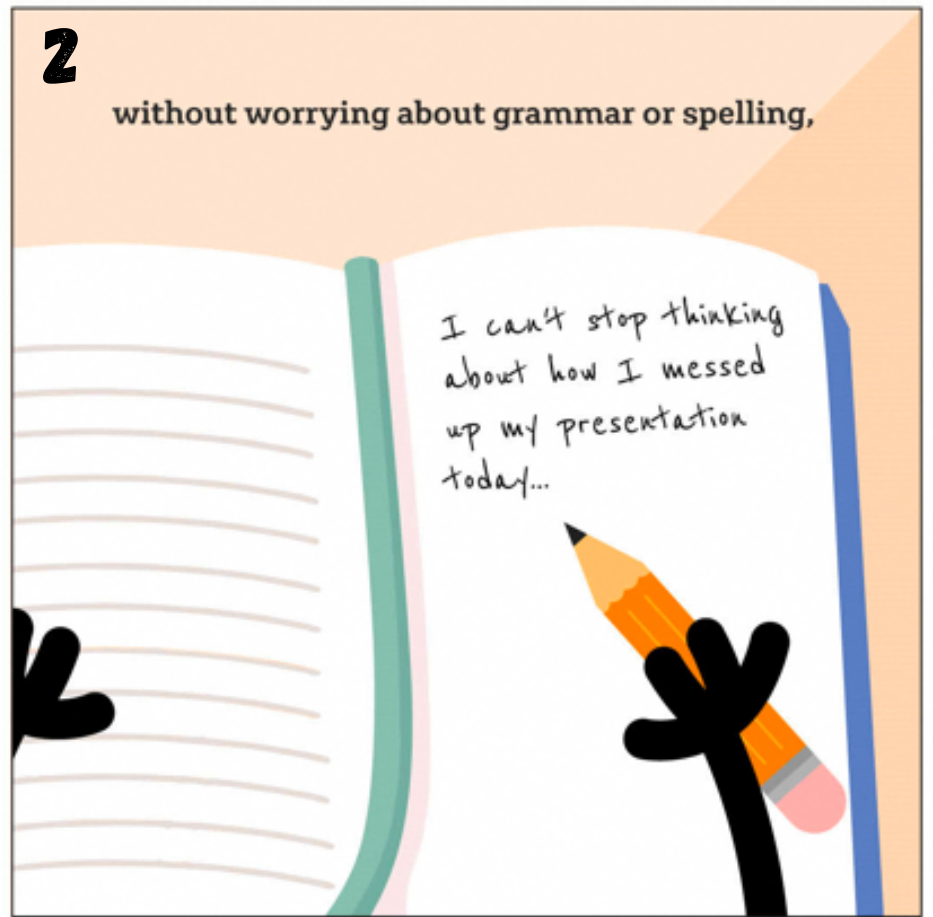
1

Write freely about your sadness,



2

without worrying about grammar or spelling,



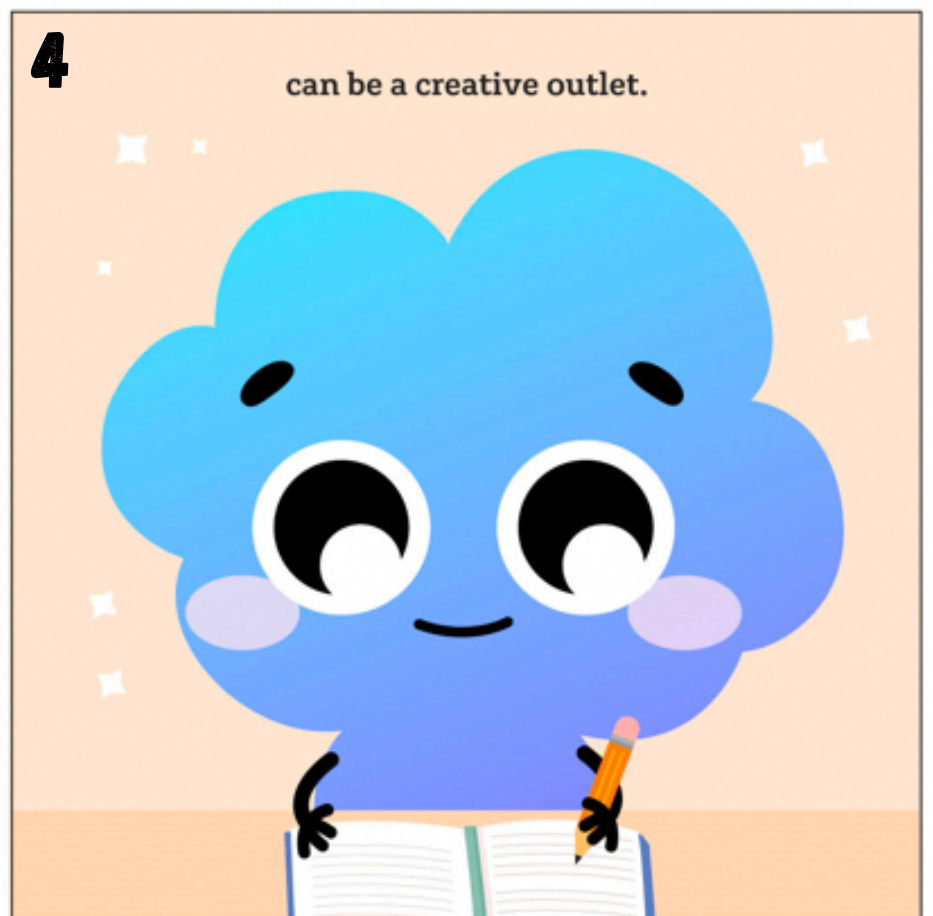
3

Scribbling, doodling or drawing alongside the writing



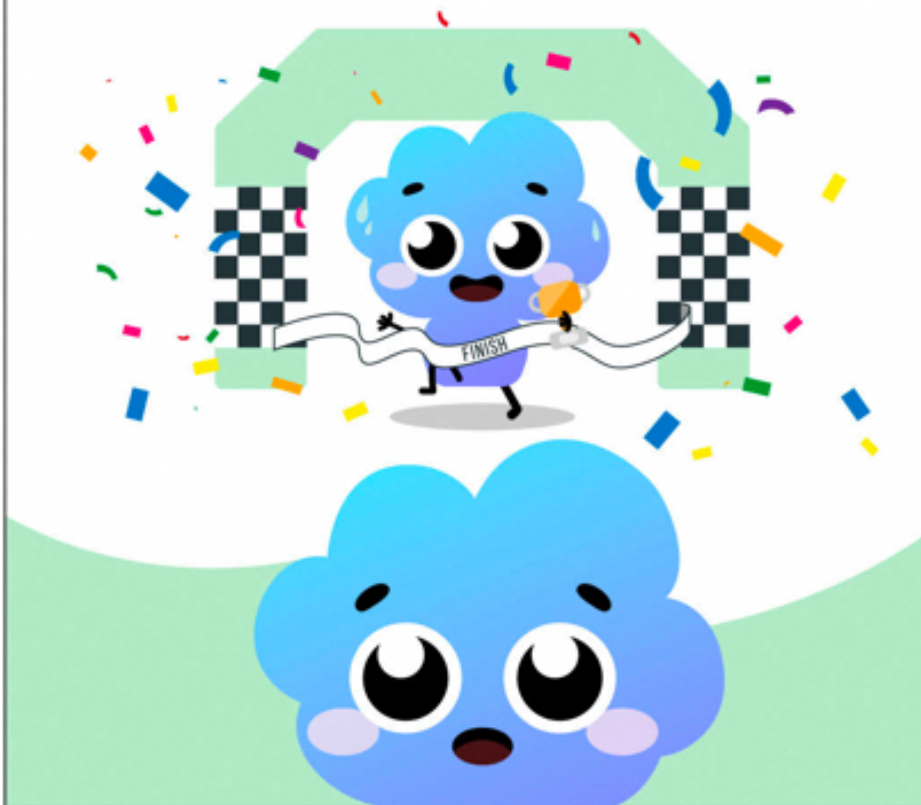
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can be a creative outlet.

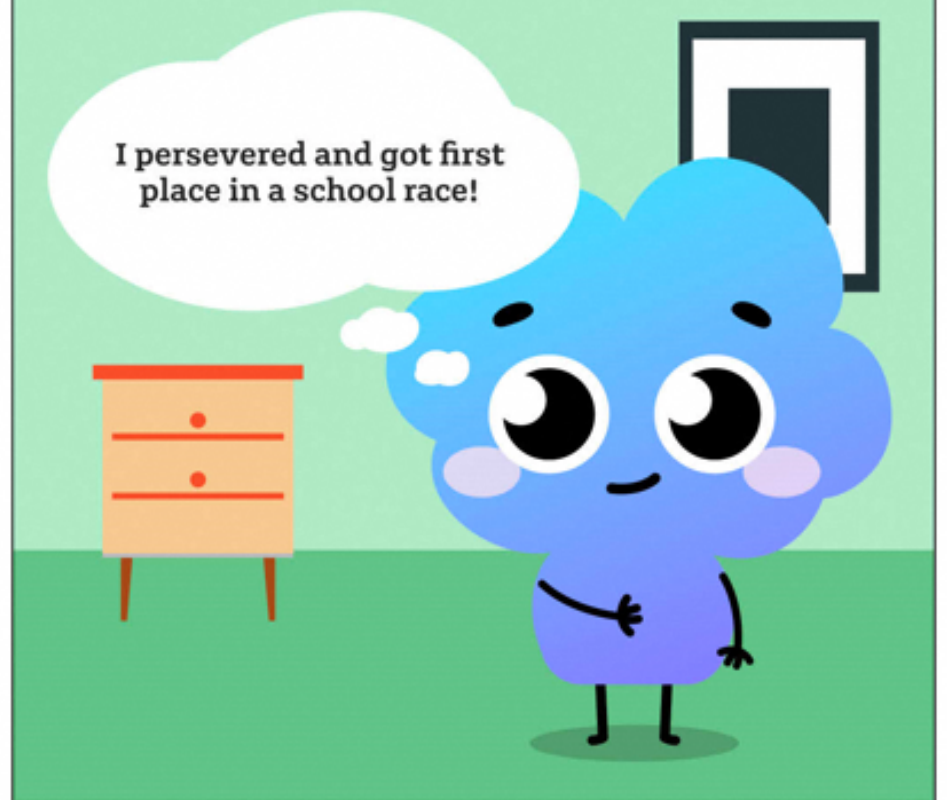


Positive Self-Statements

1 Think about past achievements/ improvements made.



2 Make positive statements about what you did.



3 Begin by saying to yourself "I did well when I ..."



4 Or "I am proud of myself when I ..."





ANGER



Feeling angry/frustrated is a normal response when you feel threatened, experience unfairness, or when your goals are blocked. Feeling anger/frustration may become a problem when you express it in unhealthy or harmful ways.

Anger Can Be a Mask for Vulnerability

Anger is often a secondary emotion. Beneath a teen's angry outbursts, there is usually fear, sadness, or frustration.

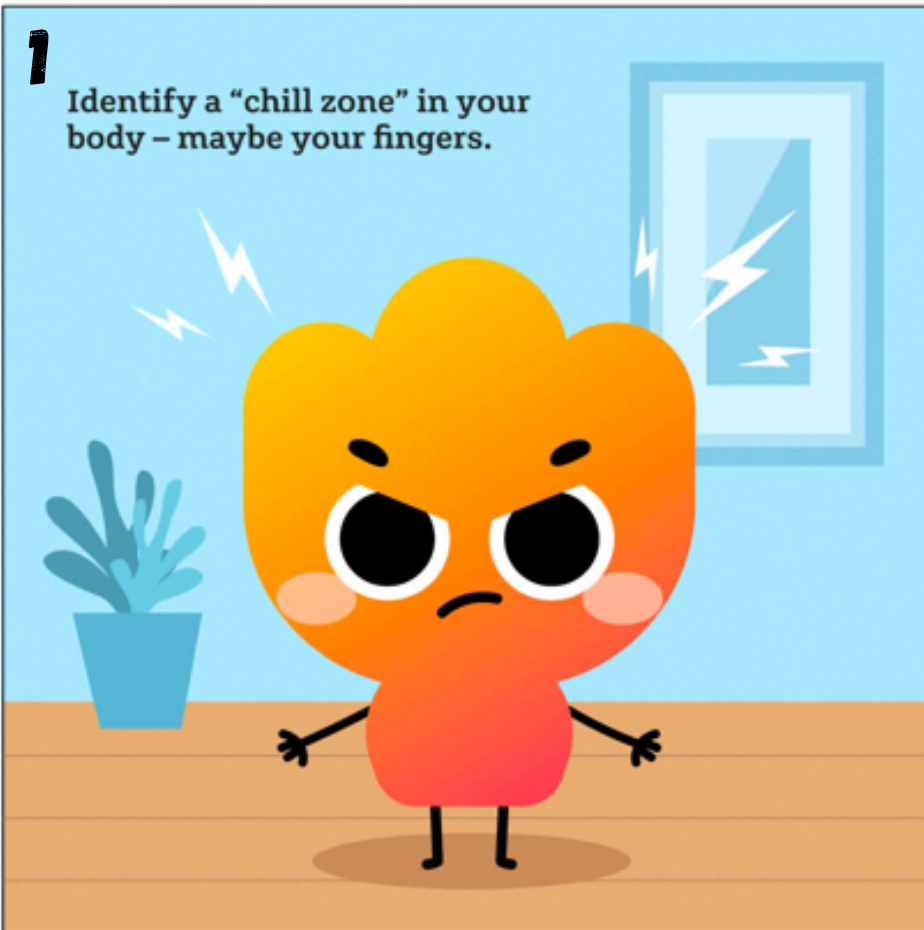
Understanding this can help us connect with our teens on a deeper level instead of reacting to the surface emotion. We can also guide our teens to express their anger constructively and manage it in healthy ways.



The Chill Zone

1

Identify a "chill zone" in your body – maybe your fingers.



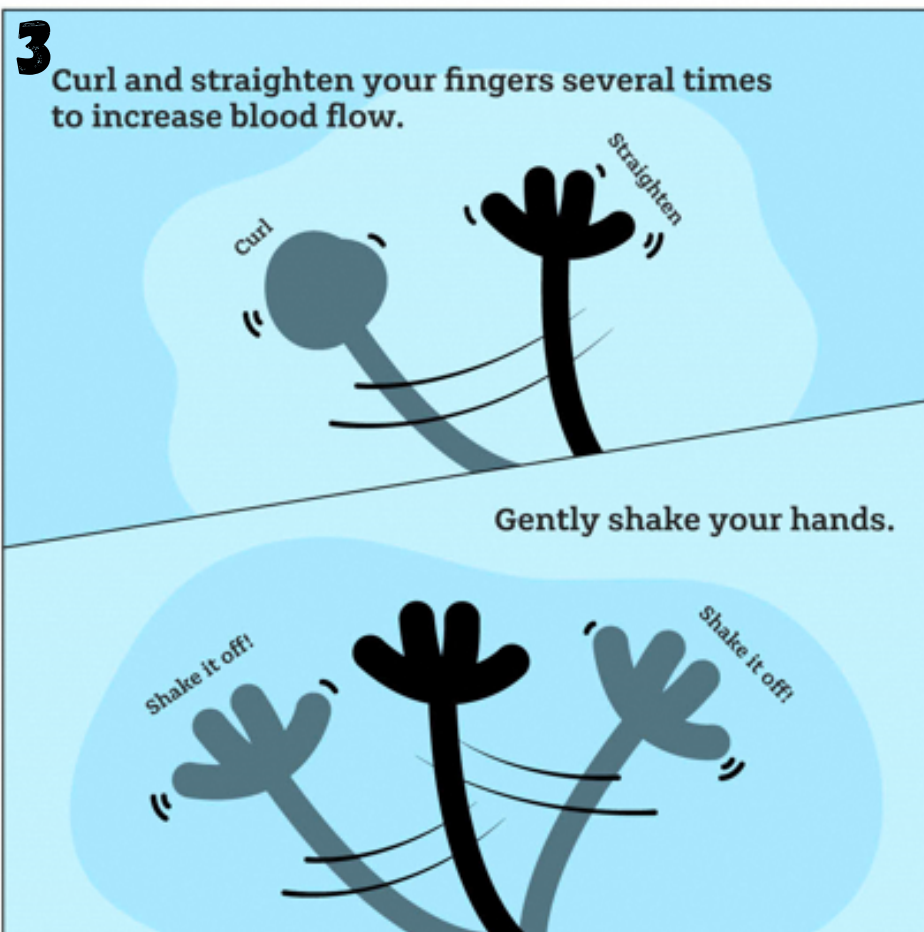
2

Focus on consciously relaxing your fingers when anger strikes.



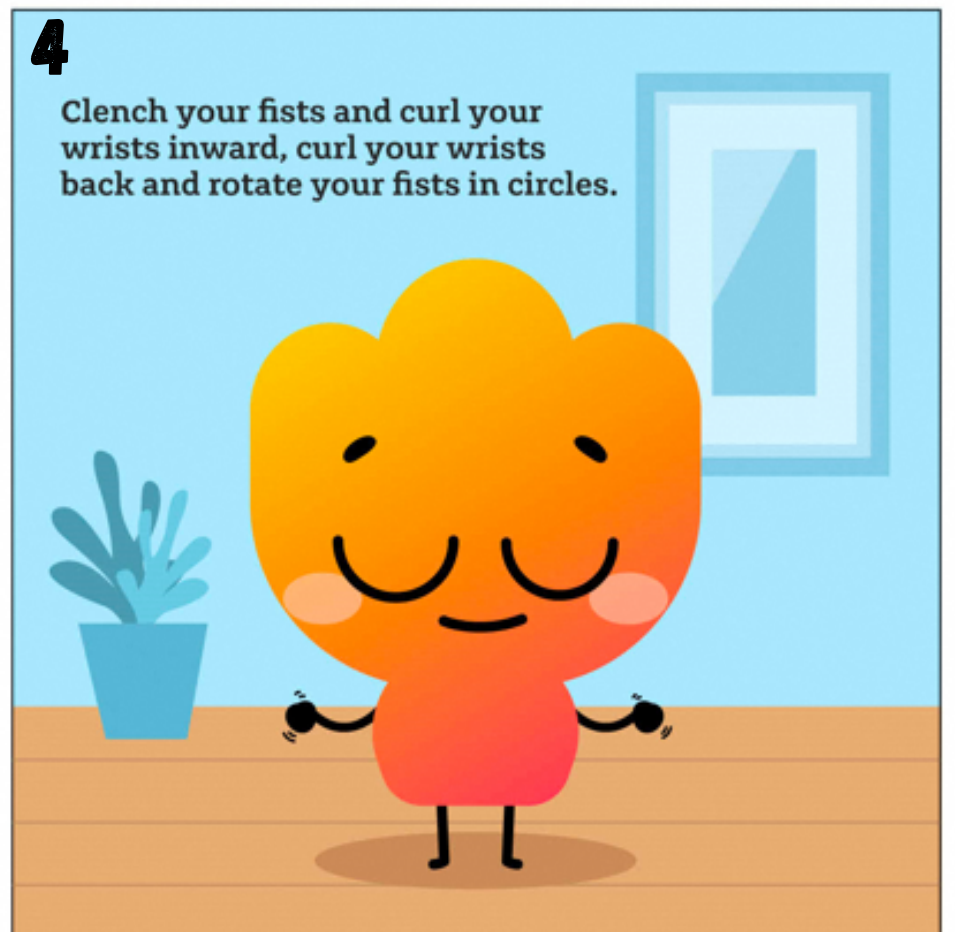
3

Curl and straighten your fingers several times to increase blood flow.



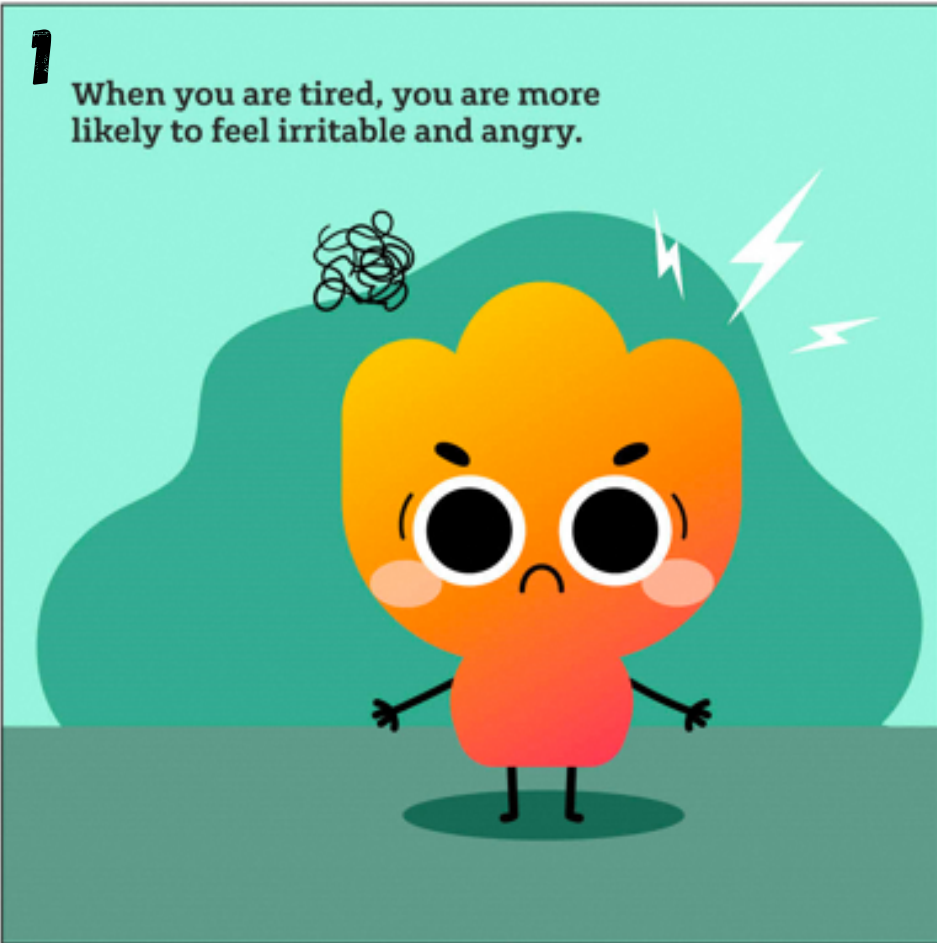
4

Clench your fists and curl your wrists inward, curl your wrists back and rotate your fists in circles.



The Sleep Sanctuary

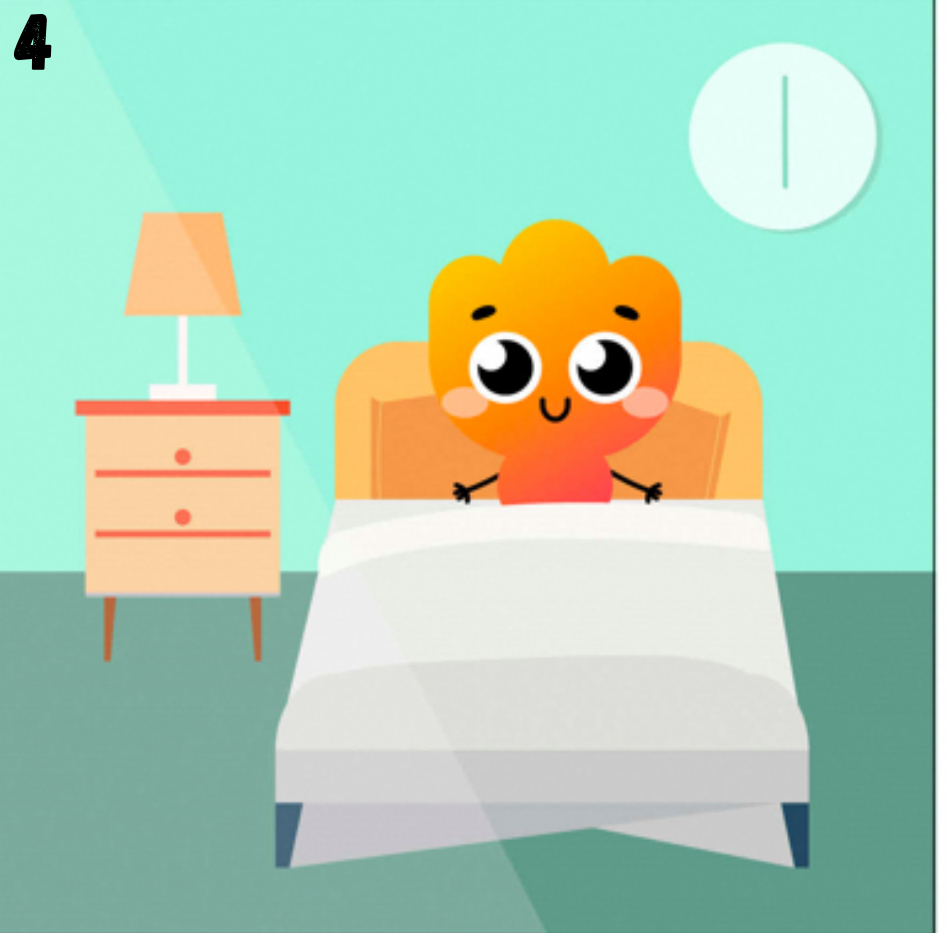
1 When you are tired, you are more likely to feel irritable and angry.



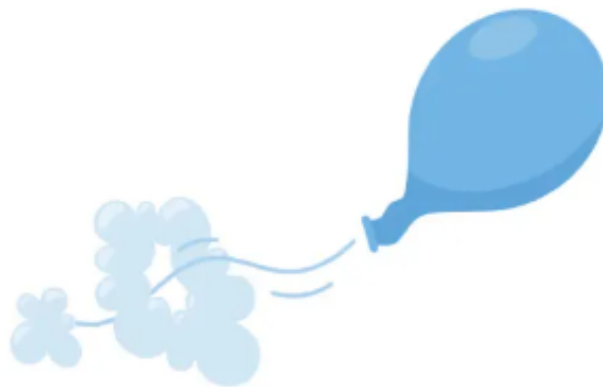
2 Get enough sleep. (at least 8 hours)



3 Develop a healthy sleep routine with consistent sleep and wake times.



○ DISAPPOINTMENT

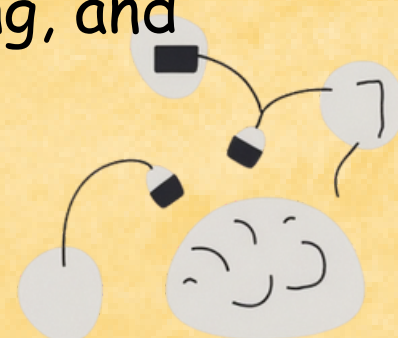


It is normal to feel disappointed from time to time, for example, when you are unable to reach your goals or meet your expectations.

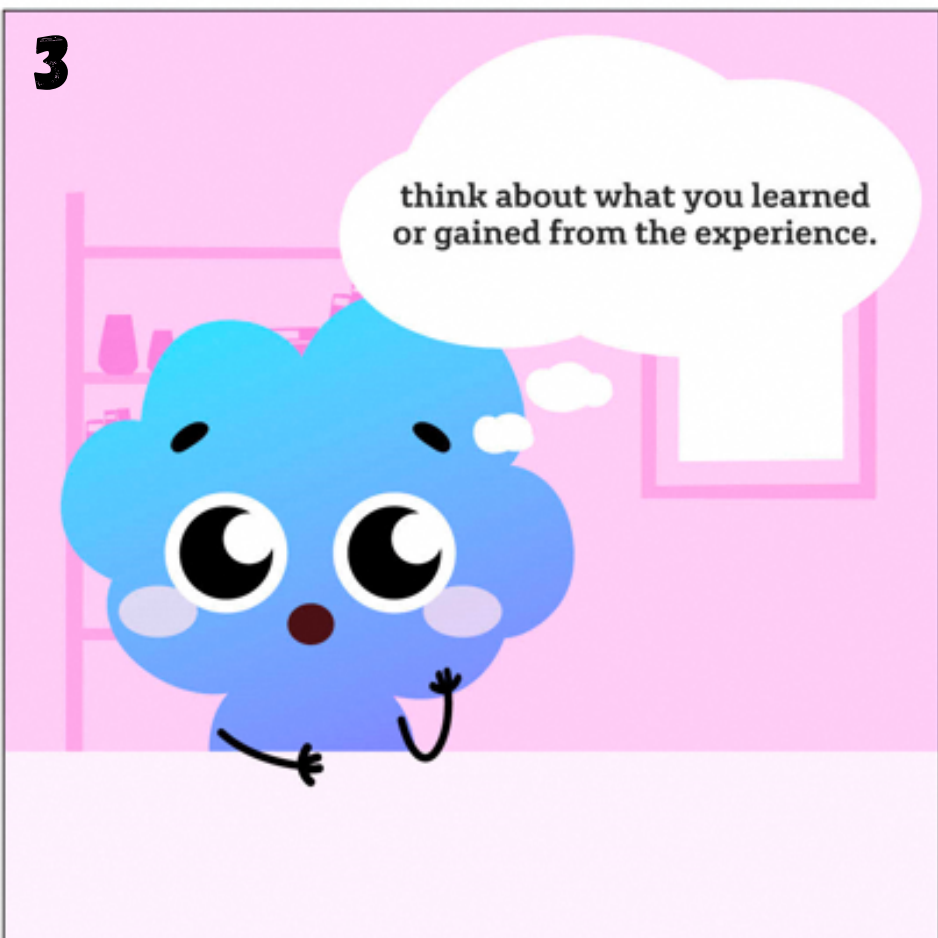
Learning from Disappointment Sharpens Decision Making

Most parents see disappointment as something to soothe or avoid. But neuroscientists have found that disappointment actually sharpens a teen's ability to predict outcomes and make better decisions next time. It is the brain's built-in feedback system.

Teens who learn to face disappointment often develop stronger judgement, better planning, and fewer repeated mistakes.



The “Disappointment Flip”



Balancing Expectations: The 4R Strategy

1 **Recognise** the expectations on myself, something or someone.



2 **Rationalise** why you may have these expectations. Check assumptions.



3 **Replace** your expectations and critical voice to be more balanced and encouraging.



4 **Reconnect** with self (e.g., practise self-care) and reconnect with others (e.g., for support or advice)

