



Teaching in 2021

An Emotional Survival Guide



A Plan for Now and for Whole School Opening

Are you and your colleagues feeling anxious, overwhelmed, tired, or bereft? Are you concerned about your pupils at school and at home and feel powerless to do anything about it?

This guide has been written by our education team, including teachers and a school governor who understand and can empathise with you.

Everyone has experienced some sort of loss since March 2020. Loss of safety, loss of hopes and dreams, loss of health, relationship breakdown, loss of friends, loss of family... On top of this, schools have had the emotional load of rethinking everything, from safety procedures and risk assessments, to how to deliver education remotely. There has been immense pressure on the whole sector and an intense spotlight from the media, the DfE, not to mention parents!

We have written this guide to help you personally, as well as help you to support your colleagues in and out of school. We have also compiled some resources ready for you to 'hit the ground running' when schools fully reopen, especially if your school is running a recovery curriculum.

In Grief Recovery, we always say 'put your own oxygen mask on first.' This is probably counter intuitive to SLTs, teachers, learning support workers, and pastoral teams, as you're so used to putting others first. It means that we're going to start by taking care of your emotions before you're in a place to help others.



Part 1: Taking Care of Your Emotions



Has your standard response to 'how are you feeling' become 'I'm fine' when people ask, but underneath you're thinking, 'I'm anything but fine'? The likelihood is that you're going through a whole raft of emotions right now, which change throughout the course of the day.

There will be good days and bad days.

If you're feeling exhausted from 'double teaching' and your emotional reaction is to cry, think about what you can do about it. The answer is probably nothing. Just acknowledge it, say to yourself 'Ok, I'm feeling frazzled, and that's a perfectly normal reaction.' If you're feeling sad, frustrated, angry... acknowledge it and let it go.

When you're extremely busy, it's easy to ignore what you're really feeling. Avoiding a negative feeling buys you short term gain at the price of long-term pain, for example you avoid the short-term discomfort of a negative feeling, you become stressed and decide to drink. It "works," and the next day, when the bad feelings come, you drink again. So far so good, in the short term. In the long run, however, you may develop a bigger problem (addiction), in addition to the unresolved issues you had avoided by drinking.

Avoidance lengthens the period of anticipation, and anticipatory anxiety is usually much worse than facing up to your feelings. Once you face up to your feelings, your mind becomes bound by the reality of what is happening to you.

Pain, fear and sadness and any other negative feelings don't just disappear; acknowledging they are there and learning to deal with them will help you to feel more in control. When you accept a negative feeling, it tends to lose its destructive power.

1. Acknowledge Everything

Acknowledge everything

How to acknowledge everything

What can you do to experience your feelings without getting stuck in them, or avoiding them?

Give Your Feelings A Label

By naming your feelings, you're taking the sting out them. Are you feeling nervous, anxious, sad, disappointed, vulnerable, angry...? This can also help you to see how your feelings are affecting your decisions.

Turn Your Thoughts Upside Down

If you're experiencing negative feelings, once you've acknowledged what's causing them try flipping them into a positive, for example if you feel frightened of leaving home in case you catch Covid-19, try feeling safe that you're in your own home.

If you find yourself dwelling on negative things, try distracting your brain with a quick physical activity, like going for a walk or doing PE with Joe Wicks.

Do Something to Boost Your Mood

If you're struggling to get past your feelings once you've acknowledged them, do something that will make you feel better. Listen to music, dance, sing, phone a friend, or go for a walk.

Acknowledging everything means having your thoughts one at a time and getting to the point of them being in the past and you being in the present.

A person wearing a red jacket and dark trousers stands on a mossy rock, looking out at a massive, powerful waterfall. The water is white and turbulent as it falls. The sky is overcast and grey. The text 'Be present.' is written in a large, yellow, cursive font in the upper left corner.

Be present.

2. Be Present

'Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift, which is why it's called the present.'

We all spend so much of our lives time travelling, we barely notice it. Travelling into the past with our thoughts to find things to beat ourselves up with, then projecting ourselves into the future to worry, creating stress, anxiety, and pain, much of which could be avoided if we simply stayed in the present.

Yes, we need to go to the past from time to time – that's where fond memories and useful lessons lie. Yes, we need to go to the future to plan and there can be pleasure in anticipation. Joy, however, is found in the now, in noticing what is happening right this second, experiencing emotions as they happen, then letting them go to move to the next one.

The situation we are in is one of extreme uncertainty. The DfE's ever-changing guidance, no firm date of full school opening, weekly Covid tests... We don't know what will happen, how long it will go on for, or what things will be like when it's over. It's easy to let your brain to escalate with lots of frightening possibilities and outcomes and blow everything up into a full-blown panic. One thing we do know is that worrying about it won't change a thing. Learning how to get through the uncertainty is a part of building healthy coping skills for ourselves and our families. Being present will help to ground you and move away from a place of worry and uncertainty.

Here are some tips to help you to be present:

1. Stand outside, if you can or open a window if you can't go out and close your eyes.
2. Take notice of what you can now hear. Birds, insects, cars, no cars.
3. Breathe in. What can you smell? What can you feel with your fingertips?
Now what are you feeling?
4. Focus on what's right in front of you, without distraction.
5. Look around you and see things for the first time.

You might notice that bird song gets louder, scents get more noticeable, your skin becomes more sensitive to the breeze or the fabric under your fingertips. You are now in the present moment. Find yourself time travelling again? Bring yourself back to the now by refocusing on your senses and surroundings again. Yes, it might take some practice - so don't give up on your first attempt.

You can also share this with your pupils!

Practice Makes Present

The more you practice being present, the more benefits you will become aware of. If you notice that the knot in your stomach appeared the moment somebody said the word "Ofsted," it's a lot easier to think about the feeling as a normal, passing reaction, and not fall into a snowball of negative thoughts that send you into a panic.

Being present can also help you to listen, as you're not thinking about what's happening next. This is a particularly useful skill to have, especially as we're all experiencing grief (loss of a loved one, loss of normal, loss of routine...), even if it is at different intensities. Grievers need to be heard and being present means that you can listen without interjection and be with people in the present moment.

3. Be Emotionally Honest

A quote used in the Grief Recovery Training is "Love is the product of truthful communication," and whether we're talking romantic love or any relationship, when we're emotionally honest everything works better. For example, "I feel like I'm drowning with this extra workload, I would really appreciate you giving me some non-contact time," is more likely to help you than keeping quiet and allowing yourself to burn out or become resentful about it. If you don't communicate how you feel, nobody will know and will assume that everything is alright.

If you try to stick to what's true for you and express it, you are more likely to be heard.

Why is emotional truth important? What is not said can be just as harmful as what is said. We have already identified that COVID-19 doesn't discriminate. Imagine one of your colleagues dying. The last time you spoke, you had a heated discussion. Two days later, they died. You hadn't said 'Thank you for helping me be the teacher I am today.' And they hadn't told you how they felt either. However, just a small tweak to the end of your heated discussion generates a much better ending. Something along the lines of 'I'm not going to agree with your point of view, so I'm going to go now, and I still appreciate you.'

There's a difference between being emotionally honest and facts. The emotional truth is what you feel. This sometimes has nothing to do with the facts. Taking the above example, the fact is you've had an argument. Being emotionally honest at the end of it changes your feelings about that argument in the future. Very quickly you can see that you might tell a different story about how you felt about the same event if you weren't emotionally honest at the end.

Be emotionally honest

Talking about your emotional truth is about expressing the voice in your heart, not your head. The truth in your head is about the facts involved in a situation. Think of 'head stuff' as what you might say in court. In our relationships with others, it's important to share what you feel rather than what you think others would like to hear. Telling your emotional truth should reflect the way you lived your experience.

Nobody is going to feel exactly the same way you do. You can never truly know what someone else is feeling because you haven't lived life in their shoes, but you may be able to empathise with them.

Sometimes emotional honesty can make you or the person you're talking to feel a bit uncomfortable, especially if you're not used to talking about how you really feel together. This may involve concerns that they take your feelings the wrong way, or you're worried about hurting their feelings. It might be that you're risking your feelings, that you tell them how you really feel, and they don't feel the same way as you do. This is a risk worth taking because you are being true to yourself. When we allow ourselves to "put it out there" and be honest with our feelings and needs, there is a good chance that others will follow.

During our everyday working lives, we have working relationships with so many people for example our students, colleagues, parents, and governors. Each person we work with will be facing their own losses. Some may be emotional honest, and some may not be. Many of you will have entered the profession because you wanted to change the lives of our future generations, but you also have an impact on the others you work with.

Covid has caused all of us to carry a huge emotional burden and we often subconsciously look for people to help and support us. You are likely to be finding parents becoming more anxious, colleagues more concerned and your students becoming clingier. Here are some suggestions that may help you support others:

This is what happened to me - Here's my take on what happened - Here's how I see it - I know you might not see it like this but this is how I felt

Look at this as a gift of time. Take a reflective look at who you are and how you would want to leave your communications with your nearest and dearest, colleagues, and students. Facing a global pandemic can put things into perspective and provide you with an opportunity to discover what and who is important.

Tell the emotional truth about yourself and people around you will know where you're at.

Here are some examples:

I love you

I'm very proud of the person you've become

Thank you for always being there for me

I always love spending time with you

I'm frustrated I can't go dancing

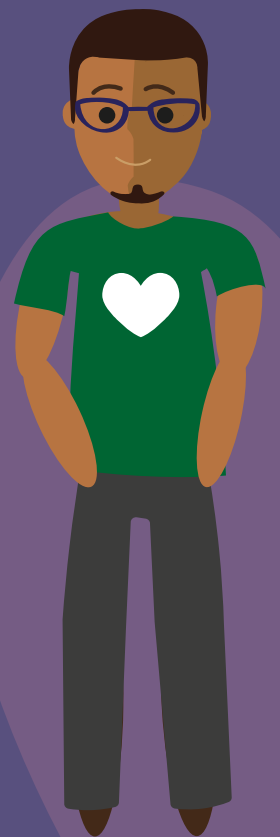
I'm scared I'll get ill

I'm sorry for shouting at you

I appreciate the work you are doing to keep this community safe

I feel overwhelmed trying to juggle so much, please can you listen to me

I don't need to be fixed, just heard



Part 2: Supporting Others



1. Listening with an Open Heart

Have an open heart.

Listening with an open heart will help you to support the people you care about, including your colleagues and your students.

The Grief Recovery Method teaches us how to listen and comfort others without trying to fix, analyse or explain (or change the topic back to ourselves!). Instead, we use the image of being a “heart with ears” – offering our full presence and listening with care and patience. If, and when we do respond, we do so without offering judgement, analysis, or criticism. Rather than telling someone we know “exactly how they feel,” we can instead acknowledge their feelings, such as “It sounds like you’ve really been through it,” or “I can’t imagine how you feel right now.”

By offering your full presence and a listening ear, you are offering them the best support and comfort you could possibly give – the chance for them to speak about their feelings with emotional honesty, without the fear of being shut down or offered platitudes. By listening, without interrupting, you are offering someone the chance to fully get their emotions off their chest. We have often heard people say, ‘a problem shared is a problem halved’ and this is really true when we use our ‘heart with ears.’

The problem is, many of us haven’t really been taught how to listen, only to hear! Here are some pointers:

1. Be Present

Being in the present moment is a great place to start learning how to listen. It means you can listen without distraction because you are ‘in the moment.’

2. Don’t be in a hurry

Make time to have more in-depth conversations and set aside an hour or so. We can be in such a rush to get to that moment of connection with the person we’re trying to listen to that we can end up cutting the other person off short. When you do this, you can end up jumping to a lot of conclusions without letting the speaker finish their sentence! The problem with that is that you don’t know where the other person is going. And even if you do, jumping in will often feel like an interruption rather than a genuine moment in which you and the speaker truly feel each other.

3. Let the speaker get their full thought out before responding

Sometimes, when we think we’re listening, what we’re actually doing is thinking about our response. You can’t do both of those things at the same time. It takes up too much brain power. It’s ok if you don’t fully understand what they’re saying straight away, and it’s fine to pause for a minute while you gather your thoughts, even if it does feel a bit awkward. This ensures that the person has said everything they need to before carrying on. Also, if you start interrupting, while you might think you’re offering help, the speaker might clam up and stop talking.

4. Listen without judgement, comparison or analysis

Whatever the person is telling you, they trust you enough to open up to you. Listen without passing judgement or without telling them what to do, or how to feel. Don’t start any sentence with ‘you need to,’ ‘you should,’ ‘you must’ or ‘you have to,’ as no matter what you say after that, the reaction isn’t likely to be a positive one. These phrases imply that you are ‘instructing’ them and can feel like an attack. It is okay to make suggestions. Imagine someone saying: ‘you need to get out, it’ll do you good’. How does that make you feel?

5. Resist the urge to fix people

If you’re listening to someone you care about, it’s only natural that you don’t want to see them hurting or going through a difficult time. However, if you’re not sure if they want your advice or not, you could always ask questions such as: ‘Is there anything I can do to help, or do you need to just talk about it?’ or ‘Would you like some help to come up with some solutions?’

Listening really is a skill and takes effort and energy to do. Pay attention to body language, tone of voice, what the person’s face is telling you. How is the other person speaking? Do they sound tense or anxious? If you’re truly listening, you’re taking all that into account, and that leaves much less space for you to focus on other things, like what you’re going to say next, or what you’re planning to have for dinner.

If you’re aware that someone needs a listening ear but don’t know how to start the process, here are some useful questions that you could ask to prompt them:

What’s happening with you today? – Sounds like you’re frustrated.
Looks like you’re unhappy, want to talk about it? – What happened?

These are non-invasive questions that require more than a ‘yes,’ ‘no,’ or ‘I’m fine’ answer.

Many people are feeling an array of emotions during this difficult time. Remember, they don’t need to be fixed, they do need to be heard. Be compassionate. Be a ‘heart with ears.’

2. Helping Staff

If you're in a Senior Leadership Team, and staff welfare is part of your role, this next section is for you. We appreciate that time is precious, and many teachers are at breaking point.

Remaining positive in front of staff can be challenging. Earlier in our guide we talked about acknowledging everything and emotional honesty. As a leader, modelling your behaviour will allow others to follow. Simply being truthful about your feelings will enable others to be truthful about theirs. This doesn't mean you have to disclose everything. An example would be: "When I first saw the latest expectations for remote learning, I felt daunted..." and let your team know that it's ok to acknowledge how you feel.

everyone
will have
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and bad
days

Everyone will have good and bad days. Allow yourself to know and be comfortable with a range of emotions and know that it is normal and natural to feel what you're feeling in the current situation. It's ok to feel scared, worried, anxious, and apprehensive. It's also important that you allow yourself time to deal with these feelings. Self-care is crucial. You can't pour from an empty vessel, which is why at the start of this guide we take care of you, first.



heart
of the
school

3. Staff Meetings

Bearing in mind that staff meetings need to be an efficient use of time, we have produced a series of practical, tried-and-tested, effective activities for your staff to help you put wellbeing at the heart of the school. The activities can be used over a series of staff meetings, or as a one-off.

The first two activities help staff to acknowledge their feelings.

Name that Feeling

- 1. Print out or write a list of positive and negative feeling words on a flipchart.
- 2. Ask every member of staff to choose two – one positive, one negative that are the closest to how they feel.
- 3. Take it in turns to share the words and why they might feel that way. Make sure you go first, so it allows your staff to see that it’s ok to not feel ok.
- 4. Thank them for being honest and explain that the purpose of the activity was to show how you’re all in it together and when you share your feelings and talk, you can support each other.

Turn your Thoughts Upside Down

- In schools, it’s easy to get drawn into negative feelings about partial school closures, so in this exercise, we look at the positives that have come from the current situation.
- 1. Start by discussing the negative aspects of partial school closure, what has upset staff, e.g., constant cleaning, fear, lateral flow tests, not seeing all the pupils, extra workload, pupils not having homes set up for home learning, juggling your own children with work expectations..
 - 2. Using a flip-chart, encourage members of staff to write down one ‘win’ for them, for example conducting parents’ evenings online, which means that it doesn’t overrun and there’s less preparation time involved. It could be about developing new IT skills, or other new ways of doing things.
 - 3. Discuss what positive things you should keep when schools return to more normal times, such as continuing parents’ evenings online.
 - 4. Explain that even though life is tough right now, there are positives to take from it and thank them for sharing their ideas.

You might find that you want to do some practical activities that you can encourage your members of staff to do outside of your staff meeting. The next two activities are looking at trying to create some sort of balance during these times of uncertainty.

Be Present

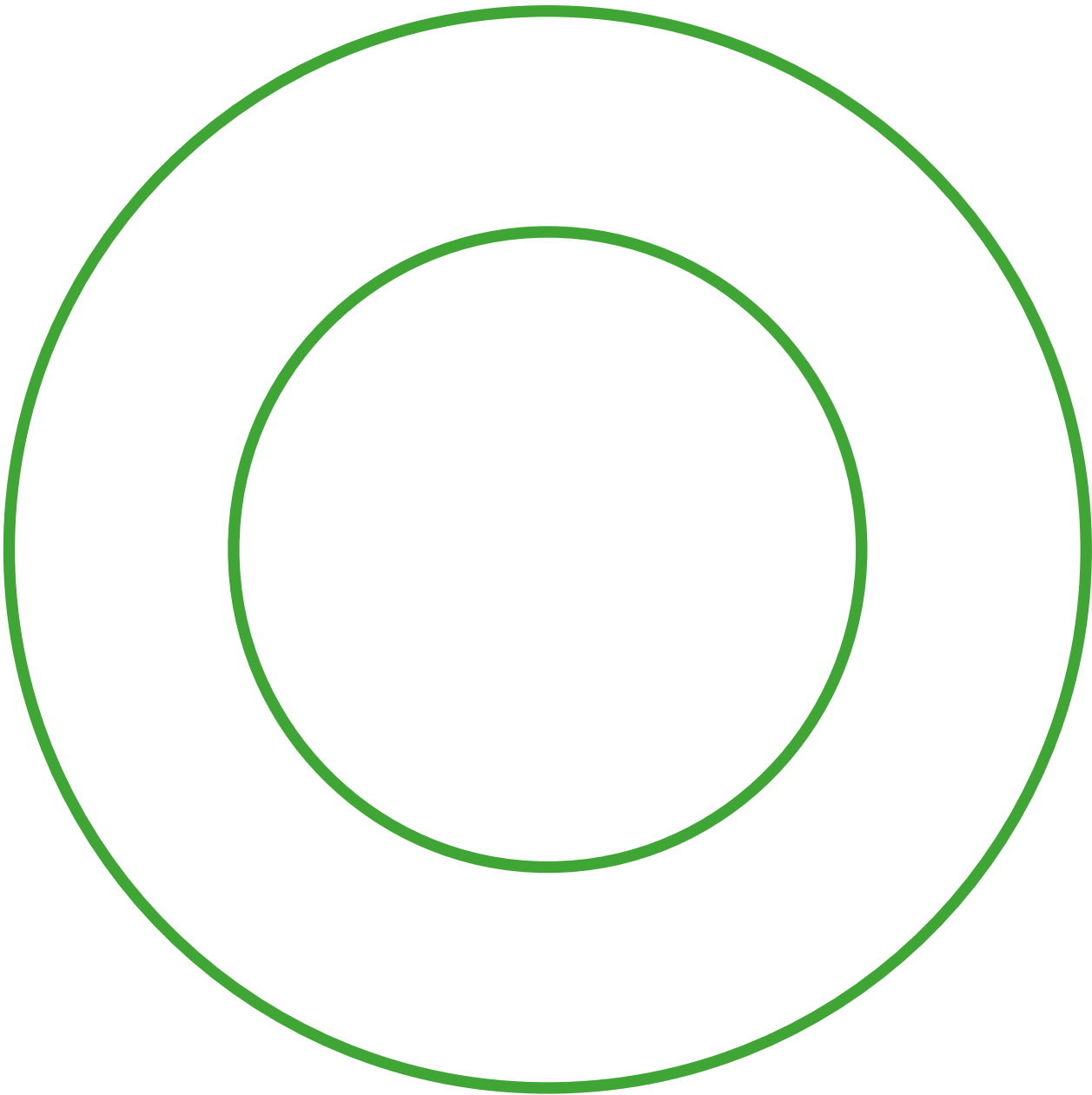
- 1. Ask everyone to ensure both feet are planted firmly on the floor.
- 2. Ask them to focus on something small nearby, such as a mark on the wall or carpet, and really look at it.
- 3. While looking at their spot, ask them to focus on what they can hear. Pick out one sound and pay attention to it.
- 4. While looking and listening, ask them to notice what they can feel, such as the fabric of their clothing, or the surface of the mug in their hand.
- 5. Maintain this looking, listening and feeling for about a minute, then relax.
- 6. Ask the staff for observations. People often notice clocks get much louder!
- 7. Ask them how they are feeling now.
- 8. Explain that being present can help them feel a sense of calm, especially in times of anxiety and overwhelm, now and in the future.

Circles of Control

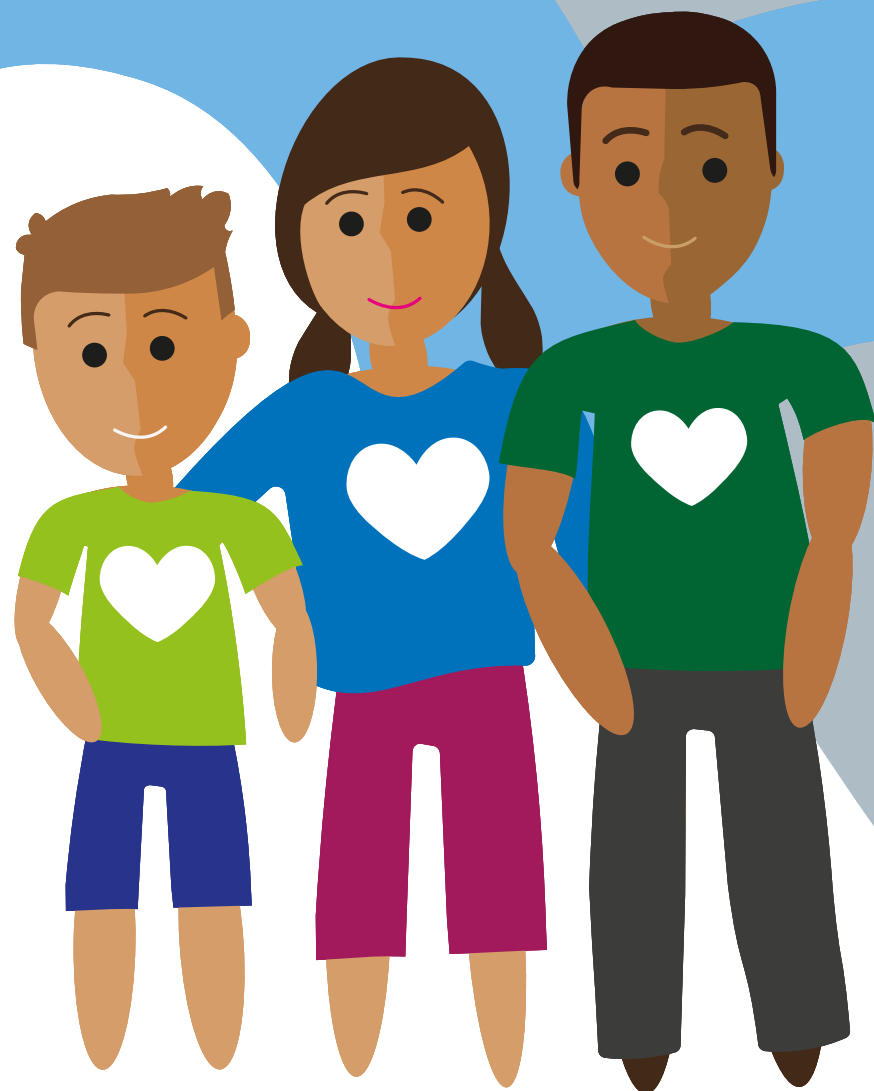
This exercise can help to get overwhelming thoughts under control and help staff to stop worrying about things they have no control over. Identifying, writing down and visualising what we can and can’t control helps us to rationalise and regulate emotions leading to less stress, anxiety, and negative thoughts.

- 1. Hand out A4 sheets of paper and pens or pencils. Ask everyone to draw a circle in the centre, allowing enough room to write inside the circle.
- 2. Explain the circle represents the things that you can control at about the current situation and ask them to write them down, e.g., ensuring children wash their hands at the start of the day.
- 3. Next, ask them to draw a larger circle around the initial circle. This circle represents all the things they can’t control at school, such as changing DfE guidelines.
- 4. They should now have a visual of all the things they can control in the centre and all the things they can’t control in the outer circle.
- 5. They may also have some things that overlap between the two circles, things that they may have some control over that they can consider acting on, or not.
- 6. Ask them how this makes them feel, and maybe start by telling them how you feel, e.g., relieved from some of the worry you were carrying.

Beyond your staff meeting(s), our free hints and tips posters can help staff to listen, talk and with selfcare.



Part 3: Supporting Pupils



3. Supporting Pupils

We understand how hard things are right now and appreciate the lack of time that teachers have to prepare resources to support their students. One of the things we really appreciate about teachers is their unconditional support of their pupils and we know that they will go the extra mile if something is going to benefit the pupils. We hope that you will find the resources we have created of use and have freed up some time for you; our gift to you as an acknowledgement of the superb job you are doing now and always.

PSHE Lessons – An Opportunity to Connect

DfE has an expectation of the entire curriculum being delivered remotely and for those still in the classroom. Teaching PSHE remotely in live lessons presents a layer of complexity not necessarily experienced by other subject areas. Here are a few considerations:

1. Think about your topic. Would it be difficult for any pupils to be taught it in the home environment?
2. Think about who might be listening in the background, e.g., other children in the home, or adults.
3. Is there a possibility that the topic might require your face-to-face support?
4. Do you need to provide additional information or signposting with your lesson?
5. Is there support available should a student make a disclosure or need help?

For more free resources and ideas, visit www.griefuk.org/openears. Here you will find details of the PSHE curriculums we have written for schools for three different age groups (4-7, 8-12 and 13+). Each box contains 36 prepared lessons in lesson plans, worksheets, assemblies with additional online resources, and circle times set across six values that could be used per half term.

Fantastic resource. Easy to understand, follow and adapt to suit your children/class. Fits alongside PSHE already in school. Children love the activities, learning about their feelings and emotions together. Staff also learnt a lot and are now more confident to say the right things and use the right words. A really good investment. – S Machin, teacher, North West England.

Circle Time: Safe Topic Ideas

Circle time online can be a really great way to connect with your class and help them to feel part of the school community. It gives pupils the chance to talk and be heard, see each other as a group, and gives them the opportunity of problem solving and finding coping mechanisms collectively. Of course, these subjects can be used for circle time back in the classroom, too.

Finding subjects to discuss in your circle time needs careful consideration though, as you don't know who might be listening in the background, for example parents, or siblings. Some subject areas require face-to-face support. We have created a 'safe' list of topics:

1. Good sleeping habits and routines
2. Healthy living
3. Good Hygiene
4. Friendship
5. Kindness
6. Gratitude
7. Being present
8. Positive mental health strategies
9. Community in Lockdown
10. Managing time online or gaming in Lockdown

Conducting Live Circle Times

1. Pair up with another teacher or support staff, so you're not alone*.
2. Avoid one-to-ones unless it has been risk assessed and pre-approved by your SLT**.
3. Familiarise yourself with your school's policies on safeguarding and disclosures.
4. Create the ground rules for Circle Time. Who can speak, when, and how? Circulate them before the lesson if you can and start the lesson with how it's going to work, what you're going to cover, and how you're going to conduct circle time.
5. Ask pupils to turn on their cameras, so that you can all see each other.
6. Use case study examples or scenarios rather than asking the pupils to talk about their personal experiences.
7. Ask for hypothetical answers.
8. If anyone talks about themselves, ask them to keep it hypothetical.
9. If the topic becomes triggering for any pupils, think about how you can signpost them to support.
10. End circle time with thanking everyone for their input and ask for feedback in the public comments, or ask them to discuss what went well, what could have been done better, and what they would like more or less of. Allow a couple of minutes for this.



*https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_-_Update_-_January_2021.pdf

** Department for Education (DfE) (2020) Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19).



returning back to school

Returning to school is going to cause another loss event for many children. Loss of their new structure, routine, safety, security, and family. And that is for the children who haven't suffered a bereavement during Lockdown and haven't endured any suffering.

Grief is the conflicting feelings caused by a change or an end in a familiar pattern of behaviour. Common responses to grief include sleepless nights, lack of concentration, restlessness, or emotional highs and lows. These reactions are normal and natural, and as you can imagine, will inhibit children's abilities to learn. Our resources can help you with developing your school's Recovery Curriculum.

Here are our tips for initial wider opening:

1. Treat it like September. Spend time getting to know the children again. What are their likes and dislikes? How do they like to learn? (Think 'metacognition'). What are their hobbies?
2. What was Lockdown like for them? Plan lessons around this.
3. Children need time to explore their feelings and emotions. They may struggle to understand how and why they feel the way they do. Give them the tools to be able to express themselves.
4. Listen. When they talk to you about their feelings, try not to interrupt. Then acknowledge how they're feeling.
5. Be patient. Returning to school may result in some behavioural issues.

Assembly

This assembly has been taken from Open Ears Box 2 for 8-12-year-olds, our year-long PSHE programme to help children with resilience, loss, and to develop life-long skills to cope with bereavement, grief, and loss, incorporating feelings and emotional wellbeing, developing healthy relationships, and resilience into learning.

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Responsibility Assembly

You will need:

Two volunteers

A bag of empty plastic bottles

Access to videos from www.openearsuk.org/resources

Welcome to our Values Assembly. This half term we are going to focus on Responsibility. A value is a principal that helps us to think about ourselves and our behaviour.

We will be looking at how we can take responsibility for our actions and our feelings. Let's have a think about different types of responsibilities. (If you're using Powerpoint, you might want to illustrate the following points).

- Looking after our belongings
- Looking after other people's things
- Looking after our home, our school, our community, our planet
- Our own feelings
- Our own behaviour
- Thinking of other people's feelings
- Remembering to do what we need to do, like feeding our pets, bringing your water bottle to school
- Taking care of ourselves, such as brushing our teeth, brushing our hair, and getting dressed
- As we get older, we got lots more responsibilities. I'm responsible for you all!

Ask for two volunteers. Ask the first volunteer to empty the bag of bottles onto the floor. Now ask the second volunteer to pick up the bottles. Ask them how picking them up made them feel. Then ask the rest of the children who should have picked them up.

Should it have been the one who dropped the bottles?

Ask them what their classroom would be like if nobody took responsibility for tidying it up.

What about the playground?

How would they feel if nobody took responsibility for taking the rubbish away from their homes?

What about the village/town/city they live in?

Everyone has roles and responsibilities and we are responsible for how we feel and behave, and how we behave towards others.

Key message:

We might not like it but sometimes we do need to clear up after others



PRESENT - EMPATHY - COMMUNITY - ENCOURAGE - SELF-AWARE - RESPONSIBLE

Make time to talk - Box of Hearts

Box of Hearts

We have used a selection of our Open Ears Box of Hearts cards to provide some talking points that can be used with individual pupils, small groups and as a class.

1. As a whole class exercise, you can use a card for circle time. Each pupil takes a turn to answer the question, while the others are encouraged to listen to others, not judge or analyse the comments made, or question their answer.

2. The questions could be used with an individual pupil, for example one who has suffered a loss. You could take it in turns to answer the questions. You should answer the question first to model how to answer the card. This works well over a series of sessions, as you can encourage them to be emotionally honest.

3. Over half a term, you could choose one card per week and display them in the classroom. You can provide your written response to the question and display it under the card. Pupils can write their answers on a piece of paper and post them into a closed box with a slit at the top. At the end of the week, you could read the responses to the class and ask them to reflect on the ideas shared. You could also ask pupils to share what they've learned from the answers.

Remember to listen to the answers without interrupting or judging!

For your own Open Ears Box of Hearts and Bereavement Box of Hearts, visit www.griefuk.org/openears



anywhere

If you could be anywhere right now, where would you be?



unhappiness

Do you feel that adults should protect children from unhappiness?



amazing

Describe how you're amazing.



5 things

Name five things you'd like to do in your life.



Open Ears

Grief UK Resources to Help You and Your Pupils

1. Resources

We have created lots of free resources that you can use, including posters, tips, articles, lesson plans, videos and more, which are available on our website –

www.griefuk.org/schools

If you have a specific need or want, please email us on schools@griefuk.org

2. When Children Grieve Book

We have a definitive guide to helping children really deal with loss from the authors of the Grief Recovery Handbook and founders of the Grief Recovery Institute. [HERE](#)

3. Helping Children with Loss Programme

This programme for adults will teach you how to communicate with the children in your care about losses they have experienced and those they yet might face. Led by a Certified Grief Recovery Specialist this programme uses the "When Children Grieve" as the textbook as you work through the process step by step over four weekly sessions. This can be delivered online. More information can be found here – www.griefuk.org/schools/#Training

4. Open Ears

The Open Ears Programme is a user-friendly, year-long PSHE curriculum to develop life-long skills to cope with bereavement, grief, and loss, incorporating feelings and emotional wellbeing, developing healthy relationships, and resilience into learning.

All the hard work has been done for you in our ready-made Open Ears Programme, which meets many of the objectives found in the new PSHE Curriculum guidelines (September 2020), and includes worksheets, lesson plans, assemblies, and circle times. Find out more here – www.griefuk.org/openears where you can order copies for your school and download free sample lessons.



About the authors

Maria Bailey is an Advanced Grief Recovery Specialist, which incorporates delivering the Helping Children with Loss Programme to schools and is the education programme co-ordinator for Grief UK. After achieving a BA(Hons) Public Relations and Journalism, she has spent her career in communications, working in different sectors including education, and has written for many national and trade publications. Maria is a co-opted governor and vice-chair at a primary school in Devon with a link role of Pupil Premium. She is also the chair of the board of trustees at a Devon preschool. Maria has three children and is the daughter of a retired teacher who lives next door and has been an extremely useful soundboard throughout the creation of Open Ears. Maria is passionate about education incorporating the whole child and believes the education system needs to change to incorporate more life skills, such as emotional well-being and resilience.

Sara Bowater is an Advanced Grief Recovery Specialist and a co-writer of Grief UK's Helping Children with Loss programme. She is also Head of House at Haberdashers' Adams in Newport, Shropshire, where she has the pastoral responsibility for over 250 pupils and is a teacher with over 20 years' teaching experience in both primary and secondary levels. During her teaching career she has been a Head of PSHE and Head of Citizenship and is a Designated Safeguarding Lead. Her teaching ethos is one that allows each one of the pupils in her care to reach and achieve their potential no matter the struggles they face or the stumbling blocks that are placed in their path.

About Grief UK

Grief Recovery UK is an organisation dedicated to helping the greatest number of griever in the shortest amount of time. The organisation offers help to individual griever and trains those who wish to help others to recover from loss of any kind. Thousands of people around the world have qualified as Certified Grief Recovery Specialists and work with people 1-to-1, in workshops, in education, healthcare and corporate settings.

www.griefUK.org