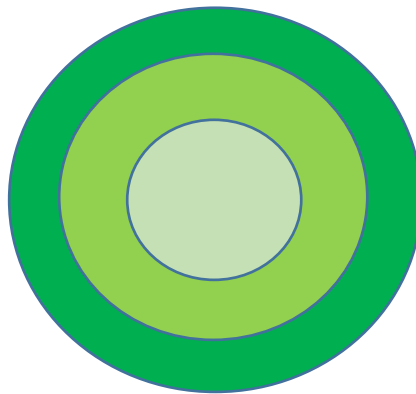


Dealing with our Worries

It is perfectly ok to feel worried! At present, there are a lot of changes in all of our lives which can also sometimes make us feel worried. Below explains a task to help with worries you may be having or experiencing – whether this is to accept or acknowledge your worries, ask for help to deal with them, plan for or actions to take to reduce the worry. Prioritising and planning can alleviate worries and help make us feel more positive.

1. Firstly, write down all your worries on post it notes or pieces of paper – do not rush with this step.
2. Then place these worries into one of the circles as explained.
 - **The inner circle is for worries you can do something about.**
 - **The middle circle is for worries you cannot do something about right now (this might be time dependent) but can return to, plan for or ask for help with.**
 - **The outer circle is for worries that exist but are out of your control – these you need to acknowledge or accept. Acceptance of a worry or issue that is out of your control is a useful strategy to help you manage it.**



3. Now you have placed each of your worries into one of the circles, focus on the inner circle. What worries can you do something about? For example, I am worried about not seeing my friends. You can do something such as make a plan to ask your parents to help you talk to them through phone, email, Skype or Zoom. There may be photos on the School website or you may have other photos of you together which you could frame and put up. You may choose to send them a postcard or letter – letting them know you are thinking of them.
4. Once you have planned or acted on the inner circle, focus on the middle one. Again, you may need to ask for help to address these worries, to help you plan for when it happens in the future. For example, 'What if I have to go straight to Secondary School or your 'next' year group and don't know what I have to do/where I am going/who my teacher or tutor is?' For some of you, you might put this worry in the outer circle, for others it may go in the middle – it will be personal to you – however, there are actions you could take to help with this worry, for example, right now no-one knows when we will be going back to school. It could be April, May, June, July or indeed later on in September. We will be given updates on the current situation from the Government so we will share them as and when we know. If, as time continues, it looks more likely for a September start date, we can try to ensure you have the equipment you need for wherever you are going e.g. uniform, bags, pencil case etc. We can also talk to your friends to see which schools/classes they are going to so you could travel together. The School would most likely inform you of your class/form group and we would then know a Teacher name. Teachers are currently working and will continue to work sorting things like timetabling and lessons to help settle you back in school. They will understand how you feel.
5. Finally, the outer circle. An example of a worry in this circle might be 'How long will this last?' Currently, no-one knows how long this will last. It is something that we may think or worry about but we have to accept that there is not an answer - yet. We need to remind ourselves that we are

at home, the rules are there to help keep us safe and instead try to think of the things we can feel grateful for. Accept that we don't have the answers, park that worry and live the journey we are currently on. Talking about this as a family can help.

6. Once your circles are complete, discuss or talk through any further thoughts or questions together. Talking can help. You may find other worries crop up during this process and discussion. Perhaps then try the self-care bingo afterwards to focus on positive, feel good activities.

This document was written by Laura Stevenson – just a reminder, she is not a trained psychologist but has created this advice based on teaching practice currently used in school, recent course content and previous background reading.