

# Supporting Your Child's Emotional Well-Being



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## Introduction

This short booklet offers resources and graphics to help parents/guardians/carers to support children's emotional well-being. The resources are from author Fiona Forman's children's well-being programmes, including ***Welcome to Well-Being***, ***Wired for Well-Being*** and ***Tools to Thrive***. These resources also come from her book for parents, ***Braver than you Believe: A Parent's Guide to Building Children's Resilience using Positive Psychology Skills***.

The positive, caring, nurturing and supportive relationship that you have with your child creates the foundation for the development of healthy emotional well-being. Normalising, naming and accepting all emotions is also vital. Taking the time to connect, listen and have fun together is an invaluable way to help your child to navigate and cope with the wide range of emotions which is part of being human.

The resources are suitable for children from around the ages of 7- 12 years.

If your child is experiencing prolonged emotional difficulties, it may be necessary to seek professional help.

## Contents and Suggestions for Use

### Page 2: Emotional Well-Being Check -In

Use this ***Wheel of Emotions*** to help your child to identify their emotions. Remind them that all emotions are OK, it's what we do with them that matters. Validate your child's emotions and empathise with them as they express them.

### Page 3: Mood Boosters

Use this list to encourage your child to find helpful ways to boost their mood so that they feel less overwhelmed by strong, uncomfortable emotions

### Page 4: Emotional Regulation Strategies

Use these graphics to practise emotional regulation techniques with your child. Practise them together at various times during the day when your child is already feeling calm. This will help your child to remember to do them at times of stress, worry or overwhelm.

***Box Breathing***

***3, 2, 1...Breathe***

***Hand Breathing***

***Stop and Drop***

### Page 7: Worry Decision Tree

Use this graphic to help your child to deal with specific worries as they arise. Make sure to validate their concerns and worries. If there is something the child can do about the worry, then make a plan to do it, if not, help your child to choose an activity to give their mind a chance to take a break from the worry for a while.

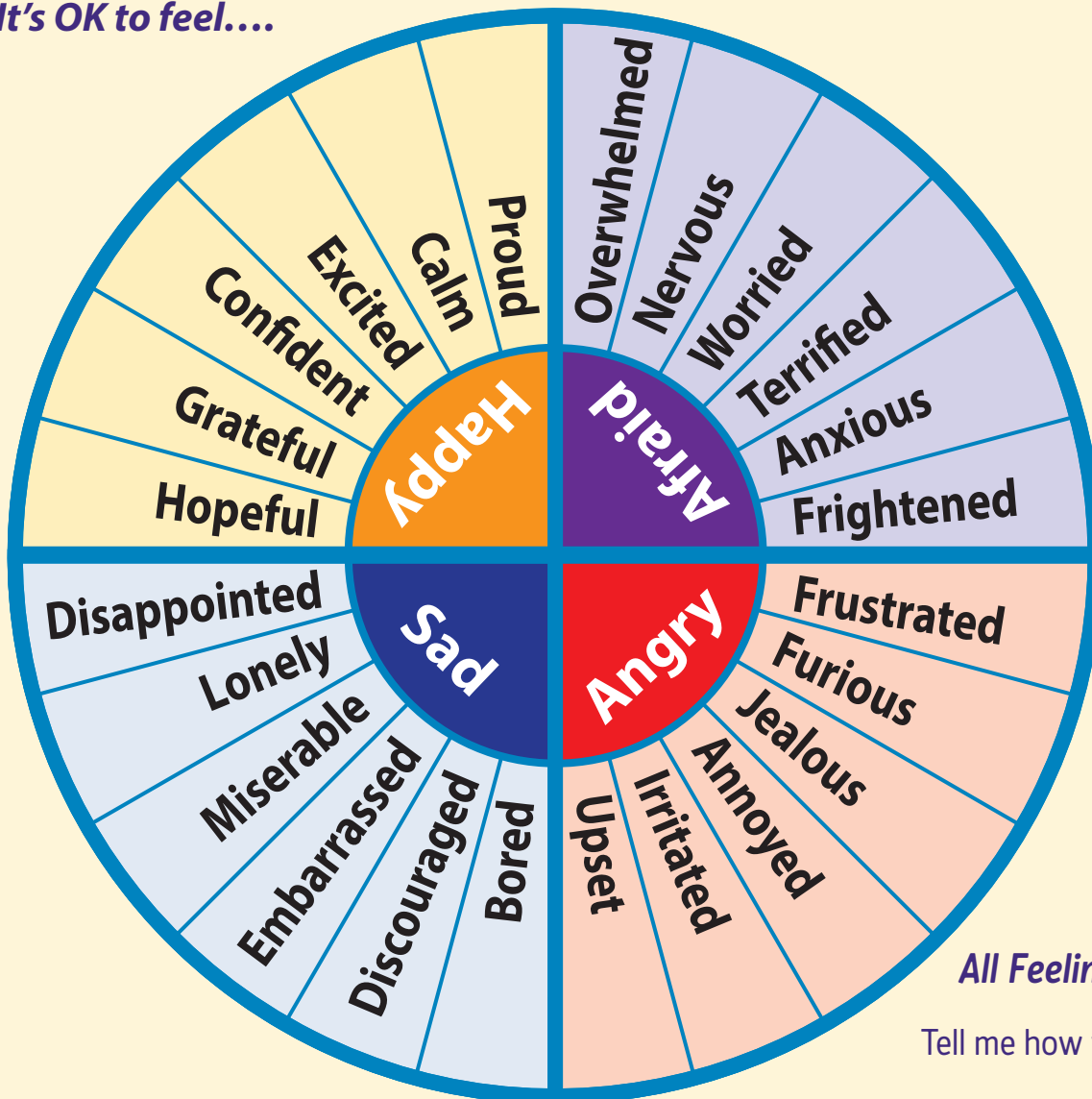
### Page 8: Character Strengths

Discuss these Character Strengths (*Seligman & Peterson, 2004*) with your child and help them to identify their top 5. They might like to draw a Character Strength Shield with their name and top 5 strengths around it. Remind your child of their strengths often and encourage them to use these strengths when facing challenges or difficulties.

## Emotional Well-Being Check-In

Can you name some emotions you feel/felt today?

*It's OK to feel....*



*All Feelings are OK*

Tell me how you feel today,

all feelings are OK.

Sad or happy,

worried or free,

let it in and let it be.

It will pass

and then you'll know,

feelings come

and then they go.

**ALL EMOTIONS  
ARE OK!  
IT'S WHAT WE DO WITH  
THEM THAT MATTERS!**

# Mood Boosters

If I want to boost my mood, now or later, I can...

**Name my feelings**



I feel angry  
I feel happy  
I feel sad  
I feel worried

**Talk about my feelings**



**Have a hug**



**Take 5 deep breaths**



**Move my body**



**Ask for help**



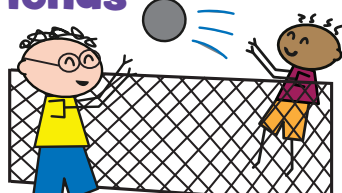
**Help someone else**



**Do something I enjoy**



**Play with my friends**



**Get enough sleep**



**Speak to myself in a kind way**



I'm not OK, but I'll be OK  
Feel it, but don't feed it

**Be creative**



**Remember 3 things I'm grateful for**



1.  
2.  
3.

**Remember something I'm proud of myself for**

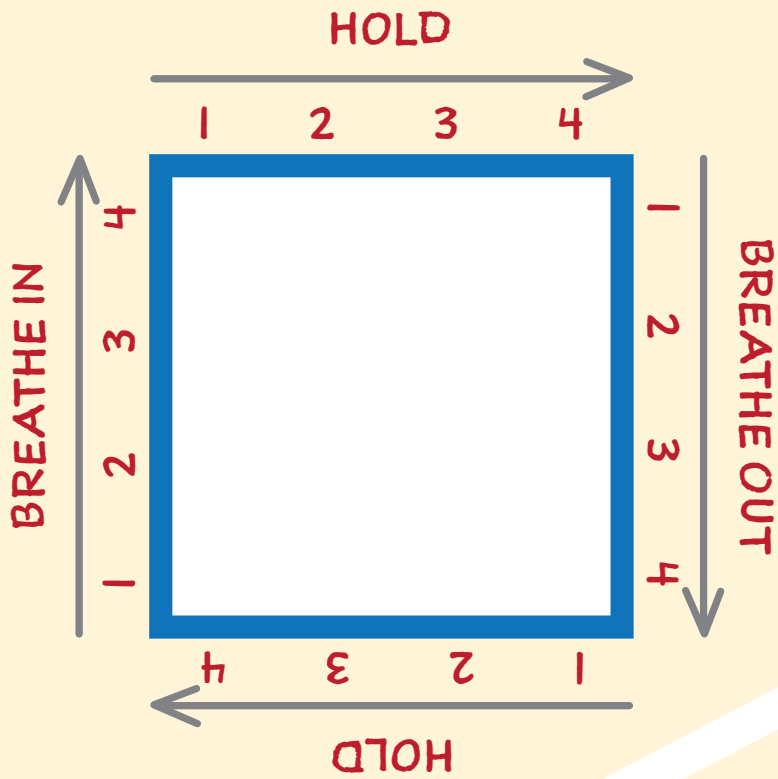


**Get some fresh air**

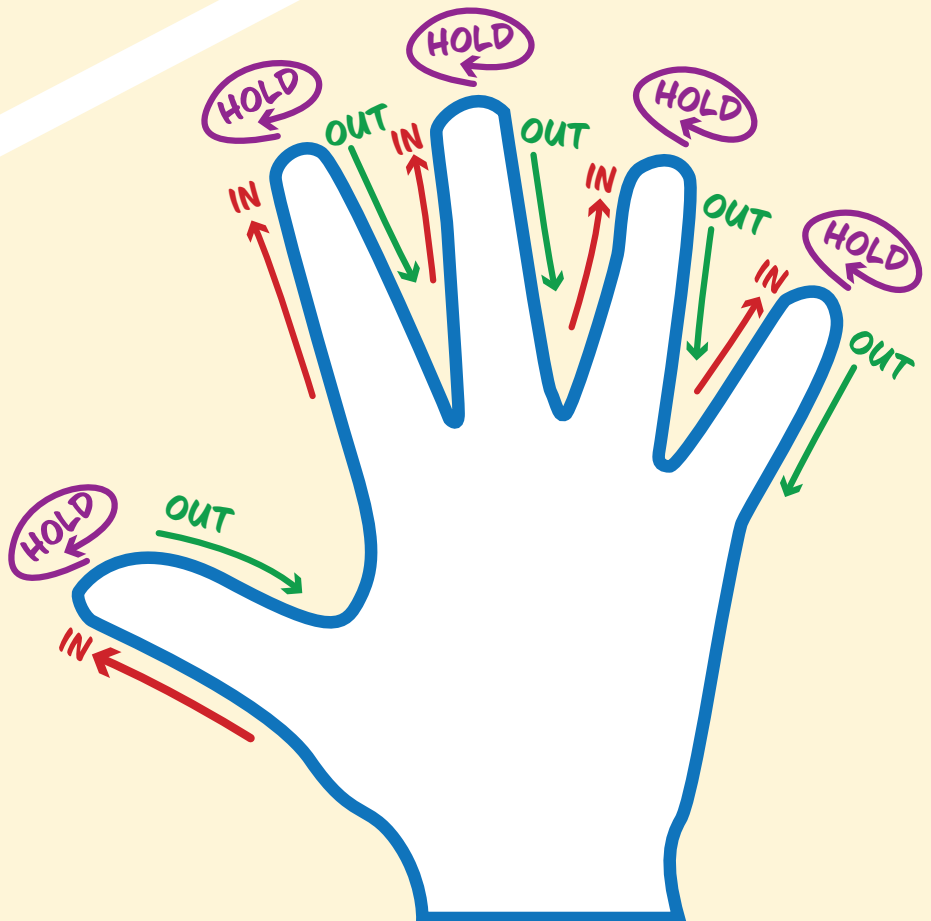


# Emotional Regulation Strategies

## Box Breathing



## Hand Breathing



## Emotional Regulation Strategies

### **Stop and Drop**

**Stop** what you are doing for a moment and gently close your eyes or lower your gaze.

Sit up nice and straight with your feet on the ground and your hands resting on your lap.

Our minds and bodies are often so busy, so it's good to take a moment to relax a little now.

**Drop** your attention now away from your busy mind and all of your thoughts and down to your breathing - notice your chest and tummy gently rising and falling. Don't try to change your breathing, just notice the air gently filling your chest and tummy.

**Drop** your attention even further now, right down to your feet now. Feel your feet connected to the ground underneath you.

Keep your attention in your body now for a little while longer. Imagine your breath going right down to your feet, as if your whole body is breathing. Feel a gentle feeling of warmth and relaxation spreading right through your body, from your feet up to the top of your head. Take a few more moments to enjoy this feeling.

Now it's time to gently open your eyes. Do some gentle stretches and remember to stop and drop like this any time you need to!

Above audio recording available here: [www.otb.ie/stop-and-drop](http://www.otb.ie/stop-and-drop)

### **Rainbow Breathing**

Close your eyes or gently lower your gaze. Now breathe in deeply and imagine lots of beautiful red light surrounding you, filling up your lungs and going right down into your toes. Now breathe out slowly and imagine sending this beautiful bright red light out with your breath, letting it take all of any worries you have away with it. Imagine your body becoming soft, warm and relaxed as you do this. Now let's do the same with each colour of the rainbow in turn orange...yellow...green...blue...indigo...violet... Now you can gently open your eyes and do some gentle stretching.



## Emotional Regulation Strategies

# 3, 2, 1... BREATHE!

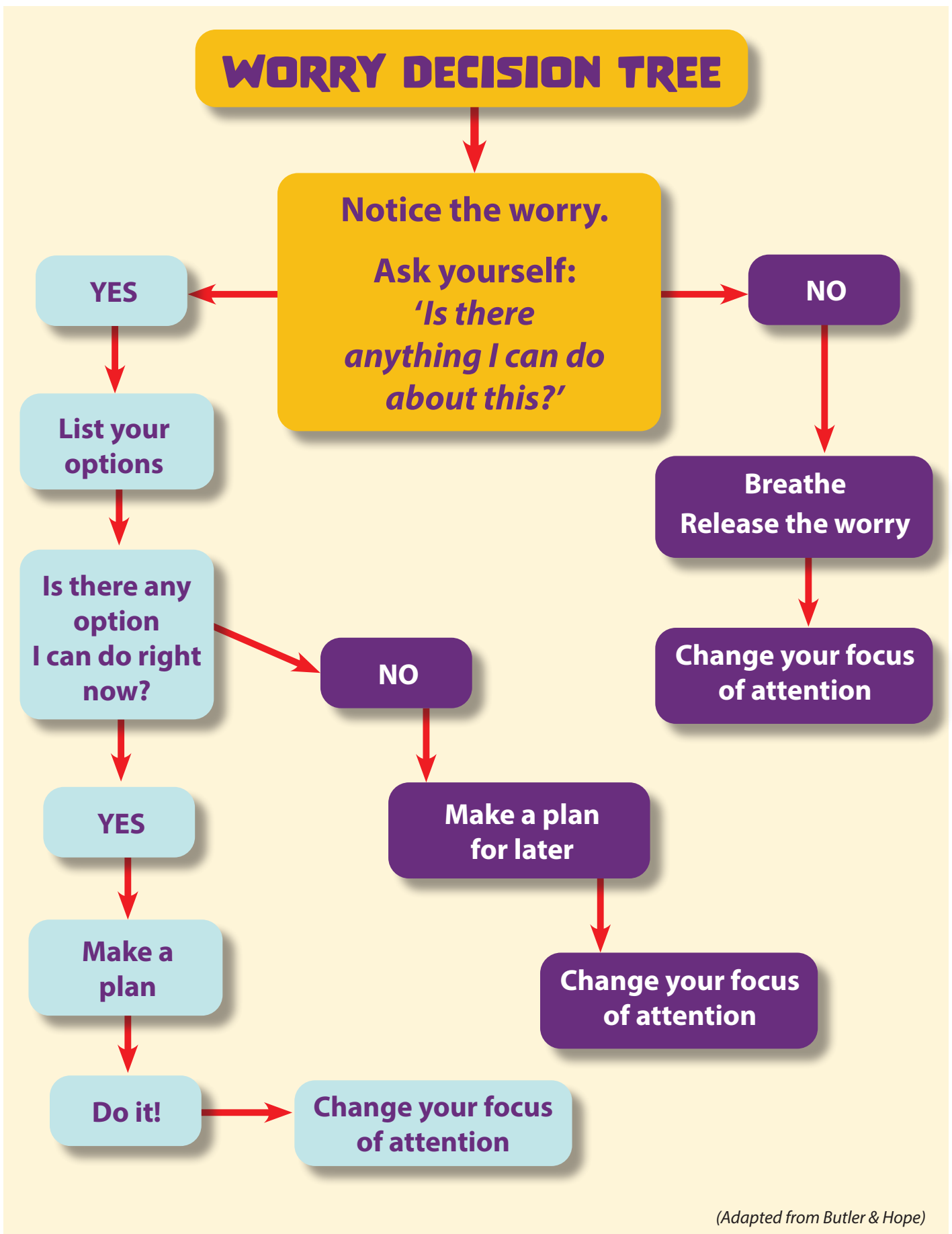
ANY TIME YOU NEED  
TO FEEL MORE CALM,  
LOOK AROUND AND NAME...



THEN  
TUNE INTO YOUR BREATHING  
AND TAKE 5 DEEP BREATHS.

Use the **3, 2, 1... BREATHE** method to help to calm you during moments of panic or stress, through tuning into your senses.  
Repeat 2 or 3 times until you feel yourself becoming calmer.

## Worry Decision Tree



(Adapted from Butler & Hope)

# Character Strengths

SELIGMAN & PETERSON, 2004



## Character Strengths

24 Character Strengths	
<b>Open-Mindedness</b>	Being open to new ideas.
<b>Zest</b>	Having lots of energy.
<b>Self-Control</b>	Choosing to do what you should do, not just what you want to do.
<b>Forgiveness</b>	Accepting that people are sorry.
<b>Love of Learning</b>	Enjoying learning new things.
<b>Curiosity</b>	Enjoying finding out about the world.
<b>Teamwork</b>	Very good at working in a group.
<b>Fairness</b>	Making sure everyone gets what they need.
<b>Perspective</b>	Seeing the big picture.
<b>Humour</b>	Seeing the funny side of things.
<b>Appreciation of Beauty</b>	Noticing and enjoying the beauty around us.
<b>Optimism</b>	Looking on the positive side of life.

## Character Strengths

### 24 Character Strengths - continued

<b>Caution</b>	Being careful.
<b>Creativity</b>	Being good at using your imagination and creating new things.
<b>Perseverance</b>	Not giving up, even when something gets hard.
<b>Gratitude</b>	Being thankful and appreciative.
<b>Social and Emotional Intelligence</b>	Understanding and getting on well with others.
<b>Meaning</b>	Having a strong sense of what is important in life.
<b>Honesty</b>	Being truthful.
<b>Kindness</b>	Being considerate and helpful to the needs of others.
<b>Bravery</b>	Being courageous.
<b>Love</b>	Feelings of warmth and connection.
<b>Leadership</b>	Good at managing a group.
<b>Humility</b>	Not being boastful.