



CREATIVE BEING
COUNSELING & CONSULTING

SUPPORTING STUDENTS ONE TO ONE

PRACTICAL INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING AND COPING STRATEGIES ACROSS GRADE LEVELS

AGENDA

8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m

Introduction

Emotional Awareness & Regulation

Stress & Anxiety Coping Skills

Cognitive Coping (Thoughts-Feelings-Actions)

Social Coping & Relationship Skills

Resilience, Safety & Help-Seeking Skills

Final tips & takeaways

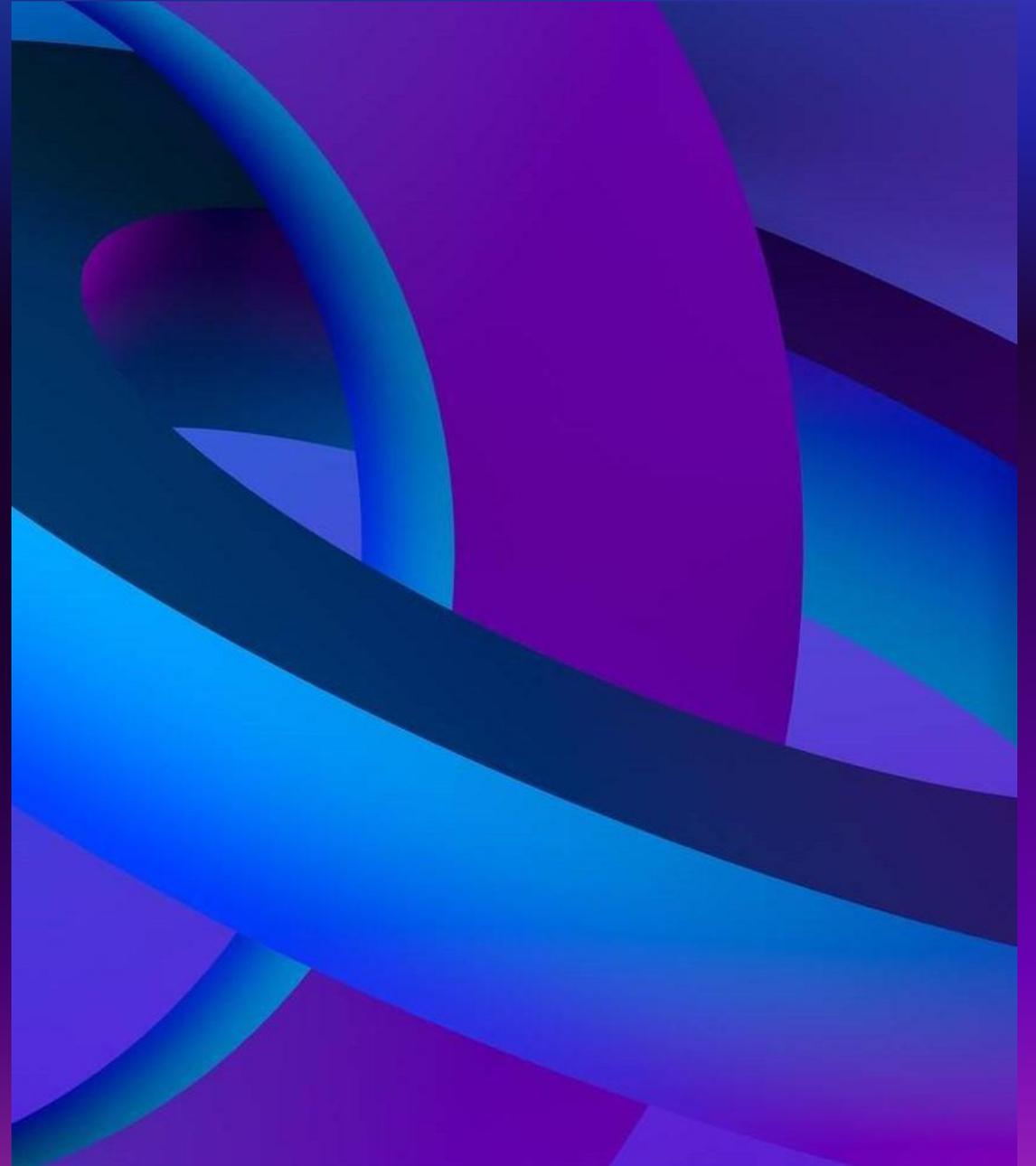


Agenda

5 core human functioning systems cover how people experience everything in life:

- 1. Emotional Awareness & Regulation**
→ How I understand and manage what I feel.
- 2. Stress & Anxiety Coping Skills**
→ How my body handles pressure, change, and demands (even good ones).
- 3. Cognitive Coping (Thoughts–Feelings–Actions)**
→ How I interpret life and make meaning of experiences.
- 4. Social Coping & Relationship Skills**
→ How I connect, communicate, set boundaries, and navigate people.
- 5. Resilience, Safety & Help-Seeking Skills**
→ How I recover, protect myself, and reach out when life gets hard.

FOUNDATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING



FOUNDATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

- Purpose of individual counseling in schools
- Differences in approach:
Elementary vs. Middle vs. High School
- Brief vs. ongoing individual sessions
- Emotional safety & rapport

STORY OF JAPAN'S VIRAL BABY MONKEY PUNCH



Let's Get Grounded

1. “What did you notice in your body, breath, or thoughts during that time?”
2. “What shifted—even just a little—for you?”

BRAIN

Left brain expression (Academic)

detail oriented
 (Looks at parts)
 Logical
 Sequential
 Rational
 math and science
 can comprehend
 Analytical
 Objective
 uses logic
 facts rule
 words and language
 present and past
 knowing
 acknowledges
 knows object name
 reality based
 forms strategies
 order/pattern perception
 practical/planned
 safe
 cautious



Right brain expression (Creative)

'big picture' oriented
 (Looks at wholes)
 Random
 Intuitive
 Holistic
 philosophy & spiritualism
 can 'get it' (the meaning)
 Synthesizing
 Subjective
 uses feeling
 imagination rules
 symbols and images
 present and future
 believes
 appreciates
 knows object function
 fantasy based
 presents possibilities
 spatial perception
 impetuous/spontaneous
 adventurous
 carefree/risk taking

COPING STRATEGIES

Emotional Awareness & Regulation

Stress & Anxiety Coping Skills

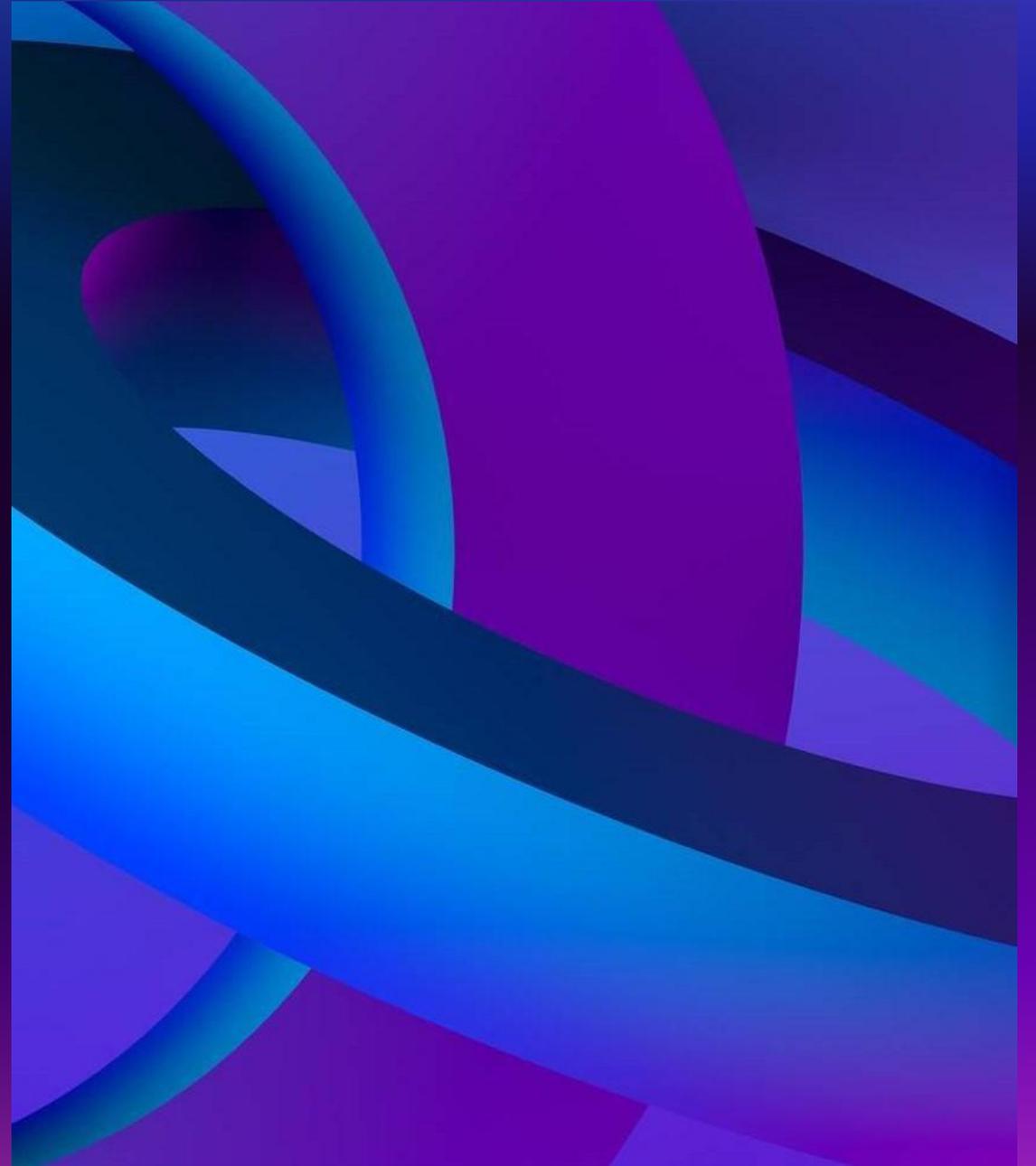
Cognitive Coping (Thoughts, Feelings, Actions)

Social Coping & Relationship Skills

Resilience, Safety & Help Seeking Skills

EMOTIONAL AWARENESS & REGULATION

Help students name, understand, and
manage emotions.



Emotional Awareness & Regulation

Definition:

Emotional awareness and regulation is the ability to recognize, understand, and name your feelings (emotional awareness), and then manage how you respond to those feelings in healthy, purposeful ways (emotional regulation). It means noticing what's happening inside you, pausing, and choosing actions that support your well-being rather than reacting impulsively.

Emotional Awareness & Regulation

Research:

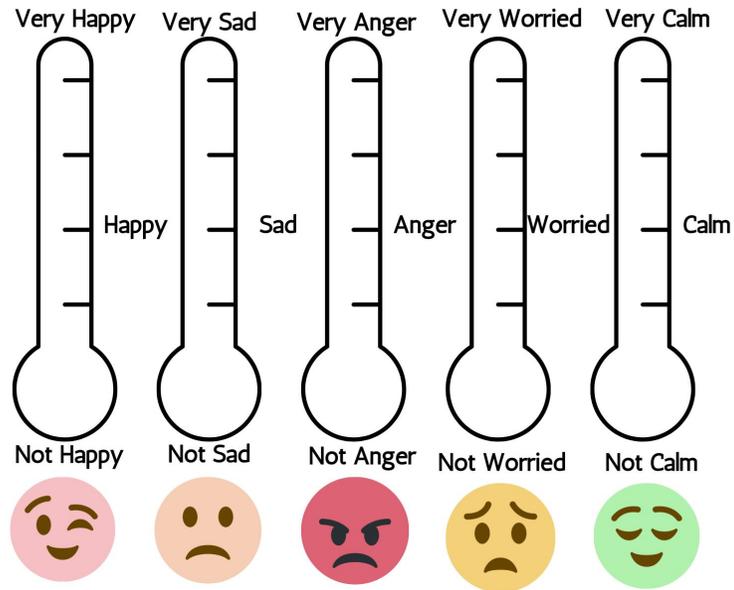
Emotional awareness and regulation are closely tied to mental health outcomes. People who struggle to understand or manage their emotions are more likely to experience anxiety, depression, and behavior problems, while strong awareness/regulation skills are linked to better overall psychological well-being.

Emotional Thermometer

How are you feeling today?



Feeling Thermometer



Feelings Thermometer – How am I feeling now?

Rage, furious

Angry, mad

Frustrated, confused, annoyed, very sad

Nervous, worried, anxious, upset

Happy, calm, satisfied, elated, pleased, o.k.

STOP

Take 5 deep breaths
Change what you are doing
Go to your calm space
Request help

Take a break
Count to ten and try again
Take 3 deep breaths
Request help

Be positive!
Say 'I can do this!', or 'It's ok'
Think of something good or your favourite activity

Well done!
Everything is cool!
You're relaxed, calm and focused.

Emoji Sticks



Body Scan Walk (Awareness)

1. Ask students to **stand and slowly walk** around the room.
2. Guide them with prompts (soft voice works well):

“Notice your breathing.”

“Notice your shoulders... your jaw... your hands.”

“What emotion feels strongest right now?”

“Where do you feel it in your body?”

3. After 2–3 minutes, have them **freeze** where they are.

Then ask:

- What emotion did you notice?
- Where did you feel it physically?

Name it, Tame it, Reframe It

Step 1 — Name It (5 min)

Right now or recently I felt: _____

(circle one if stuck: angry / sad / anxious / overwhelmed / embarrassed)



Then:

Where did I feel it in my body?

chest stomach head shoulders hands

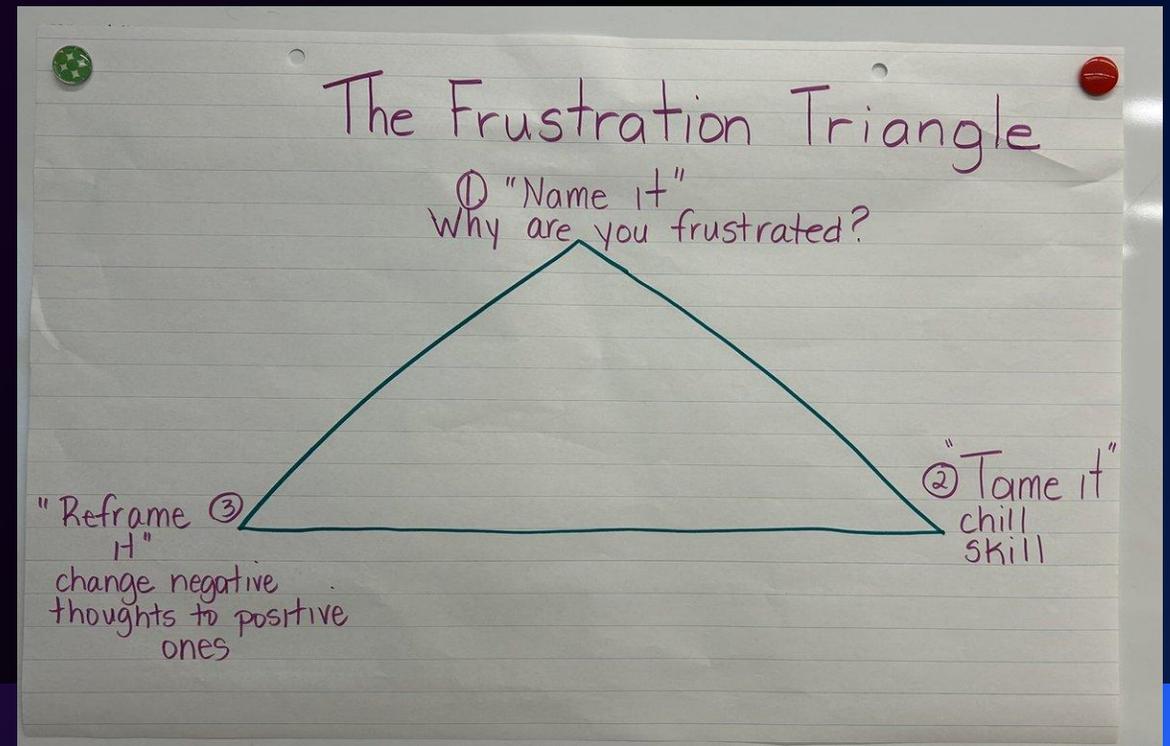
Name it, Tame it, Reframe it

Step 2 — Tame It (5 min)

Practice together (there is power in mirroring it together)

👉 4-4-6 breathing

- Inhale 4
- Hold 4
- Exhale 6



Name it, Tame it, Reframe it

Step 3 — Reframe It (10 min)

Have students fill in:

The thought in my head was:

Now rewrite:

A kinder / stronger thought:



Name it, Tame it, Reframe it

Examples you can model:

- “This is hard” → “Hard doesn’t mean impossible.”
- “I messed up” → “Mistakes help me grow.”

Ask what would help this emotion feel 10% better

Emotional Awareness & Regulation

Studies of social-emotional learning (SEL) programs that emphasize emotional awareness and regulation show improvements in students' academics, behavior, and motivation — suggesting these skills help children *engage, persist, and succeed* in school environments.

[What Does the Research Say? - CASEL](#)

Feel the Weight



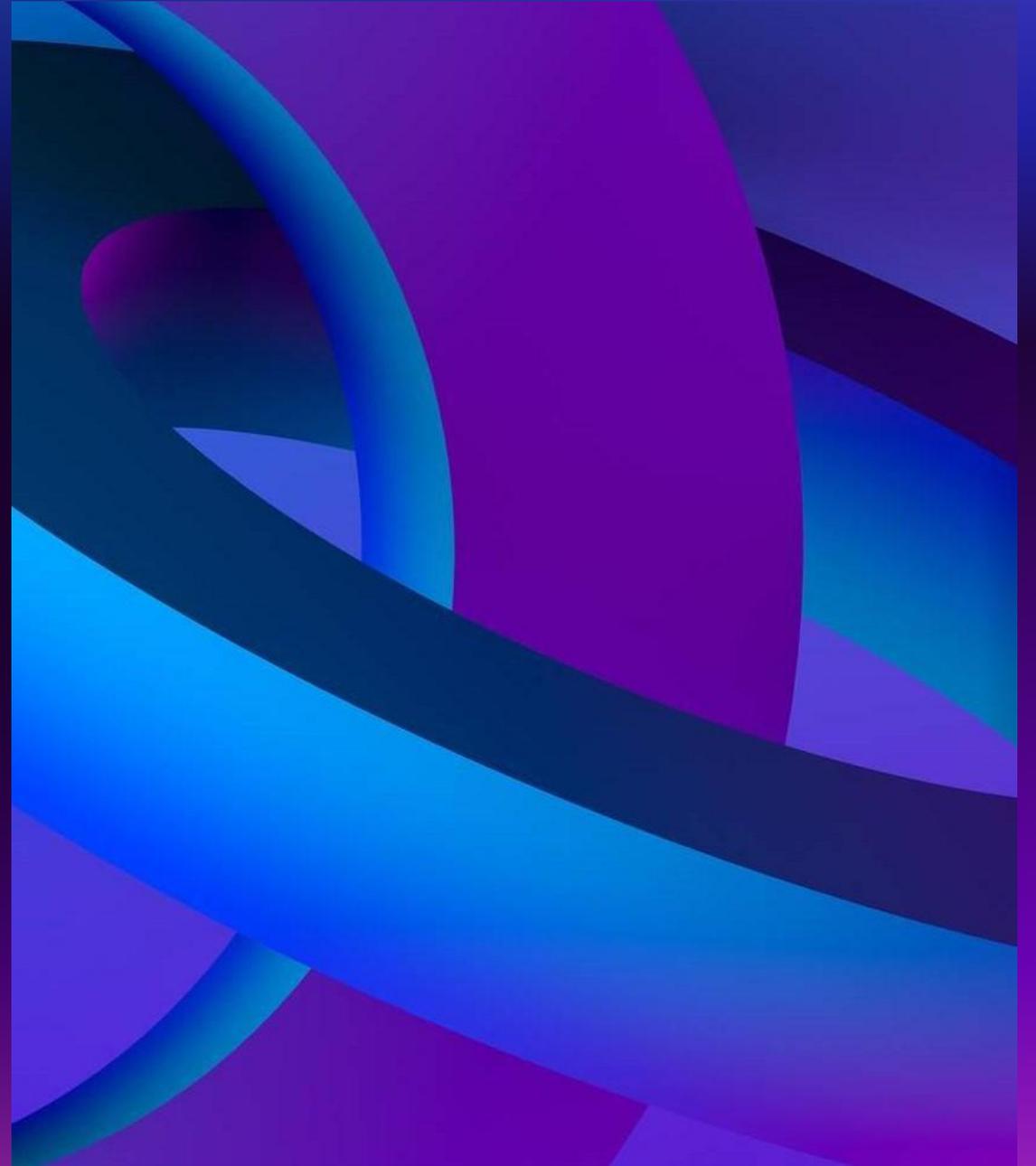
9:50a.m.

Sharing Best Practices

10:00a.m.

STRESS & ANXIETY COPING SKILLS

Tools to manage academic, social,
and life stressors.



Stress & Anxiety Coping SKills

Definition:

Healthy strategies that help calm your body, challenge unhelpful thoughts, and respond to challenges in a safe and productive way.

Stress & Anxiety Coping Skills

Research

Research shows that teaching coping skills (like mindfulness, problem-solving, and emotion regulation) can reduce stress and anxiety and improve psychological well being.

[The effectiveness of mindfulness training on coping with stress, exam anxiety, and happiness to promote health - PubMed](#)

Stress & Anxiety Coping Skills

Effective Coping Strategies Are Linked to Better Resilience and School experiences. Students who regularly use adaptive coping strategies report better school wellbeing and resilience.

Research finds that children who use effective coping strategies — especially problem-focused ones — show more positive attitudes toward school, higher motivation, and better social integration. In contrast, passive or avoidant coping often predicts poorer socio-emotional outcomes.

Worry Box

- Office
- Home
- Set a time and forget it
- Throw it away

Write it down and put it away!



Stretch It Out



Stretching is a powerful tool for managing stress and anxiety.

Lowers cortisol levels

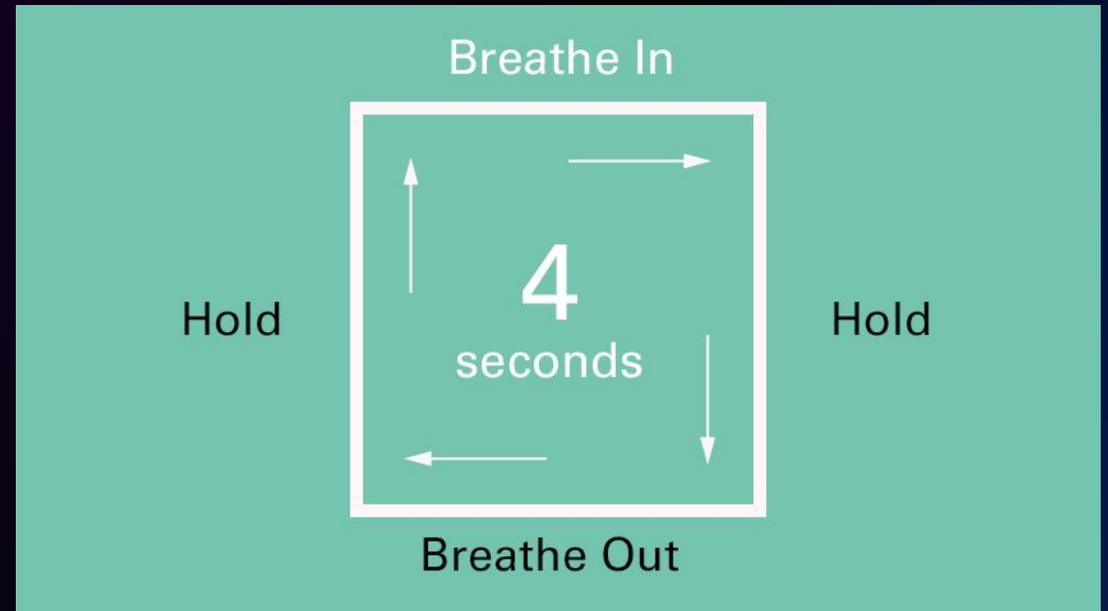
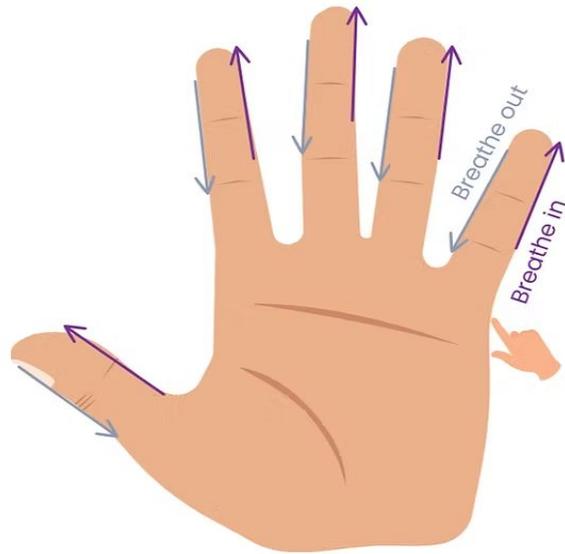
Relieves muscle tension

Boosts serotonin production,

[10 Stretches That Relieve Anxiety And Stop Overthinking](#)

Breathing: Your built in tool for strength, focus and calm

Five Finger Breathing



Test Anxiety Strategies



Keep Calm and Test On

2-Minute Calm-Down Routine

Goal: Calm the nervous system before the test starts.

- Box breathing (4–4–4–4)
- Shoulders up → release
- Feet flat on floor grounding

Let it Go

Brain Dump Before Test

Time: 5 minutes before exam

Students:

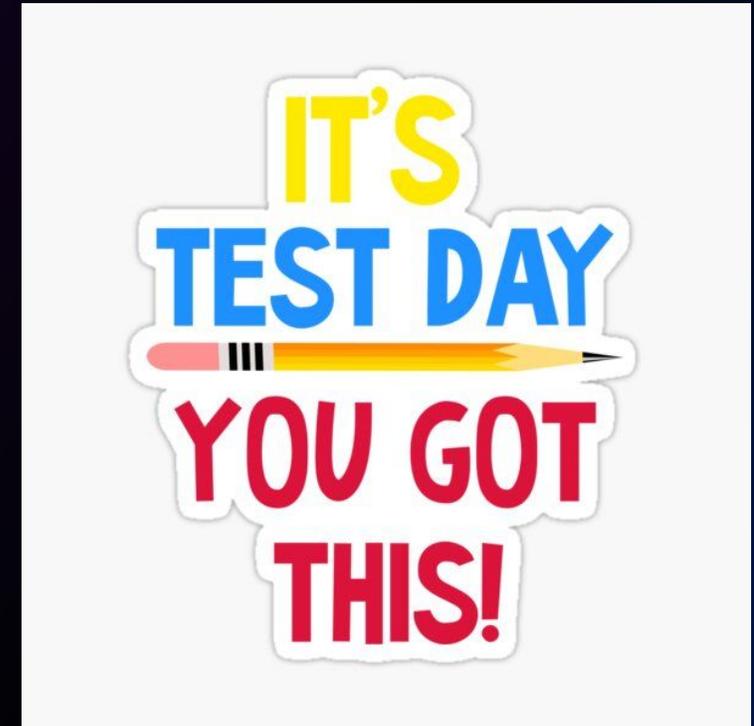
- Write everything they're worried about.
- Write down things they studied-formulas, vocabulary, key info.
- Then fold paper and set it aside.

Research shows this reduces intrusive thoughts and improves

focus. [“The Power of the Brain Dump” — A Must-Have Strategy for Test Day — KAB Consulting LLC](#)

Start Smart

1. Skim the test.
2. Start with easiest questions.
3. Skip and return to hard ones.
4. Watch time calmly.



Ground Yourself: Small Moves, Big Calm

Calm Your Body

with this progressive muscle
relaxation (PMR) exercise

10:40a.m.

Micro Pep Talk

Say one true, calming sentence:

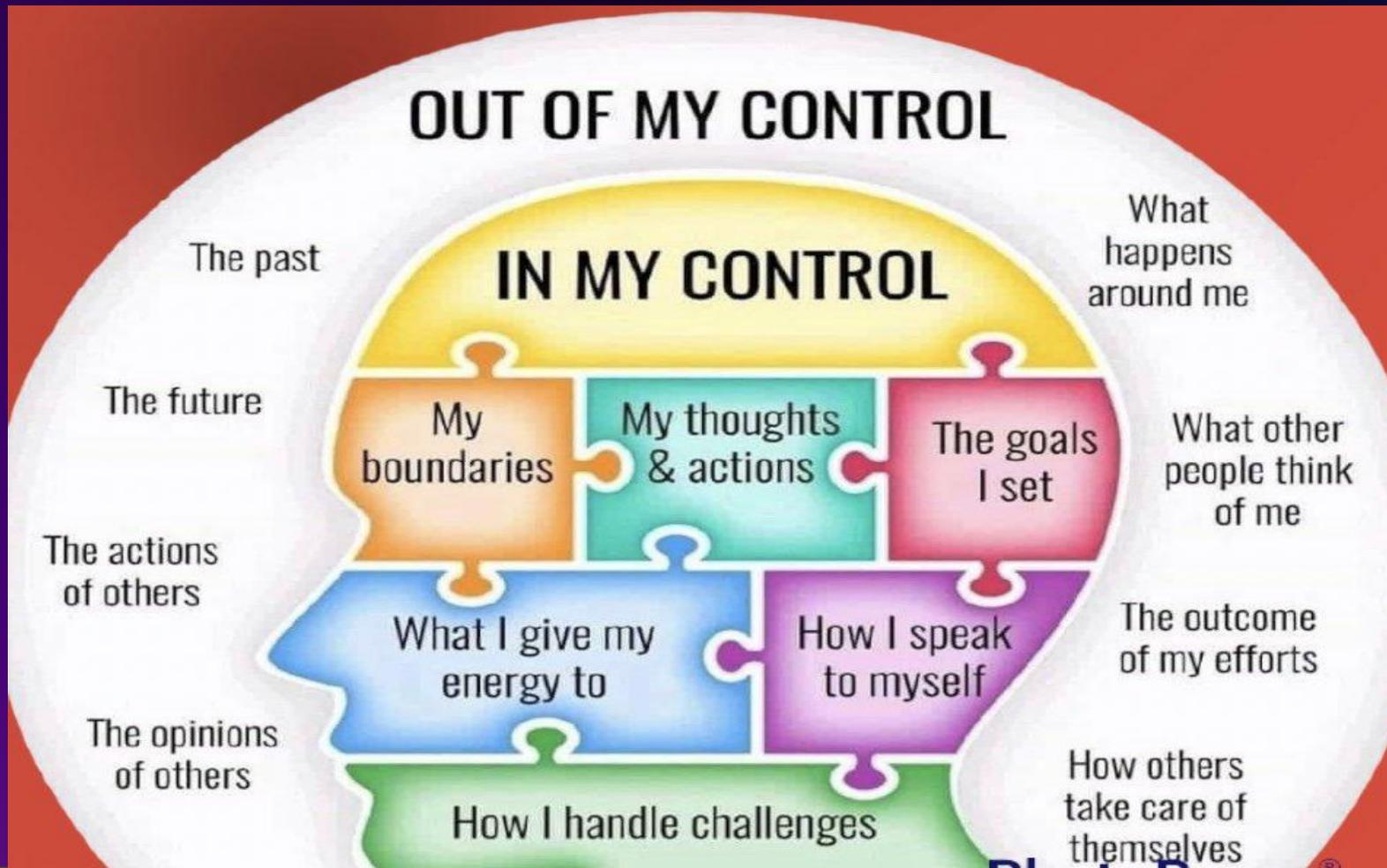
Sample: 'I am here. I am safe right now.'

["13 Grounding Techniques To Help Calm Anxiety"](#)

Practical Tips for Implementing Grounding with Students

- Start brief
- Personalize

What is In Your Control



What is In my Control

10:55a.m.

Purpose: Reduce anxiety caused by worry spirals.

Activity:

Draw two circles:

- Inner circle: **Things I can control**
- Outer circle: **Things I can't control**



JUST A THOUGHT

You don't control what happens—but you **do control your thoughts and actions**, and those can change how you feel.

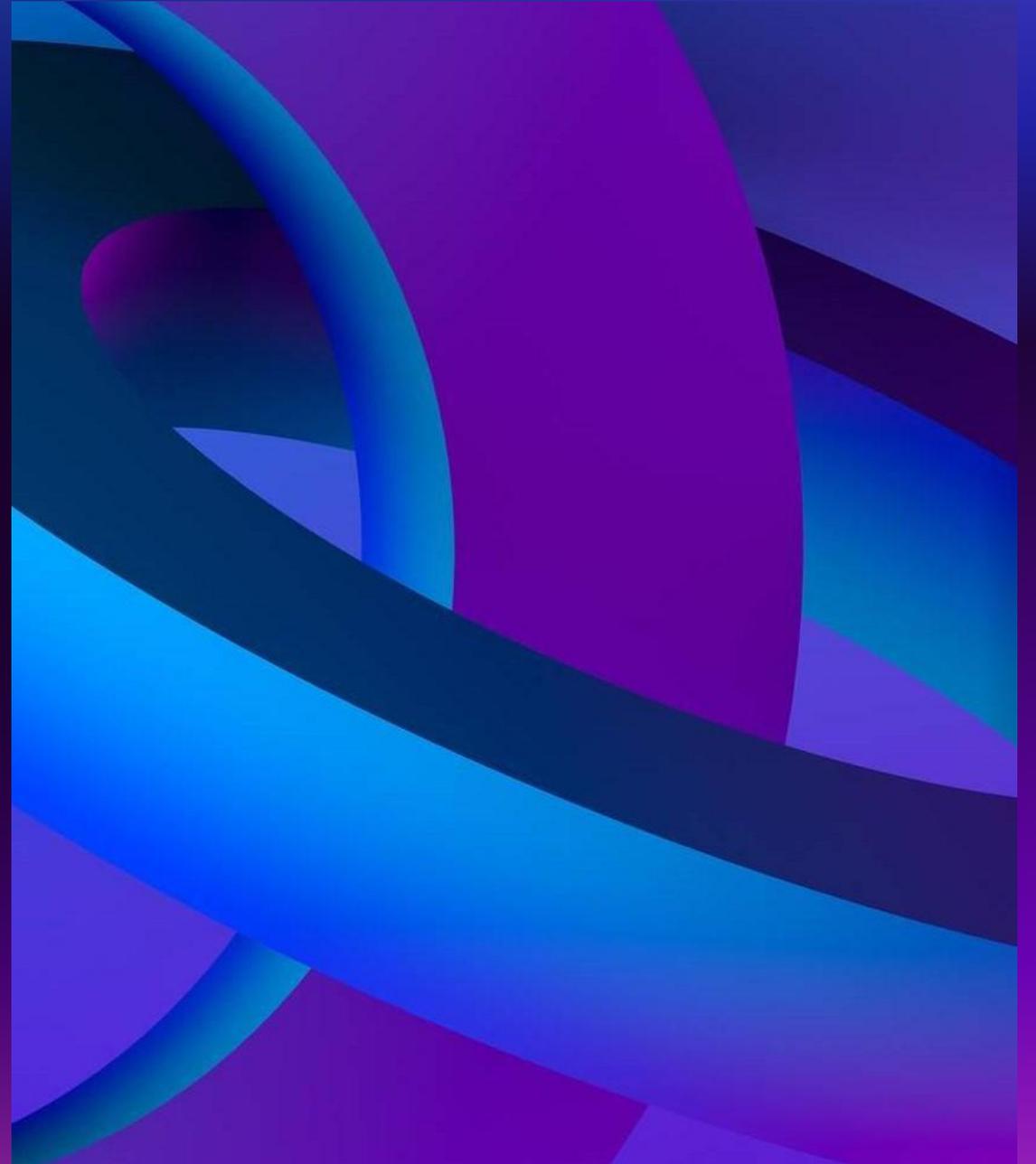
Sharing Best Practices

11:05a.m.

COGNITIVE COPING

THOUGHTS+FEELINGS
=ACTIONS

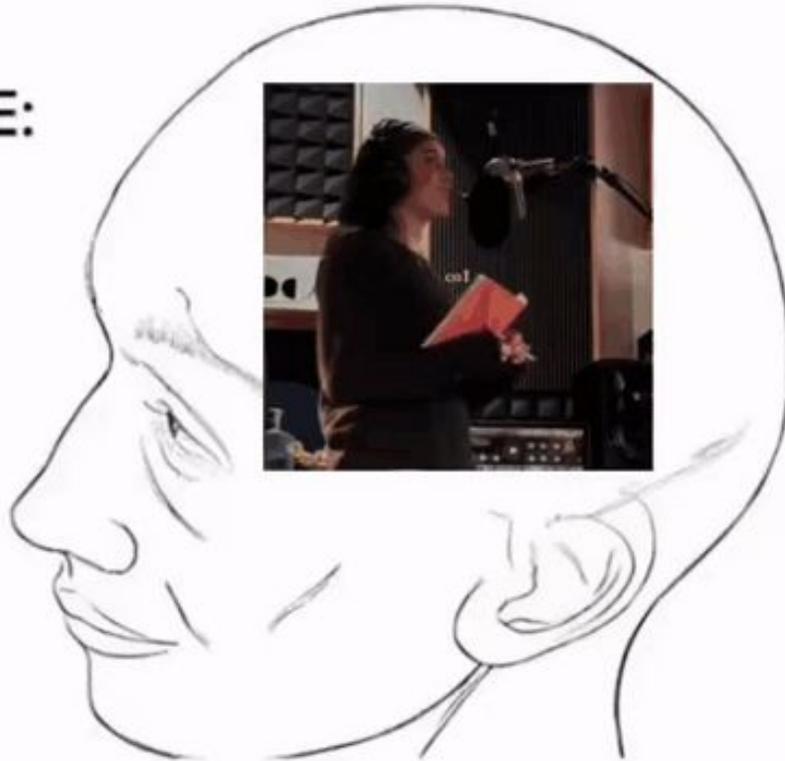
Helping students manage unhelpful
thinking patterns.



What's On Your Mind

Why you so quiet? What's on your mind?

ME:

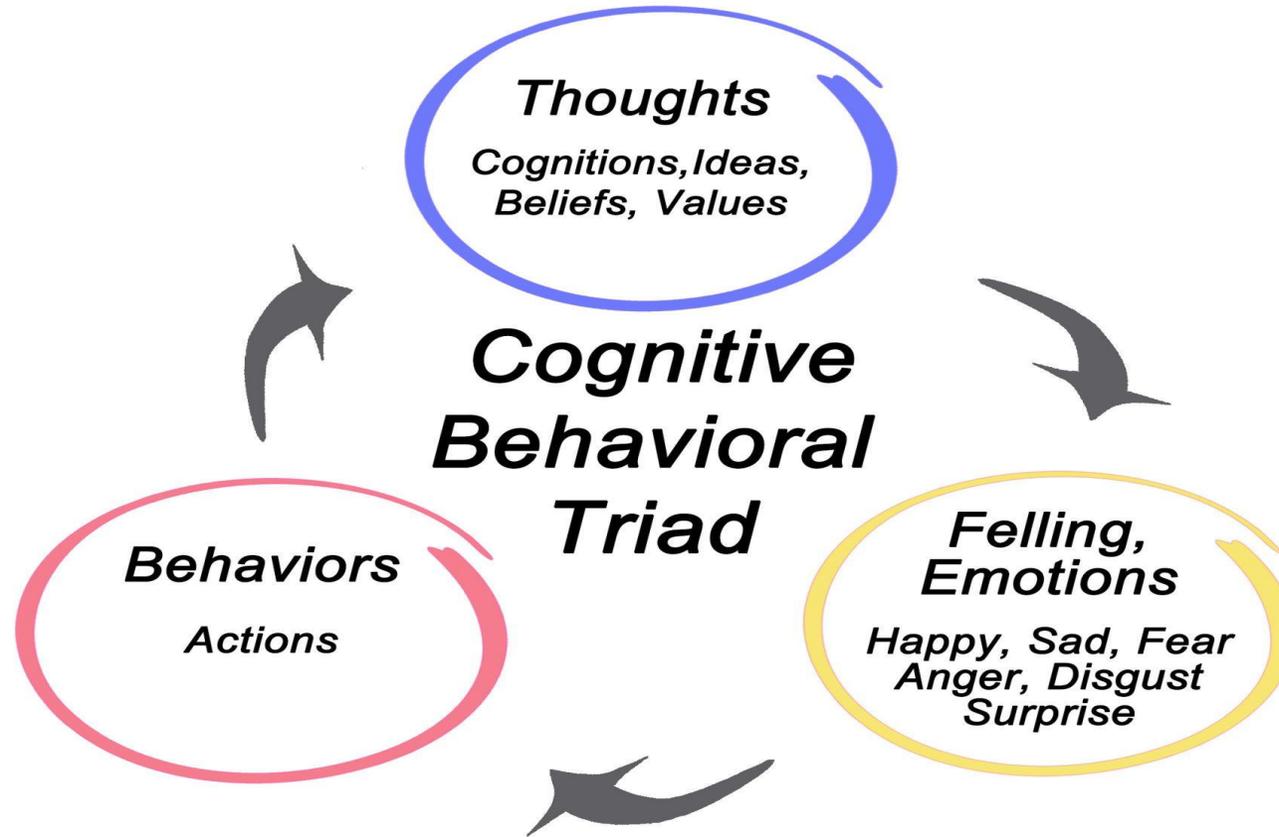


Thoughts+Feelings = Actions CBT

Definition:

The Thoughts–Feelings–Actions triangle comes from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and helps students understand how their thinking patterns influence emotions and behaviors.

Thoughts+Feelings =Actions



Thoughts+Feelings = Actions

How the Cycle Works

Example:

Thought: “They’re laughing at me.”

Feeling: Embarrassed + anxious

Action: Withdraws from group

Thoughts+Feelings = Actions

Just because we think of something doesn't mean it's true.



Thoughts+Feelings = Actions

Research:

Research shows that changing maladaptive thoughts leads to measurable improvements in mood and behavior in disorders like anxiety, depression, OCD, and more.

[In brief: Cognitive behavioral therapy \(CBT\) - InformedHealth.org - NCBI Bookshelf](#)

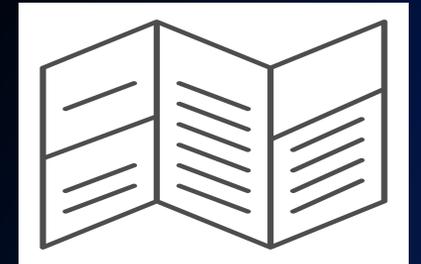
Thoughts+Feelings=Actions Trifold

Purpose: Help students see how thoughts influence emotions and behavior.

Step 1: Real-Life Scenario Give a relatable prompt (or let students choose one)

- Failed a test, Friend didn't text back, Teacher corrected you in class
Didn't make a team / club

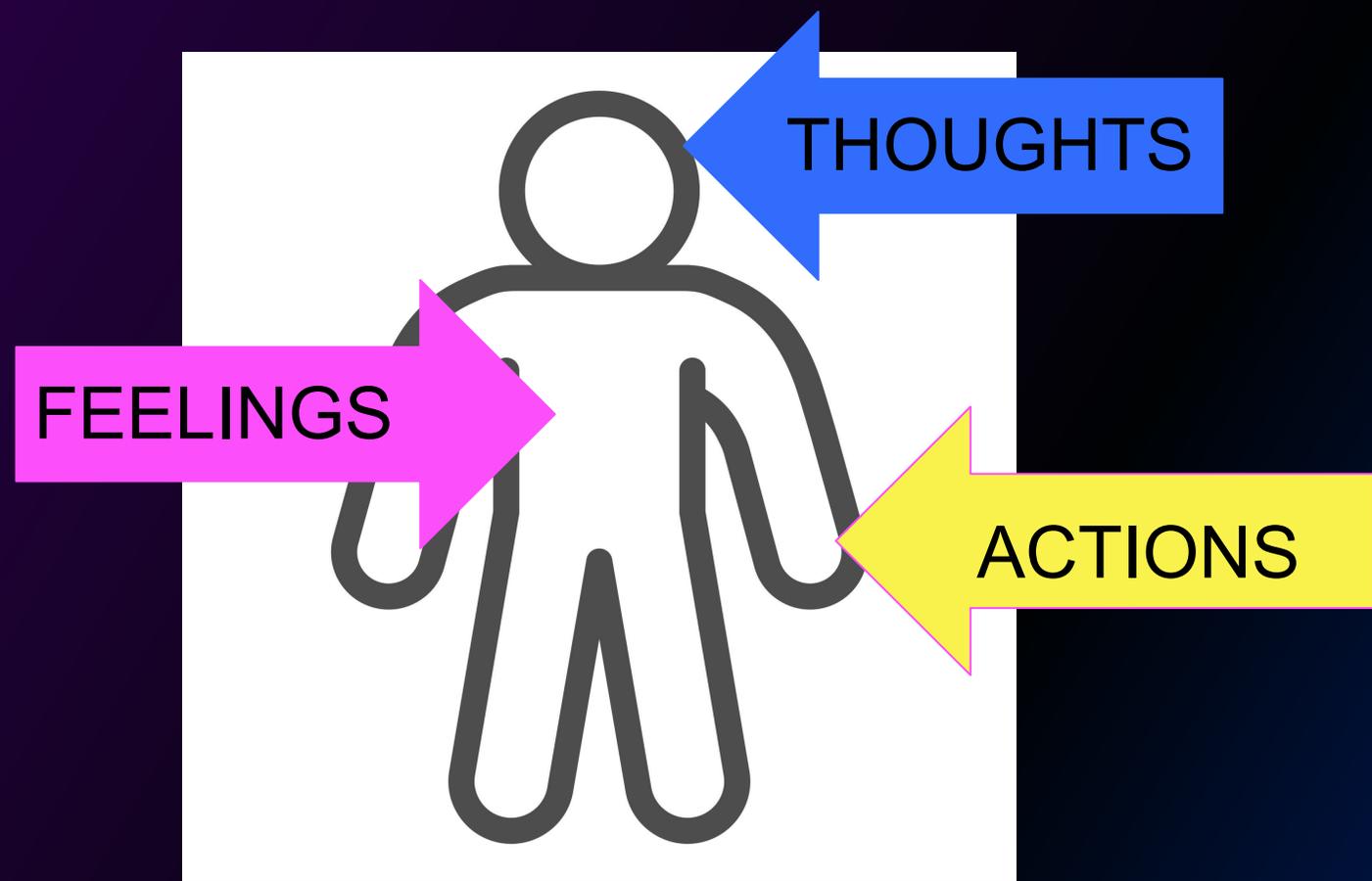
Step 2: Students complete a 3-column chart THINK | FEEL | ACT



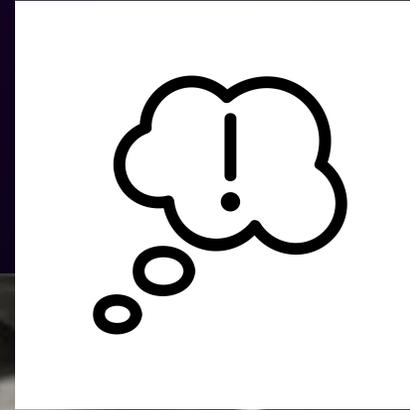
Same situation, different thoughts = different outcomes.

Thoughts + Feelings = Actions

Human Figure



Bubble Thinking/ Positive Negative



JUST A THOUGHT

Students don't need to "fix" every thought—just **notice and adjust** enough to function better.

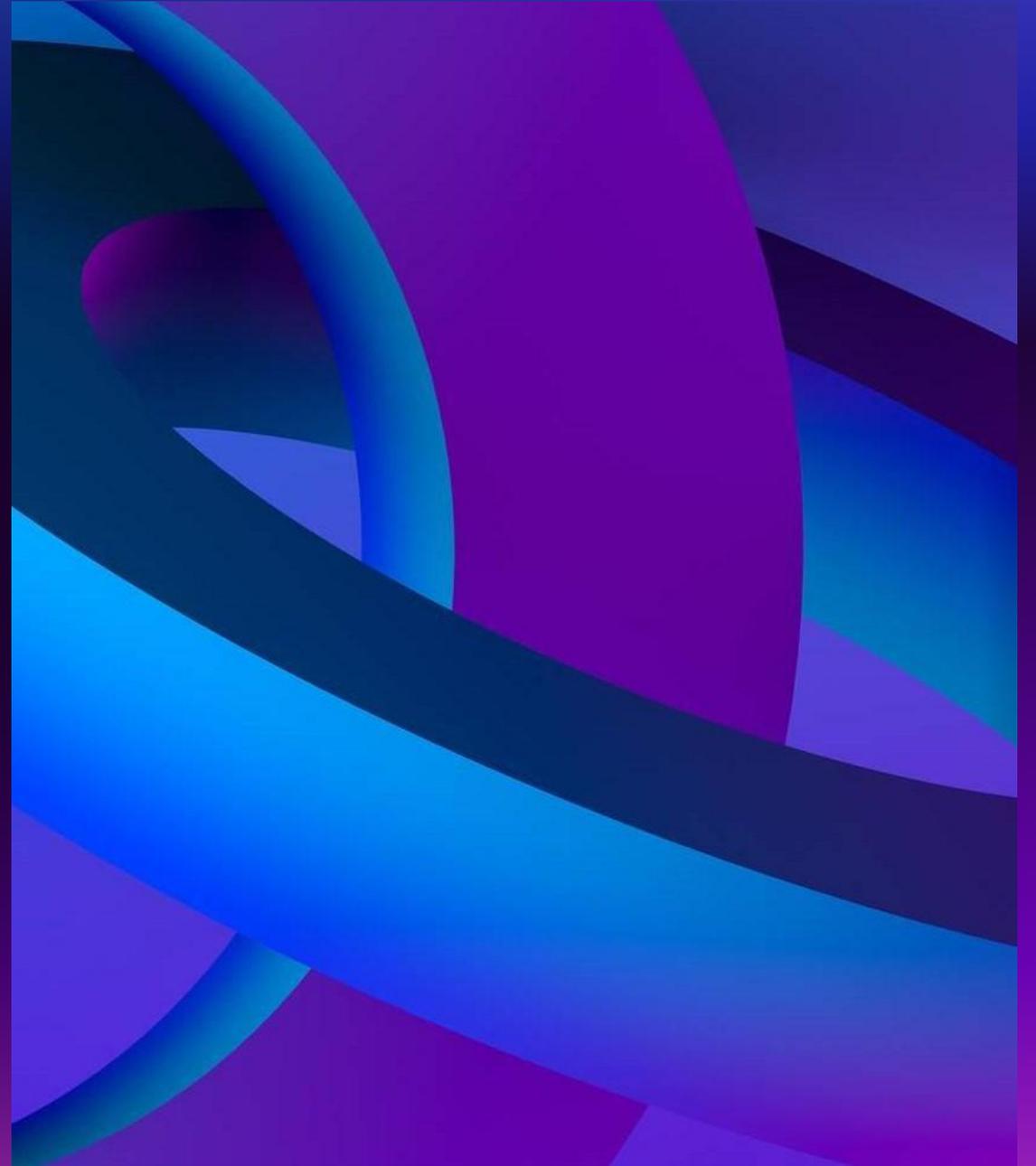
Sharing Best Practices

LUNCH
11:30a.m.-1:00p.m.

**Let's Take a Little Time
On YOU!**

SOCIAL COPING & RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Coping through healthy connections and
communications.



SOCIAL COPING & RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Definition

Social coping: The set of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral strategies a student uses to manage social stressors and interpersonal challenges, such as seeking support, reframing negative thoughts, and using calming techniques.

Relationship skills: The abilities that enable a student to form and maintain healthy interpersonal connections, including effective communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and cooperation.

SOCIAL COPING & RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Research

Individual counseling that explicitly teaches **social coping** (emotion regulation, problem solving, seeking support) and **relationship skills** (communication, empathy, conflict resolution) produces measurable improvements in students' emotional well-being, peer functioning, and academic self-regulation—especially when skills are taught with modeling, rehearsal, and reinforcement across settings.

SOCIAL COPING & RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Research

Teaching coping skills reduces symptoms of anxiety and somatic complaints among students and supports mental health (e.g., reduced distress when coping skills are taught).

Key Points for Social Coping and Relationship Skills **Elementary**

Asking for help

What makes a good friend

Conflict Resolution basics:

-Stop-Talk-Listen-Solve



Friendship Mirror

Time: 20–30 minutes

Goal: Help the student understand what a good friend looks like—and how they can be one.

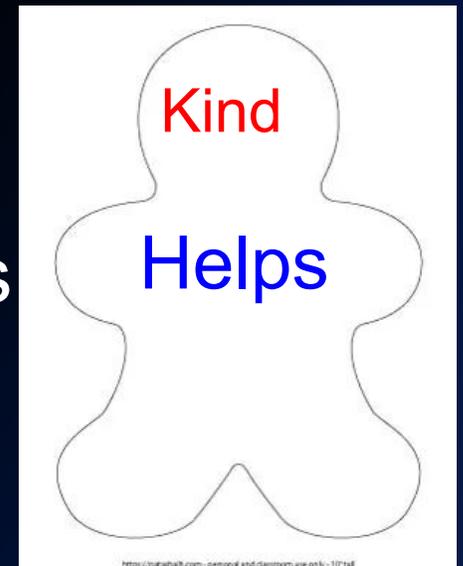
Step 1: Build the “Good Friend” List (5–10 minutes)

Ask: 1. What makes someone a good friend? 2. How do good friends act?

3. How do they make you feel?

Write or draw traits: Examples: Kind, Shares, Listens

Says sorry, Includes others



Friendship Mirror

Step 2: The Mirror Moment (10 minutes)

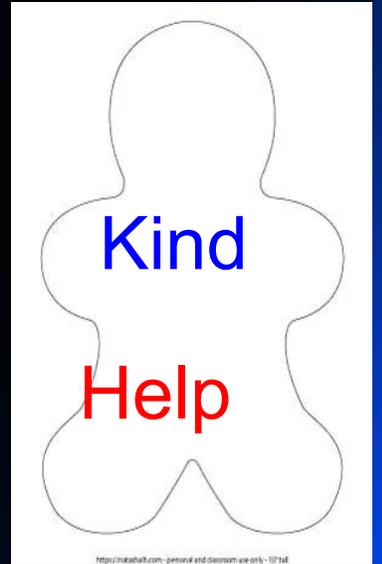
Ask student: “Which of these do you already do?”

Put a star next to traits that you show to your friends.

Circle one they want to work on.

- When was a time you were a good friend? What could you try this week?

This builds confidence and accountability without shame.



Friendship Mirror

1:25p.m.

Step 3: Practice Scenario (5–10 minutes)

Give one simple scenario based on student's life: 1. A friend won't share. 2. Someone says something mean. 3. A friend doesn't want to play your game.

Ask: What would a good friend do here? What could YOU say?

Practice using a sentence stem: "Can I have a turn next?" "That hurt my feelings." "Do you want to play together?"

Closing Reflection

Finish with:

- "One thing I will try this week is..." "A good friend is someone who..."



Key Points for Social Coping and Relationship Skills

Secondary

Handling Peer Pressure

Boundaries

Assertive Communication

Healthy Relationships

Navigating Conflict and breakups

Self Advocacy

Relationship Reality Check

Time: 20–30 minutes

Setting: Individual counseling

Focus: Boundaries, respect,
communication, red flags

Step 1: Core Values Check (5–7 minutes)



Ask: “What does a healthy relationship look like to you?”

Have the student list 5 qualities. *Examples: Trust, Respect, Honesty, Communication, Independence, Accountability, Mutual effort*

Then ask: Which one is non-negotiable for you? Which one is hardest to find?

Continued: Relationship Reality Check

Step 2: Scenario Reflection (8–10 minutes)

Present 2–3 realistic secondary scenarios:

Scenario A:

A friend gets upset when you hang out with other people.

Scenario B:

Someone constantly checks your phone or asks who you're texting.

Scenario C:

A friend apologizes but keeps repeating the same hurtful behavior.

Ask: Healthy, unhealthy, or complicated? What red flags do you notice? What would a confident response sound like?



Continued: Relationship Reality Check



Step 3: Boundary Script Practice (5–8 minutes)

Have the student practice saying: “I care about this friendship, but I’m not comfortable with ____.”

“I need ____ in order to feel respected.”

Discuss: What makes saying that hard? What fears come up? What might actually happen?

boundary you might need to strengthen?

Continued: Relationship Reality Check



Step 4: Reflection (5 minutes)

Ask: Are your current relationships adding stress or support? What's one boundary you might need to strengthen?

If It's Complicated, It's Probably A No

Goal: Help the student identify traits of healthy relationships, reflect on their own experiences, identify red flags. .

Part 1. “Healthy or Unhealthy?”

Give the student small slips of paper with behaviors. Have them sort the behaviors into healthy and unhealthy behaviors. Discuss how these behaviors make them feel.

Continued: If It's Complicated, Then It's Probably a No

Part 2 “Three Must-Haves” (5 minutes)

Ask student: If you could design the perfect healthy relationship, what 3 things must it have? Have student write them down. (ex. trust, respect, honesty, kindness, space). Then ask student, “Do your friendships have these?” Which one is most important to you?

Continued: If It's Complicated, Then It's Probably a No

Part 3 Red Flag Reflection (5–7 minutes)

Ask:

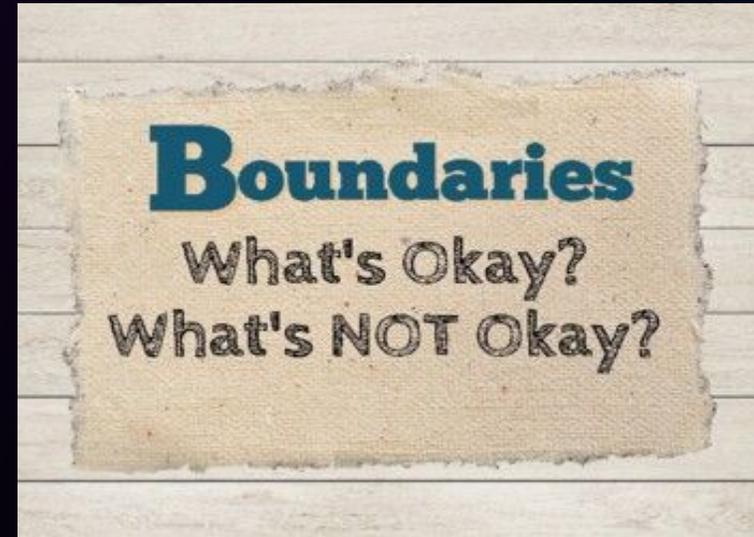
- What's one behavior that would make you uncomfortable?
- What could you say if that happened?

Practice a simple boundary statement:

“I'm not okay with that.”

“Please stop.”

“That makes me uncomfortable.”



JUST A THOUGHT

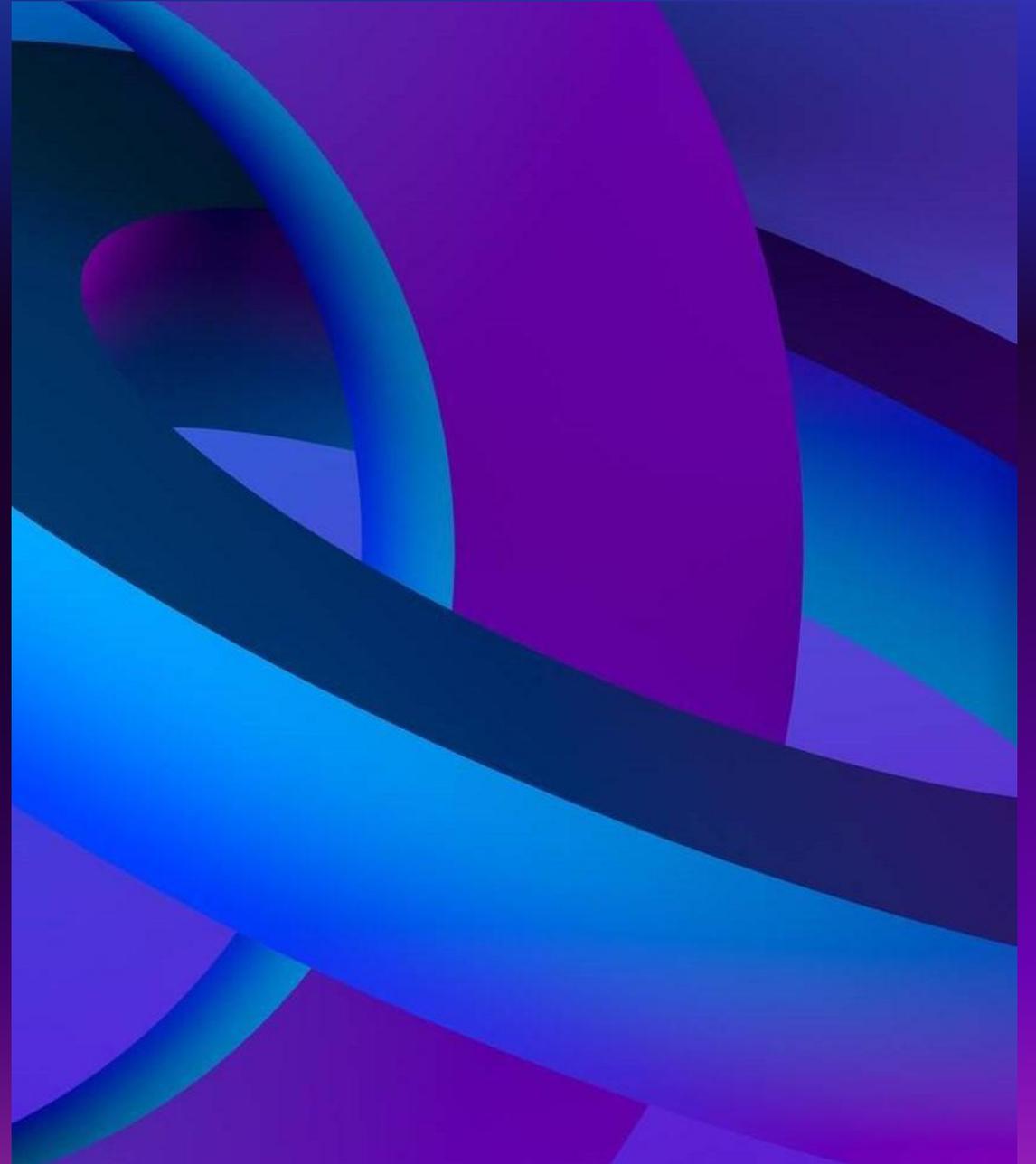
Teaching resilience + safety + help-seeking, gives
students lifelong protective skills

Sharing Best Practices

1:55pm.

RESILIENCE, SAFETY & HELP-SEEKING SKILLS

Building long-term coping capacity and
knowing when
to get help.



Resilience, Safety & Help-Seeking Skills

Definition

Resilience is a student's ability to cope with challenges, adapt to change, and recover from setbacks using healthy strategies and supportive relationships.

Safety skills help students recognize unsafe situations (emotionally, physically, or socially), set boundaries, and make choices that protect their well-being.

Resilience, Safety & Help-Seeking Skills

Definition

Help-seeking skills empower students to identify when they need support, communicate their needs, and reach out to trusted adults or peers for assistance.

Together, these skills build emotional strength, increase protective factors, and support positive academic, social, and mental-health outcomes

Resilience, Safety & Help-Seeking Skills

Research

Resilience correlates with positive outcomes, including better academic performance and internal resources like self-esteem and problem-solving, meaning students with higher resilience tend to perform better and manage challenges more adaptively.

Safe or Need Help?

After each SAFE scenario, you can ask:

- “How does your body feel when things are safe?”
- “What tells you this is safe?”

“I’m going to tell you some situations.

When I say one, step to the side that fits best

Bounce -Back

A challenge I survived

What helped me

What I learned

“That means I can handle hard things again.”

Resilience, Safety & Help-Seeking Skills

Research

Safety isn't only about security measures — school connectedness and belonging (students feeling valued and supported in the school environment) are documented protective factors that support resilience and emotional well-being.

[Enhancing Adolescent Mental Health: The Protective Role of School Connectedness - Be part of the knowledge - ReachMD](#)

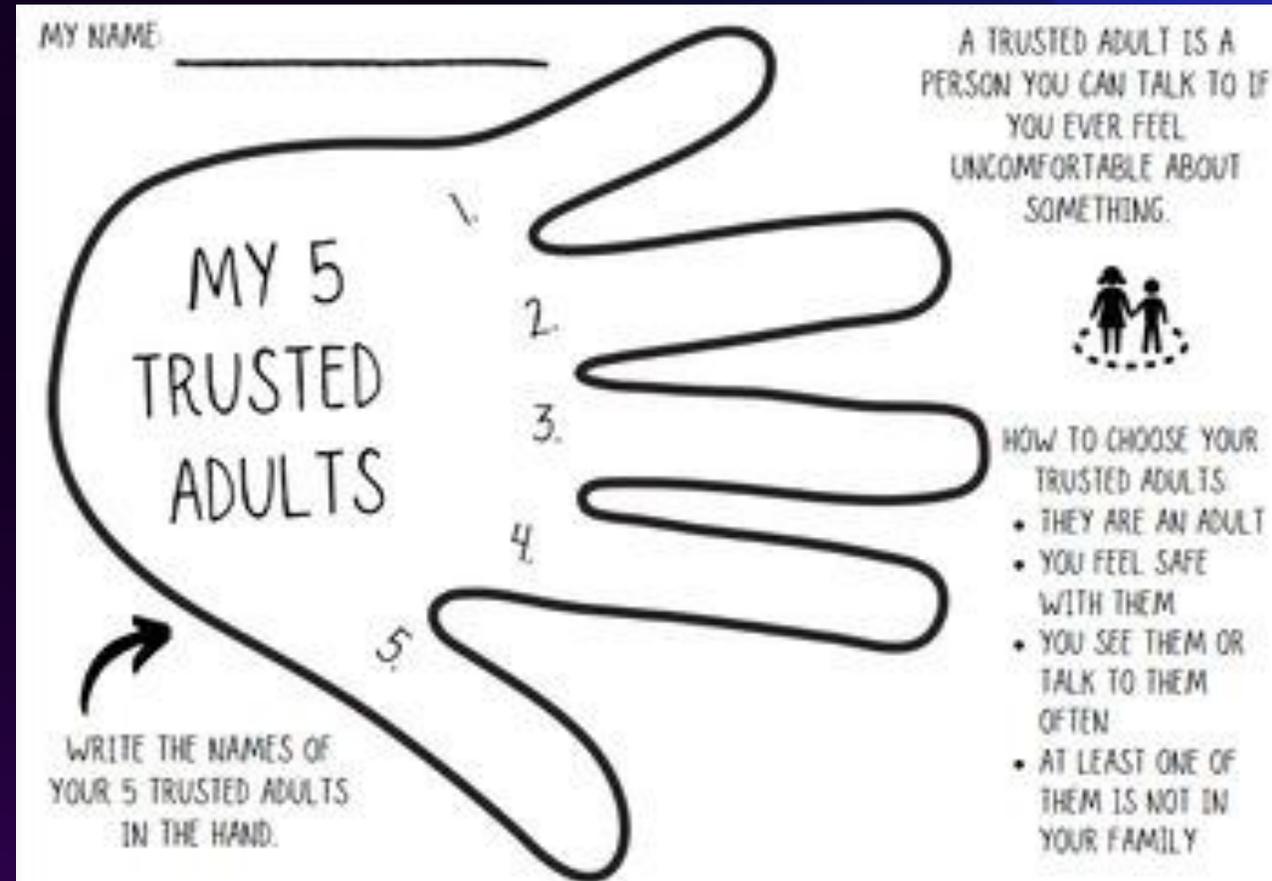
Trusted Adult Map

Purpose: Make help-seeking concrete and safe.

Activity:

Students draw a web and label:

- 3 trusted adults at school
- 2 trusted adults outside school
- 1 peer they trust



Trusted Adult Map

Discuss:

- What makes someone “safe”?
- What if the first person doesn't help?
→ Keep telling until someone listens.

Important Skill: Persistence in help-seeking.

MEET THE STUDENT

COUNSELOR-FRIENDLY CASE VIGNETTES

1. Sofia – 2nd Grade Sofia has been visiting the nurse frequently complaining of stomach aches. Her teacher reports she cries easily during transitions and struggles separating from her parent in the mornings. Academically she is on grade level, but she often asks for reassurance and wants to sit near adults.

Consider:

2. Jayden – 4th Grade Jayden has become increasingly disruptive in class, blurting out answers and leaving his seat. He recently experienced changes at home and is having trouble focusing. He is quick to anger during peer conflicts and has difficulty calming down once upset.

Consider:

3. Mia – 5th Grade Mia is very quiet and withdrawn. She rarely participates and avoids group work. Her grades have declined, and she often puts her head down. When asked how she's doing, she says "I'm fine" but appears sad.

Consider:

1. Alex – 6th Grade Alex recently transitioned from elementary school and feels overwhelmed. He reports frequent headaches and worries about failing tests. He avoids asking for help and becomes frustrated when he doesn't understand assignments.

Consider:

2. Brianna – 7th Grade Brianna is involved in frequent peer drama and feels excluded by friends. She checks social media constantly and reports difficulty sleeping. She becomes tearful easily and feels “no one understands her.”

Consider:

3. Carlos – 8th Grade Carlos often shuts down during class and refuses to complete work. Teachers describe him as unmotivated, but in counseling he shares feeling “dumb” and compares himself to others. He avoids participating for fear of embarrassment.

Consider:

1. Jasmine – 9th Grade Jasmine feels pressure to succeed academically while helping care for younger siblings. She reports feeling exhausted and overwhelmed. She struggles with time management and feels guilty when taking breaks.

Consider:

2. Miguel – 10th Grade Miguel has recently started skipping classes. He feels disconnected from school and unsure about his future. He admits feeling angry and frustrated but doesn't know how to talk about it.

Consider:

3. Kayla – 12th Grade Kayla is preparing for graduation but feels anxious about life after high school. She experiences panic symptoms before exams and worries she will disappoint her family. She is high achieving but extremely self-critical.

Consider:

Connection is the Intervention



Reflection/ Evaluation

THANK YOU

Christina Vasquez/ Amy Dominguez

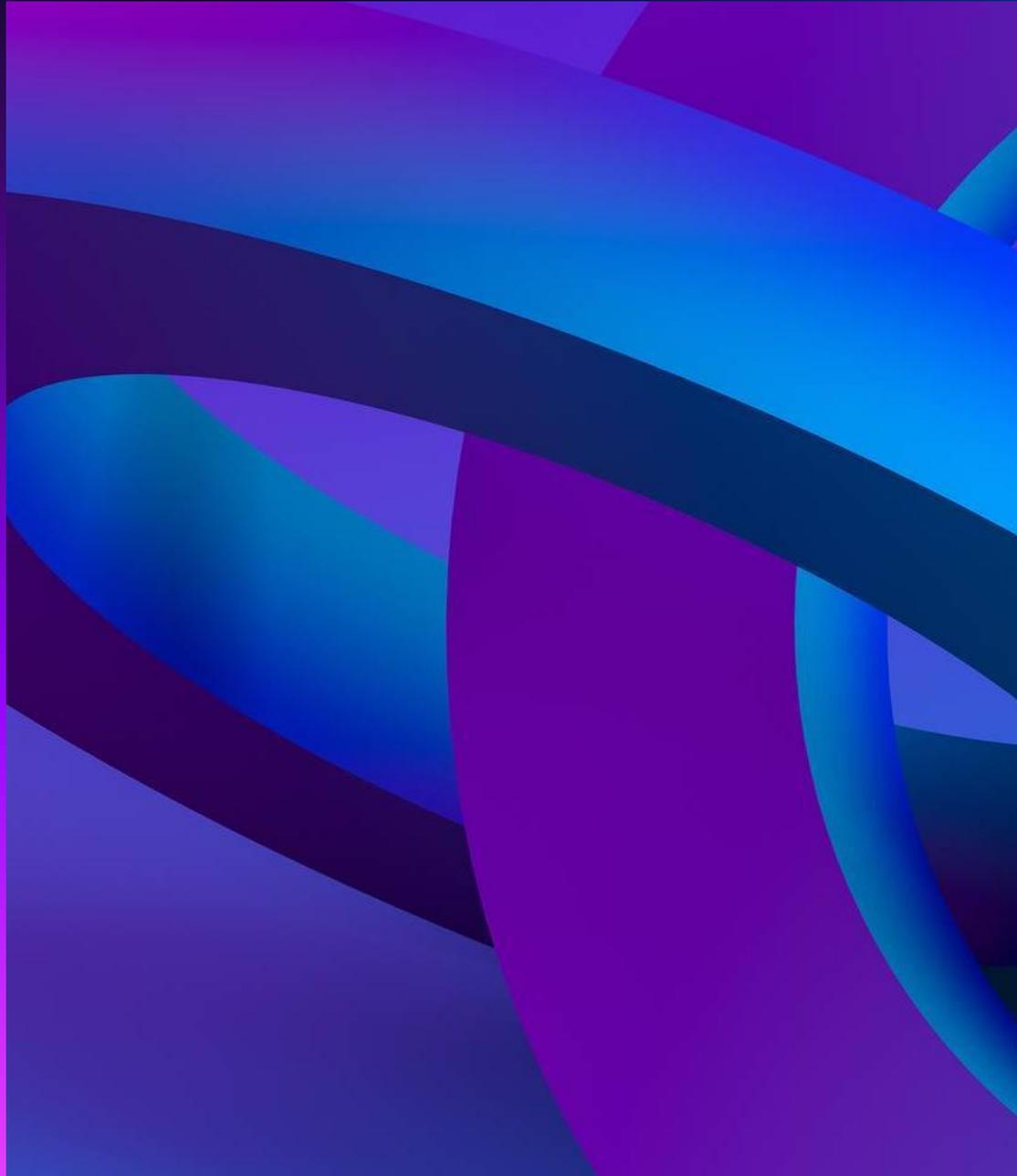
956.884.1977

inspire@mycreativebeing.com

www.mycreativebeing.com



CREATIVE BEING



SPEAKING IMPACT

Your ability to communicate effectively will leave a lasting impact on your audience

Effectively communicating involves not only delivering a message but also resonating with the experiences, values, and emotions of those listening

○ Resilience //doesn't go

Help-Seeking Role Switch

Targets: Confidence • Communication

Time: 10–15 minutes

You role-play the student.

They become the counselor/teacher.

They practice giving help.

Then switch back and they practice asking.

Activity: “Red Flag – Yellow Flag – Green Flag” (10–15 minutes)

Draw 3 columns.

Green = Healthy

- **Friend respects your “no”**
- **You feel calm**

Yellow = Warning

- **You feel uncomfortable but unsure why**
- **Friend pressures you**

Red = Boundary Needed

- **Someone ignores your no**

Boundaries Step In/Step Out

Read scenarios out loud.

Student **steps forward (IN)** if it feels okay, or **steps back (OUT)** if it doesn't.

Examples:

- A friend borrows your things without asking
- Someone makes a joke about you

Boundaries Step In/ Step Out

- A teacher checks in when you're upset
- Someone pressures you to do something you don't want to do

After each:

- “What did your body notice. Was that a boundary moment?”