



OXFORD
CBT

Ace Your Well-Being

Welcome to a journey that goes
beyond textbooks and exams

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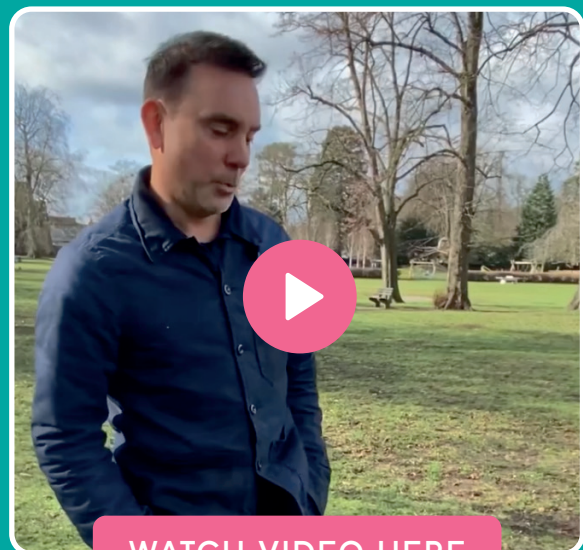
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Introduction

Welcome to a journey that goes beyond textbooks and exams – it's all about nurturing your mental well-being too. Get set to plunge into the realm of student mental health with this helpful guide. We're here to steer you through the ups and downs, equipped with valuable well-being tips and pointers towards additional resources and support to help you conquer stress, build resilience, and thrive academically. So, grab your go-to drink, settle into a cosy spot, and together, let's tackle challenges, celebrate successes, and cruise through your academic years with a healthy mind.

About us

Back in 2012, Oxford CBT was set up as a private clinic on a mission. We're all about giving you fast assessments and high-quality, science-backed treatment to enhance your quality of life. We're here to help you tackle various challenges and feel better overall. You can count on our friendly, supportive vibes for long-lasting benefits, whether you're tuning in online or dropping by our Oxford & Birmingham clinics.



[WATCH VIDEO HERE](#)

♥ WHY WELL-BEING MATTERS

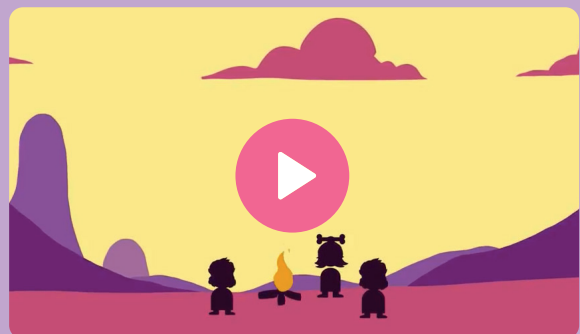
Before we dive headfirst into the nuts and bolts, let's have a heart-to-heart about the student mindset. Picture it as a delightful concoction of excitement, bouts of anxiety, unquenchable curiosity, and a sprinkle of bewilderment.

We're here to untangle this emotional mix, reassuring you that you're far from alone on this exhilarating rollercoaster. From imposter syndrome's sneaky whispers to the art of mastering time management, we're taking on the everyday mental hurdles that come with being a student.



Let's kick things off by diving into why mental well-being is such a big deal for students. Get ready for a mind-blowing revelation - a healthy mind is an academic ally that paves the way for success. Think of your mind as the compass for your academic journey. A healthy mind is your reliable guide, directing you toward success.

We'll introduce you to the power of CBT techniques and how they can become your go-to tools. Together, we'll explore the connection of how maintaining a healthy mental balance can supercharge your learning experience, sharpen your focus, and equip you to handle hurdles like a pro.





Common Challenges in Student Life



PROCRASTINATION

This is a common challenge we all face, but fear not! Understanding its causes empowers us to overcome them & make progress toward our goals with enthusiasm and determination. Common reasons for procrastination include no clear direction, perfectionism and fear of criticism. Beat Procrastination with these pro tips:

1

Chunk It Up

Divide tasks into more manageable bite-sized pieces. For quick wins, Dr. James Clear suggests using the “2-Minute Rule”. If a task takes less than two minutes, do it immediately. This simple approach stops tasks from piling up.

2

Use the Pomodoro Technique

Dr Francesco Cirillo’s technique: 25-min work, 5-min break. Enhances focus and productivity.

3

Visualise Completion

Imagine the sense of accomplishment once a task is done. Dr Heidi Grant suggests the act of visualisation boosts motivation and reduces procrastination. In the world of high performance, this technique similar to what sports pros and athletes use, has been tried and proven. Just like athletes who listen and visualise winning their race, the more you practice this, the stronger your connection to success becomes.

4

Limit Distractions

Create a distraction-free environment when working. Turn off notifications and establish boundaries with social media. Dr Cal Newport’s “Deep Work” principle focuses on eliminating digital distractions for intense focus.

5

Reward Yourself

Set up rewards for completing tasks on time. Positive reinforcement creates a sense of achievement and motivation.

TAKE THE QUIZ





STRESS & ANXIETY

Uni life can bring its fair share of stressors and anxieties. In this section, we'll look into how to spot the signs and effective CBT techniques to manage stress and anxiety. From reframing negative thoughts to practising mindfulness, you'll find actionable strategies to stay calm and collected.

We all know those moments when anxiety or nervousness sneaks in, with various triggers like academic demands, exam pressures, social events, public speaking, the dread of making mistakes and underestimating our ability to handle situations.

Guess what? It's completely normal! But it's also good to be aware of when these feelings kick into high gear and when some extra support could make life easier.



Constantly worrying



Racing heart



Tense/tight muscles



Sleeplessness



Feeling anxious all the time



Retreat to a place of safety



Feeling on-going nervousness



Breathing rapidly (hyperventilation)



Drinking more to increase comfort



Social anxiety



If these sound familiar, it's okay to reach out for support. You're not alone on this journey!



1

Identify Negative Thought Patterns

Recognize and challenge negative thoughts that contribute to stress and anxiety. Replace them with balanced and rational alternatives.

2

Breathing Exercises

Practice deep breathing techniques to calm your nervous system. Inhale deeply for a count of four, hold for four, and exhale for four.

3

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Tense and then release different muscle groups to release physical tension associated with stress.

4

Journaling

Write down your thoughts and emotions. This helps you gain insight into triggers and patterns, allowing you to manage them more effectively.

5

Time Management

Break tasks into manageable chunks using techniques like the Pomodoro Technique. This prevents feeling overwhelmed.

For an informal idea of your present needs try our online self-assessment quizzes:

GENERAL QUIZ



ANXIETY QUIZ





PERFECTIONISM & MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

Perfectionism involves setting exceptionally high standards that are often tough to reach. Perfectionists deem anything less than perfect is a failure and even tiny flaws feel like a disaster – which can stress out students big time.

Studies show that more students are feeling the pressure to be perfect. High expectations and criticism play a role, and this can mess with our mental health. Perfectionism isn't just about getting everything right – it's also tied to things like eating issues, self-harm, anxiety, and feeling down.

This is not uncommon, and there are ways to manage it! Practising the wellbeing tips and strategies throughout this toolkit and below should in turn promote your self-confidence and resilience which should reduce negative thought patterns and mindset which relate to the onset of perfectionism.

★ EXPERT TOP TIP

Do you know about the 80/20 rule?

Well, it's like a magic trick for students! The rule suggests that you can achieve 80 percent of your desired results with just 20 percent of the effort. When students put in excessive hours of studying, they could be missing out on a more balanced approach. By working smarter, in line with the 80/20 rule, you can achieve excellent results without sacrificing the fun and enjoyable activities (such as friendships, hobbies, sports, etc.) that make the university experience richer. It's all about finding that sweet spot where productivity and enjoyment meet!



The CBT Toolkit

Here's where the magic happens – the introduction to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) techniques. These are more than just tools; they're your personal armour in the battle against stress, anxiety, and the hurdles that come your way. CBT techniques are like your trusty compass, helping you navigate the terrain of student life with greater confidence and resilience. Prepare to unlock a range of strategies that empower you to approach challenges with a clear mind.

ACE



Negative Thoughts Log



Activity Planning



Breathing Exercise Audio



The Feel Wheel



Gratitude Journal Template



Mini Mindfulness



Happify Meditation



5 ways to improve your well-being



5 things grounding exercise





Building Resilience

Resilience is your secret weapon against setbacks. Life throws curveballs, and student life is no exception. The tools & resources mentioned throughout this guide help to build resilience, that inner strength that helps you bounce back from setbacks.

A common barrier to resilience is something called imposter syndrome. This is that sneaky feeling of doubting your abilities, worrying you'll be exposed as a "fraud." But guess what? You're not alone, and you're definitely not a fraud! Use these tips to show imposter syndrome who's boss! [HERE](#)

Improve Resilience with CBT: Use principles of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to enhance your resilience and well-being:

1 Challenge Negative Thoughts

Identify and challenge negative beliefs about setbacks or challenges. Replace them with balanced and rational thoughts. Set challenges every day that you find slightly uncomfortable e.g volunteering in class, joining a society, meeting new people/peers. Try the [Negative Thoughts Log](#) in your toolkit.

2 Practice Self-Compassion

Treat yourself with kindness, especially during tough times. Self-compassion improves resilience by reducing self-criticism. Give these [positive self-talk affirmations](#) a try.

3 Mindfulness for Stress

Engage in mindfulness exercises to manage stress. Stay present, observe your thoughts, and reduce reactivity to stressors. Try the [Grounding Exercise](#) or [Happify Meditation](#) in your toolkit above. Or simply try doing just one thing at a time and concentrating fully on this without any distractions such as eating a meal or drinking a cup of coffee without looking at your phone.



Build a Support Network

Connect with friends, family, or therapists. Seeking support promotes resilience by reminding you that you're not alone.

[CONTACT US](#)



YOUR ON-GOING RESOURCE

Armed with an understanding of the student mindset and a glimpse into the power of CBT techniques, you're ready to take on your academic journey with a renewed sense of purpose. A holistic approach to student life, one that embraces both the academic and the emotional dimensions. Get ready to conquer challenges, embrace opportunities, and transform your university experience with a well-balanced mindset. Your journey has just begun!

Remember, mental well-being is a journey – one that deserves your attention and care. Don't forget to explore our library of free mental health resources including blogs, more 'spot the signs' and self-assessment quizzes, designed to provide you with valuable insights along the way. Here's to navigating uni life with confidence and thriving in mind and spirit!

FREE RESOURCES





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Stay Well, Stay Connected!



Join us on social media for student-friendly content and helpful tips.



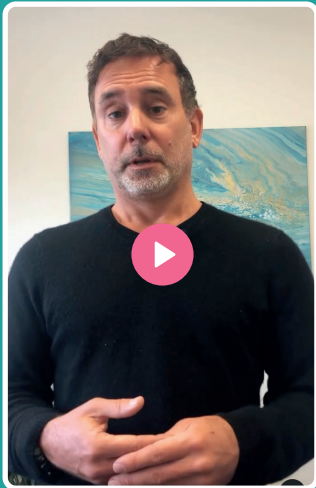
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ACE Log

What you do, when you do it, and who you're with can have a great influence on your mood. So, why not keep a little log of the things that make you feel accomplished, those wonderful connections with friends, and the stuff that simply sparks joy?



Let's keep it simple to stay healthy, happy and balanced with ACE:

Achieve - work, chores, study and celebrating the small wins

Connect - coffee date with friends, phoning family, joining a society, volunteering

Enjoy - fav dish, gaming, movie night, hobby

When stress hits, we often focus too much on achieving, leaving out the fun and connecting bits. When we're down, we tend to withdraw. And when anxiety strikes, we dodge what makes us anxious.

Here's the hack: Make daily 'me-time' a must! It's about relaxing, having fun, and enjoying life. Aim for balance - mix in tasks that give you a sense of accomplishment, those that help connect you with others, and those that simply make you happy.

This ACE log can help keep track & it's super easy to use: simply jot down the day, date, time, the cool stuff you did, and rate how much of a buzz you got from Achievement, how awesome the Connection was, and how much pure Enjoyment you soaked up. You can rate it from 0 (didn't hit the mark) to 10 (absolute jackpot), or just tick the ACE boxes.

| Day Date Time | Activity - what you did, who you were with | Achievement | Connection | Enjoyment |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------|------------|-----------|
| Monday 19th Sept 7pm | Example: Played video games after dinner | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Tuesday 20th Sept 2pm | Example: Called miriam and invited her around for coffee | 4 | 9 | 8 |

ACE Log



Achieve - work, chores, study and celebrating the small wins

Connect - coffee date with friends, phoning family, joining a society, volunteering

Enjoy - fav dish, gaming, movie night, hobby

| Day Date Time | Activity – what you did, who you were with | Achievement | Connection | Enjoyment |
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Activity Planning Diary

Adding enjoyable activities to your daily routine is a powerful mood boosting strategy. Aim to plan daily joy-filled solo and social activities to swiftly lift your spirits, enhance motivation, and nurture your mental well-being.

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|---|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| <p>Morning</p> <p>What will you do?</p> <p>Where will you do it?</p> <p>Who will you do it with?</p> | | | | | | | |
| <p>Afternoon</p> <p>What will you do?</p> <p>Where will you do it?</p> <p>Who will you do it with?</p> | | | | | | | |
| <p>Evening</p> <p>What will you do?</p> <p>Where will you do it?</p> <p>Who will you do it with?</p> | | | | | | | |

Activity Planning Diary

Adding enjoyable activities to your daily routine is a powerful mood boosting strategy. Aim to plan daily joy-filled solo and social activities to swiftly lift your spirits, enhance motivation, and nurture your mental well-being.

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Morning | | | | | | | |
| What will you do? | Get up at 8am | Get up at 8am | Get up at 8am | Get up at 8am | Get up at 8am | Lie in until 9am but no later | Get up at 8am |
| Where will you do it? | Eat breakfast | Eat breakfast | Eat breakfast | Eat breakfast | Eat breakfast | Call my mom for a catch-up | Exercise |
| Who will you do it with? | Walk to work | Walk to work | Walk to work | Walk to work | Walk to work | | |
| Afternoon | | | | | | | |
| What will you do? | Have lunch with a friend | Take a walk at lunch | Lunch with a friend | Take a walk at lunch | Have lunch with a friend | Go and visit the museum | Take a trip to the city |
| Where will you do it? | | | | | | Have lunch out | |
| Who will you do it with? | | | | | | | |
| Evening | | | | | | | |
| What will you do? | Go to the cinema to watch a film with a friend | Exercise - gym or swim | Choose an episode to watch on TV after doing chores | Treat self to a bath and read a book | Zumba class | Research some clubs to join | Take a trip to the city |
| Where will you do it? | | | | | 'Life admin' | | |
| Who will you do it with? | Early bedtime 10pm | | | Call Dad | Nice meal | | |

Daily Journal



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Title:

Date:

MOOD / EMOTION TRACKER



VERY SAD



VERY HAPPY

SPACE FOR CREATIVITY:

DOODLES, ILLUSTRATIONS,
THOUGHTS, TEXT ETC

THINGS THAT I AM GRATEFUL FOR:

MY GOALS AND INTENTIONS:

REFLECTIONS:

WHAT I ACCOMPLISHED TODAY:

Here's a guide on how you can use this Daily Journal.

Date

Start each entry with the date, allowing you to track your entries and organise them chronologically.

Title or Heading

Consider adding a brief title or heading to each entry, to summarise the main focus or theme of the day's journaling.

Mood or Emotion Tracker

You might want to include a section or section heading to record your current mood or emotions. You can use a scale (e.g. 1-5) or descriptive terms (e.g. happy, sad, excited) to capture how you're feeling.

Things That I am Grateful For

Consider adding a dedicated space to express things you're grateful for each day. Gratitude journaling can have numerous effects on well-being.

Goals and Intentions

Include a section where you can write down your goals, intentions, or affirmations for the day or the future. This helps with focus and motivation.

Reflections:

Add a section where you can reflect on the events of the day, any insights you gained, or lessons learned.

What I Accomplished Today

Dedicate a spot to celebrate your accomplishments or positive things you've done during the day, no matter how big or small.

Space for Creativity:

If you enjoy creative expression, you can add an area for doodling, sketches, or any form of art that complements your journaling.

Negative Thoughts Log

A useful tool for tracking negative thought patterns, helping you understand them better and work towards a more positive mindset.

Situation

Describe the situation that triggered your negative thinking

Who were you with?
What were you doing?
Where were you?
When did it happen?

Negative Thoughts

What went through your mind?
(Thoughts, images, or memories)

If it was an image or memory,
what did it mean to you?

Emotions & Body Feelings

What did you feel?
How strong was that feeling?
(0-100%)

Responses

What did you do?
How did you cope with those feelings?

Negative Thoughts Log

A useful tool for tracking negative thought patterns, helping you understand them better and work towards a more positive mindset.

Situation

Describe the situation that triggered your negative thinking

Wednesday 6:00pm
Dropped a tray of food as I was getting it out of the microwave.

Saturday 12:00pm
Waiting to meet a friend in town.

Friday 10:00pm
At home alone. I'd said no to going out with a friend as I had been feeling anxious and was regretting it.

Negative Thoughts

What went through your mind?
(Thoughts, images, or memories)

I can't even get that right.
I'm pathetic.

I bet she doesn't come.
Picturing times when I've been left out or excluded.
Picturing times when I've been horrible to other people.

I hate myself.
Why am I so shit?

Emotions & Body Feelings

What did you feel?
How strong was that feeling?
(0-100%)

Angry.
Hot feeling in my chest.
Hopeless.

Nervous.
Sad.
Feel 'heavy' in my head.

I felt sad and was crying.
I felt trapped and like it wasn't going to get better.

Responses

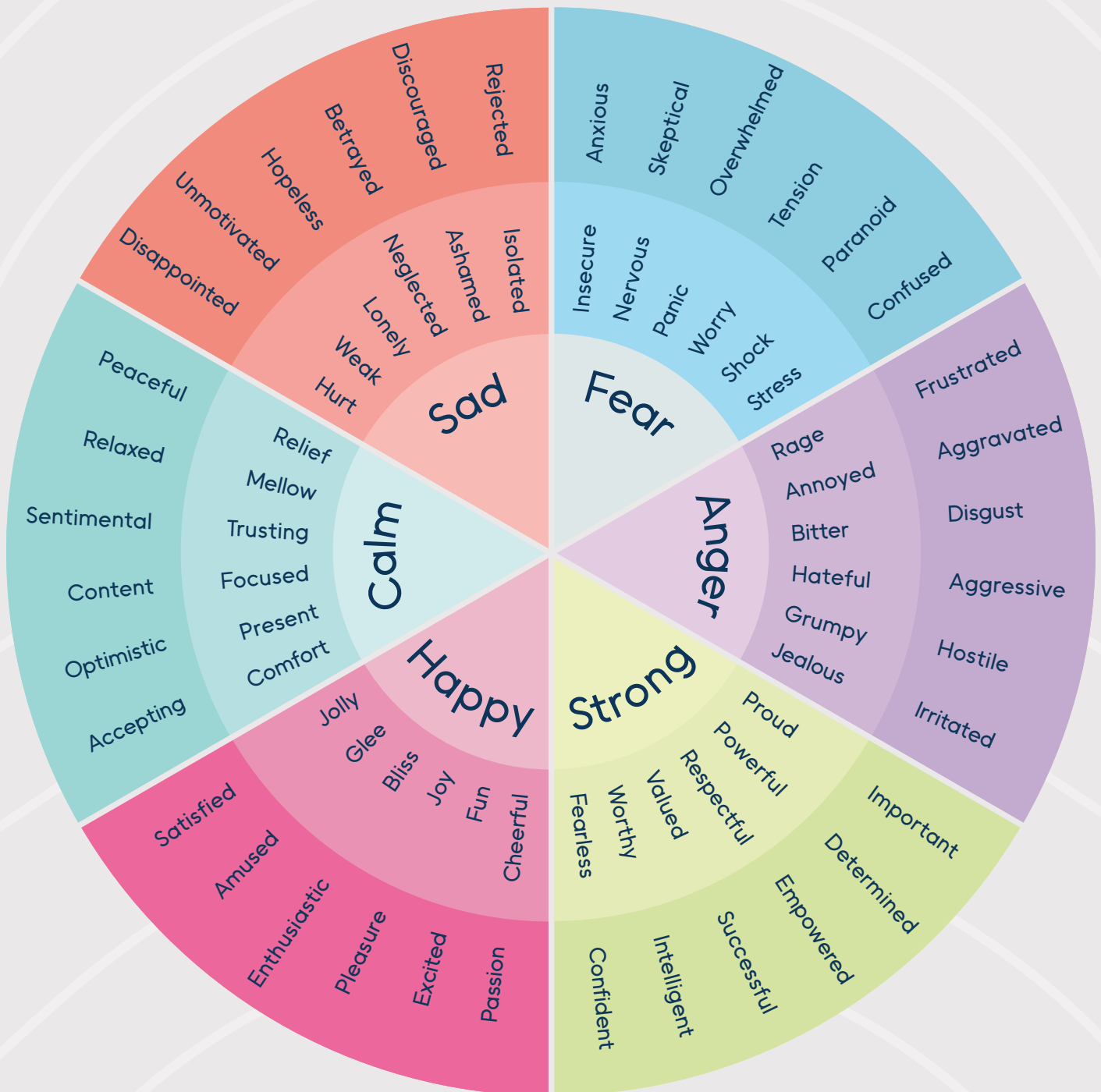
What did you do?
How did you cope with those feelings?

I shouted to let the feeling out, then cleaned up.

I didn't do anything. I just sat there thinking about all of these awful things until she turned up.

I self-harmed by cutting my thighs.

The Feel Wheel



The CBT feel wheel acts as a colourful map of emotions that helps you put a name to how you're feeling. A useful tool often used in therapy to understand your emotions and work with them.