Think Twice, Have Hope, Build Resilience
Merici College Pastoral Care Program

A program designed to help enhance and maintain resilience and psychological wellbeing in young people (aged 12-18) by building their social and emotional skills.
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Rationale and aim of the Think Twice, Have Hope, Build Resilience program

Research has shown one in five young Australians between the ages of 12-18 suffer from significant mental health problems (Mission Australia 2001; Sawyer et al, 2000; Zubrick et al., 1995). Consequently, there have been calls for a greater emphasis on promotion, prevention and early intervention.

Schools have been identified as a key setting for delivery of preventative mental health interventions, since schools are a key force, second only to family, in shaping the child’s early mental health and development (Dodge, 1993). Research has found that the quality of relationships between teachers and students in classrooms, opportunities for student participation and responsibility, and the level of support provided by teachers are all strongly related to students’ academic progress, and emotional and social development (Spence & Sheffield 2003).

Research suggests that there are a range of protective factors that may buffer adolescents against the impact of stressful life events. Resiliency is one of the most significant protective factors (McGrath & Noble, 2003, 2011). Social skills, school and family are also found to be strong protective factors, such as strong social support, a high level of connectedness and participation in school and positive relationships with family members, peers and teachers (Beyondblue SenseAbility 2010, Spence & Sheffield 2003).

Therefore, in the establishment of this program and with the continued development of teacher/student relationships through both classroom and pastoral care, Merici College aims to create an environment inductive of supporting resilient students and reduce mental health issues amongst our students by building their social and emotional skills.

Acknowledgement

In putting together this program for Merici College it is essential to acknowledge that all the activities and resources found in this document have come from a wonderful resource created by Beyondblue (authors: Stephen Irwin, Dr. Jeanie Sheffield and Kristina Holland-Thompson) entitled SenseAbility.

Definition of Resilience

Human resilience is the ability to cope and bounce back after encountering negative events, difficult situations or adversity and to return to almost the same level of emotional wellbeing. It is also the capacity to respond adaptively to difficult circumstances and still thrive (McGrath & Noble 2011).
Information on Enhancing Resilience

Teaching young people coping skills makes it more likely that they will be able to respond effectively and adaptively to challenges and times of adversity, manage emotional distress and have optimal levels of social-emotional wellbeing. Coping skills provide them with cognitions, behaviours and attitudes for making their lives at school and in life less distressing, happier and more productive (Noble, 2010).

Coping skills that help young people be resilient include:

- Understanding that bad times are usually temporary;
- Talking to others when feeling worried or distressed;
- Using helpful thinking which calms you down and reflects reality;
- Recognising that neither you nor other people are perfect;
- Focusing on any small positive in a difficult situation, using humour; and normalising instead of personalising and catastrophising.

Beyondblue’s SenseAbility resource identifies essential life skills which help young people to interact more effectively with others, and cope better with life’s changes and challenges. These skills are broken into six main types: helpful thinking and self-talk; emotion recognition and regulation; life problem-solving; communicating effectively; planning and time management; and keeping well. Each of these skills will be visited in this pastoral care program.

About the program

The program is designed to help enhance and maintain resilience and psychological wellbeing in young people (aged 12-18) by building their social and emotional skills. Young people who possess sound social and emotional skills are generally better able to cope with the stressors of daily life. They also tend to have better relationships with parents, teachers and peers, and perform better academically. Very importantly, having these skills makes it less likely that a young person will experience significant mental health problems in the future.

The program is enhanced with a number of DVD clips and these will be available on Clickview and on individually burnt DVDs for those tutors wishing to have their own copy. However, the sessions do not solely rely on the DVD and can be run effectively without the DVD if necessary. If you see this icon in the session then the DVD is necessary OR icon represents a paper version available as an alternative. The only exception to this is Session 6, which is a relaxation technique lesson and it will be necessary for PC classes to join together to conduct this session. Each session has been designed as a 45 minute lesson.

Ideally, the program would be enhanced if it was run in partnership with the Pastoral teacher and the senior students (especially Year 11 students). We see this as a leadership opportunity for these students, it will enhance their connectedness to pastoral care, augment their knowledge and understanding of these resiliency skills through peer tutoring and give prospect to more students receiving their Registered unit for pastoral care if they were given the opportunity to organise and help run these sessions with support from the Pastoral
teacher. It is hoped Year 11 students will be given training in the program during their time on Year 11 Conference.
Session 1: Helpful thinking & self-talk

What it Covers
There are many unhelpful ways of thinking about situations (referred to as ‘cognitive or thinking errors’). And these can lead us to misinterpret situations and to say very unproductive things to ourselves. This session examines the concept of challenging unhelpful thoughts and striving to replace them with more helpful thoughts.

Session plan
A. Introduce skill set: Helpful Self-Talk
B. Start DVD Helpful thinking and Self-talk Unit 2 Clip #1: Presenter introduces seven common types of thinking errors
   Or Using the Common thinking errors resource sheet discuss each of the seven common thinking errors. Get students to rank them from Worst to least damaging. Discuss how all can be equally damaging as they are all negative.
C. Start DVD Helpful thinking and Self-talk Unit 2 Clip #2: Six animated scenarios are shown, showing young people thinking unhelpfully in various situations. Pause the DVD after each scenario for class discussion. The DVD will come up with a ‘Pause here’ to identify areas to start class discussions. Suggested discussion starts are provided.
D. Start DVD Helpful thinking and Self-talk Unit 2 clip #3: Presenter offers several strategies for challenging unhelpful thoughts OR using the Thinking Strategies hand-out discuss some strategies for challenging unhelpful thoughts. Are these strategies useful/realistic/effective?
E. If time, replay DVD Helpful thinking and Self-talk Unit 2 Clip #2: After each scenario brainstorm some alternative, helpful but realistic thoughts to replace the characters’ unhelpful thoughts.
F. Conclude by introducing real-life application: Catch and challenge.
A. **Introduce skill set: Helpful Self-Talk**

Information for setting the scene:

*The cognitive-behavioural approach underpinning this session suggests that each of us can change the way we feel about events if we change the way we interpret and think about ourselves and the world around us. A critical factor that affects this is the way we speak to ourselves in our own minds: self-talk. Helpful or positive self-talk has a vital role building and strengthening emotional and mental wellbeing; unhelpful or negative self-talk can increase the risk of emotional or mental problems.*

*Helpful internal comments encourage us to try new things, and assist to put things in perspective if they don’t turn out as we’d like.*

*Encourage your students to practise helpful self-talk and to challenge unhelpful self-talk.*

*Some examples of helpful and unhelpful self talk:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unhelpful self-talk</th>
<th>Helpful self talk alternatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nobody likes me</td>
<td>It doesn’t matter if I’m not liked by everybody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I know there are people who care about me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am no good at anything</td>
<td>I mightn’t do everything well but I am still an okay person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t have to be good at everything to have value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I might fail</td>
<td>Even if I fail, it’s not the end of the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I won’t know how I’ll go if I’m not prepared to at least try</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. **Start DVD Unit 2 Clip #1:** Presenter introduces seven common types of thinking errors

OR Using the *Common thinking errors* resource sheet discuss each of the seven common thinking errors. Get students to rank them from Worst to least damaging. Discuss how all can be equally damaging as they are all negative. Hand out the Student booklet and ask students to turn to the Common thinking error page to enhance discussion and understanding.

C. **Start DVD Unit 2 Clip #2:** Six animated scenarios are shown, showing young people thinking unhelpfully in various situations. Pause the DVD after each scenario for class discussion. The DVD will come up with a ‘Pause here’ to identify areas to start class discussions.

Discussion questions for each clip:

- What kind of thinking error do you think was being demonstrated?
- What makes you think that?
- What do you think the subject will feel or do next (i.e. what are the consequences of thinking in that unhelpful way)?
• Can you think of circumstances in your own life when you thought similarly? What did you do?

OR an example scenario of each type of thinking error is located on the Common thinking errors resource sheet. Discuss each of these as a class.

D. Start DVD Unit 2 clip #3: Presenter offers several strategies for challenging unhelpful thoughts

OR using the Thinking Strategies hand-out found in their student booklet, discuss some strategies for challenging unhelpful thoughts. Are these strategies useful/realistic/effective?

E. If time, replay DVD Unit 2 Clip #2: After each scenario brainstorm some alternative, helpful but realistic thoughts to replace the characters’ unhelpful thoughts.

F. Conclude by introducing real-life application: The Catch and Challenge task to the students.

• Now you have labels for seven kinds of unhelpful thinking and have several strategies for challenging them. Your challenge is to try and catch yourself whenever you find you are thinking any of these unhelpful thoughts, and challenge them!

• If you find you have the same unhelpful thoughts again and again, you could work out in advance exactly what you might be able to say to challenge them. Practise using those challenge phrases every day.

• Observe your friends and if you hear them having unhelpful thoughts. Ask yourself: ‘What would you say to yourself in that situation?’ and ‘How can this be rephrased to be helpful thinking?’
COMMON THINKING ERRORS...

**ALL-OR-NOTHING**
This is when you see everything as black or white, with no in between. If something isn’t 100% perfect, then it’s a total failure. Clearly, this is a very unrealistic way to think.

**OVER-GENERALISATION**
This is when you see one event that didn’t turn out so well as part of a never-ending pattern of failure everywhere. The truth may be that the accident was an isolated event, and if you put it into perspective, it probably isn’t that bad at all.

**MIND-READING**
This is really just bad guessing. This is when you decide in your mind what other people must be thinking, without checking the facts, and then you act on that (quite probably incorrect) assumption. The reality is, you simply cannot know what other people are thinking without them telling you.

**FORTUNE-TELLING**
Maybe this should be called “misfortune-telling”. It is predicting that things will turn out badly, even if you have absolutely no proof that this will be the case. This thinking error can lead to mental problems, because if you think things are going to go wrong, then you may act in a way that allows them to go wrong.

**MAGNIFICATION**
This is when you make one little mistake, and it becomes so huge in your mind that it spoils everything else in your day. This is also called “blowing things out of proportion”, or “making mountains out of molehills”.

**MINIMISATION**
This is the opposite of magnification, but not in a good way! This is when you downplay anything good that might have happened to you because you are too focused on one aspect of the event that went wrong. It is possible to acknowledge where things might not have been perfect without blowing them to ruin the overall event.

**CATASTROPHISING**
This is a very common thinking error. It is when you make extreme judgments and imagine the very worst outcomes will occur even if there isn’t a scrap of evidence they will. In this way, it’s a bit like fortune-telling – the difference is that fortune-telling has you thinking things won’t turn out, catastrophising has you imagining the very worst will occur.

**STOP!**

WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF THINKING IN ANY ONE OF THESE SEVEN WAYS, YOU NEED TO TELL YOURSELF TO STOP, AND PRACTISE SOME THINKING STRATEGIES THAT WILL ALLOW YOU TO CHALLENGE THESE UNHELPFUL WAYS OF THINKING.
Thinking Strategies

Strategy 1: Consider the Evidence
If you find yourself thinking negatively about an event or situation, ask yourself: What evidence do I have that this is actually true or going to happen? Chances are, you don’t have any, and you’re worrying without good reason. Ben wondered if Bennett had a nasty reason for wanting to meet him in the park. Was there any evidence she was going to chase him with a cricket bat? None he could think of.

Strategy 2: Is There an Alternative Explanation?
If you have it in your head that an event happened because of something you did or didn’t do, ask yourself: Is there an alternative to that explanation? Ben considered some other reasons Bennett might have wanted to meet him: perhaps to kiss and get back together or perhaps to return his library card.

Strategy 3: What Would You Say to a Friend Who is Thinking Like That?
It is the easiest thing in the world to call yourself unpleasant names when you make a mistake. But as we’ve learned, unhelpful and negative self-talk can be really harmful and discouraging. So, if you find yourself in a situation like Ben’s, where he was tempted to call himself an idiot for ruin his white clothes, act like your own best friend, and say something helpful like, “Chill out. It was a mistake, you didn’t do it on purpose.”

Strategy 4: What is the Likelihood?
Again, it is easy to imagine the worst when something important to you remains unresolved. In these situations where your imagination is tempted to run wild with negative possibilities, ask yourself “What is the likelihood?” When Ben heard the fire engine siren, he immediately thought it was his house burning down. But was that likely? No. When you think rationally and objectively, you can reduce your stress and help yourself feel a bit better.

Strategy 5: Is There a More Helpful Way to Think About This?
This is a really valuable thinking skill to learn. This isn’t about glass-half-full or looking on the bright side – it is about looking at an event (even one with a less than ideal outcome) and using your brain to work out if there is a way to think about it that isn’t just going to make you feel miserable. Ben received a huge credit card bill in the mail and became really stressed. Was that going to make the bill disappear? No. Life is about making mistakes – they are how we learn! And a big part of learning is looking at everything that happens, good and bad, in helpful ways. When Ben thought helpfully that he would simply have to create and stick to a budget in the future, he felt a lot better.

WEB SITES
www.youthbeyondblue.com
www.lifeline.org.au
www.sane.org
www.reachout.com
www.headspace.org.au
www.somazone.com.au
www.inspire.org.au

HELPLINES
Youthbeyondblue: 1300 22 4636
Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
Lifeline: 13 11 14
Sane Australia: 1800 18 7263

ONLINE COUNSELLING
www.kidshelp.com.au
Session 2: Emotion Recognition & Regulation

What it covers
If unchecked, some emotional responses can be inappropriate, unhelpful, or even harmful to yourself and others. This session examines ways to look for warning signs and strategies for regulating emotions.

Session plan
A. Introduce Skill Set
B. Brainstorm various emotions people can feel.
C. Worksheet: Identifying emotions
D. Start DVD Emotional Recognition and Regulation Unit 2 clip #1: Presenter explains why it is important that we learn how to recognise when we are experiencing high emotions, and to learn how to regulate them. Four animated scenarios showing young people with emotions running high. Pause the DVD after each scenario for class discussion provided.
E. Read and discuss Recognising & Regulating Emotions hand-out in student booklet.
F. Start DVD Emotional Recognition and Regulation Unit 2 Clip #1.1 which replays the four animated scenarios seen in clip #1. Pause the DVD at points marked ‘Pause here’ for class discussion. Discussion suggestions are provided.
G. Classroom activity: Role-play – You will need to photocopy Scenario Cue cards
H. Conclusion: Introduce real-life application
A. **Introduce Skill Set**

Information for setting the scene:

*It is perfectly normal and healthy for each of us to feel high emotions at appropriate times. It is okay to feel hurt and angry when somebody does the wrong thing by you. It is natural to feel happy when something good happens to you. And it is only human to feel sad when you lose something or someone close to you. However, when emotions aren’t regulated, and are allowed free rein to drive you, there can be unwanted consequences. You could get hurt or could injure someone else; you could risk alienating people who care about you; or you might become physically or mentally unwell.*

*Therefore, it is important to learn the warning signs that you are feeling (or are about to feel) high emotions, and to practise strategies that might help you regulate these emotions.*

B. **Brainstorm various emotions people can feel and some of the bodily reactions that occur when we get really emotional.**

C. **Complete Worksheet: Identifying emotions in student workbooks. Answers are provided in the teacher resource book.**

D. **Start DVD Emotional Recognition and Regulation Unit 2 clip #1: Presenter explains why it is important that we learn how to recognise when we are experiencing high emotions, and to learn how to regulate them. Four animated scenarios showing young people with emotions running high. Pause the DVD after each scenario for class discussion.**

Discussion suggestions:

- What do you think is happening in the clip?
- How can you recognise the emotions being displayed (i.e. what are the clues; verbal; non-verbal, context, other person’s reaction)?
- What might be the consequences if these emotions aren’t regulated?
- Could you stop yourself if you felt the way the character does? How?
- What are some real-life situations you know of where similar emotions aren’t regulated (e.g. road rage)?

E. **Read and discuss Recognising & Regulating Emotions hand-out in student booklet.**

F. **Start DVD Unit 2 Emotional Recognition and Regulation Clip #1.1 which replays the four animated scenarios seen in clip #1. Pause the DVD at points marked ‘Pause here’ for class discussion. Discuss the strategies each character might employ to help regulate their emotions.**

G. **Classroom activity: Role-play – You will need to photocopy Scenario Cue cards**

- **Time:** 10mins. +
- **Size:** pairs, then whole class
- **Space:** room for pairs to interact
- **Resources:** Role-play cue cards available in teacher resource
**Aim:** for students to experience situations where high emotions could have undesirable consequences if they go unregulated.

**Result:** should be an understanding that emotions can be regulated, and that different strategies work better for different people.

1. Break class into pairs
2. Give each pair one or more of the set of cue cards. These are marked situation 1, 2 and 3, and either Character A or Character B for clarity.
3. Prompt the pairs to enact the situations, allowing approximately one minute for the role-play (being mindful of the students who might be tempted to take the activity to the extremes).
4. Come together as a class and have three pairs role-play each of the situations for the purpose of class discussion. It is up to you if you conduct class discussion after each enactment or after all three.

**Class discussion suggestions:**

- What did you think Character A was feeling in the situation/s? What signal gave away the emotion?
- What did you think Character B was feeling in the situations? What signals gave this away?
- Were either or both characters’ emotions misread? Was that an easy mistake/Why/Why not? What regulation strategies did you see employed?
- What might have happened if the emotions were not regulated?
- Have you ever been in a similar situation where emotions ran high and things got out of hand before they could be discussed? What happened? What might have been a better way to handle the situation?

**Conclusion:** Introduce real-life application: Recognising your own emotions task

- Ask students to try and ‘map’ their own personal warning signs that high emotions are coming. These may include not only physical signs (e.g. tense muscles, fluttering in the stomach, racing pulse, sweaty palms, dry mouth), but thoughts as well. Write a list of these.
- Now get students to think of some coping strategies that they could use when any or all of these warning signs appear (e.g. physical strategies – deep breathing, counting to ten, walking away OR thinking strategies – ‘It is okay if this doesn’t work out’, ‘I’m going to give this person time to state their case’). Write these down, too.
**Worksheet: Identifying emotions**

Look at the pictures of various emotions and identify what emotion each picture is expressing.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Excitement" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Anger" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Surprise" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="sadness" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Shy" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Shame" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Fear" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Boredom" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Disgust" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="fustration" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Nervousness" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Embarrassed" /></td>
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Recognising and Regulating Emotions

We all experience a range of emotions, from small ones like feeling slightly pleased or irritated, to big ones like joy and fury. However, it's not good when your emotions take over and seem to control your life.

- Different emotions are appropriate for different situations (like feeling annoyed because you can't find your shoe).
- If you act on your emotions all the time there can be unwanted consequences (road rage is a classic example).
- Being able to recognise the emotions that others might be feeling is really useful for good communication (it gives you clues about what they might be thinking).

Understanding and regulating your emotions helps you deal with the ups and downs of life appropriately.

How Will I Know?

Look for warning signs that you are feeling strong emotions.

Physical Signs:
- heart rate goes up
- throat feels tight
- face becomes hot
- muscles tense

Thoughts:
- 'It's not fair!'  
- 'How dare they?'
- 'I always make mistakes!'
- 'Nothing ever turns out for me.'

Strategies to Regulate Emotions

1. Recognise physical symptoms  
e.g. throat tightening, heart rate rising
2. Use physical venting  
e.g. jogging, swimming, singing loudly
3. Withdraw from tense situations  
   If you feel angry or unsafe, physically leave the situation
4. Change your thinking  
   Consider alternative, more helpful ways to think about the situation
5. Seek help

Everyone experiences times when it seems difficult to manage emotions. If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed or that your emotions are taking over, talk to your GP, school counsellor or other trusted adults. You should also consider these options:

WEBSITES
www.youthbeyondblue.com  
www.lifeline.org.au  
www.sane.org  
www.reachout.com  
www.headspace.org.au  
www.somazone.com.au  
www.inspire.org.au

HELPLINES
Youthbeyondblue: 1300 22 4636
Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
Lifeline: 13 11 14
Sane Australia: 1800 18 7263

ONLINE COUNSELLING
www.kidshelp.com.au
Situation 1 – Character A
You are a parent who has been looking for full-time work for the last four months. Today you’ve finally found a stable, long-term job but it means moving your family to a city in a different state. Such relief! You succeeded in keeping your stress and worry about the future hidden from your children. This move will be a good thing.

Situation 2 – Character A
You and friends went out for a barbecue in the state forest park last weekend. While you were all playing cricket, someone stole money that you’ve been saving for something special from your purse/wallet. It could have been anyone, but Character B (who you told earlier about your saving scheme) has been nervous around you. Could he/she be the thief?

Situation 3 – Character A
You are very embarrassed. You asked the brother/sister of your good friend Character B out, and he/she said no. In fact, he/she wasn’t very nice about it – as if he/she was out of your league and knew it. Now you are afraid that Character B knows about the rejection, and might share those feelings that you are a bit of a loser.

Situation 1 – Character B
Your parent has been acting funny lately, and it has been starting to really annoy you. You think he/she doesn’t really care too much about what’s going on in your life. But the good news is that you have just been accepted into the school’s A-grade basketball team. You feel really good as part of the squad – it’s one place you feel really stable and secure.

Situation 2 – Character B
You are trying to keep your excitement under wraps. Your friend Character A has a birthday coming up, and you’ve found the perfect gift on Ebay. However, it closes tomorrow and you need the cash to buy it. You are thinking of asking to borrow money from them, but can’t tell them why. You will pay him/her back over the next month.

Situation 3 – Character B
Your good friend Character A has been moping about for the last few days, and it’s driving you nuts. He/she won’t say what it is that’s frustrating them, and you’re sick of asking. You’ve decided to tell Character A (gently but firmly) that he/she had better think seriously about getting over whatever is bugging them because it’s starting to wear thin.
Session 3: Life Problem-solving

What it covers
This session explores how to break most problems into five easy steps to help them seem less overwhelming and more likely to be solved. It also looks at ways of seeking help if a problem seems too big to handle.

Session plan
A. Introduce skill set: Life problem-solving
B. Start DVD Life problem solving Unit 1 Clip #1: Presenter speaks about the five basic steps that anyone can take which may assist in solving problems both small and large.
   OR get students to open their student booklet to session 3 and read through and discuss the hand-out *Five Steps to Problem-Solving*.
C. Activity 1: Small group role-play using the five steps to problem solving for the situation provided. **Photocopy Role-play Cue Cards on page 22.**
D. Activity 2: Problem-solving Quiz and discussion.
E. Activity 3: Brainstorming help sources
F. Conclusion: Students to record help sources from brainstorming activity into their booklets and reflect on the five steps of problem-solving.
A. **Introduce skill set: Life problem-solving**

Information for setting the scene:

*We all face problems every day. Often they are small problems, like how to find time to do your homework and watch your favourite TV show. Sometimes though, they can be big things like arguments with friends and family, the loss of something important, or a choice about an important life decision.*

*Feeling confident about your ability to face and deal with problems is really important to your wellbeing. If problems seem to stress or overwhelm you, you may choose not to deal with them at all, which rarely brings satisfactory results.*

*Very importantly, all of us should regularly be reminded that one of the keys to solving many of life’s problems is being prepared to seek help from others.*

*In this session we will look at the steps to problem-solving life’s challenges, and provide opportunities to practise these steps as well as look at places you can seek help.*

B. ![Start DVD Life Problem solving Unit 1 Clip #1: Presenter speaks about the five basic steps that anyone can take which may assist in solving problems both small and large.](image)

OR ![get students to open their student booklet to session 3 and read through and discuss the hand-out Five Steps to Problem-Solving. The five steps to problem-solving are:](image)

1. Ask: What is the problem?
2. Ask: What are my options/possible solutions?
3. Ask: What are the pros, cons, and consequences of each option (for ourselves and for others, in the short and long-term)?
4. Make a decision
5. Do and Review

C. **Activity 1: Small group role-play using the five steps to problem solving for the situation provided.**

*Time:* 10+ mins  
*Size:* Pairs or Small groups  
*Space:* For small groups to work together  
*Resources:* Role-play cue cards – enough for each small group  
*Aim:* to give students the opportunity to use the five steps to problem-solving to come up with options for a real-life challenge.  
*Result:* Students should be increased confidence in their ability to face problems and make decisions.

1. Break class into Pairs or groups of 3 or 4  
2. There is a Role-play cue card provided with a Situation; the characters in the situation are labelled A and B. Give a copy of the cue cards to each pair/group.  
3. Allow students approx. 2-3 minutes to read their Cue card and act it out.  
4. Allow another 3-5 minutes for students to employ their five steps to problem-solving in order to come up with a possible solution to the problem.  
5. As a class, share the solutions that the students have decided on for the situation.
**Discussion suggestions:**

- Was there an ideal and obvious solution to the situation? Why/Why not?
- Did the five steps to problem-solving help? In what ways?
- Did other groups come up with solutions that your group hadn’t thought of? What does this say about different perspectives, and about seeking help from others when you have a problem?

D. **Activity 2: Problem-solving Quiz and discussion.**

**Time:** 10+ mins.

**Size:** Individuals

**Space:** No special requirements

**Resources:** Problem-solving quiz in student workbooks

**Aim:** to give students the opportunity to address fictional life problems and to discuss ways of thinking that they can deter effective problem-solving.

**Result:** students should be increased confidence in their ability to think helpfully in order to tackle life problems.

1. Get students to turn to the problem-solving quiz in their booklets. This quiz presents eight scenarios with multiple choice answers.
2. Allow students approx. 5-10 mins to work through the eight scenarios, and to consider each in terms of the five steps to problem-solving.
3. Come together as a class to discuss which solutions they might choose for each scenario, and why.

**Discussion suggestions:**

- What do you think the person in the scenario was saying to him/herself? Why might they be saying that? What might have happened to make them think this way?
- Did you come up with an option that was not one of the multiple choices? What was it? Why might that be a good option?
- How important is it to consider situations from various points of view? Why?

E. **Activity 3: Brainstorming help sources**

**Time:** 10+ mins.

**Size:** whole class

**Space:** no special requirements

**Resources:** whiteboard

**Aim:** to give students the opportunity to consider help-seeking options

**Result:** should be students with increased confidence to act helpfully after seeing the warning signs that they or someone close to them is struggling with particular life problems.

1. On the whiteboard, write up a list of five or six major types of life problems. You can choose your own, but here are some suggestions:

   - Academic issues
   - Friendship issues
2. Ask students to imagine they have a friend who is struggling with an issue in each of the above domains. For each domain, brainstorm a small list of people whom you might recommend your friend seek help from (e.g., mental health issues: seek help from GP, psychologist, trusted family member, school counsellor).

Discussion suggestions:

- Did you come up with different sources of help for different problems or issues? Why?
- What are some warning signs that might signify someone needs help in any or all of the listed domains?
- Why is it sometimes difficult to seek help? Why is it often easier to seek help for others than for ourselves?

F. **Conclusion:** Students to record help sources from brainstorming activity into their booklets and reflect on the five steps of problem-solving.
Five Steps to Problem-solving

You will face problems all your life. Some of them will be small day-to-day problems like what to eat for breakfast, or where to find your house keys. Other problems that arise can be much more significant and complex, like disagreements with friends, or trying to decide what to do when you finish school.

Regardless of whether the problem you face is small, medium, or large, there are five steps you can take that can help you deal with it. This five-step model is not a guarantee that you’ll come up with the ideal solution, but it does encourage you to consider lots of options and outcomes. By doing this, you’ll know you’ve given this problem your best shot, and that should make you feel good no matter how things turn out.

**STEP 1 Ask: What is the problem?**

This is a really important step - sometimes, even just identifying what the problem is can prove half the battle!

Ben doesn’t know what he wants for breakfast.

**STEP 2 Ask: What are the options/possible solutions?**

This is a very important step, because you have to make yourself think about all your options, not just the obvious ones. Open your mind, and think objectively and creatively.

Ben considers every food option in the house.

**STEP 3 Ask: What are the pros, cons, and consequences of each option?**

Here is where you imagine what is likely to happen if you proceed with each of your possible solutions. What will be the upside? What might be the downside? Some options will have two sets of consequences: short-term and long-term. Some options will have outcomes that affect not just you, but other people, too. Complex, isn’t it? But this step is incredibly important.

Ben knows that cereal is quick to prepare (pro) but won’t be as tasty as he might like (con).

Ben thinks bacon and eggs would be the tastiest option (pro), but also one that leaves his kitchen in a mess and the house smelling like fried bacon (con) - consequences that might affect other people.

**STEP 4 Make a decision**

Ultimately, you have to make a choice. Problems that are left to fix themselves very rarely go. Remember nobody can read the future, so you just have to make a decision based on your clear thinking about options and their consequences.

Ben decides that yoghurt is today’s best breakfast choice.

**STEP 5 Do and Review**

There! You’ve chosen one course of action and gone through with it. Did it work? Maybe it did, maybe it didn’t. Regardless, you should feel good about it, because you thought clearly and carefully before you acted, and did the best you could. If things didn’t turn out, well, that’s life. We all make mistakes - mistakes are how we learn, so don’t make yourself feel bad!

Ben eats the yoghurt and thinks it is tastier than the cereal and less tasty than the bacon and eggs (but probably better for him) and, the clean up is a breeze. Good choice!
## Activity 1: Role-play Cue Cards

Print sufficient copies so that every performer gets a card, and separate cards with scissors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation – Character A</th>
<th>Situation – Character B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are on an excursion to the art gallery with the rest of the students in your grade. It is totally boring. You see the opportunity to sneak away to the cinema next door – there is time to catch a movie and still return in time for the bus back to school. Your friend Kasey is coming with you – and now you want to know if character B will come too.</td>
<td>You are on an excursion to the art gallery with the rest of the students in your grade. It is totally boring. You already have A’s in Art this semester. Your best friends – Character A and Kasey – want to sneak away and watch a movie. You are worried they won’t think much of you if you stay at this dull exhibition instead of wagging and hanging out with them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem</td>
<td>Solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. You see a teacher take a stumble and instinctively laugh. You are sent to the principal’s office for a reprimand. You:</strong></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Put yourself in the teacher’s shoes, and realise he is embarrassed. You offer to apologise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Refuse to say anything on the grounds you might incriminate yourself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>You take whatever punishment you get, and approach the teacher privately to explain why you laughed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. You see a friend, Mark, boldly shoplift a DVD. Later, Mark warns you not to tell anyone. You:</strong></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Go and talk to a friend who you know can keep secrets and ask his/her advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Decide to anonymously inform an adult about Mark’s thievery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Your parent refused to raise your pocket money. Your younger brother received a $10 per week top up. You:</strong></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Get over it, and head out to get a part-time job that will make $10 look like a joke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Sulk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Ask your parents if there is a good time to talk in the next few days, and query why they are helping your brother out instead of you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Against the law and your parents’ wishes, you go out drinking and injure yourself staggering home. You:</strong></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Determine to say nothing until your parents confront you about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Realise you had better cop it sweet because you may need help getting to the doctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Concoct a complex but convincing lie that makes out your friend Tom to be the bad guy, and you just a gullible pawn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. You are offered a part in the school play. You are secretly excited, but are worried your friends will rib you. You:</strong></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Take your friends aside and explain how much this means to you, even if they have a laugh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Determine to go ahead with it, and if they laugh at you, you’ll give them hell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Refuse the part. It would be fun, but you’d rather have the approval of your friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Your brother is fined for speeding. He swears you to secrecy, but your parents suspect and want to know what you know.</strong></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>You tell the absolute truth, that you did know but intended to keep your brother’s secret.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>You suggest that the whole family gets together to talk about this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>You say little, then take your brother aside and tell him he has to own up to the truth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Your boyfriend/girlfriend is pressuring you to start a sexual relationship. You worry if you don’t, you’ll be dumped.</strong></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Explain why you don’t want to, and trust he/she cares enough about you to agree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Dump them as a pre-emptive strike. He/she should know you better than that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Get all your friends together for a vote on what you should do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. You receive a present from a friend that you know is an unwanted gift they got from someone else.</strong></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Angrily call them a cheapskate. Your friendship is worth more than a scabby hand-me-down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Take the gift and quietly scratch this person’s name off your friendship list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Put it in your cupboard with the plan to give it back to the same friend on his/her birthday.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 4: Communication 1

What it covers
This session looks at the many ways we humans communicate, including non-verbal and electronic communication, and the problems that can arise when communication breaks down or we miss or misinterpret important cues. Explores the importance of careful listening and clear speaking – including the many types of ‘filters’ (distractions, emotions, expectations etc.) that can act as barriers to clear communication.

Session plan
A. Introduce Skill Set: Communication
B. Class discussion on communication. Discussion suggestions provided.
C. Activity 1: “Charades” looking at non-verbal communication. Non-verbal cue cards are provided. **Photocopying of these cue cards will be necessary.**
D. Start DVD Communication Unit 1 Clip #2: Presenter uses animated clips to highlight some “filters” that can limit effective communication **OR** Brainstorm some ‘filters’ with the class and discuss using the discussion suggestions provided.
E. Activity 2: “Filters role-play” and class discussion.
F. Conclusion: Student reflection in workbook – How do I communicate?
A. **Introduce Skill Set: Communication**

Information for setting the scene:

*Many creatures use communication of some form, but human communication is far and away Earth’s most complex. There is an almost endless list of means that we use to convey our ideas and our feelings. Communication began as a means for early humans to survive, by helping them cooperate in order to find and collect food. The written word was a more secure way for stories and wisdom to be passed between generations. Now, communication has many purposes in human society. Good communication is essential for getting along with one another. This session investigates some of the ways in which we communicate, and what we can do to make our communication more effective.*

B. **Class discussion on communication.** Commence a class discussion about some of the following points:

- What is communication? How do humans communicate? How is animal communication different to human communication?
- Which senses are most important to communicate? What happens to people with compromised sight, hearing, or physical disabilities? How is the brain able to compensate?
- Which cues do you rely on most: verbal or non-verbal? Why? What do you specifically focus on?
- What are some of the ways you let people know how you are feeling when using technology like SMS and email? Are these always effective? Why/Why not?

C. **Activity 1: “Charades”** looking at non-verbal communication.

**Time:** 10+ mins.

**Size:** Pairs

**Space:** For pairs to interact and move around

**Resources:** Non-verbal cue cards (photocopy enough for one sheet per pair and cut them in half for each pair)

**Aim:** to give students the opportunity to practise non-verbal communication

**Result:** should be increasing awareness that a considerable amount of information we communicate with one another is conveyed non-verbally.

1. Break the class into pairs
2. Give each student in the pair half of all the non-verbal cue cards. **Do not** let students see their partner’s cards.
3. Explain that pairs are to take turns conveying the information on their cards without words or writing. You may choose to apply other constraints or rules.
4. Allow approx. 30 secs per card
5. If you don’t wish to break up the class into pairs, have demonstration pairs perform in front of the class.
6. Come together for class discussion:
• For performers: Was it easy or difficult to convey your information? Why/Why not? What did you find yourself wanting to use to get your idea across?
• For receivers: What were the most important cues that helped you get the information from your partner (e.g. facial expressions, body posture)?

D. Start DVD Communication Unit 1 Clip #2: Presenter uses animated clips to highlight some “filters” that can limit effective communication.

OR Brainstorm some ‘filters’ with the class and discuss:
• What kind of ‘filters’ do you think can get in the way of effective communication?

E. Activity 2: “Filters role-play” and class discussion.
Time: 15+ mins
Size: pairs / whole class
Space: For pairs to perform in front of whole class
Resources: Filters Cue Cards (photocopy enough for each pair in the class to perform once)
Aim: to give students the opportunity to see how ‘filters’ can impede effective communication.
Result: should be increased understanding that good communication is not straightforward, and requires effort on both sides.
1. Bring pairs up to the front of the class one at a time to perform one of the scenarios in each set of the filter cue cards.
2. Allow no more than one minute per scenario.
3. After each performance, discuss as a class what happened.
Discussion suggestions:
• What kind of ‘filter’ do you think was getting in the way of effective communication in each scenario? How do you know?
• What might either or both of the characters do to remove the filter and improve communication?
• Do you think either or both characters need to think differently in order to remove the filter? How?
• You been in a situation similar to the one just enacted? What happened? What might have been done differently or better?

F. Conclusion: Student reflection in workbook – How do I communicate?
Students are to review the session by answering the following questions in their work booklet in the space provided:
• Write down the non-verbal cues you tend to use to help communicate your thoughts and wishes to others. These might include tone of voice, body language, clothing choice, any messages you text or type, and facial expressions.
• Which are you best at?
• Are there any you are not so good at? What makes you think that?
• How could you improve your ability to communicate non-verbally
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You are hungry for a piece of fruit.</th>
<th>You saw a poisonous frog nearby. Beware!</th>
<th>You want to borrow $10 please.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The other person is on fire.</td>
<td>A cattle stampede is coming – run away!</td>
<td>Today there will be a solar eclipse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your printer has run out of ink – how annoying!</td>
<td>Does your partner know when the next bus is due?</td>
<td>You are very worried that you might be a werewolf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You like a new song entitled ‘Sunshine’.</td>
<td>Your aircraft has just crashed and you are lost.</td>
<td>You have lost your small, black dog somewhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario 1</td>
<td>Scenario 1</td>
<td>Scenario 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Character A**  
Your friend  
Character B has some news, but your stomach aches so badly you hunch over in pain. | **Character B**  
You just heard that the band you're in has signed up for a series of paid gigs - you want to share the news! | **Character A**  
Put your hands firmly over your ears and do not remove them during the role-play. | **Character B**  
You need your friend's opinion on whether the school's sports camp last year was worthwhile. |
| **Scenario 3**  
**Character A**  
You are in a foul mood (you've lost your wallet with nearly $100 in it). You're trying to listen anyway. | **Scenario 3**  
**Character B**  
You have just met a new girl/guy and want to tell your friend all the things you like about this person. | **Scenario 4**  
**Character A**  
You really need Character B's help with a charity drive, but you feel nervous around them. | **Scenario 4**  
**Character B**  
You are in a bit of a hurry, but Character A has asked for a moment of your time. |
| **Scenario 5**  
**Character A**  
You want to ask Character B to play guitar at your party, but you are positive he/she won't want to. | **Scenario 5**  
**Character B**  
Character A has asked you here to 'get your thoughts on something'. | **Scenario 6**  
**Character A**  
You are very expressive and loud, and want to tell your friend about a fireworks show. | **Scenario 6**  
**Character B**  
You are a quiet person who is easily startled by loud, aggressive people. |
| **Scenario 7**  
**Character A**  
You are a very softly-spoken, shy person. You want to tell your friend about a new TV show you like. | **Scenario 7**  
**Character B**  
Your friend wants to tell you something - you have only a minute before your bus is due. | **Scenario 8**  
**Character A**  
You think *Doctor Who* is the dumbest, most boring, childish and lame-brained show on TV. Right? | **Scenario 8**  
**Character B**  
You are a big fan of *Doctor Who*. You also really like Character A and want to be lifelong friends. |
Session 5: Communication 2

What it Covers
This session explores four different skills that are important to good communication within relationships: perspective-taking, assertiveness, negotiating, and conflict resolution.

Session plan
A. Introduce Skill set: Communicating in relationships
B. Introduce the four key skills used when communicating with others: perspective-taking, assertiveness, negotiation, and conflict resolution by reading through and discussing the hand-out in the student workbook Perspective-taking, Assertiveness, Negotiation, and Conflict Resolution.
C. Start DVD Communication Unit 3 Clip #2: Presenter speaks about the importance of perspective-taking
   OR progress immediately into the Class activity in D.
D. Activity 1: “Two perspectives role-play” and discussion.
E. Start DVD Communication Unit 3 clip # 3: Presenter explains why it is important to be assertive
   OR explain to students the difference between passive, aggressive and assertive.
   Brainstorm why being assertive is important.
F. Activity 2: “Healthy assertiveness role-play” and discussion.
G. Conclusion: Student workbook reflection.
A. Introduce Skill set: Communicating in relationships
Information for setting the scene:
Relationships are complex – the way that you relate with your local shopkeeper will be very different from the way you relate with your teacher, your best friend, your parents, and your siblings. Getting along well with others in this wide range of relationship types requires some complex skills. During this session we are going to look at two of these skills closely and how they can help you get along well with other people and feel good about yourself.

B. Introduce the four key skills used when communicating with others: perspective-taking, assertiveness, negotiation, and conflict resolution by reading through and discussing the hand-out in the student workbook Perspective-taking, Assertiveness, Negotiation, and Conflict Resolution.

C. Start DVD Communication Unit 3 Clip #2: Presenter speaks about the importance of perspective-taking
OR progress immediately into the Class activity in D.

D. Activity 1: “Two perspectives role-play” and discussion.
Time: 10+ mins.
Size: Pairs / whole class
Space: For pairs to perform in front of class
Resources: Two perspectives Cue cards (photocopied for each pair)
Aim: to give students the opportunity to see the same event from two perspectives.
Result: should have increased awareness that it is valuable to try and see events from more than one point of view.

1. Choose a pair of students to perform in front of the class.
2. There are three sets of cue cards, marked situation 1, 2 and 3, and labelled Character A and Character B. Give each student in the pair one of the two cue cards. Do not let the performers see each other’s cards.
3. Allow the students 30 seconds to read their cue card, and then allow them to perform the scenario.
4. Conduct a brief discussion about perspective-taking. Discussion suggestions supplied below.
5. Choose a new pair of students to enact the scenario on the next set of cards.
6. Continue until all the students have had a turn, or all the scenarios are examined adequately.
Discussion suggestions:
- What emotions were displayed by the characters? What evidence did you see of either or both characters taking the other person’s perspective?
- What happened when one character started to look at the situation from the other’s point of view?
- Ask the performers to read each others cue cards aloud. What did they learn from understanding their partner’s character’s motivation?
• What might be a solution to this issue? Why is perspective-taking important to that solution? What can you do to build up your ability to see things from other people’s perspectives?

E. Start DVD Communication Unit 3 clip # 3: Presenter explains why it is important to be assertive

OR explain to students the difference between passive, aggressive and assertive communication. Brainstorm why being assertive is important.

F. Activity 2: “Healthy assertiveness role-play” and discussion.

Time: 10+ mins.
Size: Pairs
Space: For pairs to perform
Resources: Perspective-taking, Assertiveness, Negotiation and conflict resolution hand-out (found in student booklet).
Aim: to give students the opportunity to practise health assertiveness behaviour.
Result: should be an improved understanding of how to be healthily assertive in day-to-day situations.

1. Break into pairs.
2. Students are going to role-play healthy, assertive behaviour in common situations. You may brainstorm potential situations, or here are a list of suggestions for the scenarios:
   • Returning a faulty item to a store
   • Asking a teacher for an extension
   • Cold-calling on a business for employment
   • Seeking a loan of money from a parent for something special
   • Refusing peer pressure to do something wrong or dangerous e.g. drinking under-age, wagging school, taking drugs etc.
3. Students may wish to refer to the hand-out in their workbooks to remind themselves about assertiveness.
4. Limit each performance to a maximum of one and a half minutes.
5. Lead class discussion some discussion suggestions are:
   • Were you able to stick up for yourself?
   • Did you end up with a reasonable, win-win outcome?
   • Did anyone get tempted to get passive or aggressive? Why? What did you say to yourself to avoid or change that?
   • How did the observes think the person being assertive came across?
   • Have you ever been in a situation similar to the scenario in real life? What did you think and feel about the situation? What did you do? What might you do differently now?

G. Conclusion: Student workbook reflection.
Over these role-play activities:
• Was there an improvement in your skill?
• Why do you think you’ve improved at this skill?
• What do you still need to work on?
• If you don’t think you’ve improved, is there something you could do differently, or someone who could help you?
Perspective-taking, Assertiveness, Negotiation & Conflict Resolution

PERSPECTIVE-TAKING
Perspective-taking means looking at situations from other people’s points of view. Almost every action we take has some impact on other people, and understanding how situations seem from others’ perspectives is really important to getting along.

Sometimes you need to put yourself in other people’s shoes, such as:
- your friend’s
- your parent’s
- your boyfriend’s or girlfriend’s
- your teacher’s

and imagine what a situation must seem like from their point of view. That new perspective may change how you think about things!

ASSERTIVENESS
Being assertive means:
- Sticking up for yourself, don’t allow others to dominate you
- Being firm, fair and reasonable
- Looking for win-win outcomes

Here are some tips:
- Think about the other person’s motives
- Explain how their actions affect you
- Make eye contact and use a firm but calm voice
- Allow the other person to respond, and listen when they do
- Know what you want, but be prepared to compromise
- Speak to yourself helpfully
- If you don’t feel safe with the other person, move away.

NEGOTIATION
A negotiation is not issuing an order or receiving a command. Negotiations are like conversations – they are two-way interactions. Effective negotiations require good listening and thinking skills.

Here are some tips:
- Prepare beforehand – think about alternatives in case you can’t get your preferred outcome
- Find out the other person’s perspective – know what motivates their decisions
- State your own needs – explain why something is important to you
- Don’t argue – it’s not productive and it gets tempers up
- Choose timing – allow a generous amount of time at a mutually convenient moment when neither of you are preoccupied
- Choose a good place – ensure it is a comfortable place for both of you, where you can speak without batting noise and distractions.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION
In life, it is inevitable that your wants and needs will rub up against other people’s – and that’s when conflicts arise.

Here are some tips that can help when you desire to resolve a conflict:
- Don’t go in angry – go in when you are calm and prepared to listen
- Understand each other’s perspective – it is important you both understand what the other person wants and why
- Prepare and make time – allow time to state your own case and to listen to the other person’s
- Consider getting help – a mediator can help with difficult conflicts. Mediators can include friends, counsellors, psychologists, teachers and youth workers. It is especially important to consider asking for help from a mediator if you are worried the other person could be abusive or violent.

If you need help ...

WEBSITES
- www.youthbeyondblue.com
- www.lifeline.org.au
- www.sane.org
- www.reachout.com
- www.headspace.org.au
- www.somazone.com.au
- www.inspire.org.au

HELPLINES
- Youthbeyondblue: 1300 22 4636
- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- Sane Australia: 1800 18 7263

ONLINE COUNSELLING
- www.kidshelp.com.au

beyondblue
www.youthbeyondblue.org.au
SenseAbility
www.senseability.org.au
**Situation 1 – Character A**
You are a teacher who has given Character B an extension on his/her assignment because you know he/she had a family illness to deal with. The student is due to hand the assignment in today. You have a rotten headache, perhaps made worse by the stress of receiving a speeding ticket this morning.

**Situation 1 – Character B**
Last week your brother broke both his legs in a rock climbing accident, so you’ve had to look after your younger brother/sister while your parents made trips to the hospital. As a result, all your homework is late. You were supposed to have an assignment done today for your teacher, Character A, but basically forgot all about it, you’ve been so stressed out.

**Situation 2 – Character A**
You are the parent of Character B. You are worried about him/her because the last time you let him/her go out with Charlie, they both got drunk and in trouble with the police. Three months have passed, but you are sure that Charlie has not changed his/her spots, and you’re worried that Character B will get in trouble again.

**Situation 2 – Character B**
You are the son/daughter of Character A. Three LONG months ago, you and your friend Charlie did a silly thing and went out and drank alcohol. Both of you got sick and were brought home by the cops. You both got in huge trouble. But this Friday night you want to go out with Charlie again to an alcohol-free dance club. You need permission.

**Situation 3 – Character A**
You are the coach of a sports team of which Character B is captain. Your team has lost every game this season. It is not entirely Character B’s fault – there have been problems accessing your training ground and so on. However, Character B has been very busy with school and a part-time job and has less time to practice. You have to replace him/her as captain.

**Situation 3 – Character B**
You are the captain of a sports team of which Character A is coach. You’ve been working hard all season trying to rally the team, but despite this you’ve lost every game. You’re tired, cranky, and always rushing from school to practice and work, trying to cram everything in. Another problem is that the oval is being resurfaced, and that’s Coach’s responsibility, not yours.
Session 6: Keeping well

What it covers
Explores the importance of taking care of yourself by eating well, getting adequate sleep, and thinking well. Students assess their own self-care regimen and look for areas they might want to change.

Session plan
A. Introduce the skill set: Keeping Well
B. Brainstorm why keeping well is important to life success. Discuss different ways we can keep well (e.g. attention to nutrition, exercise, scheduling enjoyable activities, sleeping well and thinking helpfully).
C. Activity 1: Thinking Better Scenarios and Discussion
D. Activity 2: Personal Reflection and Discussion
A. Introduce the skill set: Keeping Well

Information for setting the scene:

We ask a lot of our minds and bodies. Not only do we expect them to keep us walking, breathing and eating, we make them run, solve and learn. Our bodies face many pressures, such as risk from injury and illness, or potentially unhealthy behaviours like sitting badly or eating poorly. Our minds face pressures too – from worrying ourselves over life events, to speaking critically to ourselves, or looking at setbacks as failures instead of as learning experiences.

Keeping well means looking at the things we can do to give our minds and bodies the best chance possible to keep us happy and healthy now, and to carry us into a rewarding and enjoyable future.

B. Brainstorm why keeping well is important to life success. Discuss different ways we can keep well (e.g. attention to nutrition, exercise, scheduling enjoyable activities, sleeping well and thinking helpfully).

C. Activity 1: Thinking Better Scenarios and Discussion

Time: 15+ mins
Size: individuals or small groups
Space: for small groups to work together
Resources: Thinking Better Scenarios Sheet (found in student workbook, pens and paper)
Aim: to give students the opportunity to consider options for helpful thinking
Result: should be aware that wellbeing can be improved by challenging unhelpful thinking.

1. Ask students to open their workbooks to Session 6 and the Thinking Better Scenarios page. This sheet presents several scenarios where young people are thinking unhelpfully about themselves.
2. Students are to imagine they are a healthcare provider (e.g. personal trainer, GP, nutritionist, psychologist) and the young people in the scenarios are coming to see them for help. Students are to write in the spaces beside each scenario some suggestions for courses of action that might help the fictional characters feel better about themselves and/or their situation.
3. Allow students between 5-10 mins to work through the scenarios and come up with suggestions.
4. Come together as a class for a discussion. Discussion suggestions, for each scenario you might ask:
   - What kind of health-care provider were you in this scenario?
   - What unhelpful things was the person saying to him/herself, or what might he/she say?
   - Why do you think the person in the scenario was saying unhelpful things to him/herself?
   - What suggestions did you have that might help the person think more helpfully about the situation?
• If he/she can think more helpfully, how would the person be feeling and how could this improve the situation?

• Who else could they seek help from? Make sure in the discussion you stress the importance of seeking help as a course of action.

D. **Activity 2: Personal Reflection and Discussion**

**Time:** 10+ mins  
**Size:** Individuals  
**Space:** No Requirements  
**Resource:** whiteboard  

**Aim:** to encourage students to think objectively about what they are currently doing to look after their own bodies and minds.  

**Result:** Students’ should identify areas of self-care that they can improve on in their own lives.

1. Briefly discuss what self-care is- it involves looking after the whole person (mind, body and spirit), and includes getting adequate sleep, and exercise, a good diet, thinking helpfully, and doing some enjoyable things.

2. Ask your students to consider their own self-care regimen, and rate themselves from 1 (needs considerable work) to 5 (very competent). You might have them rate themselves in four or five domains, such as: Exercise, sleep, nutrition, helpful self-talk, scheduling enjoyable events, relaxing when stressed – the domain choices are up to you but each of them are available in the student workbook with space for them to write a sentence explaining why they gave themselves that rating.

3. Come together for class discussion. Discussion suggestions:
   - What might be some consequences of poor self-care? E.g. they might include feeling physically or mentally unwell, stress and frustration, lethargy, and irritability (to name a few).
   - How did your ratings go? In which areas do you think you care for yourself well? What makes you think that?
   - In which areas do you think you can improve? What makes you think that?
   - What are some of the challenges or obstacles that seem to prevent or hinder good self-care? Brainstorm a list and then brainstorm some solutions to overcome these obstacles (e.g. not enough time to exercise? Devise a weekly timetable that builds in a half hour of exercise each day, or which allows for shorter periods of incidental exercise like a 10 minute walk to the shops).
**Scenario 1**
Alexis regards herself as a fairly happy person. She is clearly very image conscious, and her hair and nails are perfect. Her heart rate is high and she gets easily puffed even climbing a short set of stairs. She says, 'I’m not fat. What’s the point of exercising? I will just sweat and it’ll be horrible and embarrassing.'

**What kind of care provider are you (e.g. GP, personal trainer, yoga teacher, nutritionist)?**

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**Scenario 2**
Dylan has come to you on the suggestion of his mother. He is snappy and irritable all the time, not just with other people, but with himself, too. You discover that he has two part-time jobs in addition to study and practice for the school tennis team. He finds himself unable to sleep at night because he’s worried about jobs he’s left undone.

**What kind of care provider are you (e.g. GP, personal trainer, yoga teacher, nutritionist)?**

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**Scenario 3**
Emerson is pale but looks quite well. He is concerned because he seems to get colds all the time, which affect his ability to study. You ask about his exercise regimen, and he says he doesn’t do any – he stays slim by ‘watching what he eats’. Putting him on the scales reveals he is underweight.

**What kind of care provider are you (e.g. GP, personal trainer, yoga teacher, nutritionist)?**

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Rating your Self-Care

Circle the rating that best suits your level of self-care in each of the following domains (1 needs considerable work to 5 very competent):

Needs considerable work <---------------->Very competent

1. Sleep  1  2  3  4  5
Why did you give yourself this rating?

2. Exercise  1  2  3  4  5
Why did you give yourself this rating?

3. Nutrition  1  2  3  4  5
Why did you give yourself this rating?

4. Helpful self-talk  1  2  3  4  5
Why did you give yourself this rating?

5. Scheduling enjoyable events  1  2  3  4  5
Why did you give yourself this rating?

6. Relaxing when stressed  1  2  3  4  5
Why did you give yourself this rating?
Session 7: Keeping Well 2

What it Covers
Presents a range of stress-management and relaxation techniques that students can pick and choose from to help them relax in times of high stress.

Session Plan
A. Introduce Skill set: Keeping well – stress management techniques
B. Start DVD Keeping Well Unit 2 Clip #1: The presenter explains the importance of physical activity to help manage stress and stay well. He lists a range of activities, explaining that there is something to suit everyone. Review the relaxation techniques hand-out found in the student workbook.
C. Choose one or more clips to get students to practise some relaxation techniques (most can be done with students sitting in their seats – students can emulate the techniques demonstrated in each clip):
   - Clip #2: Deep breathing
   - Clip #3: Progressive muscle Relaxation
   - Clip #4: Creative Visualisation
A. **Introduce Skill set: Keeping well – stress management techniques**

Information for setting the scene:

*It is important to practise recognising the signs within yourself that let you know you are a bit stressed, feeling anxious, or in need of a break. When you do feel those symptoms, it is a good idea to stop what you are doing (if possible) and perform a stress-management technique.*

*Different people will respond better to different techniques. Some of us need vigorous exercise to help reduce stress; others prefer something quiet and meditative.*

B. **Start DVD Keeping Well Unit 2 Clip #1:** The presenter explains the importance of physical activity to help manage stress and stay well. He lists a range of activities, explaining that there is something to suit everyone. Review the relaxation techniques hand-out found in the student workbook.

C. **Watch one or more of the DVD Keeping Well Unit 2 clips #2, #3, and #4.** If you have your own relaxation sources feel free to use them. This session is purely about exposing the students to relaxation techniques.

You might consider prefacing the activity by asking students to take their pulse (you may need to teach students where to find their pulse on their neck or wrist, to time for 15 seconds, and multiply that count by four). Have students write down their beats per minute. After the exercise, have students check their pulse again and see if their heart rate has changed.

Choose one or more clips to get students to practise some relaxation techniques (most can be done with students sitting in their seats – students can emulate the techniques demonstrated in each clip):

- Clip #2: Deep breathing
- Clip #3: Progressive muscle Relaxation
- Clip #4: Creative Visualisation

**Discussion suggestions:**

- Who liked which activity and why?
- Which activity made you feel most relaxed?
- Did feelings of relaxation correlate with a change in heart rate? Why/Why not?
- Some students might have techniques they use which they would be happy to share with the rest of the class.
**Relaxation Techniques**

Relax, it’s important!

Your body can respond to worrying situations and anxious thoughts with muscle tension. Long-term and constant muscle tension can have all sorts of unpleasant consequences, from crankiness and headaches through to sleeping and heart problems. So, learning relaxation techniques can be a real asset in managing stress and anxiety. They don’t take long!

Different relaxation techniques work better for different people. Don’t be afraid to try all of them to see which ones appeal to you most.

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<tr>
<th><strong>Deep Breathing</strong></th>
<th><strong>Progressive Muscle Relaxation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Creative Visualisation</strong></th>
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<td>Sit with your legs uncrossed, good posture, and place your hands on your thighs. Close your eyes. Breathe deeply through your nose into your abdomen for a long count of five seconds (your chest should move only a little). Hold for a long count of two seconds, then breathe out slowly through your mouth for a long count of five. Repeat for 10 to 15 cycles. Stop briefly if you feel light-headed.</td>
<td>Losen any tight clothing, sit or lie comfortably, and close your eyes. Tense different muscles of your body as much as you can for at least a count of 10 (never so tight or long that it hurts!). Then, slowly release the tension and allow the muscle to relax. Let that feeling of relaxation flow through your body. Start at your feet and move up.</td>
<td>This is a technique where you imagine a scene, place or situation you regard as safe, restful, and happy. Sit comfortably in a quiet place. Breathe gently through your nose, eyes closed. Picture in your mind the place you like – a forest, the beach, a field. Try and smell the aromas, taste the air as you hear the sounds. Feel your body relax. Continue for at least 10 minutes.</td>
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<th><strong>Meditation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Mandala Circles</strong></th>
<th><strong>Yoga</strong></th>
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<td>Sit comfortably in a quiet spot. Close your eyes if you like. Breathe in through your nose. As you exhale, say the word ‘One’ silently to yourself. You might like to focus on the sound you make exhalting (like the Sanskrit word ‘Om’). Or if your eyes are open, focus on an object, exploring its colours and textures. Spend at least 10 minutes meditating, but stay focused.</td>
<td>This is a drawing technique to calm the mind. Bring a pencil and paper to a quiet place. Draw a large circle. Now, be prepared to keep drawing for at least 10 minutes. Start filling the circle with whatever you like – spirals, patterns, running-writing – but don’t let the pencil leave the paper unless you’re changing colours.</td>
<td>Yoga comes from a Sanskrit word meaning ‘to unite’. It is a series of mental and physical exercises. While yoga has strong connections with religions like Buddhism and Jainism, its exercises are a great way to improve health, and can be done by anyone of any age and fitness. We recommend you start at classes conducted by a registered instructor.</td>
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**Exercise can help ‘bust’ stress and keep you feeling well**

Regular exercise (20–30 minutes a day) is extremely important for staying healthy and relaxing tension. Most exercises are very cheap or free. Group sports are fun, but individual activities like walking, running, swimming and cycling are also very good for clearing the mind and releasing physical tension. The important thing is not to overdo it and injure yourself.

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<th><strong>Schedule Pleasant Activities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Helpful Self-talk</strong></th>
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<td>It is admirable to study and work hard. However each of us needs to have some time away from study and work. Unfortunately, the fun stuff is often what gets neglected when things become hectic. That means it’s important to schedule in things you enjoy doing, like seeing friends, going to the movies, or heading to the beach. Fun isn’t just enjoyable, it’s part of keeping well!</td>
<td>Your inner voice can help you relax and cope with difficult situations. Encouraging yourself can be just as important – and often even more important – as having others encourage you. Practice saying helpful things to yourself like, “It might be tough but I can have a go”, and “I’ll make this a plan I can do it one step at a time.” Always challenge unhelpful self-talk.</td>
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**Seek Help When You Need It**

There are times when all of us find it difficult to cope with anxiety and stress by ourselves. Some people you can turn to for help are: your GP, counsellors, and other trusted adults. You should also consider these options:

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<th><strong>WEBSITES</strong></th>
<th><strong>HELPLINES</strong></th>
<th><strong>ONLINE COUNSELLING</strong></th>
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**Program Evaluation:**

Thank you for participating in the PC program in 2011. We would really value your opinion and ideas to improve Pastoral Care at Merici College. Please take the time to complete the online evaluations at the following websites below:

Teacher Evaluation: [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5ZMD329](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5ZMD329)