DIVERSE MINDS
LEARNING & LEISURE CIC

FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

When things get difficult

Understanding your reactions and finding the support you need

A difficult moment can leave you upset, angry, quiet or unsure what to do next.

You can use these pages on your own or with someone you trust. There is no score, and you can leave anything blank.

Inside

Ideas for difficult moments
What support can look like
Three activities to try
A page to make your own plan

You do not need a diagnosis to use this resource.

MAKING SENSE OF IT

You can ask for help with this

When it starts getting harder

You might notice a tight jaw, fast thoughts, wanting to leave or finding words difficult. You might notice nothing until it feels too much. You can ask for help at either point. [2]

In the moment

If you can, move away from an argument to somewhere safe. Try a short message such as I need space or Please stay nearby. You could write it or point to a card. An adult can help reduce noise, explain differently or pause a task. [2,3]

Afterwards

When you are ready, think about what happened and what would help next time. If someone was hurt, ask an adult to help put things right safely. Adults can apologise and change their actions too. You do not have to work it out alone. [2]

Your feelings can be taken seriously

You deserve care even when you are upset. Other people deserve safety too. Adults should help you find a safer way through, rather than expect you to manage everything yourself.

WHAT SUPPORT CAN LOOK LIKE

Eight parts of wellbeing

In Scotland, adults use these eight areas, called SHANARRI, to think about wellbeing with you. They connect with one another. These examples are written for this resource. [1]

Safe

Adults help me stay safe. I can tell someone when a place or a person worries me.

Healthy

I can get care for my body and feelings, including help with rest, food or pain.

Achieving

I get help to learn and try things at a pace that works for me.

Nurtured

People care about me and make time to help when life feels difficult.

Active

I can choose play, movement or activities I enjoy, with support to take part.

Respected

My views are taken seriously. I can ask adults to explain a decision.

Responsible

I can contribute and make choices with guidance. Adults remain responsible for my safety.

Included

People help remove barriers so I can belong and join in without hiding who I am.

These are things adults should consider with you, not targets you must pass to earn help. [1]

ACTIVITY 1 | DRAW, WRITE OR TALK

If my feelings were weather

Would they look like sunshine, fog, a storm or something else? You can show more than one feeling. Your picture does not have to make sense to anyone else.

My weather today, or on an imaginary day...

What would I like someone to understand?

You can use shapes, colours, words or a story. Choose an ordinary moment, make one up or skip this page. You do not have to revisit something upsetting.

ACTIVITY 2 | CIRCLE YOUR CHOICES

Build your support menu

What could make a difficult moment easier? Circle a few ideas, cross out anything you dislike or add your own. Different days may need different things.

Less noise

A quieter place or fewer people talking.

Someone nearby

A trusted person who gives me time.

A clearer first step

Show me or write down what comes next.

A safe movement break

Stretch, walk or move in a way that suits me.

A different way to speak

Let me write, draw, point or send a message.

Time for basic needs

Water, food, rest or help with discomfort.

My own idea:

Choose one idea to discuss with an adult:

Who can help make it happen? What will they do when I ask?

Support should be safe, available and agreed with you. You do not have to try everything or become calm before someone helps.

ACTIVITY 3 | IMAGINE, TALK OR ACT

What could help here?

Try these made-up situations with someone you trust. You can talk, draw or act out an idea. There is more than one possible answer, and you can skip either story.

The plan has changed

Sam arrives at a club expecting their favourite game. The activity has changed and nobody explained. Sam feels upset and wants to leave.

What could an adult explain or change?

I was still talking

Alex is trying to explain a problem at school. Someone interrupts and tells them to hurry. Alex stops speaking.

How could an adult give Alex time to be heard?

Try a helpful response together

What could the young person say or show? Who could help? What could adults do differently so they feel safe, respected and included?

You can pause the activity at any time. Nobody has to play a part that feels uncomfortable.

MAKE IT YOURS

My plan for a difficult moment

Write, draw or ask someone to record your words. You do not have to answer every question. Choose what to share.

What I want adults to understand

What was difficult? What might other people have missed?

What might help next time

A change to the place, the task, the way someone speaks or something else.

How I can ask for support

My word, message, gesture or signal, and the person who will respond.

What happens after I ask

What will the adult do? When will we check whether it helped?

People I can ask: _____

An adult should explain who will see this page and when they may need to share information to keep you safe. Help must not depend on completing the sheet.

HELP AND FURTHER READING

You can tell someone again

If someone does not understand, you can try another trusted adult. You could show them a note or ask someone to speak with you. If you feel unsafe, tell a trusted adult as soon as you can. If anyone is in immediate danger, phone 999. [3]

Being heard includes an explanation

An adult may not agree with every request. They should still take your views seriously, explain their decision and help you understand what can happen next. [4]

1. Scottish Government: wellbeing and SHANARRI

The official eight wellbeing indicators.

Read more

2. Young Scot: coping with conflict

Ideas for understanding reactions and asking for support.

Read more

3. Young Scot: finding support

People and organisations you can contact for help.

Read more

4. Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

Young people's right to be heard in decisions.

Read more

Checked 29 October 2026. This is an original reflection resource informed by the sources above. It is not a behaviour score, assessment or treatment programme.