

**Its normal to feel more afraid, sad and angry...**



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## Talk overview

1. During COVID-19 is our **language choice** to describe our community and personal response important?
  - Would it be helpful to be careful about **unintended consequences** in how we use it?
2. Are you more afraid, sad, and angry compared to this time last year?
  - That's very important to pay attention to...**your response is normal.**
3. What can we do?

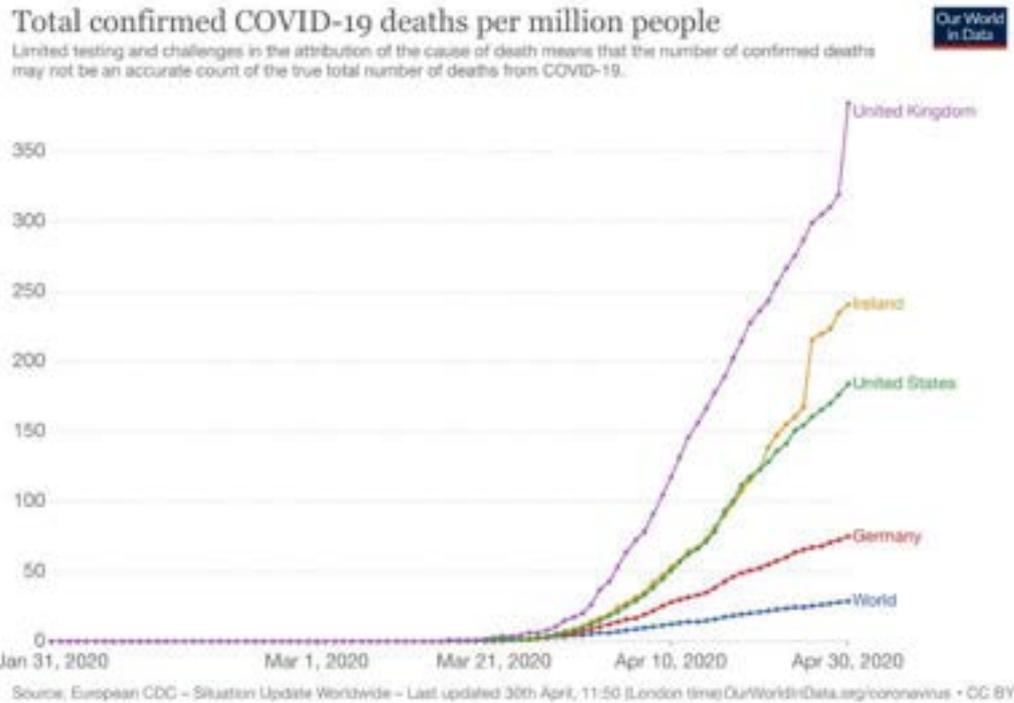
Some **helpful emotion regulation skills** we can practice ourselves and teach young people.

  - Putting words on my feelings
  - Learning to turn my feelings up and down
  - Cultivating compassion for ourselves and others.

# COVID-19 brought-out different characteristics in political leaders...



...to attempt the same aims...



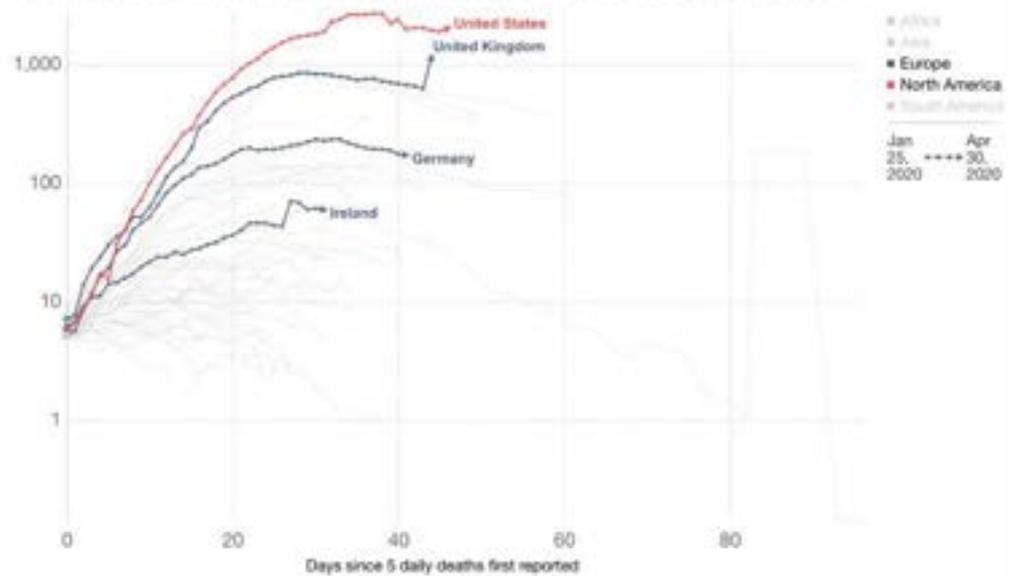
<https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus-working#what-is-the-total-number-of-confirmed-deaths>

...to attempt the same aims...



### Daily confirmed COVID-19 deaths: are we bending the curve?

Shown is the 7-day rolling average. Limited testing and challenges in the attribution of the cause of death means that the number of confirmed deaths may not be an accurate count of the true number of deaths from COVID-19.



Source: European CDC – Situation Update Worldwide – Last updated 30th April, 11:50 (London time) OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus - CC BY



<https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus-working#world-maps-confirmed-cases-relative-to-the-size-of-the-population>

...and its brought out the best in some people...  
who were already pretty damn good...



# Is the language we use to describe our response important?



Are these amazing people...?

Fighting an enemy invader?

At war?

On the frontline?

Under attack?

Killing the virus?

Doing Battle?

Redeployed?

# Is the language we use to describe our response important?



Or are these amazing people...?

Serving the public?

Being scientific?

Practicing medicine?

Bravely doing their jobs?

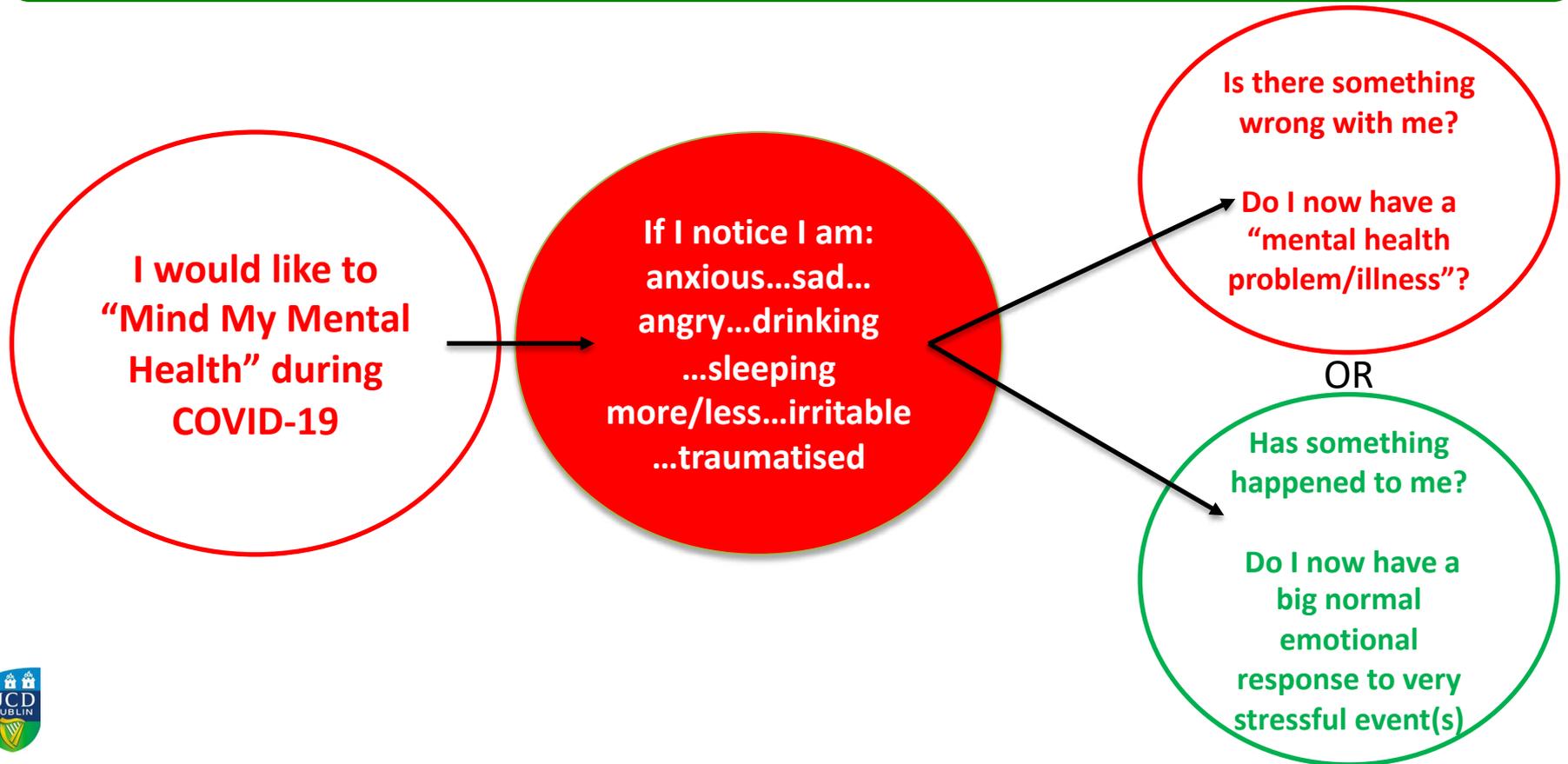
Volunteering?

Supporting?

Reassigned?



# Is the language we use to describe our response important?



# Our emotions are normal, functional, and not mental health issues

## Anxiety



**Personal Function:**  
To warn and protect us  
from danger

## Sadness



**Personal Function:**  
To grieve and process  
loss. To signify who and  
what are important to us

## Anger



**Personal Function:**  
To defend, punish and  
respond to unfairness and  
injustice

**Shared Function Across Emotions:**  
To rapidly direct our behaviour and communicate our mental state to others

# Understanding our emotional responses as normal

1. COVID 19 is a big dangerous thing happening to me and my family, friends and community?



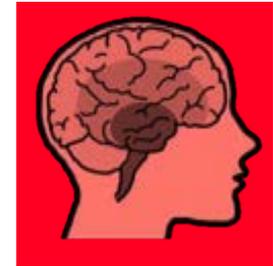
Threatening environment

Anxiety  
Aggression



2. Some of my brain systems are evolved to respond to threat emotionally...

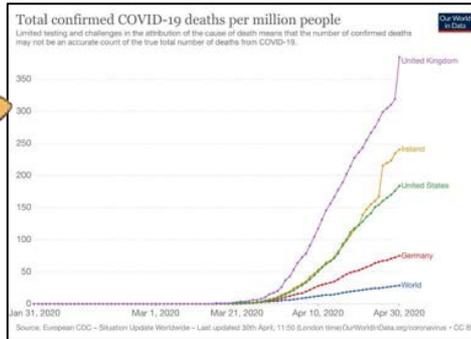
3. So my body responds to protect me from danger.



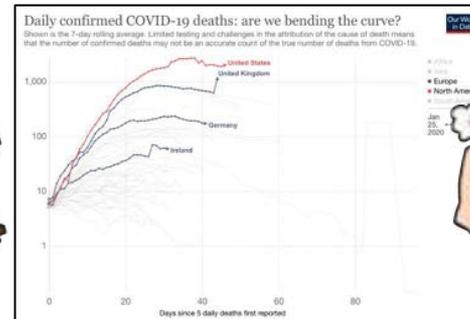
Fight  
Flight  
Freeze  
Appease

# Feeling more afraid, sad, and angry at the moment is a normal response to our very changed world

## Anxiety



## Sadness



## Anger

**Personal Function:**  
To warn and protect us from danger

**Personal Function:**  
To grieve & process loss.  
To signify who and what are important to us

**Personal Function:**  
To defend, punish and respond to unfairness and injustice

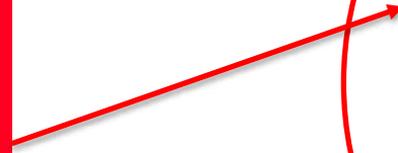
**Shared Function Across Emotions:**  
To rapidly direct our behaviour and communicate our mental state to others

# Understanding our emotional responses as normal

**Threatening environment**

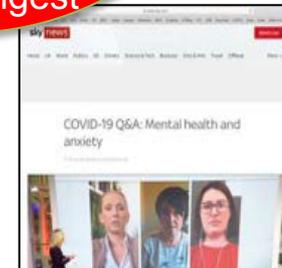
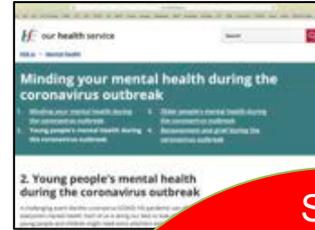


**These emotion based response systems are evolved for the short term**



**In humans these emotional systems work less well when threatening events continue for a very long time...**

# Understanding our emotional responses as normal



There isn't  
something  
wrong with you

So...  
"Minding My Mental  
Health"  
...requires me to use  
other parts of my  
brain to understand &  
regulate my  
emotions, especially  
when they are at  
their strongest

Something big  
and important  
is happening  
to you

## 3 Skills For “Minding My Mental Health”



1. Putting  
words on how I  
feel

2. Turning my  
emotions up or  
down

3. Cultivating a  
compassionate  
response

# 1. Putting Words on How I Feel – Using “I Statements...”



1. An ‘I statement’ starts with letting people know whose feeling you are talking about: **“I feel .....**”
2. An I statement names clearly for people how you are feeling: **“I feel happy/sad/angry/frustrated/lonely or whatever.....”**
3. An I statement ends by explaining to yourself and other people why you feel the way you do: **“I feel sad when I can’t call to see my friends because I miss them”**.

# 1. Putting Words on How I Feel – Using “I Statements...”



Afraid



Happiness



Sad



Guilty



Angry



Stressed



Kindness



Confused



Lonely



???

# 1. Putting Words on How I Feel – Using “I Statements...”

## Expressing How I Feel: **Fear**

Describe or draw a picture of a time when you felt worried or afraid...



On a scale of 0 (none) to 10 (the most worried or afraid) give a score for how angry you felt?



Become aware of how being worried or afraid feels for you... use this picture to mark any parts of your body where you feel worry or fear...

Practice using 'I statements' to express your worry or fear by writing one here that says how you felt...

## Expressing How I Feel: **Sadness**

Describe or draw a picture of a time when you felt sad...



On a scale of 0 (none) to 10 (the saddest) give a score for how sad you felt?



Become aware of how sadness feels for you... use this picture to mark any parts of your body where you feel sadness...

Practice using 'I statements' to express your sadness by writing one here that says how you felt...

## Expressing How I Feel: **Anger**

Describe or draw a picture of a time when you felt angry...



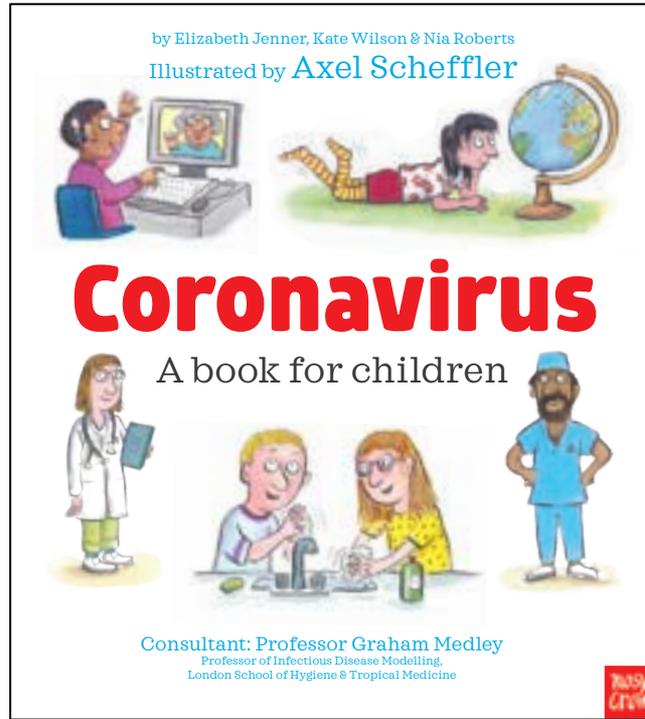
On a scale of 0 (none) to 10 (the angriest) give a score for how angry you felt?



Become aware of how anger feels for you... use this picture to mark any parts of your body where you feel anger...

Practice using 'I statements' to express your anger by writing one here that says how you felt...

# 1. Putting Words on How I Feel – Using “I Statements...”



**We don't make children's feelings worse by paying attention to them.**

**Paying attention to children's feelings is validating and allows them regulate them better.**

**Ignoring how a child is feeling, even if its well intentioned, is invalidating and usually makes these emotions stronger.**

## 3 Skills For “Minding My Mental Health”



1. Putting  
words on how I  
feel

2. Turning my  
emotions up or  
down

3. Cultivating a  
compassionate  
response

## 2. Turning our emotions up and down



Afraid

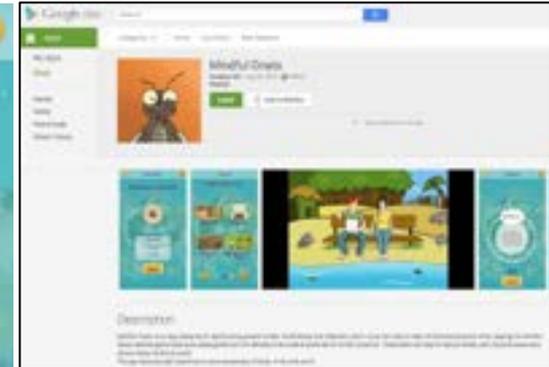
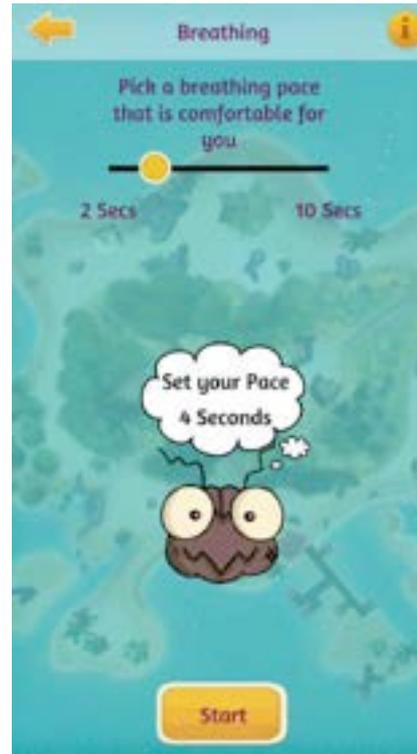


Angry

After a period of time we may benefit from **turning down** some of our emotions for ourselves

Evidenced-based skills for this include

1. Breathing exercises
2. Progressive muscular relaxation



**Mindful Gnats App**

## 2. Turning our emotions up and down



Afraid

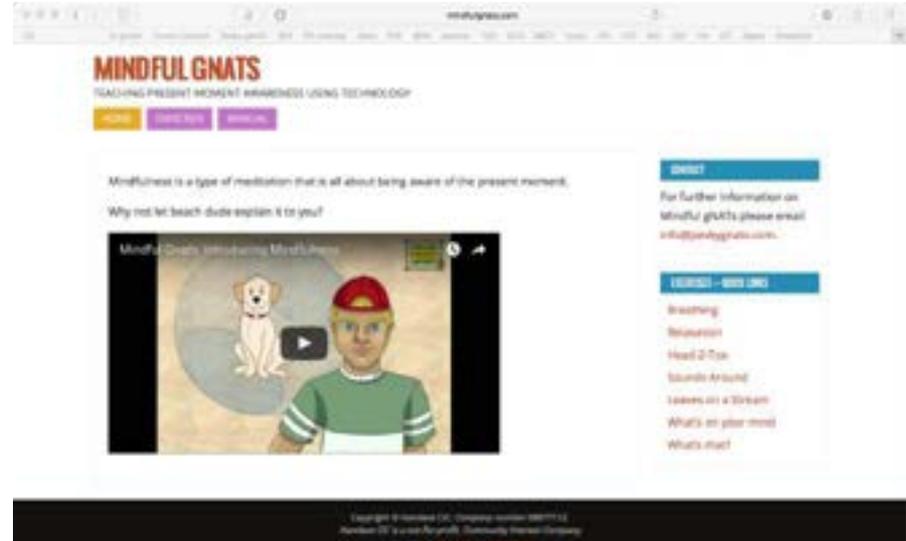


Angry

After a period of time we may benefit from **turning down** some of our emotions for ourselves

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1. Breathing exercises
2. Progressive muscular relaxation



[www.MindfulGnats.com](http://www.MindfulGnats.com)

Also has the same breathing, relaxation and mindfulness exercises

## 2. Turning our emotions up and down



Afraid

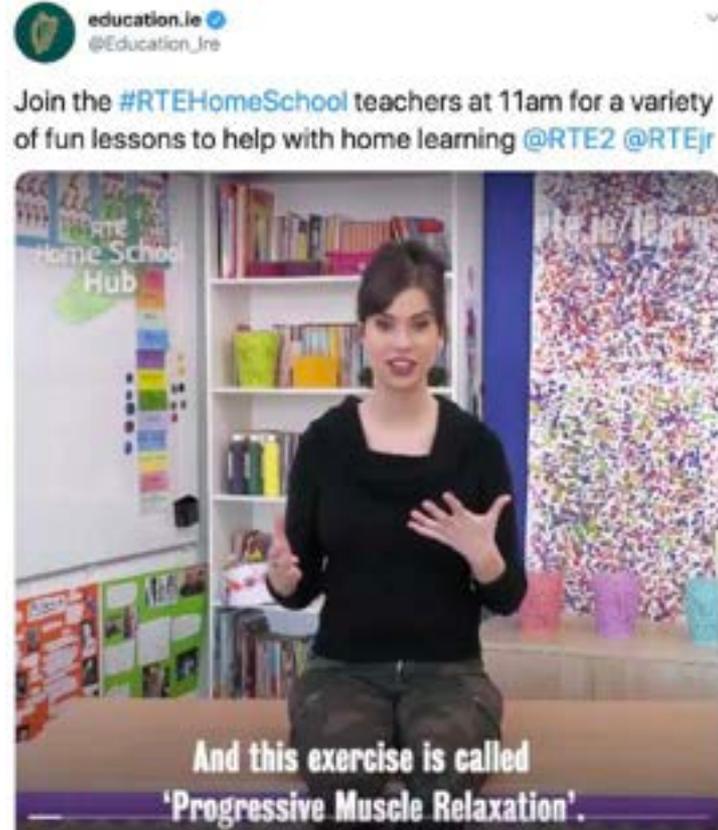


Angry

After a period of time we may benefit from **turning down** some of our emotions for ourselves

Evidenced-based skills for this include

1. Breathing exercises
2. Progressive muscular relaxation



## 2. Turning our emotions up and down



Sad



Positive emotion

After a period of time we may benefit from **turning up** some of our emotions for ourselves

Evidenced-based skills for this include  
**1. Behavioural activation**

Plan Your Week!



Pleasure-ometer

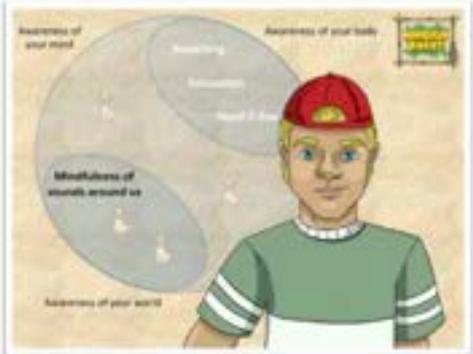


Mastery-ometer



## 2. Turning our emotions up and down

**Beach Dude Skills: Activity Scheduling**



**Activity Scheduling**

The aim of this skill is to help you get back doing things you enjoy and are helpful for you to do.

Sometimes when we're feeling down we feel more tired than usual and we get in the habit of not doing simple things.

Taking some time to plan to do simple things can really help. It makes you feel better, it helps you feel less tired, it encourages you to do more, and it helps you have less gNATs.

I would like you to plan some things for the next week and notice how much pleasure and sense of mastery you get from carrying them out.

**Plan Your Week!**



Make a list of things you enjoy doing...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Make a list of things you do that are helpful for you to do...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Pick the ones that you would like to do over the next seven days and agree a plan with the person you are working with that will help you to do them...



Now you've made your plan I want you to go and do the things you have listed and record how you get on by giving each activity two scores.

**Pleasure:** The first score is how much pleasure this activity gave you from 0-10. 0 is no pleasure and 10 means it was very enjoyable.

**Mastery:** The second score is how much of an achievement was it for you to do that. 0 means it was not an achievement and 10 means it was a huge achievement. Base your scores on how hard or easy you find things now rather than judging how hard or easy they were before.

**Describe the Activity:**

Pleasure:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Mastery:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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Pleasure:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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[www.fleetinfects.com](http://www.fleetinfects.com) 88

## 3 Skills For “Minding My Mental Health”

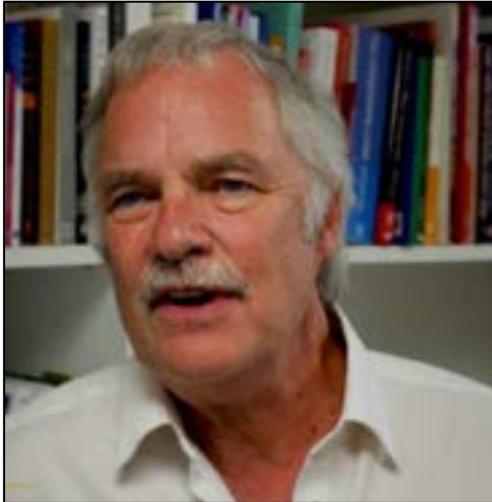


1. Putting  
words on how I  
feel

2. Turning my  
emotions up or  
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3. Cultivating a  
compassionate  
response

### 3. Cultivating Compassion Response for Ourselves and Others



Prof. Paul Gilbert

The Compassion Focused Therapy definition of **compassion**:

“Sensitivity to the suffering of self and others with a commitment to try to relieve it and prevent it.”

### 3. Cultivating Compassion Response for Ourselves and Others



Sensitivity to emotional distress in ourselves and others.



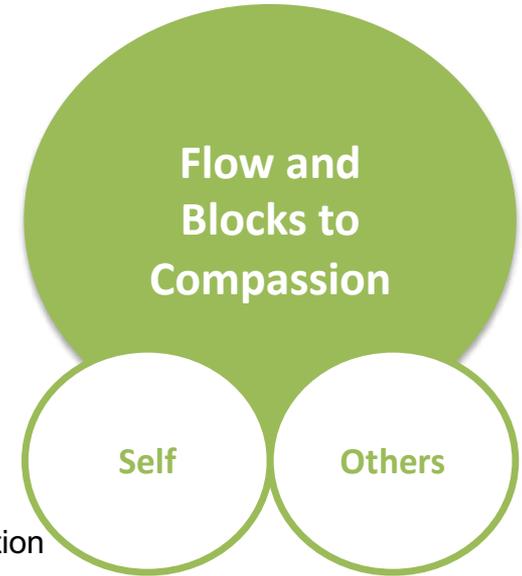
Wisdom, strength and non-judgement



Courage and Strength: Compassion is a motivation not an emotion



Practice, skill and dedication



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