



I CAN COPE WITH FEELING UNWELL

IDEAS

HOW CAN ADOLESCENTS TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN
WELLBEING

We have found ourselves in challenging times that are rather difficult for everyone, including adolescents. There are certain factors that have changed our daily lives tremendously such as: losing a home, coming into an unfamiliar environment, changing schools, uncertainty and rapid changes.

That's why it is all the more important to take care of our well-being on a daily basis and to learn the techniques that can help us do this. Let's stay focused on what we can control and incorporate enjoyable activities into our daily lives.

1

LET'S STAY FOCUSED ON WHAT WE CAN CONTROL

It is understandable that due to the war and its consequences we often feel burdened, stressed, distressed, bad-tempered, irritated, and unable to do anything about the war and its consequences...

When we are faced with some unexpected and unpleasant events, we quickly get caught in a whirlpool of negative thinking. We go over events over and over in our minds and we imagine all possible, usually unpleasant scenarios, sometimes focusing more on what is happening to us than on how we could feel better in that moment.



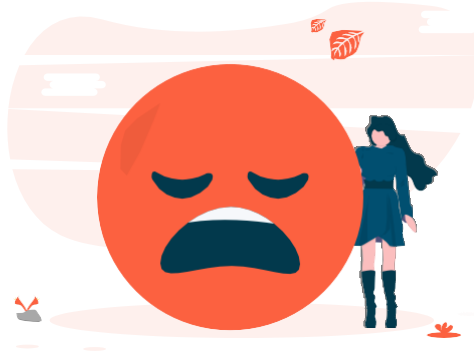
We cannot change certain things or the course of events in the current situation, but we can change the way we look at the situation and decide how to react.

Sometimes it helps if we come to terms with the fact that some things are simply beyond the scope of our control. We should try to accept the things that we are unable to control. However, there are certain things that we should be able to control and do something about them.

We have no influence over developments in Ukraine and the world, and we have never had the power to be in control of those events. Despite the changed living conditions that we are faced with, we can develop new ways of shaping our daily lives, which will make us feel better about ourselves.

We can become more focused on ourselves, try to calm down or do one of the activities we like and which can be performed in these situations - reading, talking, taking a walk, listening to music, playing sports.





2 ACCEPT YOUR PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AS IT IS

When faced with unusual and unpredictable events, we often feel confused, scared and worried. In the light of current events, it is understandable that we sometimes feel frustrated and angry or that we consider ourselves wronged.

We should allow ourselves to recognise and, above all, accept our well-being as it is, even if it is not always a pleasant one.

Recognising the state of our well-being, rather than trying to suppress it or forcefully change it, helps us to look at the situation from the outside and cope with it more easily. This also makes it easier for us to decide what to do next.

Different people try to cope with their poor well-being in different ways, but over time we discover the ways that work best for us and prove to be most useful and beneficial in certain situations. Some may find it helpful to read a favourite book, while others may find it useful to listen to music.

“*Sometimes these feelings of fear and confusion may last for a long time and they may also be putting a lot of pressure on us in our daily tasks. In times like this, it is important to listen to yourself and your body and talk to someone about it.*”

3

DISTANCE YOURSELF FROM STRESSFUL SITUATIONS FOR A WHILE

Sometimes we may feel better if we limit for a while our contact with those factors that increase our distress.



This usually isn't a long-term solution, but only a temporary one that may help us to recover and gain strength and, if necessary, find more constructive ways of coping with unpleasant situations.



If we find it distressing to follow daily news about the events in Ukraine and the world, we should limit our exposure to information and the amount of time we devote to it.

Sometimes we are able to reduce our stress just by means of talking or by lowering our expectations about what we should do or how we should feel, and by asking for help and assistance.



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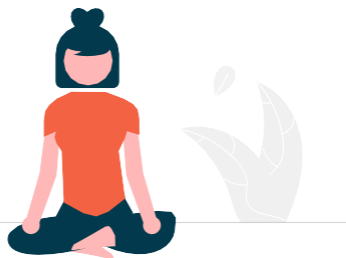
STAY PHYSICALLY ACTIVE, KEEP A BALANCED DIET AND HAVE ENOUGH SLEEP

We should bear in mind that there are different ways of keeping fit. It is always a good idea to take the stairs several times a day, take a walk, and have frequent active breaks during sedentary activities.

It is really crucial to take a break from our screens (computers, mobile phones ...). It is also highly recommendable to take up some sports activities that we can do on our own or with friends, such as walking, running in nature or playing ball games.



We should try to include at least some physical activity in our daily lives. If possible, try to maintain a steady sleeping and eating pattern as much as possible.



Try to get enough sleep, where a regular rhythm of getting up and going to bed proves to be very helpful and beneficial.

Stressful situations often affect our diet and digestion. It is often the case that we may have no appetite or we may have cravings for certain types of food, e.g. sugary and fatty snacks. There is no need to completely eliminate from our menu foods that are not strongly recommended, and it is more important to try to eat as balanced, varied and regular diet as possible. It is also essential to have an adequate fluid (water) intake, where daily reminders or carrying a bottle of water with us may prove to be of great help.



5 TAKE SOME TIME FOR YOURSELF

It is good to take some time for ourselves. Taking care of yourself involves learning new skills and acquiring new knowledge and information. Perhaps it is the right time now to learn something new (a new language, a new activity) or create something new.

“ We can spend some time getting to know ourselves, our interests and desires ”

6 STAY CONNECTED

Due to the fact that we changed our country of residence, we may have lost contact with some of our loved ones or we may keep in touch with them only remotely (by means of phone, computer, humanitarian organisations). Feelings of loneliness are normal and understandable in a situation like this.

Although no one can replace these relationships and the present situation makes us suffer, we must not forget about the people who are currently with us, giving us support and help. Making new contacts can also be rewarding, and sometimes it is even easier to talk to someone you don't know (well).

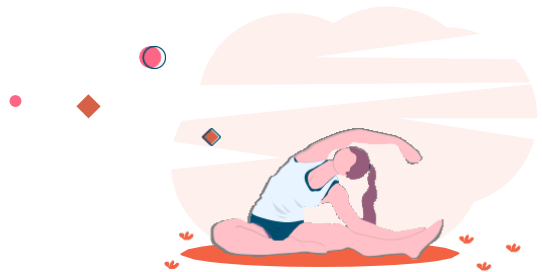


7

TRY ONE OF THE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

When we are stressed out, our thoughts wander in all directions. Just a few minutes of relaxation (e.g. relaxed breathing, gradual muscle relaxation) can help us stay more focused on the here and now. This will make it easier for us to calm down and stay in touch with our bodies and ourselves.

We also have some focusing techniques at our disposal that help us step out of our thoughts for a moment and shift our attention to events in the external world.



OBJECT OBSERVATION EXERCISE

The aim of the exercise is to observe a specific object of our choice as closely as possible for a few minutes. We can hold it in our hands, look at it closely, smell it, listen to it to find out whether it makes any sounds, maybe even taste it. We do all this with curiosity, as if we came across the object for the first time. This exercise will allow us to be fully present for a few moments in the present time while at the same time exploring an object. If other thoughts or associations related to a person or event cross our mind, we simply notice this and gently shift our attention back to the object that we keep examining. It also allows us to discover the unknown aspects of everyday world.

EXERCISE 54321

First, we start inhaling and exhaling, thus relaxing our body. Then we take a look around our surroundings, focusing on five objects we can see. We don't think about what is going on with the objects, we just notice that they are there and we name them in our minds. Then we feel the four surfaces and pay attention to the sensations that arise. In the next step, we can close our eyes and try to identify the three sounds we are surrounded by and listen to them carefully. Then it is time for us to smell, trying to detect two odours that may be either pleasant or unpleasant. Finally, we pay attention to the taste we experience in our mouths. It is advisable to take at least a few moments for each step.

8

TALK OPENLY ABOUT HARDSHIPS AND LOSSES

You may have recently been grieving the loss of a loved one, family member or friend. It is important that you allow yourself to grieve and also to let those around you help you to grieve.

Try to be honest about your own well-being and don't hide any pain you may possibly have. You may want to talk to someone directly about it and be involved in activities related to the grieving process, or you may need more time and space to express your feelings.



9

TRY TO FIND A FEW THINGS TO BE GRATEFUL FOR

Although it seems almost impossible to think of things to be grateful for in this situation, it turns out that this can be of great support to us. We can be grateful for the actions performed by others, a conversation with someone, a kind smile, a helping hand.

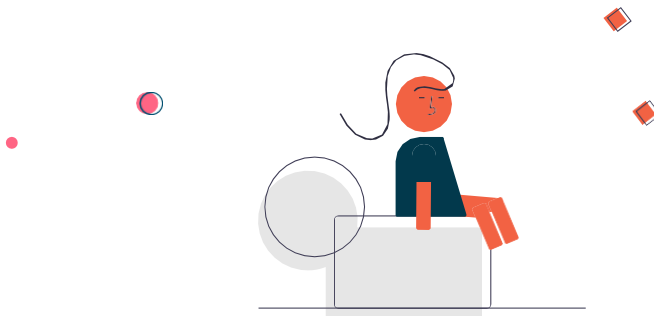
We can also appreciate our own abilities, for instance, we can be grateful for our motivation to learn a few new phrases in a foreign language that day or for our perseverance in dealing with a situation.



Let's recall enjoyable activities that we were able to perform, rather than focusing on activities that we wanted to accomplish, but we couldn't.



We can express our gratitude by means of lists we write at the end of the day or week or by keeping a gratitude journal. The simplest exercise is an **end-of-day gratitude thought**, whereby in the evening we call to mind one thing which happened during the day that we are grateful for. We can also write down our thoughts, so that they will be available to us in those days when we find it difficult to express our gratitude. It is also good to show our gratitude to those close to us, even if it is only through small gestures and actions. **Even small things like a kind word and a smile can brighten up someone's day.**



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