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# Changes - Notes for Adults

## Honesty and Transparency

Explain the change to the child in age-appropriate language, being honest and transparent about what's happening. If a child knows why the change is happening it will help them understand and cope better.

## Listen with empathy

Use your active listening skills and take the time to listen to the child's thoughts and feelings about the change without judgement. Offer empathy and validation for their emotions, even if you don't fully understand.

## Routines and Predictability

Whenever possible, try to maintain familiar routines and predictability in the child's life to provide a sense of stability amidst the change. This can help them feel more secure and grounded.

## Expression

Try to encourage the child to express how they are feeling and to ask questions about the change. Provide opportunities for them to talk, draw, or write about their thoughts and feelings.

## Choices

Offer opportunities for children to have control or choice in how they adapt to the change. This can help them to feel more empowered and comfortable.

## Patience

It can take time for a child to adapt to a change and patience and understanding are crucial.

## Coping Strategies

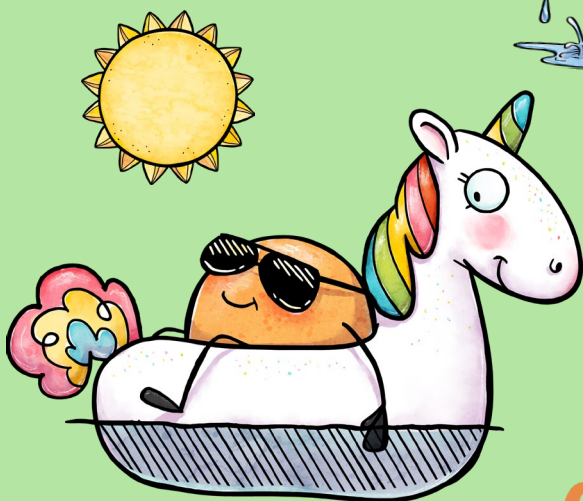
Be a positive role model by demonstrating healthy coping strategies for managing stress and uncertainty. Show the child how to practise self-care, problem-solving, and resilience.

### Other activities you could do to demonstrate change

- ✓ Seasons collage
- ✓ Life cycle of a butterfly
- ✓ Seed germination
- ✓ Colour changing experiments
- ✓ Changes in the environment
- ✓ Story telling with puppets
- ✓ Cooking or baking
- ✓ Emotions collage
- ✓ Weather observations

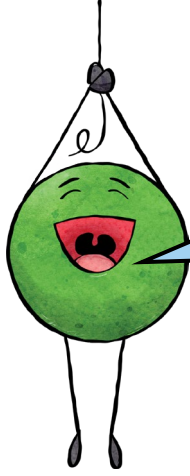
# Exploring Changes

**A workbook to help you cope with changes**

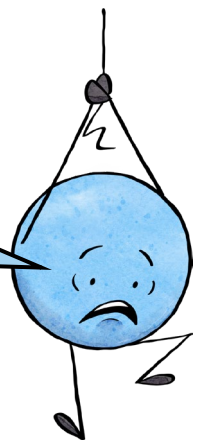




# What are CHANGES?



Changes  
can be  
exciting



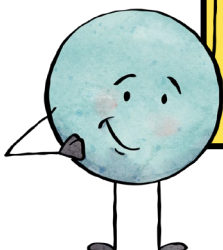
Changes  
can be  
scary

**Changes are things that happen around you or to you that make things different. Something might be the same and then it is different. That can bring lots of big feelings.**

- ☐ They can be big changes or small changes.
- ☐ They can be **expected changes** or **unexpected changes**. That means you either know they will happen, or you don't know, and it is a bit of a surprise.
- ☐ They can be positive or negative. That means they are good changes or not so good changes. They might be changes you like or things you don't like.

**You can't always control things that change. You can learn to prepare for the **expected changes** though, and you can learn to cope with the **unexpected changes**.**

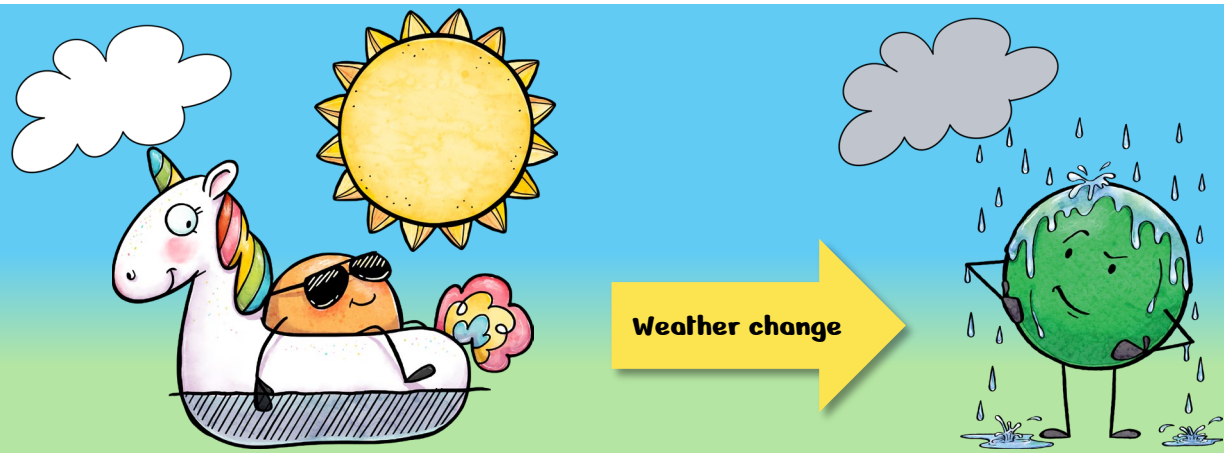
**It's good to look for the positives and the exciting bits.**



**Life is like a story book.  
Each page brings change  
and new adventures to be discovered.**

# Weather Change

The weather might change from sunny to rainy! This would be an **unexpected change** if it happened suddenly. You might be surprised by the sudden downpour of rain.



You might feel a bit fed up if it starts raining when you were having fun in the sun. You might also feel upset, shocked, disappointed, or angry. However, if you think about what you could do in the rain that would be exciting. Things such as splashing in puddles. That can be great fun! Another exciting bit could be that you might go indoors and do something fun there instead.



What else could you do if you were outside having fun and it started raining?  
Can you suggest something?

# One Year Older

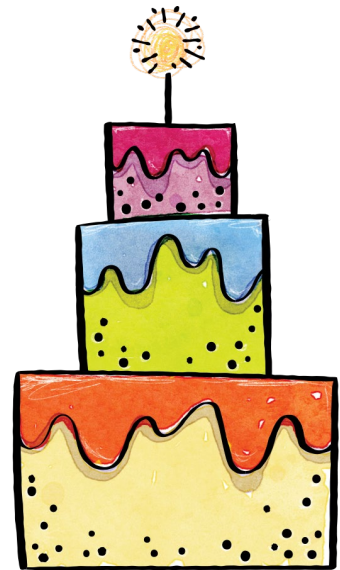


Your age will change each year...

It's your birthday and you will be one year older. That is a change that would be **expected**. You would know it was your birthday. You were one age and now you are another age.

How would that feel? There might be things you can do now you are a year older? Perhaps you can go on a special ride at a theme park because you are a year older? Perhaps you can join a sports team now you are a year older. It's good to look at the positive and exciting parts of the change.

## Happy Birthday



Can you think of something exciting about becoming one year older?  
Write it down here...



# Expected or Unexpected?

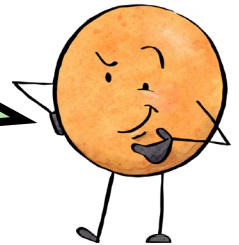
Here are some examples of other changes that might happen. Some are **expected changes**, and the others are **unexpected**, you either know they are going to happen, or you don't know they are going to happen. It can make a difference to how you feel about them and how you cope with them.

You can prepare for **expected changes**, but you can't prepare for **unexpected changes**. You just don't know they are going to happen. You can learn to cope with them though with practice.

## EXPECTED

- ☐ Starting a new school year
- ☐ Starting a new school
- ☐ Celebrating a birthday
- ☐ Moving to a new house
- ☐ Getting a new pet
- ☐ Visiting grandparents during holidays
- ☐ Going on a family holiday
- ☐ Growing taller
- ☐ Changing seasons
- ☐ Losing teeth

Yes, I knew  
these things  
would  
happen

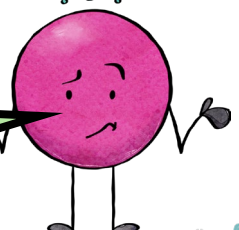


## UNEXPECTED

- ☐ Family emergency or crisis
- ☐ Supply teacher in for the day
- ☐ Natural disaster like a flood or earthquake
- ☐ Sudden illness or injury
- ☐ Unexpected loss of a loved one or pet
- ☐ Surprise visits from relatives or friends
- ☐ School closure due to unforeseen circumstances
- ☐ Accidental damage to personal belongings
- ☐ Cancelled plans or events
- ☐ Unexpected changes in routine
- ☐ Changing weather

No. I didn't  
know these  
things would  
happen

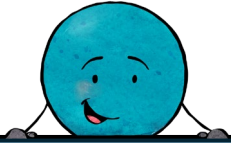
???



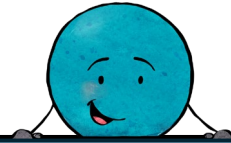


# Expected Changes

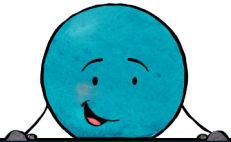
What **expected changes** have happened for you? How did you feel about them? Can you write or draw different changes in each box?



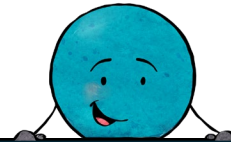
Expected



Expected



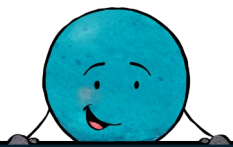
Expected



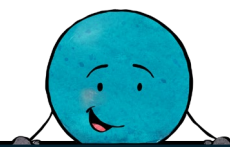
Expected

# Unexpected Changes

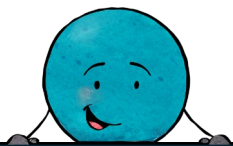
What **unexpected changes** have happened for you? How did you feel about them?  
Can you write or draw different changes in each box?



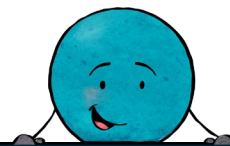
Unexpected



Unexpected



Unexpected



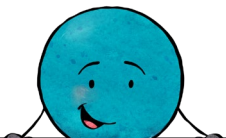
Unexpected

# Big Changes

Can you think of a BIG change that has happened for you? Can you write or draw about it in the box? Tick whether it was **expected** or **unexpected**.

☐ Expected

☐ Unexpected



**Big Change**

**Let's Chat!**

**How did that change make you feel?**

**Were the feelings comfortable or uncomfortable? Or both?**

**Were there any positive or exciting bits of the change?**

**Were there any negative or sad bits to the change?**

**Could you control this change in anyway? Or could you control your reaction to the change?**

**What bits did you like?**

**What bits didn't you like?**

**What support would have helped you with the change? What did you need?**

**How did you cope with the change?**

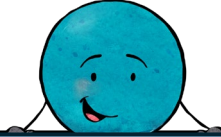
**If this happened again, how could it be made better for you?**

# Small Changes

Can you think of a **SMALL** change that has happened for you? Can you write or draw about it in the box? Tick whether it was **expected** or **unexpected**.

☐ Expected

☐ Unexpected



**Small Change**

**Let's Chat!**

**How did that change make you feel?**

**Were the feelings comfortable or uncomfortable? Or both?**

**Were there any positive or exciting bits of the change?**

**Were there any negative or sad bits to the change?**

**Could you control this change in anyway? Or could you control your reaction to the change?**

**What bits did you like?**

**What bits didn't you like?**

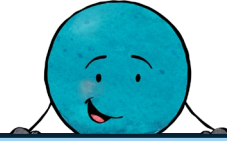
**What support would have helped you with the change? What did you need?**

**How did you cope with the change?**

**If this happened again, how could it be made better for you?**

# Like or Dislike?

A change that you liked



Liked

A change that you didn't like



Didn't Like

# Your Feelings

How do you feel when something changes?

You might have a mix of emotions. Some are **comfortable**, like feeling happy or some might be **uncomfortable** like feeling worried. Cut out the characters that represent how you feel when something changes. Write a change in the box first.



The change

- ☐ Expected
- ☐ Unexpected

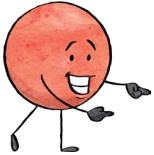
Comfortable emotion	Uncomfortable emotion




# Preparation

When something expected changes you can try to prepare yourself for the change.  
Let's look at some expected changes. Can you think of how you might prepare for those changes?  
Can you think of the positives and exciting bits of those changes?

## Moving to a new house

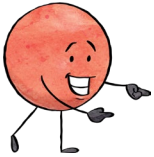


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## Getting a new baby in the family

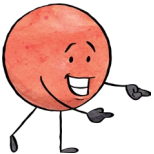


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## Visiting grandparents during holidays

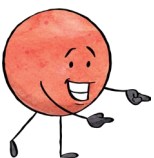


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## Going on a family holiday



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# Preparing for YOUR Change

How can you prepare for a change that is going to happen. The change is an **expected change**. Write the change in the box first. See if you can use the questions to prepare for the change...



This is the change...

**The change**

- ☐ What information can you find out about the change?
- ☐ How do you feel about the change?
- ☐ What might make you feel better about the change?
- ☐ Who can you talk to about the change?
- ☐ Can you think of some good things about the change?
- ☐ Can you think of some things you like about the change?
- ☐ What can you do to help your self-care – that means how can you look after yourself?

Use the box to jot down or draw any ideas to help you cope with the expected change



This is how I can prepare for the change

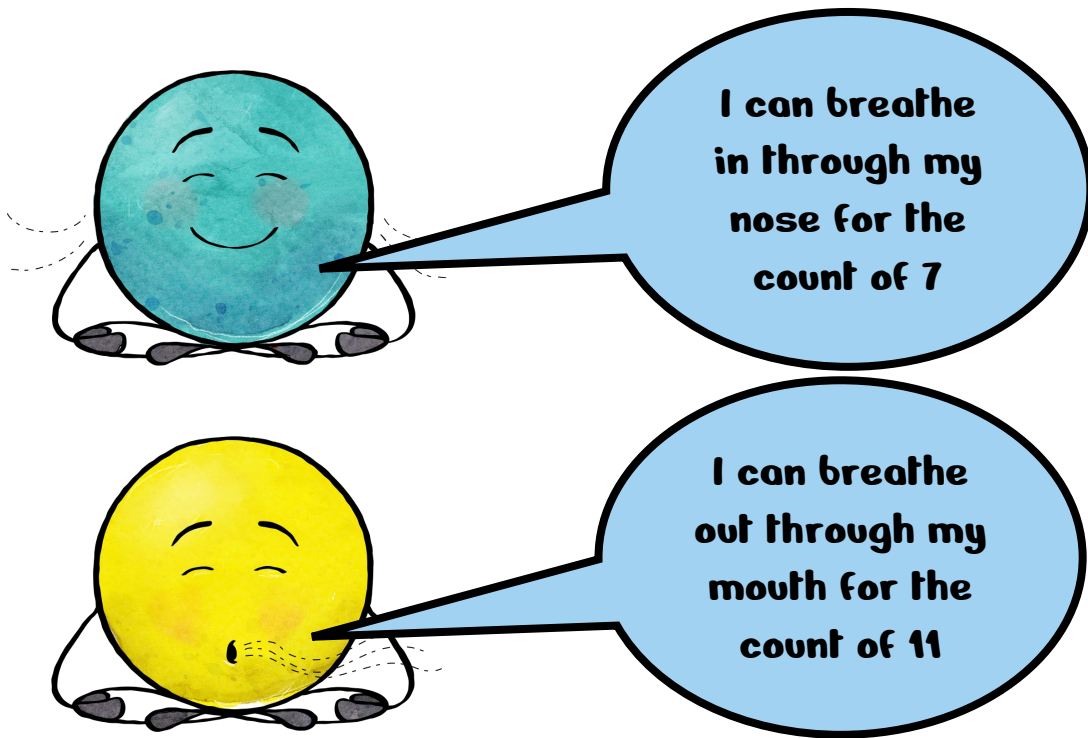
**Preparation**

# Breathe!

You can't prepare for **unexpected changes**. You just don't know they are going to happen. They can take you by surprise or they can shock you. This can bring a whole range of **BIG feelings**. That is perfectly normal. Everyone can feel overwhelmed at times with **unexpected changes**. There are things you can do to help yourself feel better.

**Stay Calm by practising your  
breathing techniques.**

**Stop, pause, breathe!**



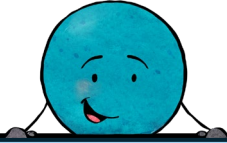
- ✓ Repeat the breathing exercise until you feel calmer.
- ✓ Breathing calmly will help those physical feelings of stress and anxiety.
- ✓ Breathing calmly can refocus your attention to something you can control.

# Take a Breath

Draw a picture of you using your breathing technique. It might be the one on the previous page or it might be another one. You can write about your breathing technique too if you want to.

Stay Calm by practising your breathing techniques.

Stop, pause, breathe!



My breathing technique

Breathe

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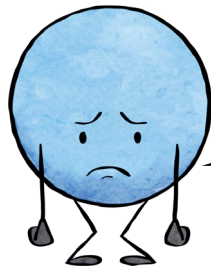
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# Talk and Express Feelings

You can't prepare for **unexpected changes**. You just don't know they are going to happen. They can take you by surprise or they can shock you. This can bring a whole range of BIG feelings. That is perfectly normal. Everyone can feel overwhelmed at times with **unexpected changes**. There are things you can do to help yourself feel better.

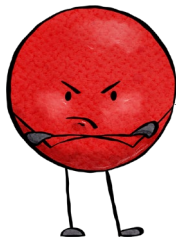
**Talk to someone!**  
**Express your feelings!**  
**Name your feeling and say why!**



I feel sad because  
there is a supply  
teacher in today!



I feel worried  
because we are  
doing PE instead  
of art today!



I feel angry  
because my  
birthday party  
was cancelled

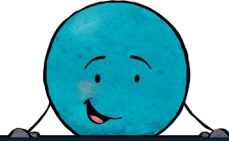
- ✓ It's ok to feel your feelings!
- ✓ Your feelings matter!
- ✓ Naming your feeling can help you feel better!
- ✓ Your feelings are an important part of who you are!
- ✓ You have every right to feel the way you do!
- ✓ Pay attention to your feelings!

# Express your feelings

Now it is your turn to express your feelings. Think about who you can talk to and write their names or draw their pictures in the box. There might be more than one person.

Name your feeling and say why.

**Talk to someone!**  
**Express your feelings!**  
**Name your feeling and say why!**



Who can I talk to?

**Trusted People**

**I feel**

**Because**

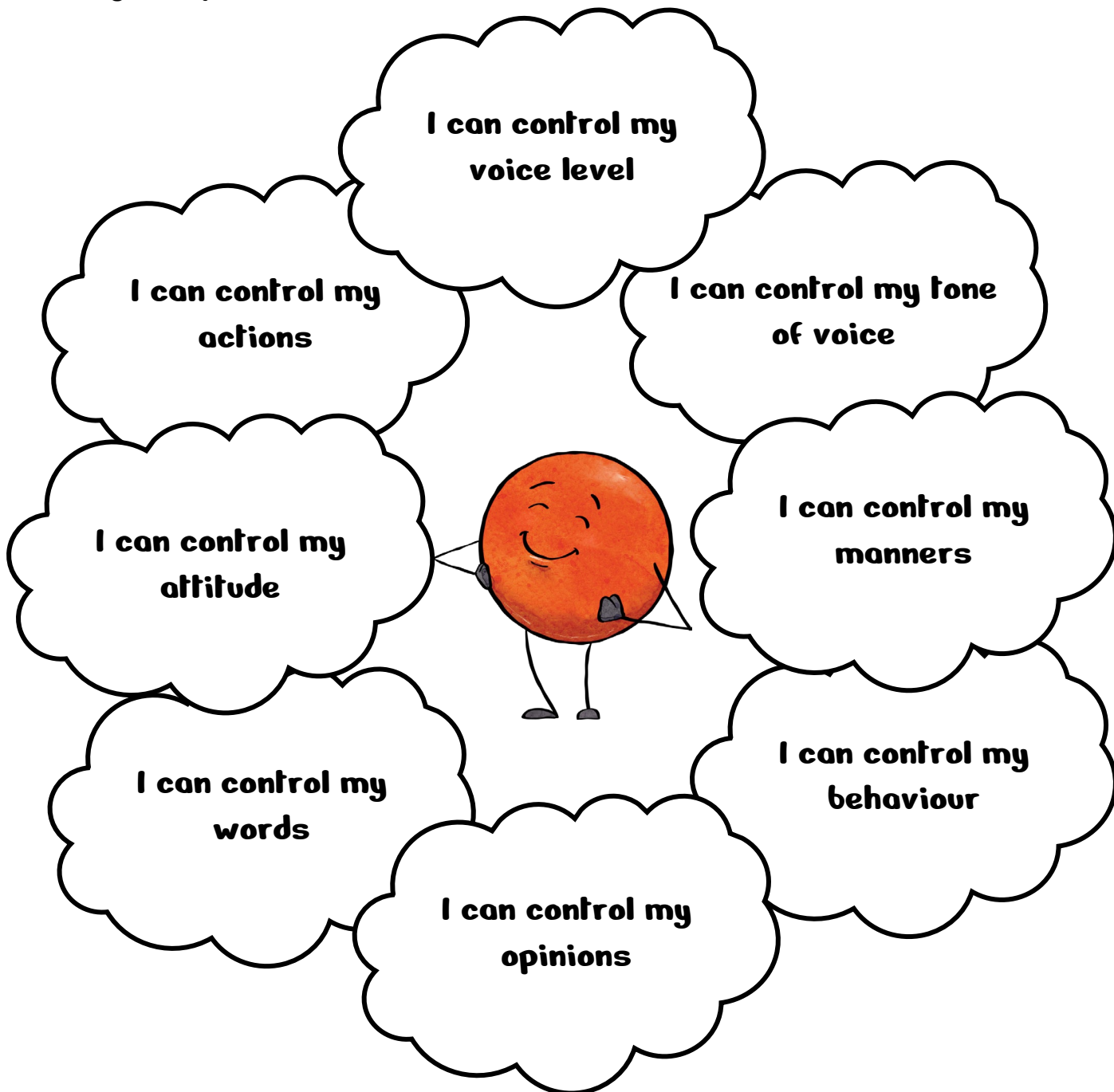


# Finding Control

You can't prepare for **unexpected changes**. You just don't know they are going to happen. They can take you by surprise or they can shock you. This can bring a whole range of BIG feelings. That is perfectly normal. Everyone can feel overwhelmed at times with **unexpected changes**. There are things you can do to help yourself feel better.

## Find things that YOU can control

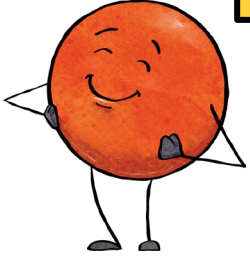
You might not be able to control the change that has happened, but you can control how you respond to it.



# Control

Think about the things you can control when something unexpected happens. Draw your picture in the middle and write in each bubble.

Find things that YOU can control

A circular arrangement of eight empty cloud-shaped bubbles for drawing and writing.

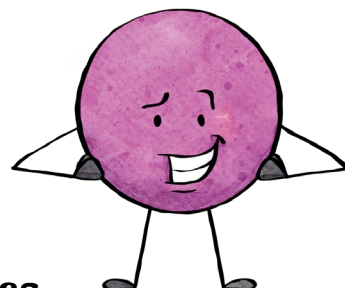
✓ I can try to control how I respond to a change.

# Challenging the Negatives

You can't prepare for **unexpected changes**. You just don't know they are going to happen. They can take you by surprise or they can shock you. This can bring a whole range of BIG feelings. That is perfectly normal. Everyone can feel overwhelmed at times with **unexpected changes**. There are things you can do to help yourself feel better.

## Challenge the negative thoughts with self-talk

You might have negative, scary or angry thoughts about the change, but you can challenge those by using self-talk. Read through some of these. Stand in front of a mirror and say them to yourself. Keep practising and then when something does happen you will remember what to say to yourself.



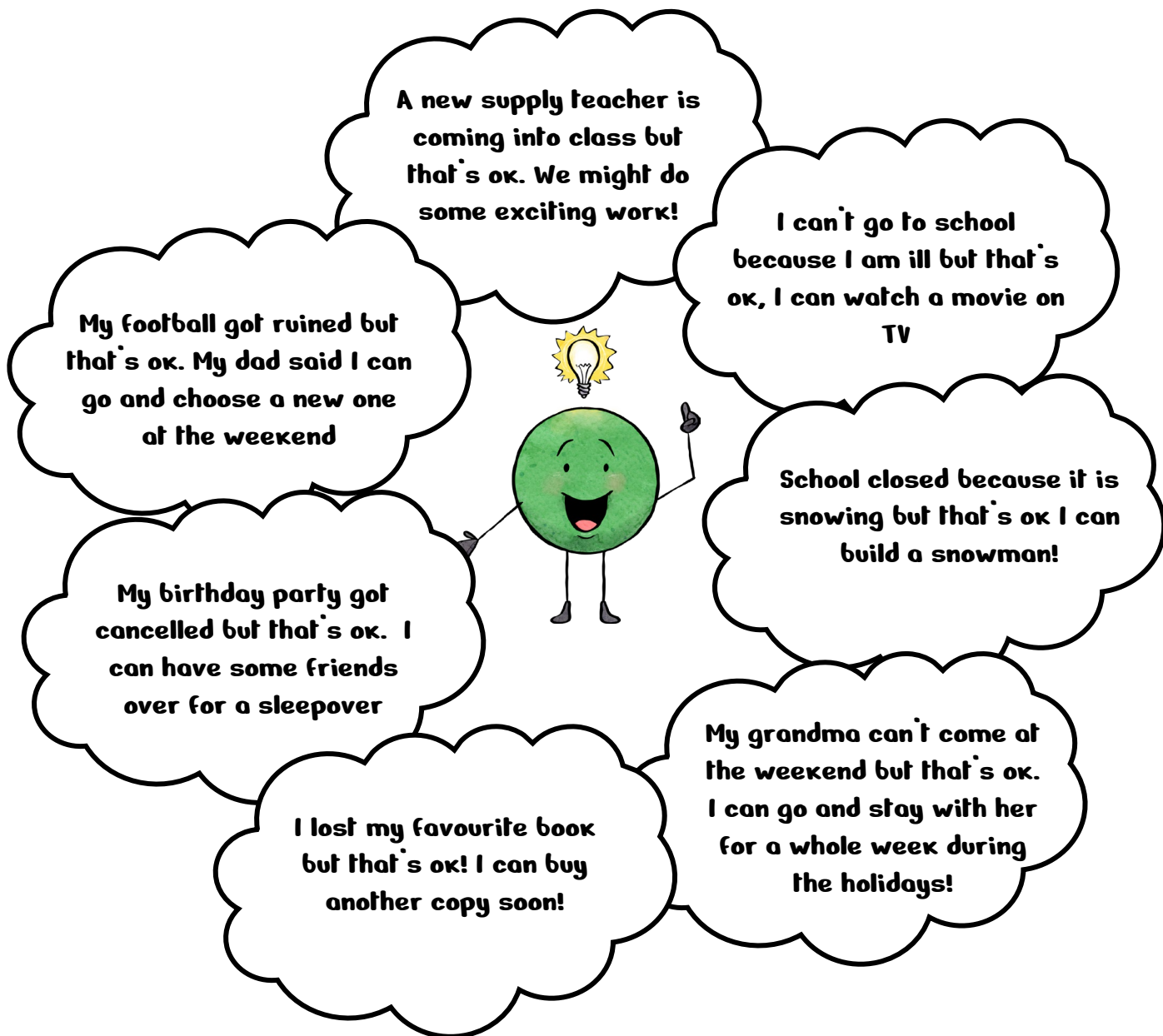
- ☐ I can do this!
- ☐ I am strong!
- ☐ Everything is going to be ok.
- ☐ I believe in myself and my ability to overcome changes.
- ☐ I may not have control over what happened, but I can control how I respond to it.
- ☐ This is just a temporary setback. I can find a way through.
- ☐ It's ok I can handle this!
- ☐ I'll take it one step at a time.
- ☐ I'm resilient and will bounce back from this.
- ☐ I have dealt with unexpected changes before, and everything was ok.
- ☐ I will treat myself with kindness as I go through this change.
- ☐ I will embrace the new experiences that this change will bring.
- ☐ It's tough right now but I know that things will get better with time.

You can choose one of these or you can use your own self-talk. What might you say to yourself when an **unexpected change** happens?

# Positive and Exciting Bits

You can't prepare for **unexpected changes**. You just don't know they are going to happen. They can take you by surprise or they can shock you. This can bring a whole range of BIG feelings. That is perfectly normal. Everyone can feel overwhelmed at times with **unexpected changes**. There are things you can do to help yourself feel better.

**Look for the positives or exciting bits!**



✓ It's not always easy to find the positives especially if something sad has happened, but with lots of things you can find the positives.

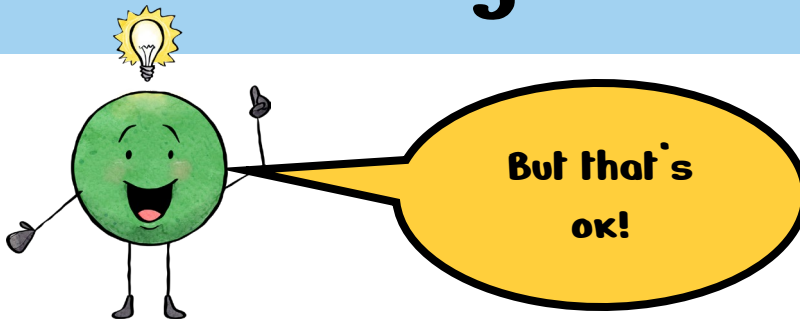
# Remember...

On the previous page there are lots of different scenarios and there were similar responses. See if you can remember this format.

## What is happening



## Say



## What is the exciting bit?



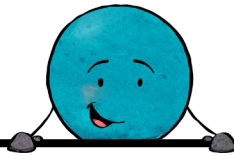
**Use your thinking and problem-solving skills to find the exciting bits!**

# Positives and Exciting Bits

Now it is your turn to practise finding the positives and exciting bits. See if you can find the positives and exciting bits in these scenarios...

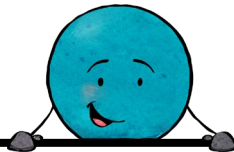
**Look for the positives or exciting bits!**

**You were expecting it to be an art lesson which you love but the teacher said you must do more story writing instead.**



What are the positives or exciting bits of this change?

**You were late for school because your car broke down on the way to school.**



What are the positives or exciting bits of this change?

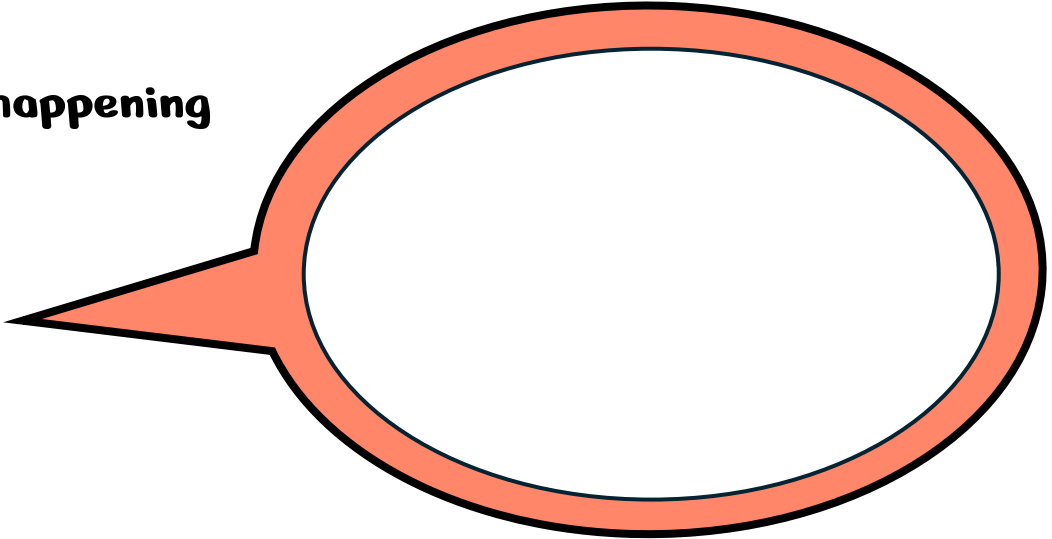


# Finding YOUR Positives

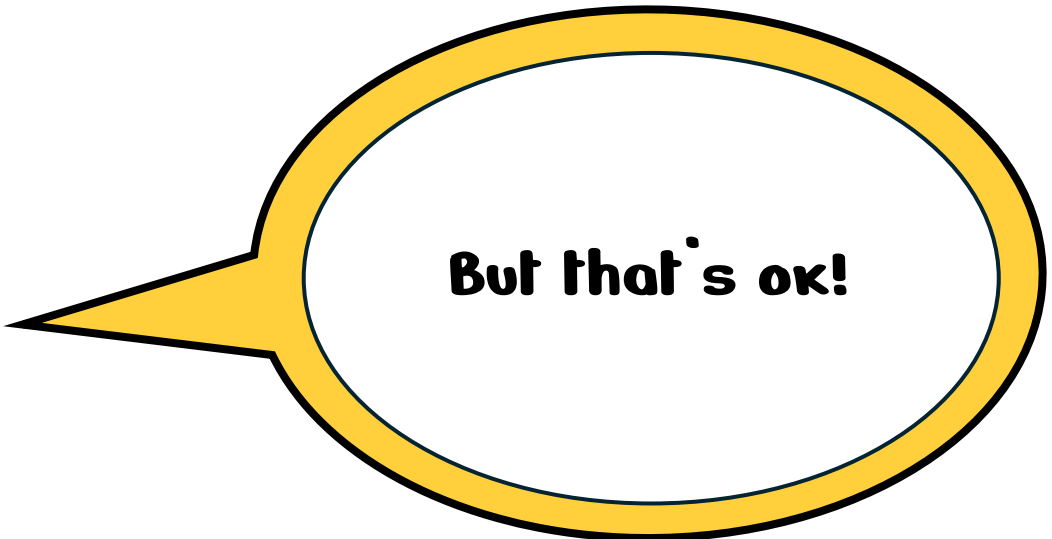
Now it is your turn to practise finding the positives and exciting bits on a real life change.

**Look for the positives or exciting bits!**

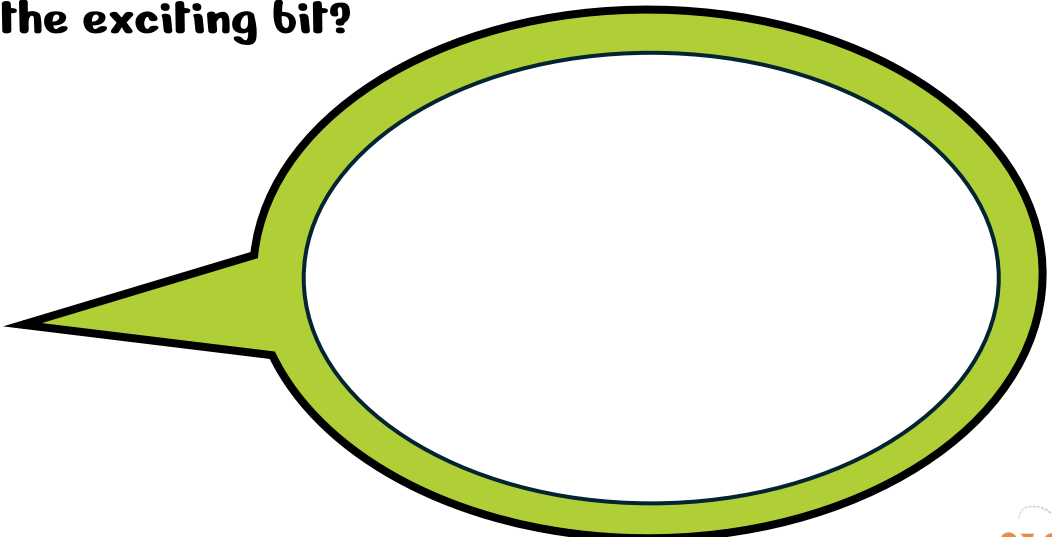
**What is happening**



**Say...**



**What is the exciting bit?**



# Unexpected Changes

**Put it all together!**

**Stay Calm by practising your breathing techniques.**

**Stop, pause, breathe!**

**Talk to someone!**

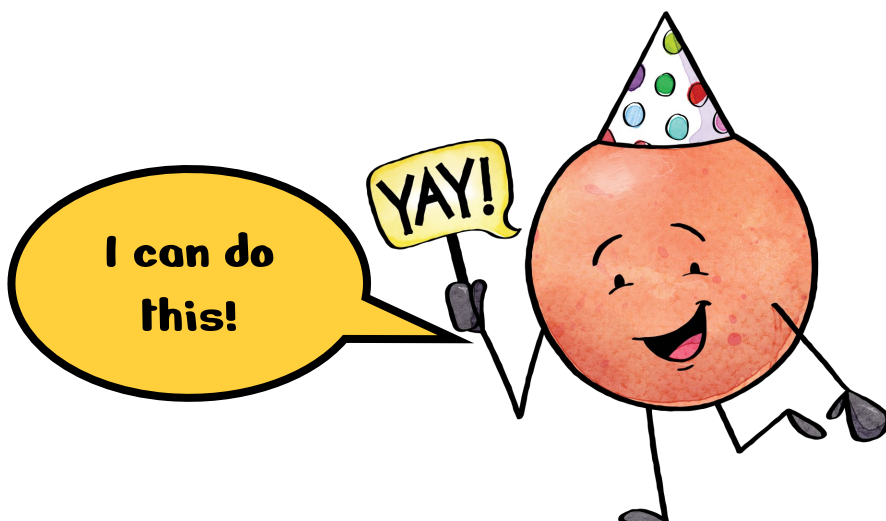
**Express your feelings!**

**Name your feeling and say why!**

**Find things that YOU can control**

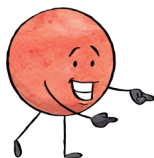
**Challenge the negative thoughts with self-talk**

**Look for the positives or exciting bits!**



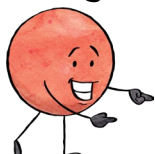
# Support I Need

It is good to think carefully about what you might need if something changes. Whether that is an **expected change** or an **unexpected change**. If you think about it now before something happens you will be better prepared. Let's look at some examples...



## Comfort

**You might need:** A hug from someone you love or trust to feel better.



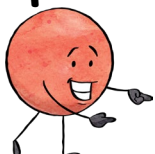
## Understanding

**You might need:** Someone to listen and understand how you are feeling.



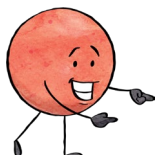
## Reassurance

**You might need:** Someone to tell you that you are not alone and there are people to help you.



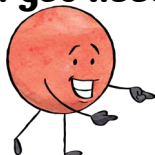
## Information

**You might need:** Someone to tell you why things are changing.



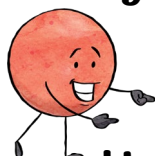
## Support

**You might need:** Someone to help you figure out what to do next and to be there when you need them.



## Choice

**You might need:** Someone to help you make choices. It might make you feel better if you have some choice over what has happened or will happen.

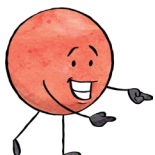


## Encouragement

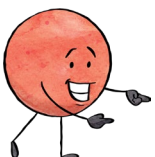
**You might need:** Someone to remind you that you can handle this, and that you are brave and strong.

# My Support Plan

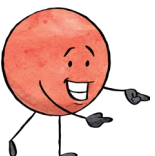
You can make a plan now on the support you might need. You can use the suggestions on the other page or think of your own.



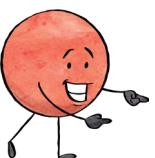
**I need...**



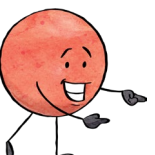
**I need...**



**I need...**



**I need...**



**I need...**

- ✓ If change knocks at my door, I can remember that it is ok to ask for a helping hand

# When something **CHANGES**

You can use this sheet to work through any changes that happen for you. Whether that is an **expected change** or an **unexpected change**.

What changed?



- ☐ Expected
- ☐ Unexpected

Comfortable feelings



Uncomfortable feelings



Things I like about the change (exciting bits)



Things I don't like about the change



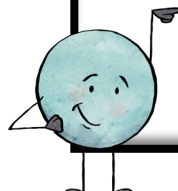
Can I prepare for the change? What can I do?



Support I need



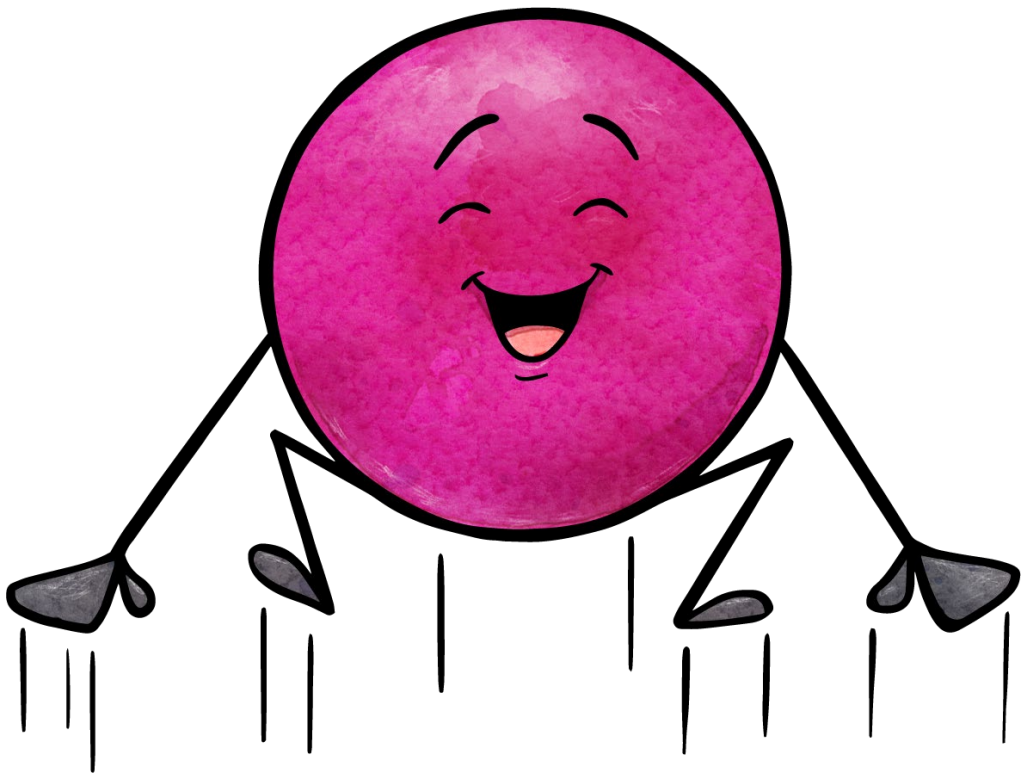
How can I cope? What strategies can I use?



# RESILIENCE

Coping with changes can make you more resilient and help you feel better in yourself. Resilience is when you bounce back from something that has upset you or something that is difficult to cope with.

## Bounce back to Happiness



**I am strong and I can  
work it out!**