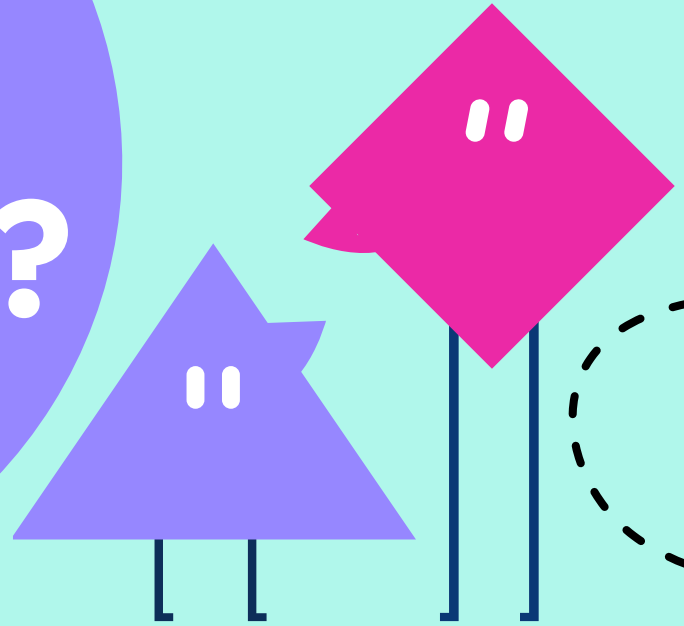


What about us?



A workbook for young people whose family member has been arrested

When someone in your family is arrested for illegal sexual behaviour online, you might feel angry, worried, confused or even helpless. If you're a young person going through this, you are not alone, and this book is for you.

It was created by the team of experts behind Shore, a safe and anonymous place for young people worried about sexual behaviours.

The book was made alongside a teenager, Deana, who went through what you're experiencing now. She made it through. And you will too.

This book can support you at this really difficult time, give you some tools to cope, and remind you that you are not alone in this.

*Names and some details have been changed in this story to afford anonymity

Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Check in with yourself Feeling Grounded	
What about us?	Page 7
Untangling feelings	
What about my questions?	Page 10
Getting Answers	
What if I feel stuck?	Page 13
Worry thoughts and happy memory jars	
What if I feel overwhelmed?	Page 15
Finding ways to cope Journaling	
What about the future?	Page 22
Skills for the future	
What about now?	Page 28
Messaging future you	

Introduction

Things might feel scary, upsetting, or confusing right now – and that’s totally okay. When you’re ready, this book is here to guide and help you through.

You will follow Deana’s story after her dad was arrested for illegal sexual behaviour online. Through her journey, you’ll get a better sense of how she coped, find some helpful ways to cope yourself, and gradually start to feel a little more hopeful too.

Top Tips

You can read this book on your own or with someone you trust. If you feel comfortable, let a parent, carer, or another trusted adult know you’re reading this - they might be able to support you. There’s even a guide just for them, to help them know how best to support you. [Download the parents workbook.](#)

We know that talking about what has happened can be very difficult – sometimes it’s hard to find the right words, and you might also have been told to keep things private right now. That’s okay, but that doesn’t mean you can’t talk to people who are there to help you – like your parent, carer, another trusted adult or one of our experienced advisors at [Shorespace.org.uk](https://shorespace.org.uk).

Try to find a quiet, private space where you feel safe and comfortable to read this workbook.



Check in with yourself

Before we hear from Deana, it's important to check in with yourself.

You might be feeling all kinds of things right now.

Feelings can make us more aware of ourselves, and can keep us safe.

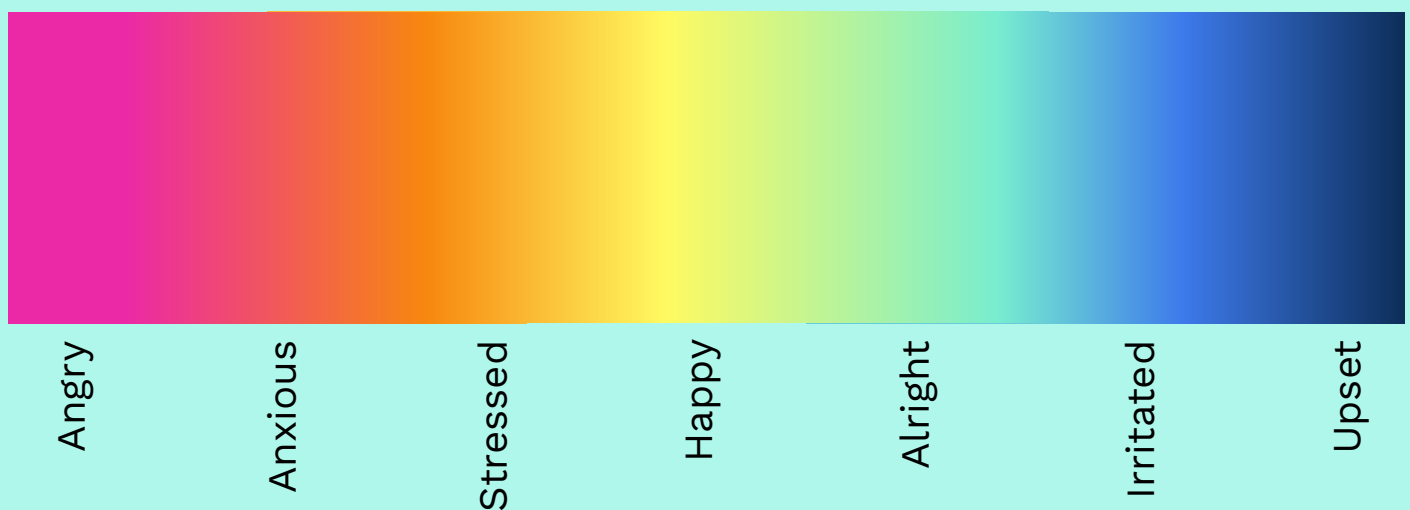
But sometimes they can be overwhelming... Let's take a minute to

figure out how you are feeling.

It's okay to feel all these emotions.

It's best to read this book when you are feeling calm and ready. If you're not quite there yet, try the exercise on the next page — It's designed to help you feel a bit more settled before you begin.

Feelings thermometer



Scan the feelings thermometer, which feelings do you have right now?

Feeling Grounded

Sometimes, strong emotions or memories can feel really overwhelming. That's where "grounding techniques" come in – they help you feel more in control, by bringing your focus back to the here and now.

They help you focus on what's happening right now, so you can step away from any difficult thoughts or memories that come into your head.

If you're feeling a bit all over the place, this short exercise might help.

Why not give it a go?

You can follow along with a video by scanning this QR code:



[Check out our managing difficult emotions page on the Shore website.](#)

We're going to help you tap into your senses by trying a grounding technique that will help you pay attention to your body and how you are feeling.



Make sure you are comfortable.
There's no rush.

First

Take a deep breath
In through your nose
And out through your mouth
Let's start by listing 5 things you can
see around you
Are they familiar?
What colour and shape are they?

Now

Think about 4 things you can touch
How do they feel?
Think about their texture and
temperature.

Next

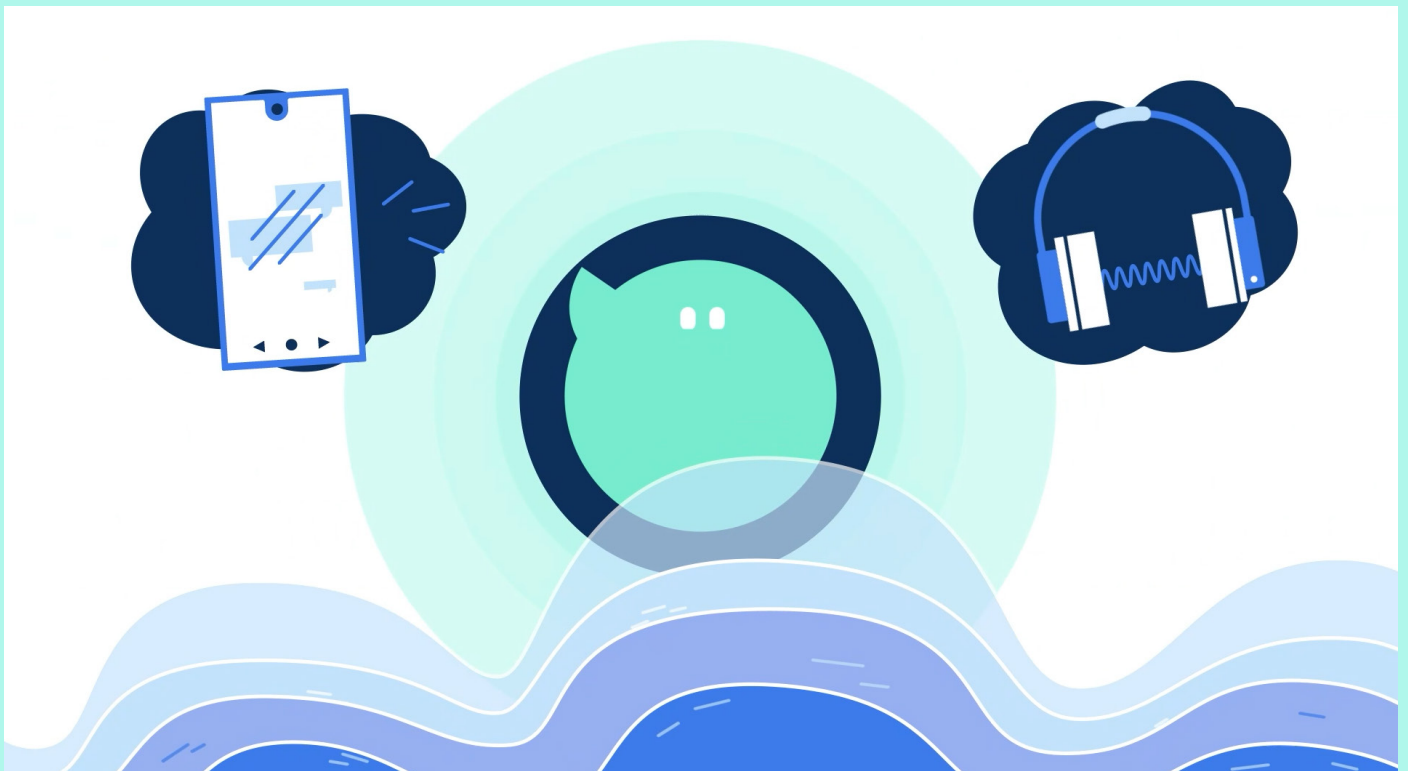
Let's name 3 things you can hear
Are there sounds nearby? Or far
away?

And now

What 2 things can you smell?
Take a deep, slow breath
In through your nose
And out through your mouth

Finally

Think of 1 thing you can taste
How would you describe it?
Now you've finished, take a moment
to check in with yourself and think
about how you are feeling.



Grounding exercises work best when you practise – so try this one a few times this week.

Now, if you feel ready. Read on. But remember, you can stop at any time. If you feel yourself getting upset or angry, take a break or try the grounding exercise again.

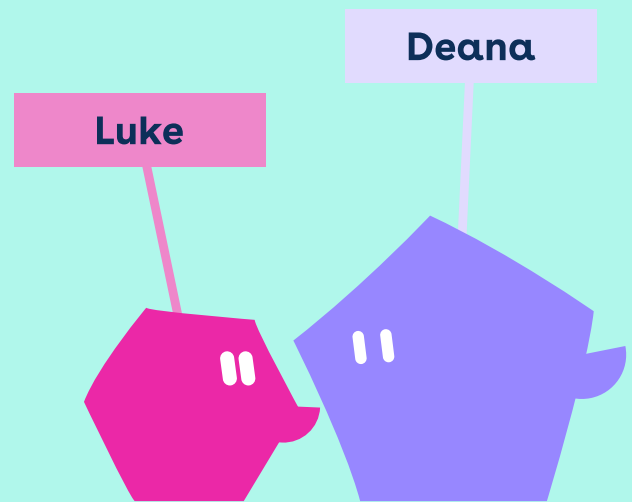
Deana's story

Chapter one

What about us?

When a family member is arrested for their sexual behaviour online

Deana & Luke's Story



'It seemed like a normal day. Nothing could have prepared me for what was about to happen.

Unpacking from a family holiday only a few days prior, life seemed chaotic, as it usually is.

Taking a quick break, I heard a loud knock at the door.

Dad opened the door and let two strangers into the house.

Who were these people? It wasn't like Dad to invite strangers into the house.

Mum called me downstairs. Everyone had such serious looks on their faces, and I started to get more worried.

Lots of tears later, my dad was gone.

It couldn't be right.
This couldn't be happening.

It was a nightmare I couldn't wake up from.

I think the first wave was shock, just as if time stood still and nothing was real. At that point, I think it felt like there must have been a mistake, and somehow it wasn't actually my dad.

After that, it was a combination of sad and sick. It felt as if my dad had this whole massive secret and none of us really knew him; this was all happening without anyone having a clue.

It was horrible to think about, just how could he have done this to us?

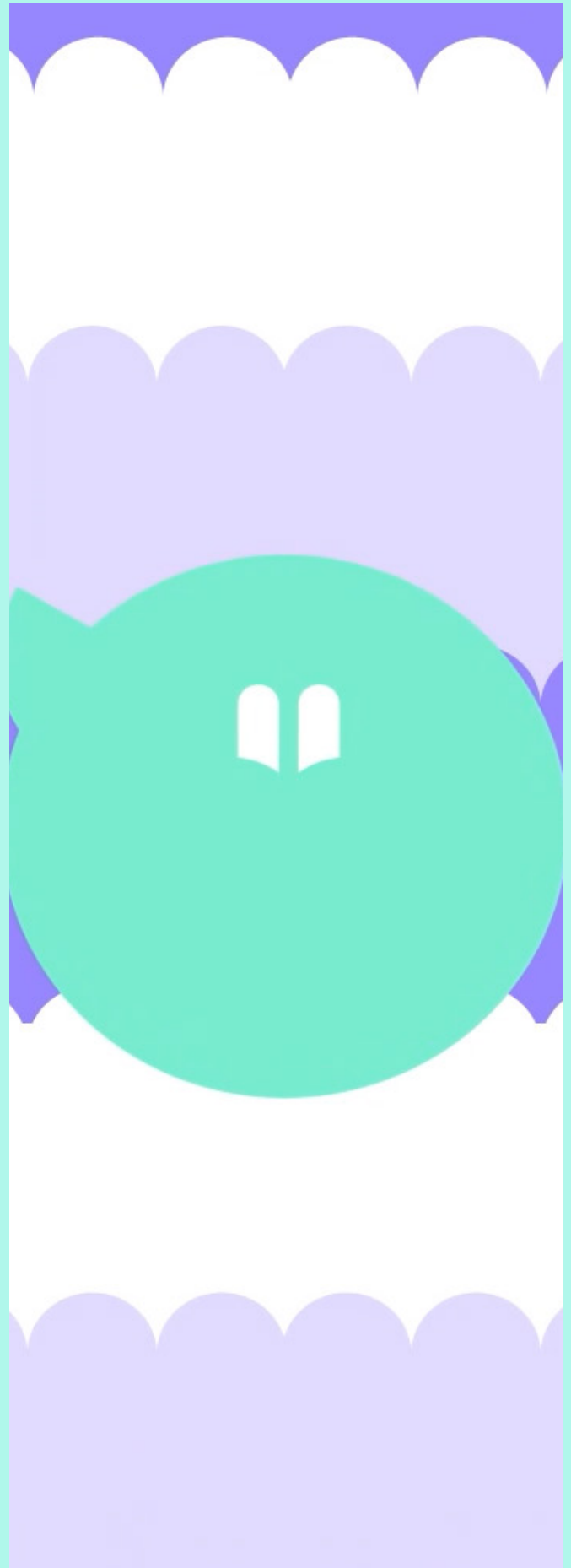
I also felt really worried about my dad.

No one knew where he was, and I was really concerned about him.

I remember we just sat together for hours, almost in silence, and every now and then one of us would either cry for a while or say, "How is this happening?".

We were pretty much just in limbo, with nothing we could do.

After sitting for a while, hundreds of feelings and emotions filled my head. It was difficult to understand what I was feeling.'



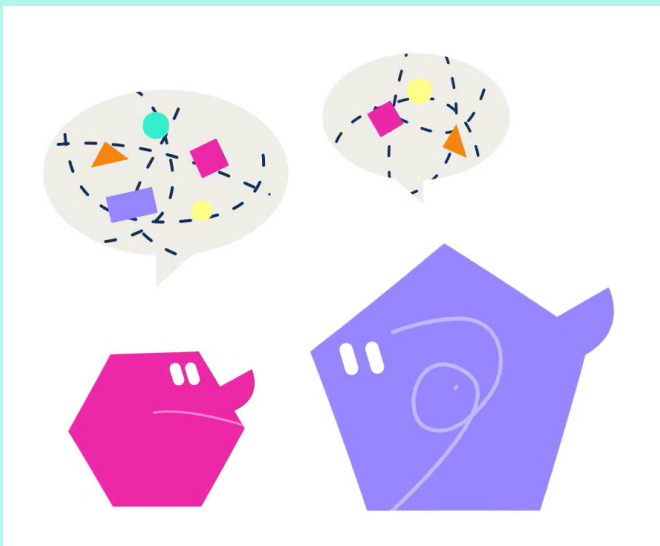
Untangling feelings

You might be feeling a bit like Deana right now, like all your emotions are in a tangled ball.

Writing down our emotions can help us make sense of how we're feeling. If we can name our feelings, it can help us to cope with them, even when it's really difficult.

This exercise might help – give it a go.

Write down the emotions you're feeling in the spaces in the ball below, or circle the emotions already named in the ball below that describe how you're feeling.



What about my questions?

‘The mornings became a bit easier. But every time I heard about it, flashbacks of that day flooded my mind. It was the worst feeling. My palms went sweaty, and my heart felt like it was going to beat right out of my chest.

I spoke to Shore. They’ve worked with other people like me whose parents have got into trouble for things like my dad did online.

They helped me see that although people, like my dad, have done a bad thing, it doesn’t make them bad people.

That made me feel better about the situation, and my feelings about it. I love my dad, and I shouldn’t have to feel guilty about that. They told me a bit about the legal process, and how things are most likely going to run. It made me feel a bit nervous, but also better.’

**Harmful
behaviour**



Getting Answers

You might have lots of questions, just like Deana. Everyone's experience is different, and it's okay to feel how you feel. Some people may feel angry, upset, or even relieved.

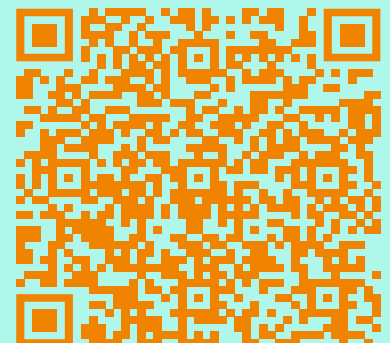
These feelings can be confusing and raise a lot of questions – the activity below is designed to help.

Here's a space for you to write down any questions you have, and who you think might be able to help answer them.

My Questions

Who Might Help Answer It

If you want to learn more about what to expect, check out the common questions section on our [your questions answered page](#) or scan the QR code.



Sometimes there just aren't answers yet, and that can feel really confusing or frustrating. Waiting for answers can be tough, but remember:

- You've done nothing wrong.
- You are not responsible for what's going on.
- You can only control what you do – not what others do.
- It's the adults' job to look after themselves and support each other. It's not your responsibility to fix things—that's up to them.

Not all our questions can be answered straight away.

Often, it can take a long time for decisions to be made, especially when the police are involved.

This can leave us feeling uncertain and worried about what might happen next.

Use the space below to write down anything you feel uncertain about right now.

Even if you can't get all the answers you want right away, there are things you can do to feel less worried.

Check out the next exercises for help with this.

What if I feel stuck?

‘So many emotions flooded my mind. My head was muddled, both with worries and with all of our happy memories as a family.

Shore taught me about ‘worry and happy memory jars. It was a fun activity creating and decorating the jars.

Every time I felt worried, I’d write it down, and put it in the worry jar. It was very helpful to put the worry in a safe place outside my mind.

My favourite part was the happy memory jar. A place where I could go to look at my most treasured memories of us as a family. It was the best way to lift my mood in times when I was struggling.

I’m glad I gave it a try;, it really helped the healing process, and helped to cheer me up when I was having a more difficult day.



Worry thoughts and happy memory jars

You might be struggling to make sense of your thoughts, feelings, and memories, just like Deana was. If you're finding it hard to hold onto the good moments, this exercise might help.

Grab two empty jars, or anything you can safely keep things in. If you like being creative, decorate the jars so you can tell them apart: one for your worries and the other for your happy memories.

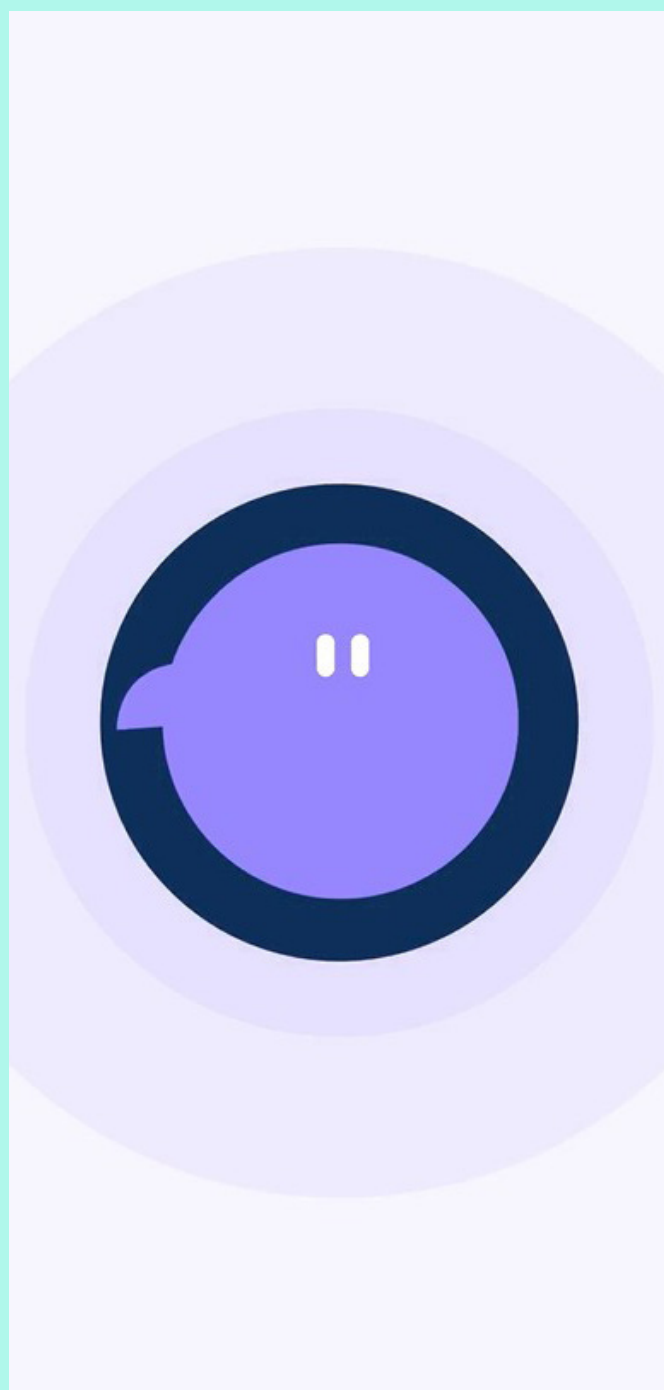
Fill one jar with worries you have. You can put written notes, pictures, and small objects. Anything you want that represents the worry.

Fill the second jar with happy memories. Again, you can put written notes, pictures, small objects. Anything you want that holds a happy memory.

Leave the jars with the lid closed somewhere safe and private when you don't want to think about it.

When you want to, you can open the jars and look at your thoughts and memories.

You can also share them with someone you trust if you want to talk, or with one of our experts at Shore.



What if I feel overwhelmed?

‘Before my first day back at school, I was a mess. My head was full of worries. I was shaking with nerves. What if everyone knows?

Will teachers treat me differently? If people find out, will I get made fun of? These ‘what ifs’ plagued my mind.

As the day went on, these worries slowly drifted away from my head. No one knew.

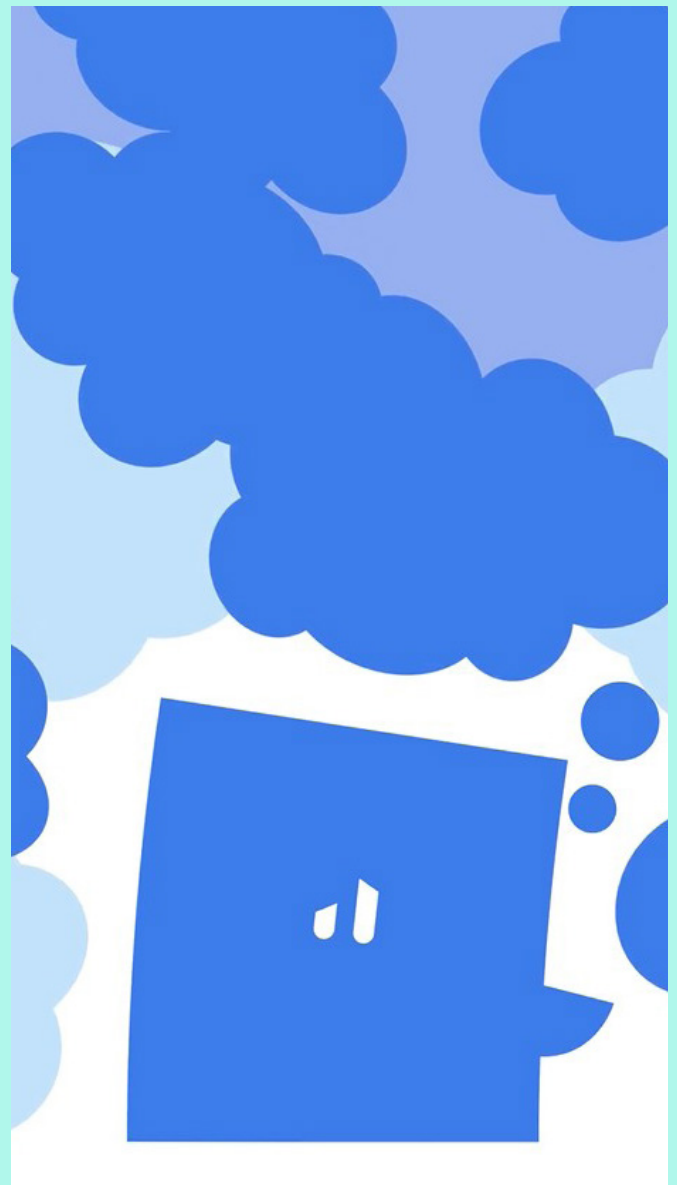
I got on with my day as usual, and nothing bad happened.

There was actually one person who knew – my guidance teacher. They helped me understand that if I needed support, they could help me.

There were actually a lot of people that I could use if I needed at school, such as guidance teachers, school counsellors, and the school nurse.

It was good to know that, if I needed, there was support there for me. But what I found most helpful to deal with those overwhelming thoughts was journaling.

Journaling became a regular practice for me. Being able to express my feelings freely was an incredible help to my journey. Sometimes talking to people is scary. Journaling helped me overcome being nervous when expressing my feelings.



Finding ways to cope

You might be feeling overwhelmed with something right now, just like Deana was before she went back to school.

If you are, this exercise might help.

Give it a go.

Imagine yourself as a big shiny bucket, with taps sticking out of it to drain the water.

The water in the bucket represents difficult feelings.

If you've got a lot of difficult feelings, you might feel weighed down, and everything might seem rubbish.

If you don't have many difficult feelings, you might feel light, and everything might seem great.

As we go through our day, our buckets can fill with lots of feelings, particularly if we're feeling sad or stressed. The taps are what we can use to feel better.



If the feelings get too much, it's like the water overflowing. So, we need to use our taps.

If we add taps, the water can flow out, and we can get rid of difficult thoughts the way we want. This can help make you feel lighter.

There are four main types of taps attached to your bucket:

Emotional tap: This tap helps us let out the difficult emotions by expressing them, through things like, shouting, screaming, or crying. This may feel good for a while and might be all you need.

This tap can sometimes cause more problems, however, particularly if someone else gets hurt by our shouting and screaming. So, it's important to have other taps.

Avoidant tap: This tap helps us avoid difficult feelings by ignoring our tricky thoughts and distracting ourselves.

This can be okay for a little while, but this tap often gets blocked as we're not really getting rid of the difficult thoughts.

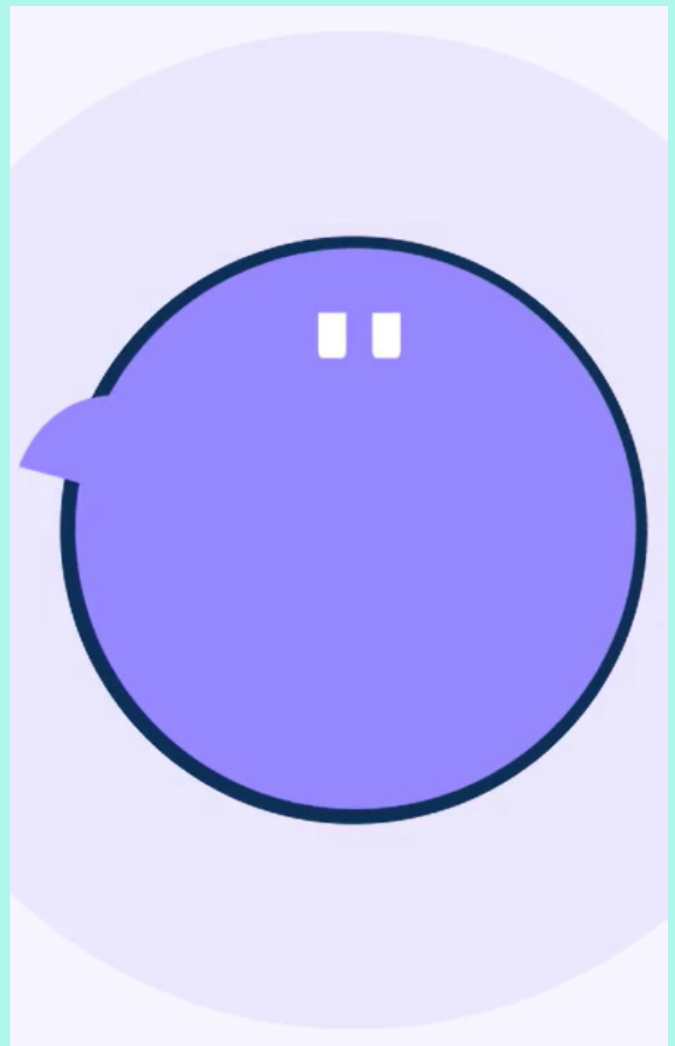
Processing tap: This tap works by processing our difficult emotions. Giving yourself a chance to slow down and think about how you are

feeling and why you might be feeling like that. Journaling is a great way to get your processing tap flowing.

Solutions tap: This tap often works the best. It works by identifying the problem, thinking about a solution, and giving it a go.

Journaling can help you identify what the problem is that you want to find a solution to.

Before you have a go at journaling, think about these questions. Which taps do you use at the moment?



What do you do to make yourself feel better?

Who helps you when you've got lots of difficult feelings?

How do they do it?

Journaling

A journal is your own private space where you can say whatever you want - no rules, no one's judging.

Have a go at journaling yourself – either write in this book or get a different journal with as much space as you need. This is just a template.

You can use this structure, or find a different way of writing out your feelings, thoughts, and ideas in a way that suits you. It might be helpful simply to write on a blank page.

How am I feeling?

What am I thinking about?

What can I do about it?

Here's an example from Deana's Journal where she used journaling to try and find solutions - it might help you get started:

Feeling	Thought	What can I do?
Scared	'What does the future look like for my family?'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk to mum• Plan for a positive future• Go on days out
Angry	'Why did my dad do this to us?'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write a letter to my dad - I don't have to send it, but it's helpful to get what I want to say to him on paper• Talk to Shore
Upset/sad	'I want things to go back to normal!'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distract myself with watching TV or going out with my mates• Talk to mum• Journal about what I want

Here's a template for you to give this a go to:

Feeling

Thought

What can I do?

You can also use your writing to help explain to someone else how you've been feeling, and ask them for advice, whether that's an adult you trust or one of our experts at Shore.

What about the future?

‘The journey my family went through was difficult, but as time went on, managing it got much easier. Time has passed, and I’ve learned a lot. My family is a lot stronger than before.

We finally got the option to see Dad! Although we had a lot of fun trips without him, we had the chance to invite him as well. Although life isn’t back to where it was before, we’ve learned to embrace change and find the positives in our journey.

By working together, we managed overwhelming situations, difficult changes, and lots of emotions.

Always being there for each other was a huge comfort throughout.

We all now have the skills and support to overcome challenging moments in life.

We regularly talk to each other, and we are much more open and honest as a family. Moving on seemed impossible for me, but with the help of many people and techniques from Shore, the process was easier to manage.

It’s helped me to make more happy memories with my family.



Skills for the future

Understanding that life has changed for you and your family is not easy.

But it's important to remember that nothing stays the same forever.

Things change, and so do we. And that's not always a bad thing.

You've now got a toolkit of skills to help you cope:

- **A place to talk to someone anonymously at shorespace.org.uk**
- **A grounding exercise**
- **A place to think about and get answers to your questions**
- **Space to untangle confusing feelings**
- **Jars to help keep safe worries, as well as happy memories**
- **Guidance on using different ways to cope**
- **Advice on journaling**

Using these tools can help you adjust to a new way of doing things.

The final piece of advice in this book is perhaps the most important.

Remember to take care of yourself.

If you're not sure how, Deana's got a few ideas on the next page.



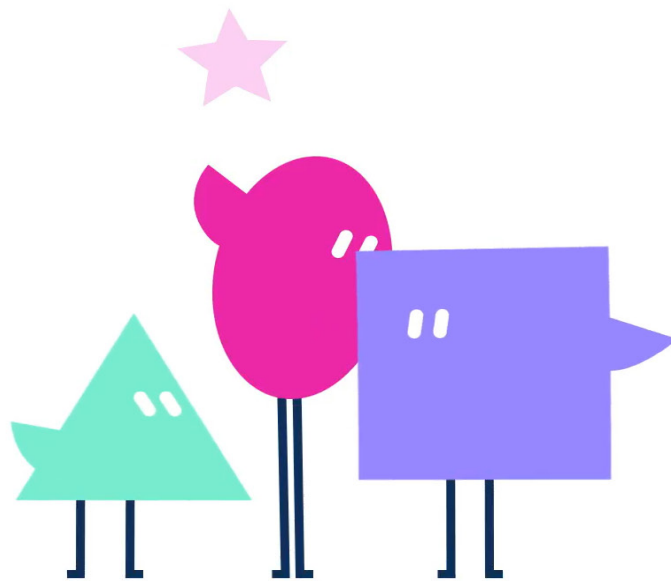
Draw and paint



Listen to music



Go out with mates!



And here are a few more ideas to try to help you take a break – you deserve it.

Ways to take a break

Make some music

Write in a journal

Write a letter

Listen to music

Take a bike ride

Call a friend

Colour with crayons

Fly a kite

Rest your legs up on a wall

Read a book

Climb a tree

Notice your body

Sit in nature

Take a nap

Buy some flowers

Meditate

Give thanks

Notice your body

Walk outside

Go for a run

View some art

Take a bath

Learn something new

Drive somewhere new

Read poetry

Write a quick poem

Watch the clouds

Pet a furry creature

Turn off all electronics

Go to a body of water

Go to a park

Go to a farmers market

Light a candle

Forgive someone

Let out a sigh

Do some gentle stretches

Watch the stars

Take deep belly breaths

Let go of something

Create your own coffee break

Eat a meal in silence

Move twice as slowly

And if you're feeling angry, that's okay. Let it out, as long as it's safe to do so. Deana's brother used wrecking pages - they might help you too.

Poke holes in this page using a pencil to pop the balloons.



Scrunch into a ball and kick it down the road.



What about now?

'This was the hardest situation I have had to deal with in my life. Going through so many knockbacks and 'worst-case scenarios' had a lasting impact on me.

However, throughout the time managing this, I've found out who I am and the strength I didn't know I had.

You are never truly alone.

No matter how impossible it sounds, life will get better. You will get through this.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story - I wish you the best!

deana

Messaging future you

This might be the end of this workbook, but it's not the end of your story. So, let us give you one last exercise before you go – to help you see that better future.

Imagine yourself in 5 years' time, you're living your best life, whatever that means to you.

Fill out this postcard to yourself.

Include details like:

- Where you live
- What you do for work or fun
- Who's around you
- What you're proud of

What challenges did you overcome?



Acknowledgement

We would like to thank all those who contributed towards this workbook.

Authors, Nick Roberts, young people's project manager at the Lucy Faithfull Foundation Scotland, and Carol Robinson, project officer at the Lucy Faithfull Foundation Scotland.

The amazing families and young people who reviewed this workbook to make sure it's as helpful as it can be.

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Our colleagues, Professor Nancy Loucks - CEO at Families Outside, Dr Natasha Sabin - practice improvement advisor at the Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse, and Professor Rachel Armitage - professor of law and social justice at Leeds Beckett university law school for their external review.

Most of all, we would like to thank Deana and her family for the courage and bravery to tell their story as well as all the children and families who shared their journeys, knowledge and understanding - this workbook would not have been possible without you.

This project was funded through the Ideas for Change Fund, which is funded by David Graham of Changing Ideas and managed by Inspiring Scotland

Thank you.

Remember, we're here to help:

If you want to talk, you can speak to us anonymously at shorespace.org.uk.

Finally, we are always looking to improve what we offer.

If you have any feedback on how this workbook might be changed to better support you, please [have your say](#).



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