

# **Understanding my feelings – for young people**

Sometimes our feelings can be really upsetting or scary, especially if you're not sure why you feel the way you do. Are you feeling upset, scared or worried? Are you not sure why?

## ***What is happening to me?***

Thoughts and feelings can be hard to make sense of. You might be having new feelings you don't understand, like:

- just not feeling yourself
- feeling something isn't right
- finding it hard to enjoy things you normally would, such as spending time with friends or doing your favourite hobby
- feeling angry or sad
- wanting to be alone
- having strange thoughts that you don't understand.

## ***Why am I feeling this way?***

There are lots of things that can affect the way you feel, like:

- problems at home, school or in relationships
- big changes in your life
- confusion about who you are, your sexuality or beliefs
- pressure from yourself or others
- feeling lonely or like nobody understands
- being bullied or abused
- worrying about what's happening in the world, like things you hear about in the news.

## ***When does something become a mental health problem?***

A mental health problem is when the way you're thinking, feeling or reacting becomes difficult for you to cope with.

We can all feel worried, down, upset or angry at times and this can be normal. But if these feelings last a long time, it might be a sign that you need more help. For example, if the way you feel:

- affects you most days
- stops you from doing the things you enjoy
- makes you feel like you can't cope anymore

## *When should I ask for help?*

**It is always okay for you to ask for help.**

It's common to wonder if you can handle things on your own, or even just feel like you don't know where to start. Whatever the issue may be, big or small, **you don't ever need to cope on your own.** You can talk to someone as soon as something is worrying you and you feel ready to talk.

## *Why should I ask for help?*

Asking for help can feel like a really hard step but reaching out for support can help you to:

- find support to help with how you're feeling
- feel like you're not alone
- share how you feel with someone you trust
- understand your feelings better
- speak to a professional, like a doctor, counsellor or mental health expert
- stop things from getting worse.

## *What can I do right now?*

- Talk to someone you trust, like a friend or trusted adult, such as your teacher.
- Visit your doctor.
- Take some time to do something you enjoy or find relaxing

Reference: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

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You can talk to someone confidentially who is trained to listen and support you, over the phone, by text or by webchat. Here are some examples:

- **[Childline](#)** (0800 11 11) – Run a free 24-hour helpline, email service and online and phone counselling service for children and young people in the UK. They can also provide Welsh speaking counsellors.
- **[Samaritans](#)** (116 123) – Emotional support for anyone feeling down, experiencing distress or struggling to cope.
- **[HopeLineUK](#)** (0800 068 4141, or text 07786 209697) – Advisors trained to help you focus on staying safe from suicide. They can provide advice and support that may help you to stay safe.
- **[The Mix](#)** (0800 808 4994) – Offer a helpline, email, live chat, telephone counselling service and crisis text line for anyone under 25 years old wanting support.