



Personal, social and learning-to-learn

Managing uncertainty

I bet you know the feeling of uncertainty. When you feel stressed out, lost and have no idea what will happen in the future. Do not worry! **You are not alone.** In this unit, you will understand your feelings better and acquire skills that help you manage uncertainty.

Discipline area	Writing, Reading and Literature
Topic	Well-being
Estimated time	1h 40'
Learning goals	<p>If you go through this whole unit, you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand your emotions better • be able to cope with stressful situations better

Warm-up

Before you learn how to manage uncertainty, let's see what you and your buddy know about yourselves in these situations:

1

Think about a situation when **you felt lost** and did not know what will happen to you or someone who is important to you. Try to remember the situation. Why were you worried? Who could you talk to? How was the situation solved (if it was at all)?

2

Turn to your buddy and share your memories with each other. Listen to your buddy carefully.

3

Do you realise similarities in your memories and emotions? Exchange your observations.

4

And now, can you think of at least one other way to deal with the situation your buddy experienced? Be creative and think of alternatives. Share them with each other.

Learn

1

The pandemic or other uncertain situations may affect us mentally.

Let's get some tips for coping with such situations.

Before the pandemic, being at school or seeing friends and family were just some of the things you could be certain about. Unfortunately, these things have become uncertain. Schools have closed, you could not see your friends in real life, and you may not have seen some of your family members for a long time. Because of this uncertainty, you may have felt upset, annoyed, scared, worried, or even, just nothing. It is important to remember that **to feel these emotions, any of these, is completely normal** and I bet the adults around you have felt the same way too. You might have felt like this not only in the pandemic but in other stressful situations such as an illness, a war or moving to another place.

Let's see some tips that might help you in such uncertain times:

SHARING

If you feel worried about something, remember that it is completely normal, and the best thing to do is to share it. Go to an adult you trust, let them know you feel worried and try your best to explain why. You could also write it down or draw it.

MINDFULNESS

Being mindful helps us when our heads are full of emotions. Go back to your senses! What 5 things can you see? What 4 things can you hear? What 3 things can you feel? What 2 things can you smell? What can you taste? You may not be able to answer all of these questions, but stopping what you are doing and being aware of your senses can help you in stressful times.

When you have done it a couple of times, try to do it in loud, crowded places too. It is a fun and interesting experiment that helps you to stay mindful in every situation.

CONNECTING

It is very important to keep in touch with your friends even if you can't meet in person. If you don't have access to a phone or laptop, ask an adult to help you connect online, or try the old-fashioned way and write a letter or draw a picture for your friends and family and mail it to them.

HOBBIES

Even if the circumstances don't allow you to keep up with your hobbies, try something that you can do: dancing, crafts, drawing, singing, listening to music, or practice sports on your own. These are also great ways to express ourselves, if we can't do it with words. Keep doing the things you enjoy and get an adult to help you if you need it.

These are the top tips for you: Remember, it is very important to look after yourself in uncertain times and you don't have to do it all by yourself!

Now it's time to discuss and write down the answers to the following questions with your buddy.

1. How did the pandemic affect schools and friendships?
2. List 4 tips to cope with uncertainty.
3. Do you have your own method to cope with uncertainty?
4. What are the 5 senses? (Go back to the text and check if you guessed them right.)

2

Together with your buddy, connect the following things with the 5 senses.
(One thing can match with more than one sense)

bee

ice cream

sun

burnt cookies

flowers

meow

strawberry

dirty socks

table

chirping

teddy bear

pizza

train

printer

boiling water

waves

drum

fire

Create

1

Together with your buddy, write down the main emotions: joy, sadness, anger, fear, worry, excitement. If you want to add more, feel free to do so!

2

Now think in silence, alone: think about situations when you felt these emotions. Connect emotions with situations. Now think about your reactions when you were in a certain situation and felt a certain emotion (for example: I felt worried before an exam -> it was hard to concentrate and I had a stomach-ache, I didn't want to talk to anyone). It is very important to understand how we react in certain situations and why. Write them down.

3

Go back to your buddy and create a drawing on a big piece of paper. Draw emojis that represent the above listed emotions. Without mentioning names, write down some of your reactions under the emojis. Do you have common reactions with your buddy?

Reflect

Be each other's happiness coach!

1

Each of you writes down on separate strips of paper at least 15 things that make you feel good and are good for you (it could be objects, persons, actions, places...). Be precise and concrete.

2

When both of you are done, read them aloud* to each other and while doing so, put each of these strips in front of you. Arrange them in order of importance. Done?

3

Which of those things are not (enough) present in your daily life and how could you change that? Help each other to make up strategies which can increase your well-being.

4

In the future try to exchange regularly about each other's well-being: are your strategies working? If not, inspire each other to try out new ones!

*In case there are things you don't want to share with your buddy, put them down, without reading them aloud.