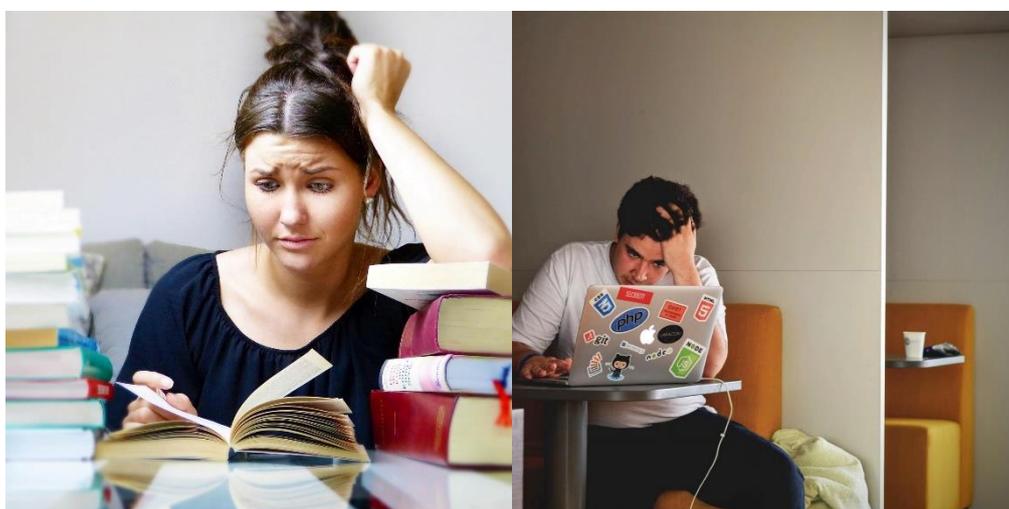


## Changing Stressful Thinking

Our thinking affects our sense of wellbeing and for every situation or challenge we experience there is more than one way to look at it. For example – imagine there is a presentation to do as part of a college assignment. Why does one student feel excited by this but another feels so scared? Do you think they are thinking the same thoughts? And who do you think feels better?

When you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed it is because there is some automatic thinking happening that is negative.



To help change stressful thinking I have included some journal sheets for you to use to record your thoughts down. This will help you to identify thinking patterns that do not help you and to help you to challenge the truth behind these thoughts. In turn this will then help you change negative and stressful thinking patterns to more neutral and positive ones. Changing negative thinking patterns will alter your perspective on things and have a positive impact on how you feel, what you do and how you experience the world around you.

Check out the journaling prompt within this section called ‘The Thought Record Journal Sheet’. When you notice yourself experiencing an automatic negative thought, you can use this worksheet to help you to create a more balanced thought and ease those emotions.

## Changing Stressful Feelings

As humans, we think that we should be feeling great all of the time and when we are not feeling great, we can get irritated or annoyed with ourselves, others and the world around us. Yet, without realising, the annoyance towards how we are feeling actually heightens these emotions more, leading us to feel even more irritated and annoyed and even becoming angry or anxious. This is because, humans naturally want to push away emotions that do not feel nice.



A more helpful approach to our not so nice feeling emotions is to actually stay with the experience and let it play out, without any attempt to alter or respond to the emotion. This will allow the wave the emotion to flow and settle back down and develops our own tolerance to emotions and feelings, strengthening our emotional resilience and equipping us better to deal with challenges.

To help with this I have provided you with a journaling prompt called ‘The Emotion Record Journal Sheet’ in this section. When you experience a not nice emotion, you can use this worksheet and follow the steps to help you.

## Changing Stressful Behaviours

What do you do to cope? When things feel tough, what do you do?

Behaviour is what we do to cope with experiences, situations and other people. It is our behaviour that gets us what we need and keeps us safe and comfortable.



However, when we are feeling a not nice emotion or thinking an unhelpful thought we can choose a behaviour that instantly gives us a sense of feeling better but in the long run we end up beating ourselves up. For example you are feeling anxious about going to the shops or going for an interview and your behaviour is to avoid it. There is an instant feeling of feeling calmer but the longer term consequence is you have no food to eat or you didn't get the job you wanted. This then leads to you beating yourself up and giving yourself a hard time.

Within this section I have provided you with a journaling prompt called 'The Behaviour Record Journal Sheet' to help you. When you notice a behaviour that is unhelpful, you can use this worksheet to help you to create a more balanced viewpoint, including intended consequences and what you hope to achieve and gain by behaving in this way. With this information identified you can then consider what behaviour would be most useful.