Tool Kit

Forming your tool-kit

A tool kit is essentially strategies to cope with emotions and bring us back to where we want to be. Once a child is aware of some of their triggers they can begin to work on an emotional ‘tool kit’. This is a bank of ideas/exercises or methods they can use when they sense their emotions have been triggered to keep control of their emotions.

Examples:

**Red Zone:**

* **Size of the problem** – count to ten and talk with someone about the size of the problem – has it perhaps been over exaggerated in the moment. Your reaction might change once you’ve taken this time to think.
* **Belly breathing –** helps to tell the nervous system to calm down. Lie on your back and place one hand on your chest and one on your stomach, breathe in, try to keep your chest hand still and feel the stomach hand move, repeat for 10 breaths. Then try standing and sitting.
* **Take a brain break –** distance yourself from a situation, go for a walk, play a short unrelated game or have a drink of water. Sometimes our brain needs a break.
* **Deep Pressure** – using touch or weight to help you to calm down. Carrying a heavy bag, having a heavy blanket wrapped around you.
* **Stress Ball** **– Squeeze a squishy ball or toy to help release some frustrations.**
* **Wall/chair Push ups – lean your palms against a wall/chair and use your arms to push your body away.**
* **Sensory Bottle – create a sensory bottle and give it a shake when you’re frustrated. Watch it settle and let your** emotions do the same. **Here’s some sensory bottle ideas** <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/edytheburroughs/sensory-bottles/>



**Blue Zone:**

* **Draw a picture –** take some time away.
* **Hug a friend or grown up –** hugs can help us calm down
* **Happy Thoughts -** think about happy times or happy thoughts.
* **Play with a pet –** stroking an animal can help relax your body and improve your mood.
* **Read a story** – sit in a comfy chair and read or look at a happy story.
* **Music** – listen to your favourite song.
* **Go outside** – being out in the fresh air can cheer you up and bring a new outlook on things.

**Yellow Zone:**

* **Breathe** - Take some deep breathes and try to refocus your mind.
* **Hug** - Ask for a hug and time to calm down.
* **Chat** - Talk to an adult about what is going on. Why might you be starting to lose control?
* **Fidget Toy** – have a quiet toy you can play with that doesn’t disturb others. This might let your brain refocus and get back to task.
* **Jumping Jacks** – do 20 jumping jacks to burn off any excess energy and then go back to your task.
* **Build a tower** – take a 10 minute break and build a huge tower. Make it as tall as you!
* **Mindfulness** – do some yoga on YouTube by searching under ‘cosmic kids’ or ‘peace out’.



Green Zone: - staying in the green zone

* Compliment others on their work.
* Complete the task you set out to do
* Complete a list and tick off your achievements.
* Help others to make you feel good about yourself.
* Set yourself easy to achieve daily goals and you will feel a sense of achievement as you work through them.
* List all the good things that have happened to you today.

Other ideas for your took kit can be found on Pinterest if you search ‘emotional tool kit’. Remember different things work for different people. Find what works for you ☺

Useful Clips:

<https://youtu.be/JVtBWiy-VKo> - DJ learns about the Zones of Regulation

<https://youtu.be/3bKuoH8CkFc> - Why do we lose control of our emotions?

<https://youtu.be/j0YDE8_jsHk> - Cookie Monster learns self-control

<https://youtu.be/H_O1brYwdSY> - Fun games to learn self-regulation/self-control that adults can teach children to play.