

growing up, IBD and emotional wellbeing



Being a young adult is not easy for anyone. But inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) can give you an additional set of things to worry about.

We know that IBD affects your mind as well as your body.

Children and young people with conditions like yours are at greater risk than other people their age to experience mental ill health¹.

It can be hard to do everything you need to do to manage your illness while coping with school and keeping up with your hobbies and your friends.

You might feel low sometimes or have problems at school or at home. It can be really tough to talk about how your symptoms and your IBD makes you feel. All this means you might sometimes feel angry, anxious or lonely. You might even feel as though you are losing control sometimes.

But you are not the only one who feels this way. Many young adults with IBD go through the same things and have the same emotions.

practical help

The good news is there are lots of things you can do to look after yourself and your feelings.

The CICRA emotional wellbeing kit will help you understand and talk about how you are feeling. You will find information, activities and tips on how to cope from other people in the same situation as you.

Always remember that asking for help is nothing to be ashamed of. It shows you are brave enough to face your feelings and do things to help yourself.

Of course, not everything you go through will be because of your IBD – but some things will. This pack will help you understand when your health condition is affecting how you feel.

Because we believe that your life should not be limited by your IBD.



“Crohn’s disease has had a huge impact on my education and social wellbeing. However, I maintain my sense of humour and have even given my stoma a name.”

Natalia, 16

¹ <https://www.nice.org.uk/sharedlearning/transforming-mental-health-care-for-children-and-young-people-with-long-term-conditions-mental-health-and-psychological-wellbeing-drop-in-centre>



diagnosis and your feelings

An IBD diagnosis is a lot to deal with. You might feel scared, angry, shocked or anxious. It can be a very tough time for you and your family. But you can get through this.

You may be unsure about what happens next and worried about what it means for your future. Lots of people in your position think 'why me?' Scientists do not know why some people get IBD and others don't – but we do know you have not done anything wrong. It is not your fault.

It may all feel overwhelming at the moment. You are not the only one who feels this way.

It is different for everyone, but remember you are not on your own. Lots of people have been where you are now and have found a way through. We, your family and your friends are all here to help.

"It isn't as scary as it may seem. It took me a while to realise that, but you have to take every day in your stride."

Hannah, 16

diagnosis and your feelings



hints and tips

- **Get informed.** Knowledge is power so research your condition – but only as much as you feel comfortable with. Once you understand it, it will not seem as scary.
- **Beware Dr Google.** Be careful what you read because it cannot all be trusted. Stick to trustworthy sources such as CICRA, the NHS and your healthcare team.
- **Write down your questions.** We can all go blank in the doctor's office. Try making a note of your questions on your phone or on a pad in your bedroom, or order a [CICRA symptom impact tracker](#). That way, you can take the list to appointments with you.
- **Get involved.** It is natural to want your parents or carers to look after you right now. And they will. But try to get involved in conversations about your treatment and care. It will help you to feel more in control and prepare you for the road ahead.
- **Get support.** Your healthcare team. CICRA and other charities. Support groups, your friends and family. All of these people are here to help you. Getting the support your family needs will help you to feel less alone, feel less scared and get the information you need.
- **Give yourself time.** An IBD diagnosis is a lot to take in. Everyone will deal with it differently. Take it one step at a time. You will adjust to this 'new normal' in your own time.
- **Never blame yourself.** We do not know what causes IBD. But we do know it is nothing that you or your family have done.
- **Remember IBD does not define you.** You are still the same person you have always been. It may always be a part of you, but it is not the whole of you.

“There are some tough times, but keeping your mind on all the things you want to do when you feel better really does help to keep you going.”

Luke, 16

diagnosis and your feelings



activity one

recognising the curve

When you are told you have IBD, it can feel like you have lost something. Lots of people say it feels like grieving. Grieving is the process people goes through when a loved one dies.

Experts say there are five stages of grieving. These are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Each of them affects how you feel and how you act.

When you are diagnosed, you might go through some or all of them. You might go through them in any order. You might go through some stages more than once. That is all normal. Remember, it is a lot to take in.

In the end, you can come to accept your new normal and get on with the rest of your life. In the meantime, it can help to understand where you are on this 'journey' and how it is affecting your feelings.



diagnosis and your feelings



activity two

write your story

Diagnosis throws up lots of different feelings. They can all get mixed up and it can be difficult to see how you will cope with them all.

Sometimes, it can help to put things in order by telling your story. It can help you figure out exactly what is making you feel the way you do. Once you know more about how you feel, you can speak to your parents/carers or healthcare teams about it. They can get you the help you need.

Why not try writing your story now, then doing it again in a month or so to see what has changed? Remember, only do this if you are comfortable with it. You might not be ready yet, and that is fine. You can come back to it at any time.

My life before I was told I had IBD

When I started to feel unwell

activity two continued

How it felt when I was diagnosed

What changed when I was diagnosed

What life is like now

What I would like my life to be like in the future

diagnosis and your feelings



more ways to get help or support

- [Watch](#) Dr Kate Blakeley talk about living and coping with IBD
- Speak to others in your situation at a CICRA [Family Day](#)
- Speak to Laura, CICRA's [Family Support Worker](#) or ask her to connect you with others in your situation
- See the emotional wellbeing kit [resources library](#) for lots more ideas and support
- Read [more about IBD](#) on CICRA's website
- Ask your healthcare team to direct you to any local support groups or check if they can refer you to a psychological therapist

There may be other times when you feel worried or stressed out after diagnosis, such as during life transitions or during a flare up, and our emotional wellbeing kit covers several areas, so keep it to refer to.

"When I was told about my diagnosis, I felt a whole mix of emotions and had so many questions... Worry filled my mind... I was relieved that I finally had a diagnosis but knew I had a long road ahead of me,"

Amelia, 13

do you need a little more help?

We designed this kit to help you and your family cope with some of the common ways IBD can make you all feel. But sometimes, you might need a little more help – and that is OK.



Lots of people feel that way.

If you spot any of the following signs, it might be a good idea to ask your healthcare team if they can offer any extra psychological support, or at least point you in the right direction of services in your area:

- Feeling like you cannot cope
- Struggling to use the tools in this kit
- The tools in this kit do not seem to be working for you
- A lack of interest in the things you usually enjoy
- A feeling of sadness that does not go away
- Thoughts of harming yourself or others



coping with IBD in the family

IBD can get in the way of life. There are hospital appointments, medications and food choices to think about. Sometimes, you might feel too tired to do your homework, your household chores or even go out with your friends or family.

You may feel your family has changed since you all found out you had IBD. Maybe you don't do the same things, or maybe you treat each other differently. Your parents or carers might be more worried about you going out with your friends than they used to be, for example.

Lots of people find this can make them sad, angry or frustrated. Sometimes, your family can get frustrated too. All this can lead to arguments or disagreements.

Remember, your family love you and want to be there for you. It can be difficult for them too.

Luckily, there are things you can do when everything starts to get too much. IBD does get in the way of life sometimes, but it does not always have to.

"I thought having a colostomy would stop me living, going out with friends, even working to my full potential. I also thought relationships would be difficult. But I later told myself that if they cannot accept my past then I have no future with them,"

William, 23

coping with IBD in the family



hints and tips

- **Build your group.** Your friends and family want to help you – but what might you need? And who would be the best people to ask? Will you need someone to talk to when it all gets too much? Or someone to remind you to take your medication?
- **Beware Dr Google.** Not everything you read online is true. Misinformation can make you feel even more anxious and overwhelmed. Look out for trusted sources, like CICRA or the NHS.
- **Share the load.** Your healthcare team are there to help you so make sure you use them! Many people find it helps to talk to people who are going through the same thing. You could go to a CICRA Family Day or join an online support group.
- **Share the care.** As hard as it might be sometimes, it is important to work with your parents or carers to manage your care. It is easier to deal with IBD when you have their support.
- **Go easy on yourself.** No one is perfect and no one can do all the right things all of the time. If something does not go to plan, do not beat yourself up. Instead, think about how you could do things differently next time.
- **Not everything that happens will be related to IBD** – try to remember family life is difficult for everyone sometimes.
- **Try making a self-soothe box** and going to it when things get too much. Fill a box with things that make you feel calm and happy – they might be a favourite perfume or scent, pictures of friends and family, inspiring quotes or even song lyrics. It is up to you.

“My family have played a bigger part in my life recently. My mum is always taking me to appointments and cheering me up. My grandparents are always willing... to look after my two siblings while I am in hospital or at appointments. They have all really helped me to cope when my Crohn’s is bad, and they are always there for me no matter what.”

Amelia, 13

coping with IBD in the family



activity one

Building your group

Remember your friends and family want to support you – but sometimes you might need to tell them how.

What sort of support do you think you will need and who do you think will be able to help you? Thinking about this now can make things less stressful later on.

Try completing our group planner. We have added some examples to get you started.

| Type of support | What I need | Group member |
|---------------------|---|--------------|
| Emotional support | Someone to talk to when things get too much | |
| Practical support | Someone to remind me to take my medication | |
| Educational support | Someone to help me if I get behind on my school/college/university work | |
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coping with IBD in the family

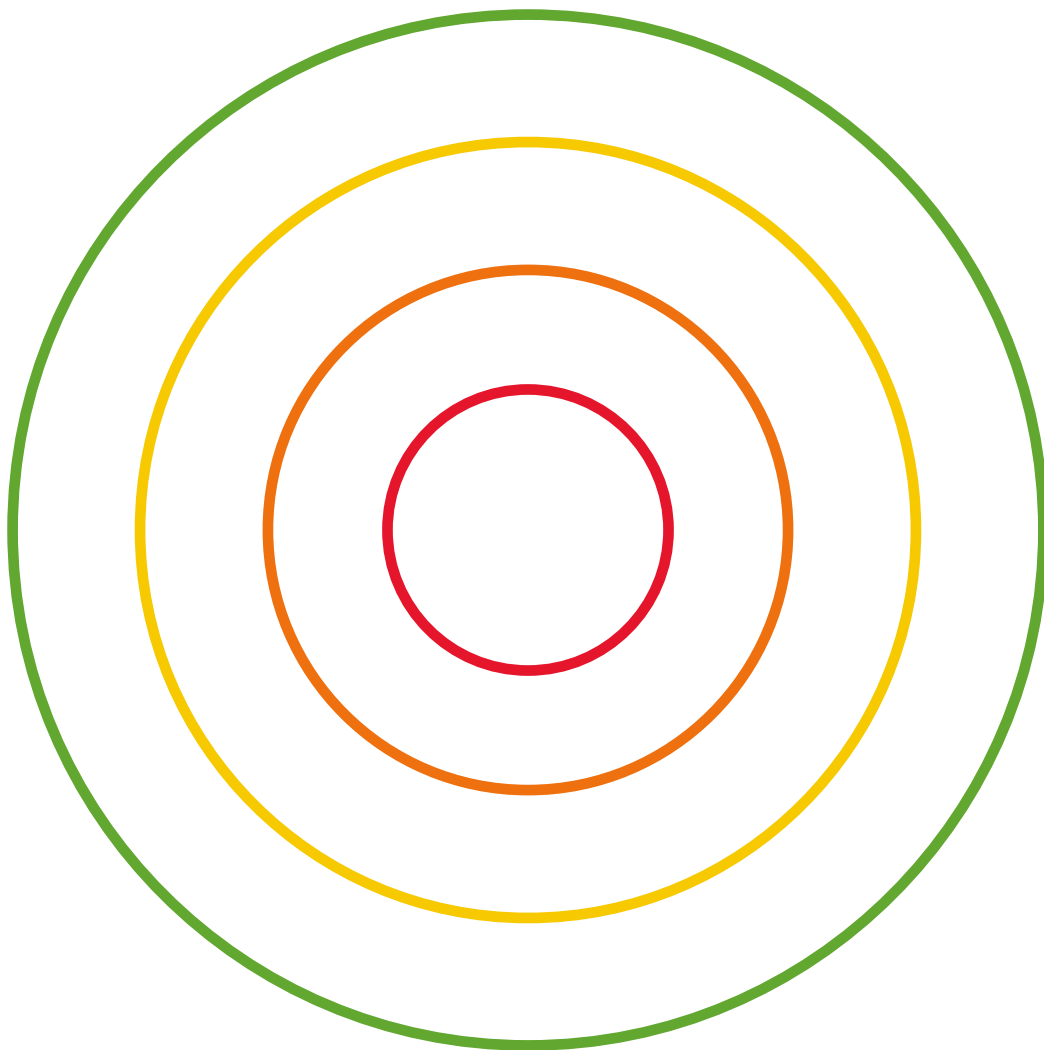


activity two

Circle of support

Dealing with IBD isn't easy – but you are not on your own. You are surrounded by people who love you and care about you.

Fill out our circle of support and see for yourself. Write your name in the middle circle below. Then write names of all the people you feel closest to in the next circle, your next group of 'close people' go in the one after that, continue to do this for all of the outer circles. You may need to add more circles!



coping with IBD in the family



activity three

Take a breath

If you are feeling anxious or overwhelmed, it can help and take a moment to concentrate on your breathing. Why not try:

1. Breathe in slowly to the count of four
2. Hold your breath to the count of four
3. Breathe out to the count of four
4. Wait for four seconds
5. Repeat steps one to four until you feel calm

You could also try colour breathing. Think of a nice calm colour then imagine breathing it in. Then choose another colour that means stress and worry, and imagine breathing it out. Keep going until you feel calm.

coping with IBD in the family



activity four

no hassle zone

If you are feeling overwhelmed, angry or frustrated, try taking yourself away from it all.

You could create a no hassle zone in your home. Try explaining to your family that when you go into your zone, you would like to be left alone to calm down.

It could be anywhere you feel comfortable – a quiet corner in the garden or your bedroom, or a soft blanket in an alcove or a corner. Why not try adding some soft lighting or a Bluetooth speaker so you can listen to calming music.

Or have set times where no-one is allowed to talk about or ask you about IBD, e.g. when you have just got home from school



coping with IBD in the family



more ways to get help or support

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- Speak to Laura, CICRA's [Family Support Worker](#) or ask her to connect you with others in your situation
- See the emotional wellbeing kit [resources library](#) for lots more ideas and support
- Ask your child's healthcare team to direct you to any local support groups

do you need a little more help?

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Lots of people feel that way.



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dealing with school or college when you have IBD

IBD and education do not always mix. It can be hard to catch up after being in hospital and you might have a daily battle with fatigue and pain. You might feel left out if you have to miss sports clubs, trips or social activities.

Some young people with IBD are small for their age, which may make them worried about bullying. You may have to take steroids. That can lead to weight gain, a puffy face and acne, and change the way you feel and act.

It can feel like an embarrassing condition to have – and to talk about. Having to go to the toilet a lot, the possibility of accidents and the general feeling of 'being different' are all hard. You might feel low or worried. You might want to hide away and stop doing things you used to like. It can be really tough when you have a flare up and get more ill.

Remember, IBD might have made things harder for you at school/ college, but some of the challenges may have been there anyway. All young people can find it hard, try and pick out what is hard because of IBD and what would have been anyway, even if you didn't have IBD. Sometimes we can blame everything on IBD!

Luckily, there are lots of things you can do to make going to school or college with IBD easier.

"It seemed impossible to start living a normal life, but my parents and siblings helped me build up the confidence and once I went back to school it wasn't as bad as I'd imagined."

Orlaith, 14

dealing with school or college when you have IBD



hints and tips

- You might not want to tell anyone about your condition, but **we would recommend telling your class teacher** or head of year and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO). Between them, they can make sure you have the support you need.
- **Having plans in place**, even if they are never used, is much less stressful than trying to get what you need in the middle of a crisis. Start thinking about what support you might need, such as extra time on exams, early. That way you can be prepared.
- **We are all changing all the time**. What we need, and how, will change too. Work with your parents or carers and school staff to review your healthcare plan at every open evening and after any relapse.
- **If you are going to miss 3 weeks** or more of education, begin discussions with school or college as soon as possible to find out what they can put in place to support your learning at home. This will help you keep up.
- **Remember spending time with your friends is important**. Sometimes, you might want to hide away but that could make you feel worse. Why not try meeting with just one or two close friends for an hour or so?
- **You might not want to tell anyone about your condition, but why not just pick one or two people you trust?** It means you will always have someone on your side.
- Are there any **practical ways to deal with IBD** symptoms in school or college? Could you keep a **second set of textbooks** at home, to avoid carrying them around? Or could you have **extra time between classes for toilet stops?** Ask for a **toilet pass** or a **Can't Wait card** from CICRA, so you can go whenever you need to.
- **Can you distract yourself from pain during classes?** Maybe try a fidget spinner, concentrate on your breathing, or just get up and have a stretch.

"I had a flare in Year 6 that carried on into Years 7 and 8. It wasn't nice to go through the start of secondary school with, but I haven't let it stop me. My friends at school have been very supportive. We are always laughing and whenever I'm not at my best they always keep me up and running."

Harry, 15

dealing with school or college when you have IBD



activity one

Express your fatigue

Lots of people with IBD have fatigue. It can make it hard to concentrate or take part in class. It can make you irritable or frustrated – especially when someone says it is 'just' being tired.

It can help to be able to explain fatigue to tutors and friends. Some people say it feels like 'hitting a wall' or 'being completely drained of any energy'. But it is different for everyone.

What does it feel like to you? Why not try writing it down?

Start a fatigue diary

If you understand how different activities make you feel, it might help you manage your fatigue better.

Why not make a note of what you have been up to, and how much energy you have at different points in the day? You could do it on your phone or start a paper diary, like the one below.

Try filling it in once or twice a day.

| Day and time | Activity log | Energy level |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Monday morning | PE at school | 😞 |
| Monday evening | Dinner and TV with the family | 😊 |
| Tuesday daytime | Hospital appointment, history lesson | 😴 |
| Tuesday evening | After school club | 😞 |

You might find that you have more energy first thing in the morning, or last thing at night. Once you know that, you can plan around it.

Maybe imagine you have a jar of 'energy marbles' and each marble is one 'bit' of energy you have for a day. You might have a certain number of marbles for sport or exercise. Then there is another number for doing stuff you need your brain for, like schoolwork, and some marbles for having fun.

How would you use your marbles? What are the best things to 'spend' your marbles on and when? Remember, it is different for everyone so try different things to see what works for you.



dealing with school or college when you have IBD



activity two

Who are you?

IBD is only part of what makes you who you are. Focusing on what you are good at will help you see that.

Why not write a list of the things you like about yourself? Try asking yourself the following questions and, remember, you can always ask your family for a little help.

- 1) **What are you good at?**
- 2) **What do you like best about yourself?**
- 3) **What are you most proud of?**
- 4) **Do you remember a time you did something you didn't think you would be able to?**
- 5) **How did you do it?**
- 6) **What would you do differently if you had to do it again?**

You could even put the list on the fridge or pin it to a notice board in the house.

dealing with school or college when you have IBD



more ways to get help or support

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- Speak to Laura, CICRA's [Family Support Worker](#) or ask her to connect you with others in your situation
- See the emotional wellbeing kit [resources library](#) for lots more ideas and support
- CICRA's [resources for schools](#) include booklets for primary and secondary schools, quick guides for class teachers, information about individual healthcare plans, advice on exams and tests, and examples of letters to exam boards
- Young people share their tips on coping with school in these [videos](#)
- [Bullying UK](#) offers help and support on dealing with bullying

do you need a little more help?

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Lots of people feel that way.

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talking about it

Everyone always says it is good to talk. We know it is not always that easy, especially if the topic may feel embarrassing to talk about like bowels and IBD..

It can be hard to put your emotions into words, especially if they do not always make sense to you. You might think no one will understand how you feel.

But not talking can make things even worse. It can make you behave in ways that you might not want to. If you are angry after your diagnosis, for example, you might take it out on your brother or sister. Or if you are scared about the future you might start giving up your hobbies.

Of course, IBD is not the only thing you have going on. There's school or college work, your friends, your hobbies, boyfriends and girlfriends to think about, too.

Remember, you are not the only one who feels like this. All young people – even those who are not living with IBD – have stuff to deal with.

There are things you can do to make things easier for yourself. And we are here to help.

“My friends know about my condition as I have been very open about it and I believe that this is the right thing to do. It makes playing out and sleepovers a lot easier as I take my tablets with me.”

Josh, 12.

cicra 
better lives for children with crohns and colitis

talking about it

hints and tips

- **It is not your fault. No one knows what causes IBD, but we do know that you did not do anything wrong.**
- **You might not want to tell anyone about your IBD. But why not choose one or two people who you really trust?** It could be anyone – a friend, aunt, uncle, grandparent or teacher. That way, you have always got someone to talk to when you need them.
- **Try to open up about your condition.** It can help you to control how people see you. You only need to tell them as much as you are comfortable with. Try something like: 'I have a problem with my tummy. It's OK, I take medicine for it and you can't catch it. Anyway, did you see the match/show/film last night?'
- **Give your parents a chance.** Some young people do not feel comfortable speaking to their parents or carers about what is going on in their lives. Remember they were your age once too! Tell them what is bothering you and they might understand more than you thought.
- Some people say they find it hard to talk about their feelings because they do not really understand them. One way to start making sense of your emotions is to **start a journal**. It might help you to figure out how you feel so you can talk about it.
- **Do you like music?** You could try putting your feelings into lyrics. You could write your own song, or make up new words for a favourite rap or song. It might make it easier for you to understand and express how you are feeling.
- **How does it feel when other people open up to you?** Are you happy that you are able to help them? Does it help you to feel like you are a good friend who can be trusted? Does it help you to feel closer to them? Remember it can work the other way round too!
- **Use your healthcare team.** The good thing about talking to your IBD doctor or nurse is they have seen it all before. It means you can talk about whatever you want without ever having to be embarrassed.



"I am lucky to have my family and friends to support me. My school friends always check up on me to make sure I am okay. I have also met some friends while having my infusions at hospital, this is nice because we share our stories and text each other. Friendship and laughter are great medicines."

Katherine, 15.

talking about it



activity one

Writing versus talking

Sometimes, it can be easier to write about what is happening in your life than it is to talk about it.

Why not try sending your parents, carers or friends an email? Do you know what you would say? You could try answering the questions below if you think that would help

Did something happen? What was it and when did it happen?

How did it make you feel at the time?

Why do you think it made you feel that way?

How do you feel about it now?

Is there anything anyone could do to help?

Another idea is to ask your parents, carers or friends to talk to you via an instant messaging app. Remember, they love you and want to support you. They will be happy to communicate in whatever way you feel most comfortable with.



talking about it




activity two

A postcard from the heart

If you are having trouble opening up, you could try sending a postcard to someone you trust, to let them know how you are feeling. Or you could even write the postcard to IBD.

Why not draw a picture on the front that shows how you feel about things – however that might be. On the back, you can write just a few sentences about what made you feel that way. You might want to send to your parents, sibling, or a friend, or you might not want to send it to anyone. All of these are OK. It is just about giving you a way to open up about how you feel.





talking about it



activity three

be prepared

Thinking ahead can be helpful - what questions might your friends ask? Maybe think of some questions (What is IBD? Can I catch it? What medicine do you need to take? etc) and write down how you might want to answer them, so you feel more prepared for when these questions come up.

What do you wish others knew about your IBD?

Once you've written them down, think about showing your parents or carers?

talking about it

more ways to get help or support

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- Speak to others in your situation at a CICRA [Family Day](#)
- Speak to Laura, CICRA's [Family Support Worker](#) or ask her to connect you with others in your situation
- See the emotional wellbeing kit [resources library](#) for lots more ideas and support
- [MIND](#) has lots of tips for young people who want to open up to friends and family



"If you feel down or anxious, talk to someone."

Mansi, 13

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taking control

When you live with IBD, life can be unpredictable. You don't know when you will get ill, how bad it will be or what will happen. It can make you feel like you have too many thoughts in your head or that you are not in control.

Feeling that way can make you act differently. Some people might not be able to stop thinking about their IBD. Others might try to ignore it completely. It can make you feel angry, lonely or sad.

It can also make you think differently. Do you worry about things all the time? Do you find yourself not wanting to go out or take your medicine? Well, you are not the only one.

But with the help of your family and friends, you can take control of your life and your feelings.

"I wouldn't change me having this illness... I believe that I am the person I am because of it. I feel that I have come out stronger on the other side. Don't forget to be proud of yourself and who you are."

Abbi, 16

taking control

hints and tips

- Remember, IBD is only part of what makes you who you are. **You are not a patient, you are a person.** Try making a list of all the things you like about yourself. What things are you good at? What do you think is important in life? These are the things that make you who you are, not IBD
- **Take a step back.** Try to focus on the things you enjoy, so you can forget about your IBD for a bit – do you play football or are you a massive music fan? Do you belong to a local club or enjoy spending time with your friends?
- It's easy to focus on how we are different from our peers which can make us feel worse. Try to **list all the ways you are still similar** to your friends.
- **Have you tried mindfulness?** It means paying attention to everything that is happening in the here and now, noticing it without making a judgement about it. It can help us stop getting lost or tangled up in our thoughts or feelings. Try sitting quietly with your eyes closed for a few minutes. What can you hear? What can you smell? If you like it check out [Calm](#), [Cosmic Kids](#), [Headspace](#) or [Smiling Mind](#).
- Getting involved in your own medical care is a great way to take control of things. **Try reading up about your condition** on the [CICRA website](#) and letting your parents/carers see how much you have learned.
- **Keep taking your medicine** – it's the best way for you to stay in control of your IBD. Why not make a list of all the good and bad things about your medication?
- **Notice when things are getting too much.** Sometimes, people can't stop worrying about something bad happening. Try to catch yourself if this happens to you. Think: Is this thought useful to me? Try imagining a balloon with your worry inside it – then let it go!



"I learned NOT to let the illness control me...I control the illness."

Scott, 16

taking control



activity one

Are you a disaster forecaster?

If you feel as though you have lost control of your life, it can affect the way you think. Some young people can find themselves thinking that something awful is going to happen. But they probably have very little to back up their ideas.

Next time that happens to you, try asking yourself:

- **Am I thinking I can predict the future?**
- **How likely is it that the thing you are worried about might really happen?**
- **Is what I am thinking very helpful to me?**
- **What's most likely to happen?**
- **What if the thing I am worried about does not happen?**

taking control



activity two

Spotting negative thoughts

We all have negative thoughts sometimes. They are automatic, meaning they come out of nowhere. We cannot stop ourselves from getting them, but we can control how we react to them.

I can't control automatic thoughts
but I can control if they stay

recognise them
disagree with them
disprove them
let them go
think positively

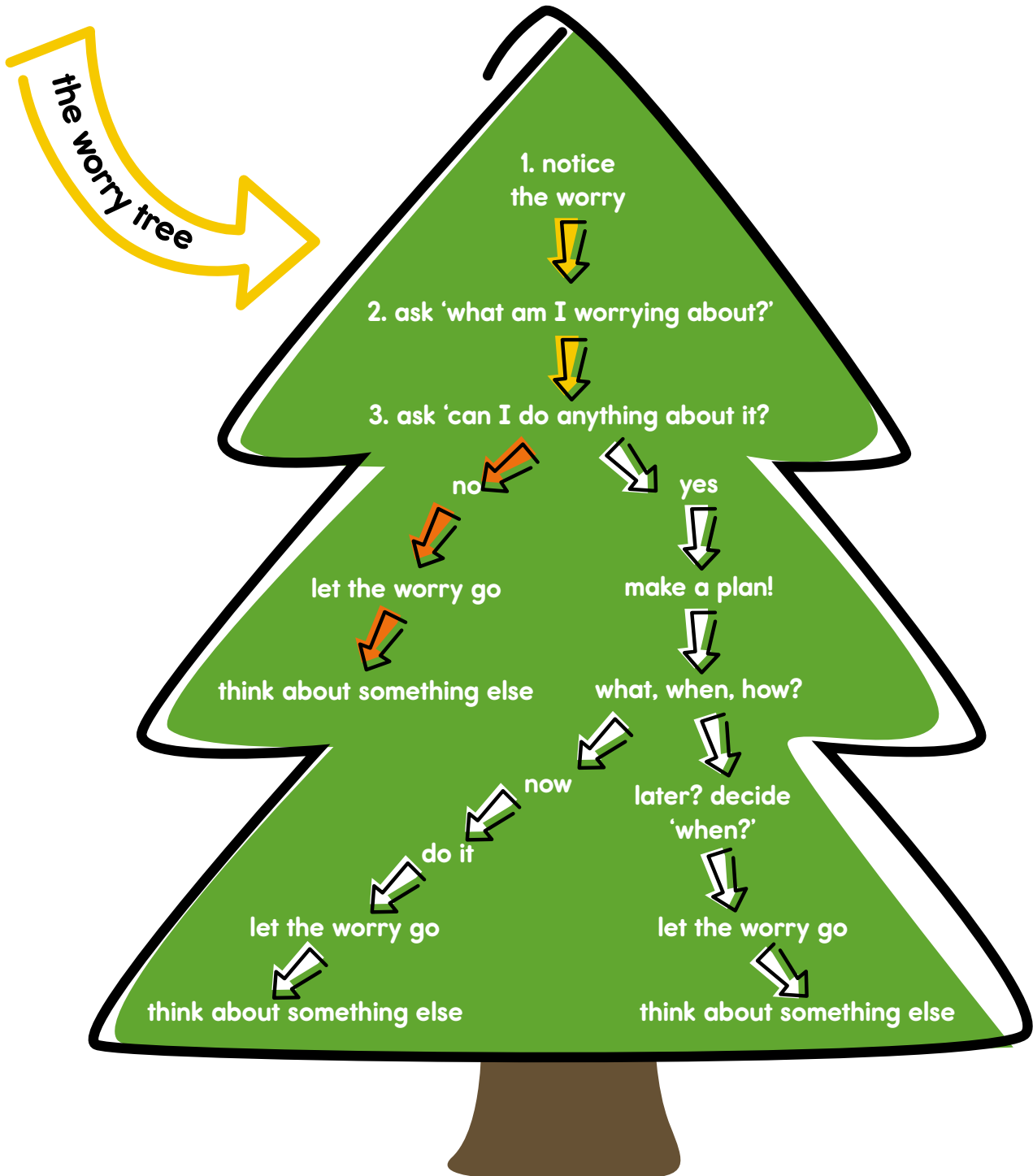
taking control



activity three

Climbing down the worry tree

People might say 'don't worry'. But how do we do that?
Try climbing down the worry tree.



If you are still finding it difficult to 'let the worry go', think about asking for help from the psychologist in your IBD team or talk to CICRA.

Adapted from Butler and Hope 2007



taking control

more ways to get help or support

- [Watch](#) Dr Kate Blakeley talk about living and coping with IBD
- Speak to others in your situation at a CICRA [Family Day](#)
- Speak to Laura, CICRA's [Family Support Worker](#) or ask her to connect you with others in your situation
- See the emotional wellbeing kit [resources library](#) for lots more ideas and support
- If you like mindfulness, check out [Calm](#), [Cosmic Kids](#), [Headspace](#) or [Smiling Mind](#).



"Having a chronic illness is terrifying and unpredictable. I never knew when a flare up would come to haunt me and I was left living in fear."

Karina, 21

do you need a little more help?

We designed this kit to help you and your family cope with some of the common ways IBD can make you all feel. But sometimes, you might need a little more help – and that is OK.



Lots of people feel that way.

If you spot any of the following signs, it might be a good idea to ask your healthcare team if they can offer any extra psychological support, or at least point you in the right direction of services in your area:

- Feeling like you cannot cope
- Struggling to use the tools in this kit
- The tools in this kit do not seem to be working for you
- A lack of interest in the things you usually enjoy
- A feeling of sadness that does not go away
- Thoughts of harming yourself or others

emotional wellbeing kit resource library

signposts and pointers: useful places to find more help

The CICRA Emotional Wellbeing Kit was designed to help you and your family cope with the feelings that come with IBD.

But there is a lot more help out there if you need it. We have listed some of our favourite websites, apps and services here.

Let us know if you have found something you think would help others like you, and we will see if we can add it, email support@cicra.org



Caring for your mental health

- [MIND](#) has lots of tips for young people who want to open up to friends and family
- [Young Minds](#) has lots of help and advice for children and young people struggling with their emotional wellbeing
- [On My Mind](#) aims to help young people make informed choices about their mental health and wellbeing
- [Child and adolescent mental health services \(CAMHS\)](#) CAMHS are the NHS services that work with children and young people who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing. Speak to your healthcare team to find out about services in your area
- [Samaritans](#) provides online and emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide
- [Childline](#) is an online and telephone counselling service for children and young people up to the age of 19.
- [PAPYRUS](#) offers confidential support and advice, as well as trusted information, to young people thinking about suicide
- [BlueIce](#) is an NHS-approved app that helps young people manage their emotions and reduce urges to self-harm. It includes a mood diary, techniques to reduce distress and automatic routing to emergency numbers if needed
- [Ieso](#) is an online course approved by the NHS. It uses instant messaging to put people with mental health problems in touch with cognitive behavioural therapists
- The NHS-approved [MeeTwo](#) app provides a safe and secure place for young people to anonymously discuss any issue with experts or other teenagers going through similar things
- [The Mix](#) offers free information and support for under 25s in the UK about sex, relationships, drugs, mental health, money and jobs
- [Anna Freud NCCF](#) is a charity dedicated to children's emotional wellbeing

emotional wellbeing kit resource library

signposts and pointers: useful places to find more help

Coping with bullying

- [Bullying UK](#) offers help and support on dealing with bullying
- [Childline](#) has lots of tips and information on coping with bullying
- The [Young Minds](#) website covers how bullying can make you feel and what you can do about it

Mindfulness, yoga and meditation

- The [Calm](#) website and app feature lots of different ways to try mindfulness. It is aimed at adults but is useful for older children
- The [Headspace](#) app has guided mindfulness exercises and videos. It is aimed at adults but is useful for older children
- [Cosmic Kids](#): Yoga, mindfulness and relaxation for younger children through interactive adventures
- [Smiling Mind](#) is a web and app-based meditation program developed by psychologists and educators]
- [Feeling Good](#) has a series of audio tracks designed to help you build confidence, energy and a positive mindset

Coping with IBD

- [Crohns and Colitis UK](#) is a national charity offering support for young people and families, as well as supporting adults affected by IBD
- www.whatwhychildreninhospital.org.uk has lots of information and videos to help prepare parents, carers, young people and children hospital visits
- [HospiChill](#) is an app-based relaxation programme that helps children and young people to prepare for hospital visits
- [IBD Relief](#) has a section on IBD and emotional wellbeing
- [Student Health App](#) is aimed at university students, and has more than 900 pages of reliable health information

Support for parents:

- The [Australian Parenting Website](#) has lots of articles, apps and videos offering parenting advice from experts
- [Young Minds](#) has lots of tips and advice for parents of children and young people struggling with their emotional wellbeing



do you need a little more help?

Sometimes, you might need a little more support in coping with the way IBD makes you feel – and that is OK.

If you spot any of the following signs, it might be a good idea to ask your healthcare team if they can offer any extra psychological support, or at least point you in the right direction of services in your area:

- Feeling like you cannot cope
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