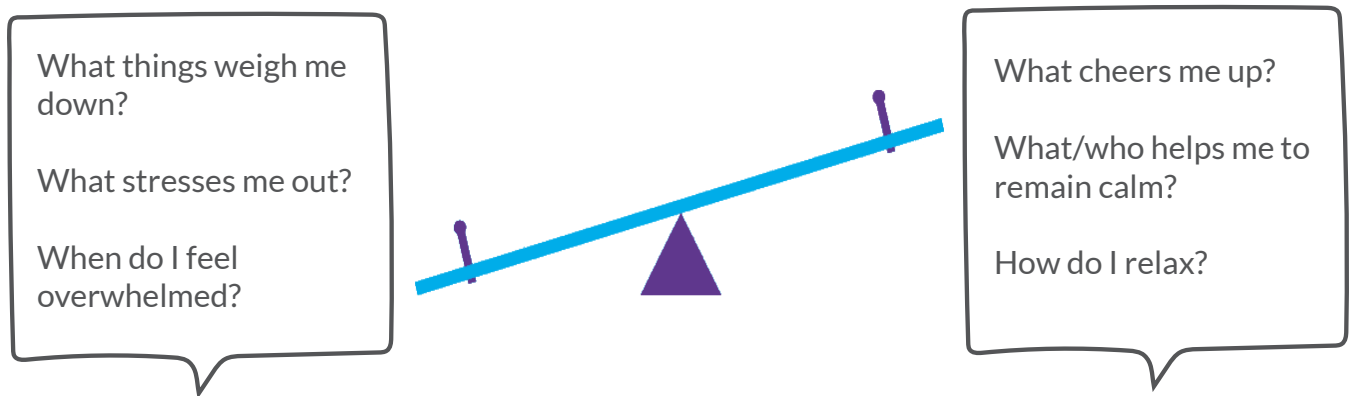


# Balancing Act

An activity for staff and children

When considering mental health, it can be useful to think of the elements that play a role in affecting it.



Thinking of this as a balancing act can enable us to identify **times, people and conditions** that may help us to cope and feel more settled when things get tough.

1. In groups or as individuals, think of those times, people and conditions that have a negative impact on you. Are there factors that you can avoid or control?
2. The next step is to ensure that you can have some of the positive elements to counteract some of the negatives. Write down the factors that help to cheer you up, remain calm and the conditions you need in order to relax.
3. Think about when you prioritise your self-care and how you could do this more.

These questions could be used with your friends and colleagues or with pupils who may struggle with the Christmas break.

# Finding your balance

An activity for children and young people

This simple exercise can be adapted to use with children of any age and takes about 10 minutes. It is particularly useful at the beginning of the day or after any sort of transition. It should be done as calmly and slowly as possible, allowing children time to breathe, relax, wobble and possibly giggle!

## Instructions:

- Stand with your feet hip width apart.
- When you feel comfortable with your posture, gently close your eyes.
- Begin by feeling where your weight is generally falling – to the front/back/side of your feet?
- Gently rock your weight to each side and front and back, feeling how your body responds and noticing where you are comfortable.
- Carefully move your weight onto one foot and slowly peel the other foot off the floor. If you can, balance there for a few moments. When you are ready to put your foot back down, do so with full awareness and as slowly as you can.
- Repeat onto the other foot.
- Finally, become aware again of where your weight is falling.
- Slowly open your eyes.
- Ask the children what they noticed about their bodies and minds.

