

INTRODUCTION TO **FLIP-IT THINKING**

FLIP-It Thinking is Laughology's toolkit to help people cope better and be more resilient. Over the next few cheat sheets, you will learn all about FLIP and how to put it into action. But first of all, here's a bit of the brain science.



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REALISTIC HAPPINESS

It's important that children (and adults) understand it's normal to experience a wide range of emotions and that:

- It's okay to be sad sometimes – no-one can be happy all of the time
- When we are happy, it helps to think why that is and build upon it
- When we recognise that we're thinking negatively about something, it can help if we FLIP our thinking. For example, if we approach a task with a 'can-do' attitude, it is more likely to go well than if we think it's going to go badly



DIPS IN THE DAY

It's great to start your day in a positive mood. Let's face it though, there are usually a few dips in the day that didn't go to plan! They might be:

- Arguments with parents
- Brothers and sisters being annoying
- Not getting up on time
- Technology not working

We can choose whether we let these things negatively impact on our whole day, or not.



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OUR BRAINS

Our emotional brain reacts first in any situation. Often this is helpful, as it is fast and automatic and helps us to get through the day in one piece. This is the part of the brain that used to shout ‘Run!’ when our ancestors were faced with predators.

When we are faced with tricky situations, it is still our emotional brain that kicks in first. Again, it can be helpful – but not always. For example, it might:

- Make us **fight** with a baby brother or sister
- Make us believe that we’re rubbish at all maths tasks, so we avoid doing them (take **flight**)
- Make us **freeze** when we are talking in front of the class

At times like these, we need the more rational part of our brain to kick in. However, it is much slower and, sometimes, it doesn’t kick in at all!

Children and young people’s brains are still developing right up until the age of 25. But, if we can practise slowing our thinking down throughout our teenage years, we will cope better when we are in tricky situations or out of our comfort zone.

We all have our own strategies for slowing our thinking down/ thinking more rationally. These are some of the things that might work:

- Try to cut out any distractions around you and focus – it might help to close your eyes
- Pause for a few seconds, so that you can gather your thoughts
- Concentrate on your breathing – put your hands on your stomach and take deep breaths in and out
- Walk away from the situation – maybe make a drink or listen to some calming music



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DO!

Think about the things that cause 'dips' in your day.

When a tricky situation happens, notice what your fast brain wants you to do. Does it:

- Want you to come out fighting or arguing or stropping?
- Make you want to run away and put your head in the sand?
- Make you panic, freeze, sulk?
- Make you feel stressed, anxious or worried!

All of these are very normal reactions, but see if you can FLIP one of them. Maybe you could:

Walk away from your little brother because, deep down, you know that he isn't deliberately winding you up. Or, if you think he is, you know he'll stop more quickly if you don't rise to it.

Remind yourself that (like everyone) there are some bits of maths that you understand well, some that you need to improve and some that you haven't even tried yet – so you aren't rubbish at all maths.

Be brave and give your opinion in a lesson because, if it goes wrong, what's the worst that can happen? Maybe you'll blush a bit. So what!

