

The 'P' in FLIP-It
Thinking stands for
**PATTERN
BREAKING**



Thinking about our habits and patterns of behaviour

You already have a lot of habits and will continue to develop these throughout your life. Some of them are really helpful, some keep you safe and some make you happy.

Other habits aren't as helpful. For example, maybe you've got into negative thinking about a certain subject at school? Perhaps you are spending more time than is healthy online?

The first thing to do is to have a think. Ask ...

- Which of your habits are helpful? These are the things that you want to CONTINUE doing. It might be that you have a really healthy diet, do regular exercise or make time to chat with your friends?
- Which habits would you like to develop? These are the things that you aim to START doing – the things that will help you to move through school, and beyond, successfully. For example, you might want to start doing your homework on the same day that you get it, so that you don't feel stressed when it gets nearer the date to hand it in.
- Which habits would you like to STOP. Maybe you have regular rows with a member of your family and that makes you unhappy? Or perhaps you're a bit messy and can't ever find anything?

The great news is that we can all change and rewire our brain – if we want to! Here's a clip (it's really for adults, but you'll get the idea) that shows how neuroplasticity works. <https://bit.ly/3p1bpze>

By deliberately doing the new behaviour or new thinking over and over again, it becomes our new habit.

So, the more you walk away from a potential row with your little brother, the easier it will become.

The more you tidy your bedroom, the easier it will be to keep on top of it.

Making sure you get the right help, when you're struggling

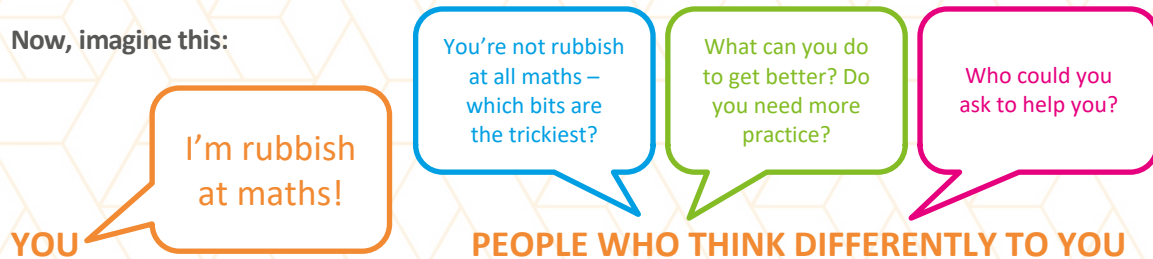
Think about the people that you chat to when you want some advice.

As human beings we are wired to turn to people who think like us, who act like us and who look like us. So, if your thinking or behaviour is a bit 'wonky' and not very helpful you might chat to a friend. Imagine this:



Sometimes it helps if a friend sympathises with you, but does it help you to move forward and improve?

Now, imagine this:



Who are the people in your family or your class who think a bit differently to you? Try asking them for their thoughts next time you need a bit of help. Just because you don't necessarily agree with their suggestions, don't dismiss them. Give them a go and who knows – they might just work.

The benefits of taking a break

Sometimes, we get into unhelpful patterns of thinking and behaving and it's hard to get out of them. Have you ever tried to do a piece of work and ended up getting really cross, or fed up or upset? Yep, it happens to us all. The more we sit there, the worse it gets.

At times like these, it's always a good idea to go off and do something else that you love – to break the pattern of unhelpful thoughts.

A very successful business lady recently told us that, when she thinks she can't do something at work, she goes off and does a really difficult Sudoku puzzle (one of her favourite hobbies). Then, when she comes back to her work, she has a different mindset. Her brain is telling her now that she can do tricky things and taaa-daaa, she's more positive to give it a go.

