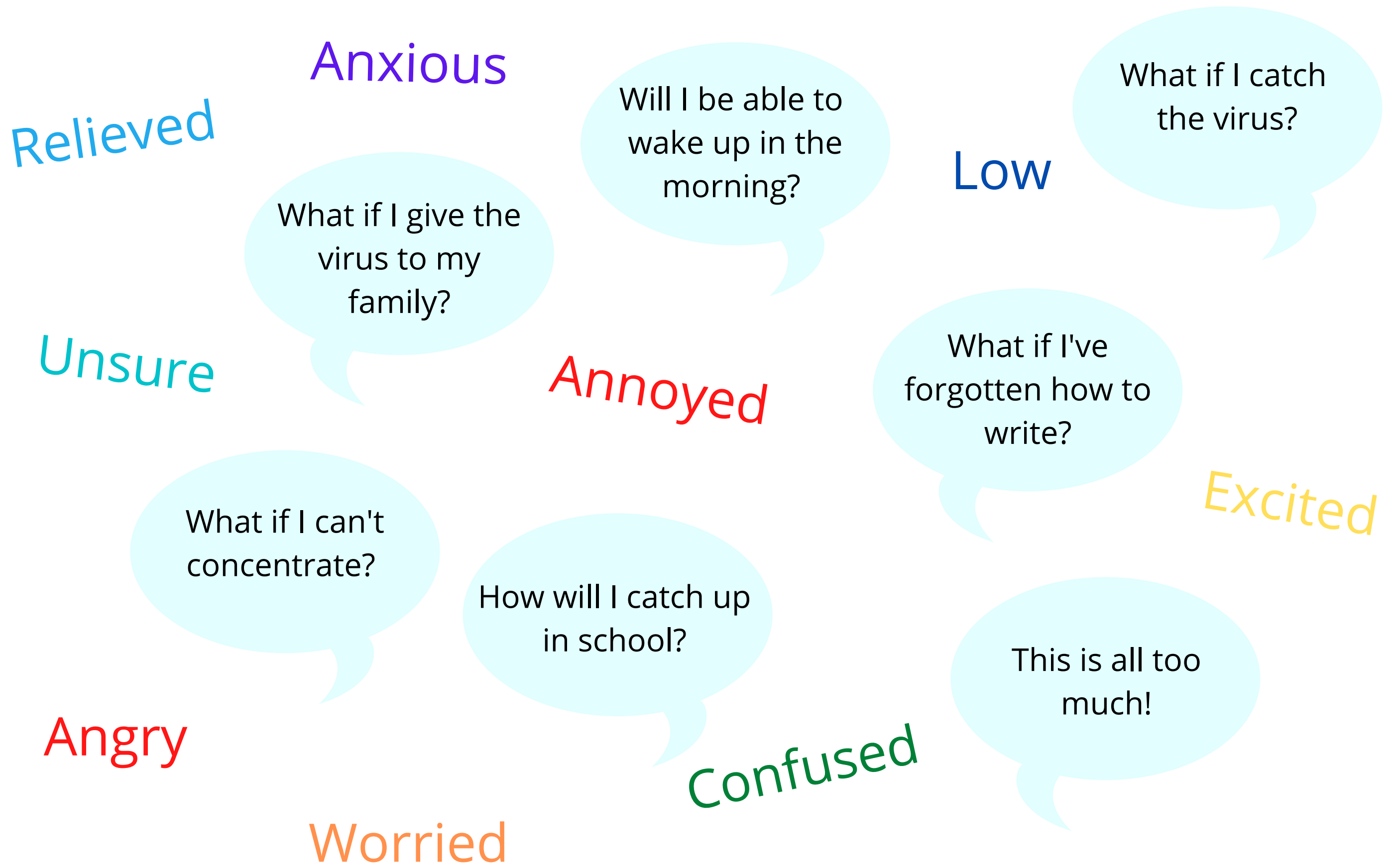


MANAGING RETURNING TO SCHOOL... ...AGAIN



How do you feel about coming back to school?

You might be feeling and thinking lots of different things about returning to school after lockdown. The pandemic has brought about a lot of new challenges and changes to our normal lives and routines. We have been in and out of many routines constantly and it might leave us having lots of different feelings about going back to school..

Here are some tips for managing emotionally with returning to school:

- 1 Accepting the feeling:** All feelings are normal, including difficult ones, and we're supposed to feel them.. Tell yourself it's okay to feel how you feel about it and let yourself feel the feelings.
- 2 Allowing yourself to be human:** School might suddenly feel harder than it was before, or you might find it harder to concentrate. You are not alone. Give yourself time to settle back into routine.



3 Holding on to what went well before: Remind yourself that you've managed returning to school after lockdown before, and you can manage it again. Think about what helped before e.g. telling yourself that you can do it, getting equipment ready etc.

4 Looking Forward: Think about the things you might look forward to in the future e.g. being able to go to restaurants or the possibility of going on holiday.

5 Gaining Perspective: If you are worried about catching or passing on the virus, remind yourself of what is different this time. For example, lots of people have been vaccinated and there will be regular testing, so people can act more quickly if needed.

6 Taking care of your health: Make sure you're eating well, moving your body and gradually getting back into an earlier sleep routine. Your physical health has a direct impact on your mood and how ready you feel to face the day.

7 Sorting the practical: Do what you need to do to prepare practically for school e.g. put all equipment and books you need in your bag and ensure your uniform is ready to wear, so that you're not rushing around and feeling flustered on the day.

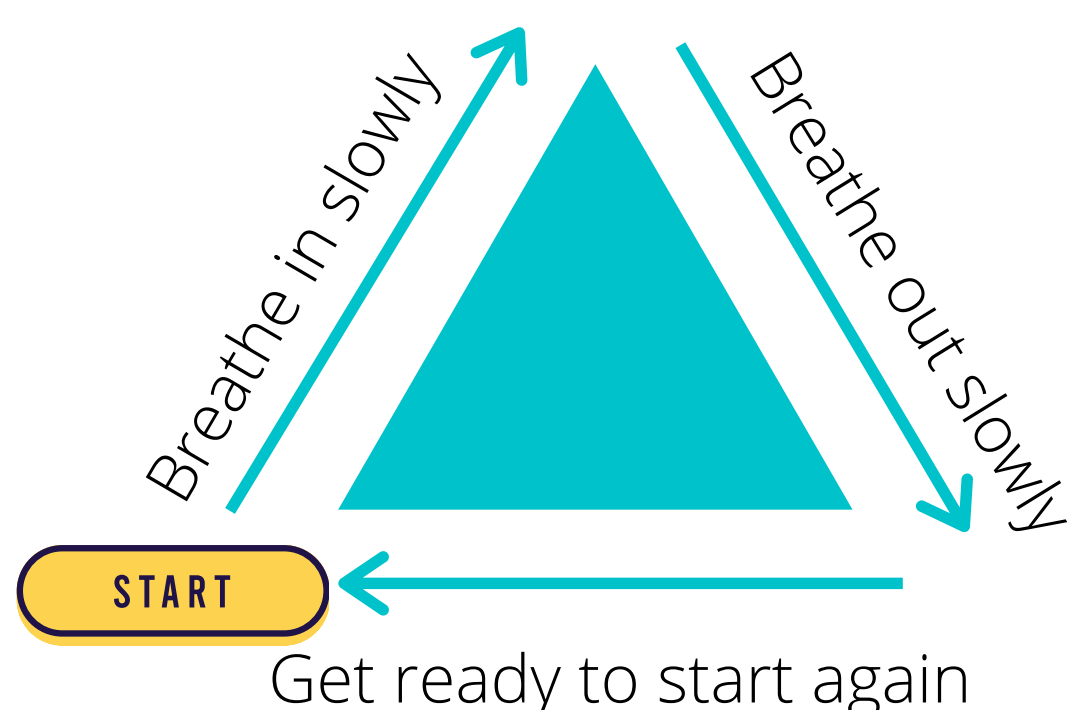
8 Staying connected: Make sure that you have things to do outside of school that are fun, and allow you to feel close to others e.g. taking a walk in the park with friends or learning a new skill online with a family member.

9 Reflecting on what you feel grateful for: Think about what is important to you and what you have really valued or appreciated, despite how difficult things may have been at times. You may want to write these down in a journal so you can remember them.

10 Speaking to someone you trust: If you're finding things really hard, it might be worth speaking to someone you trust about it. If you think you need professional help, you can speak to a teacher in school, see your GP, or contact a helpline.

11 Trying some deep breathing

When we're stressed, our breathing can speed up and make us feel more stressed. Try to slow it down using the breathing exercise below



12 Making a calm box



Find a box and fill it with things that make you feel calm. When you notice yourself feeling stressed, use your box to remind yourself about what calms you down.

