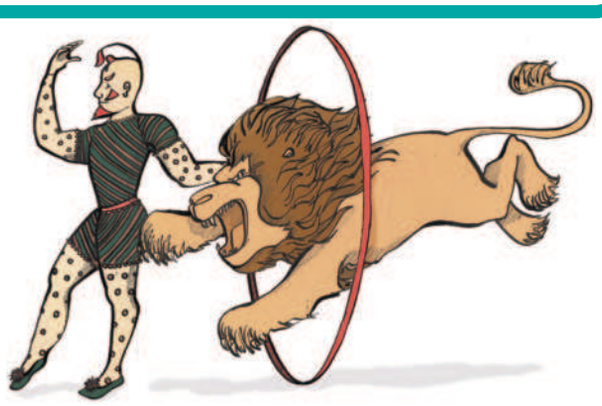
Keep the Heid Activity

When to use: anger-related issues; trigger mapping; distinguishing anger from aggression.

Time: Individual activities (separate timings are provided for each) or 45-60 minutes.

Find it: For Professionals, Practitioners & Volunteers » Mind Works » Keep the Heid

Recommend: Before the session begins watch the Keep the Heid video. (For Professionals, Practitioners & Volunteers » Mind Works » Keep the Heid.)



When we're triggered, the link between our **Thinking Brain** (prefrontal cortex) and **Emotional Brain** (limbic system) can drop out; it's then that we 'flip our lid'. To keep them connected, we can name triggers and use coping skills.

The learning bit...

- Learn about the emotional arousal cycle and how to manage the impact of conflict.
- Get to know their own responses to conflict situations and understand that these can change depending on the situation and how they're feeling in the moment.
- Identify triggers and learn about coping skills as a way of deescalating strong emotional responses.
- Recognise the difference between anger and aggression through identifying helpful and unhelpful responses.

KTH PAGE

Activity 1 (10-15 mins)

Keep the Heid activities help people recognise how they might react when feelings of anger arise, from **Human Cannonball** (Emotional Brain) to **Contortionist** (Thinking Brain), or somewhere in between.

Let's try the Keep the Heid quiz! (For Professionals, Practitioners & Volunteers » Mind Works » Keep the Heid). The quiz has ten questions and should take around five minutes to answer.

Share and discuss your results:

1. Talk about which character you got.
2. Does your result sound like you? Or were you surprised?
3. What does your result suggest about how you react?
4. If having a good or bad day, do you think results might change? Why?

KTH QUIZ



Activity 2 (20-30 mins)

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Now that you know a bit more about what happens when we **flip our lid** and no longer feel in control, let's have a think about what makes us angry, which we call '**triggers**'. By identifying and understanding our triggers, we can learn to recognise when we might **flip our lid** before it happens.

1. Write down things you know can make you feel angry or frustrated. If you're working in a group, share your ideas and notice any similarities or differences.
2. Now think about how you might respond to your triggers.
    a. What behaviours would help you to 'keep your heid'?
    b. What behaviours could be unhelpful and might make the situation worse?

If you need an idea of what a helpful or unhelpful response might look like, see the example below*

Thinking about helpful and unhelpful responses allows us to recognise the difference between **anger** (which is a healthy emotion that we all experience and can learn to express in positive ways) and **aggression** (which is an unhelpful behaviour that often involves force or violence). Next time you face a trigger, why not think about your **helpful vs unhelpful responses** and try to **keep the heid**.

***Example of helpful and unhelpful responses to a difficult situation:**

Trigger - A person cuts in front of you in a queue.

Helpful response – Politely let them know that the queue starts further back (they may not have realised).

Unhelpful response – Shout at them or push them out of the queue.

Activity 3 (15-20 mins)

When we recognise that we're starting to feel angry, we can use coping skills to act before things escalate and we **flip our lid**.

1. Think about things that you could do when you feel yourself getting angry to prevent your lid from flipping.
2. Create a coping skills poster by writing or drawing your ideas onto paper (if you're in a group, you could always make a poster jointly).



Learn more about coping skills and other complimentary resources on our website (For Young People » My Wellbeing).

My Wellbeing