

Changing Places

KS3

15mins

An activity to develop empathy and normalise mental health issues.

What you need

Students arranged in a circle, seated or standing
Flipchart or white board to record ground rules

Method

Agree or provide ground rules inviting suggestions if time allows.

Invite students to **CHANGE PLACES**

- 1. Change places if there has been a time in the past week when you've been really happy, pleased about something or maybe had a good laugh.**
- 2. Change places if there has been a time when you have felt stressed or down.**
- 3. Change places if you know someone with a mental health issue**

Ask students what they noticed?

Hopefully they will comment that most people moved. This shows that we all experience ups and downs in life and from day to day.

With the prevalence of mental health issues at 1 in 4 among adults and 1 in 10 among children all of us will also know someone with mental health issues.

Reiterate that we all get stressed and down from time to time. Usually these feelings pass and things start looking brighter after a few days. But sometimes we get stuck and these feelings can develop into a more serious problem. This could happen to any one of us.

Sometimes it just happens, for no clear reason, but things that happen to us in life such as bullying, bereavement, divorce and illness can also leave us more susceptible to mental health problems, including depression and anxiety. It's normal to experience a range of uncomfortable emotions when we face difficulties in life but if these feelings carry on and start to interfere with our lives then we may need to get some help and support. There is no shame in this and no one should suffer in silence. Asking for help is a brave thing to do and the first step to getting better.

