Teen Mental Health Toolkit

16 pages / Ages 13-19 / One doable step at a time



Big feelings. Real support. Less pressure to do it perfectly.

Inside

Tools for anxious spirals and panic, small steps during depression, parent/caregiver conversation scripts, sensory-friendly hygiene, self-care, accessible habits, and six coping cards. You do not have to do this alone.

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Original educational exercises. Not diagnosis, individualized treatment, or a promise of a particular outcome. No therapy relationship is created by downloading.

You do not have to earn help.

Pick one page. A word, drawing, voice note, or pointing is a valid answer.

Low mood, anxiety, and panic are not laziness or a personal failure. These tools may help in the moment, but they cannot diagnose or cure a condition. Reach out early if symptoms interrupt school, sleep, relationships, eating, or daily life; you do not need to wait until things are unbearable.

Get another person on your team

Choose a trusted parent/caregiver, school counselor, nurse, teacher, doctor, or other safe adult. If the first adult dismisses you, try another. If telling a parent is unsafe, start with a different safe adult.

If you might hurt yourself, have suicidal thoughts, or cannot stay safe, tell a trusted adult now and stay with a safe person while getting help. In the U.S., call 988 or text 988. For immediate danger or a medical emergency, use emergency services. Outside the U.S., use local crisis/emergency support.

My first safe adult and a backup; how I can reach them:

My easiest way to ask for help is:

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Make the next minute simpler.

Aim: reduce demand and get support. No technique works for everyone or guarantees an attack will stop.

A quick plan

1. Move to a safer, less busy place if possible. 2. Tell someone: "I am having intense symptoms. Stay nearby and use fewer words." 3. Choose one comfortable anchor: a familiar object, a neutral view, or gentle breathing. 4. Let a safe adult know what happened.

Panic can involve intense fear and physical symptoms, but do not assume every new symptom is panic. New or severe chest pain, fainting, severe trouble breathing, or a possible medical problem needs urgent medical assessment. Ask an adult for help getting care.

My sentence or signal for asking for support:

One low-input place or person I can go to:

You do not have to finish a grounding exercise, suppress movement, or prove you are calm. Panic-like episodes that recur deserve a conversation with a healthcare professional.

Make care easier to reach.

Aim: reduce sensory and starting barriers. Hygiene is care, not a measure of worth.

Task	Lower-demand option
Teeth	Try a softer brush or a tolerated fluoride toothpaste; start briefly, then build toward your dentist's advice.
Body	A short wash or damp cloth can bridge to a fuller wash. Choose comfortable water temperature and products.
Clothes	Change one item, such as socks or underwear, when possible; set out a comfortable option.
Hair	Detangle a small section, choose a comfortable protective style, or ask for help.
Setup	Put supplies where they are used; use a picture cue, seated setup, or support person.

My hardest barrier: sensory, pain, steps, shame, supplies, or something else?

One adaptation or supply I can ask for:

A bridge is not a full substitute for ongoing dental or medical care. Tell an adult about pain, skin concerns, or missing supplies. Products and routines can fit different hair textures, skin needs, bodies, and disabilities.

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