

Fight, flight and freeze

Did you know that one of the reasons it can sometimes be hard to work out how you are feeling is because, when your brain feels really threatened, scared or stressed, it goes into something called 'fight, flight and freeze' mode?

This is like an alarm in your brain. It is not something you can control and it is not always helpful.

It can look different for different people.

If you're in **Fight mode**, you might say something like: "I hate you!" or "You don't understand!"

If you're in **Flight mode**, you might say something like: "I can't do this." or "I need to get away."

If you're in **Freeze mode**, you might say something like: "I don't know."



If you find yourself saying any of these things, take some time to calm down and turn off your brain's alarm system before you try and work out how you really feel.

Different things help different people when their alarm system is going off.

Here are some things you could try:

Create a safe space: have a corner or area that is yours. You could put blankets or pillows in there, alongside cuddly toys or other things that make you feel safe.

Sensory input: some people like to use fiddle toys, or things with different textures, or even weighted blankets.

Avoiding things or situations that are tough: this isn't always easy. Sometimes making a plan or using pictures can help you manage your emotions in new and different situations.

Can you think of any times
when you have been
in **flight, fight or freeze**
mode?



What helped you?

Can you make a list of the people who can help you either use your strategies or help you when you don't know how you're feeling?



(Maybe a grown up can help with this list.)