

## Section 8. Nicotine and your mental health

### Activity



#### Materials:

- coloured pens (3-4 different colours, like red/blue/black)
- paper for drawing

**This activity will help students explore their own stress patterns and reflect on which 'tips' they can put into practice to feel better.**

### Identifying stress

1. Start the activity by telling students:

"Now it is time to think more about your experiences of stress. Imagine you are looking at your stress as an outside investigator, try to imagine it is someone else's body and feelings. You are looking at it so you can understand it better."

2. Next, ask the students to:

Draw an outline of a person in the centre of the paper, (it should be about the size of a lemon).

Using your red pen, write all the things that might cause you to feel stressed around the outline. Aim for 5 to 8 things.

Next, think about how you feel, and use a different colour pen(s) to answer the following questions:

Where in your body do you feel the stress?

Using your red pen, mark the place(s) inside the outline of the person.

Think about how stress affects your emotions.

Answer the question: When I am stressed I feel \_\_\_\_\_.

Using your blue pen, write at least 5 words around the outline of the person.

Think about how stress makes you act.

Answer the question: When I am stressed I tend to \_\_\_\_\_.

Using your black pen, write those words around the outline.

Being kind to yourself can make a big difference in getting rid of stress.

Now that you have a drawing of your own stress pattern look at it carefully.

What are your signs of stress? What feeling can you watch out for so you know you are stressed?

How can you manage your stress?

Look at the list of 'Tips for Managing Stress' pick 1-2 activities that makes you feel calmer. Can you do these whenever you feel stressed?

To finish, write your calming activities around the outline.