



The Big Questions

WORKSHEETS



**These worksheets work best after you've watched
'The Big Questions' video**



Are the Voices Real?

**Do Voices Always Tell the
Truth?**

**How do I Explain My
Voices?**

**Who Can I Talk to About
the Voices?**

If this is your first time exploring your voices, it may be helpful to work through these worksheets with someone you trust to keep you feeling safe and supported. This could be your:



Family



Friends



**Clinicians and
support workers**



Are the Voices Real?

Brain scans of people hearing voices show increased activity in the brain areas for speech and hearing, which means hearing voices is a real experience.

Finding out the voices are real experiences can be encouraging, can help us validate our experiences and help us to gain the confidence to accept and work with our voices.



Reflection

Take a moment to reflect about your experience with hearing voices and answer the questions below.

How does it make you feel to know that the voices are real experiences?

How does knowing the voices are real experiences impact how you see yourself and your voices?

Some people didn't believe me when I told them I heard things that weren't there. I felt confused and alone. Now I know they are real experiences I'm feeling more hopeful.



Do Voices Always Tell the Truth?

Voices don't always tell the truth. Sometimes they may say something true, other times they may say something untrue, and then there may be times when we just aren't sure if what they're saying is true or false.

When the voices are persistent it can be hard to separate out your own thoughts, let alone assess whether your voices are telling the truth. If you are unsure if what the voices say is true, there are a few things you could try to put them to the test.



Check online, ask a friend or someone you trust.



Ask the voices questions or ask them to explain what they are saying in more detail.



Ask yourself: Does it make sense based on what you know? Is there evidence to support it?



When my voices tell me that people are conspiring against me, I ask my sister what she thinks. Her opinion really helps put things in perspective!

My voices are always trying to convince me there is a natural disaster and that going outside is unsafe. When this happens I look on the news or read the weather forecast and reassure my voices I am safe.



Do Voices Always Tell the Truth?



Activity

Do you sometimes struggle to tell if what your voices say is true? You don't have to believe them without question! In this activity, you can think about how you might test the voices and check if what they say is true.

What is something the voices have said that was true?

What is something the voices have said that was not true?

What is something the voices have said that might have been true or untrue?

What are some other ways to check if what they say is true?

It may help to reflect on the strategies and resources you have used in the past to test if what your voices say is true.

Take a look at page 3 for some inspiration on how you check if your voices are telling the truth.



How Do I Explain My Voices?

Every person who hears voices will have a different belief of where their voices come from.
Some common beliefs are:

Past trauma

The voices stem from past traumatic experiences.

Technology

The voices come from a chip, implant or other technology.

Others' thoughts

The voices are others' thoughts that I am able to hear.

Spiritual

The voices come from a spiritual source such as God, the devil, angels or demons.

Parts of me

The voices are parts of my personality or representations of my emotions.

Brain chemistry

The voices stem from an imbalance in my brain chemistry.

My thoughts

The voices are a verbalisation of my thoughts.

The environment

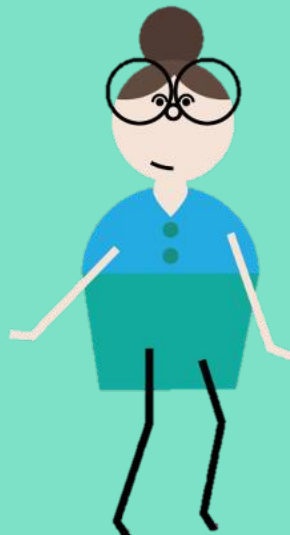
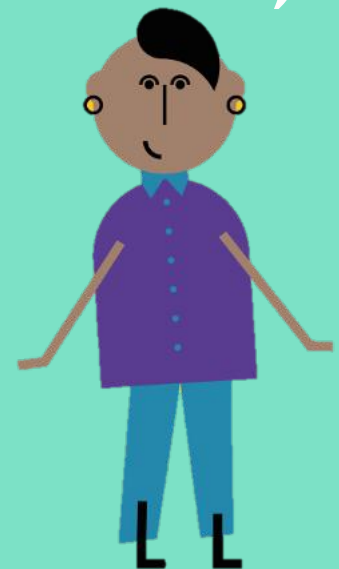
The voices come from excessive stress and worry from things in my life.

My dad and grandmother both heard voices and I believe it was passed down to me. I see it as a chemical imbalance in my brain that is part of my genetic makeup.

My voices appeared after my husband passed away. I believe they were a response to the grief and isolation I was experiencing. I think they come from a higher power who is trying to protect me.

My voices are a representation of the different parts of me and the emotions I experience. I believe my voices were initially triggered from my addictions and being in altered states of reality.

My voices and visions reflect my mind's creative ability to make sense of my past trauma. They alert me to when I am feeling threatened and when I need to use my creativity and connect with music to soothe my mind.



How Do I Explain My Voices?



Activity

How we understand our voices and their origins is often linked to how we perceive their impacts on us and our lives. Take some time to think about and answer the questions below.

How do you understand your voices? Where do you think they come from?

How does your explanation of your voices impact on your opinion of your voices?

I believe my voices are a higher power that are trying to protect me, so I see them as a gift.



How does your understanding of your voices impact on how you interact with them?

My voices are representations of parts of me, so I'm not afraid to talk with them.



How does your understanding of your voices impact on how you see yourself?

I try and separate my voices from my self-identity as I feel that my voices are a response to what has happened to me and they don't define me.



How does your understanding of your voices impact on how you relate to others?

I believe my critical voices come from being bullied at school. This has knocked my confidence and can make it hard to trust and connect with others.



Everybody will have different beliefs about their voices, but remember – there is no right or wrong explanation!



Who Can I Talk to About the Voices?

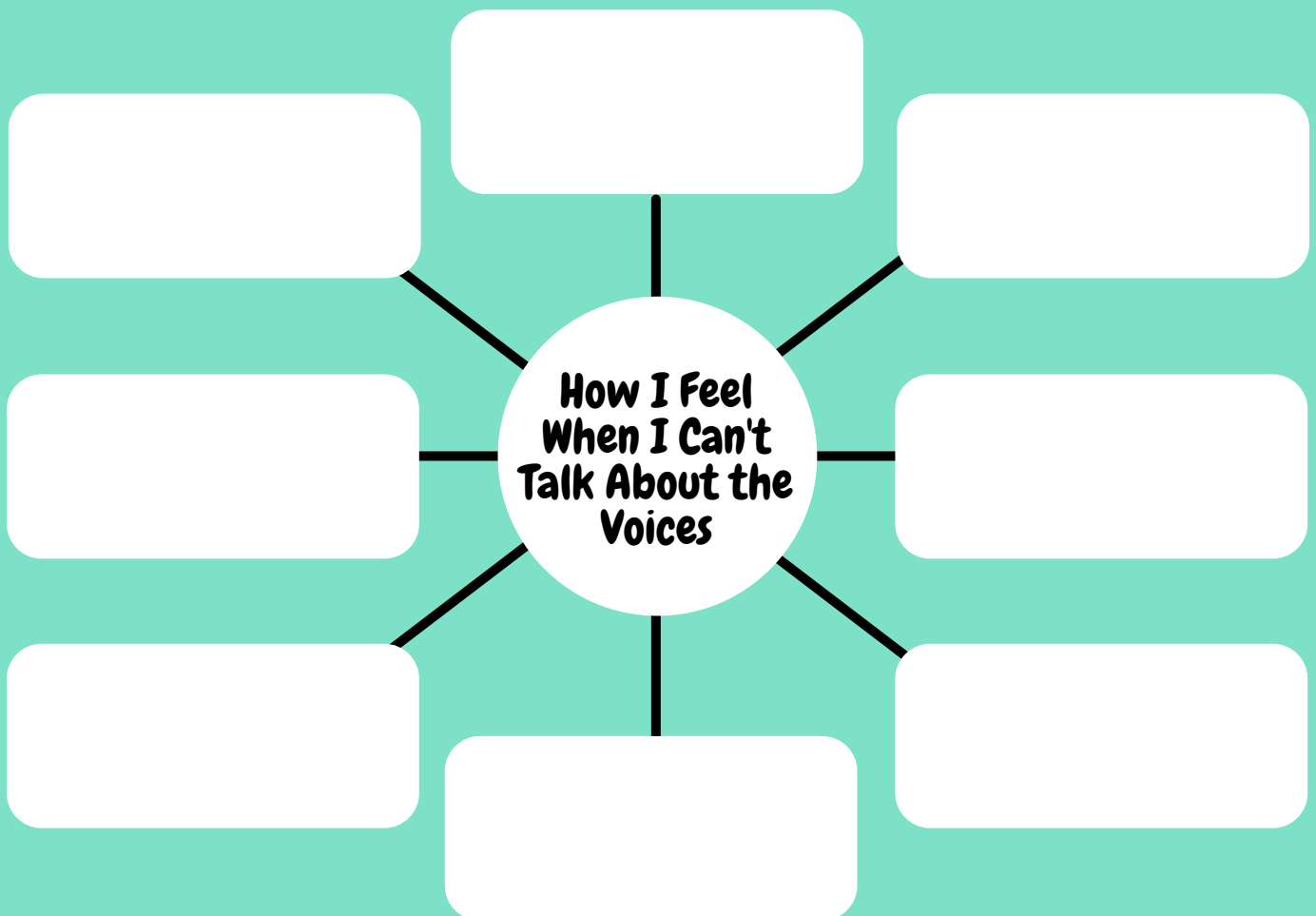
In the past, many people thought the best medicine was to ignore people's voices and discourage them from talking about it. However, over time, this has been shown to be unhelpful. Not talking about voices and their meaning doesn't make them go away and it can often lead to people feeling isolated and alone.



Activity

Take a look at some of the common feelings expressed by voice hearers when they are discouraged or unable to talk about their voices. Then reflect on how it makes you feel in the mind map below.

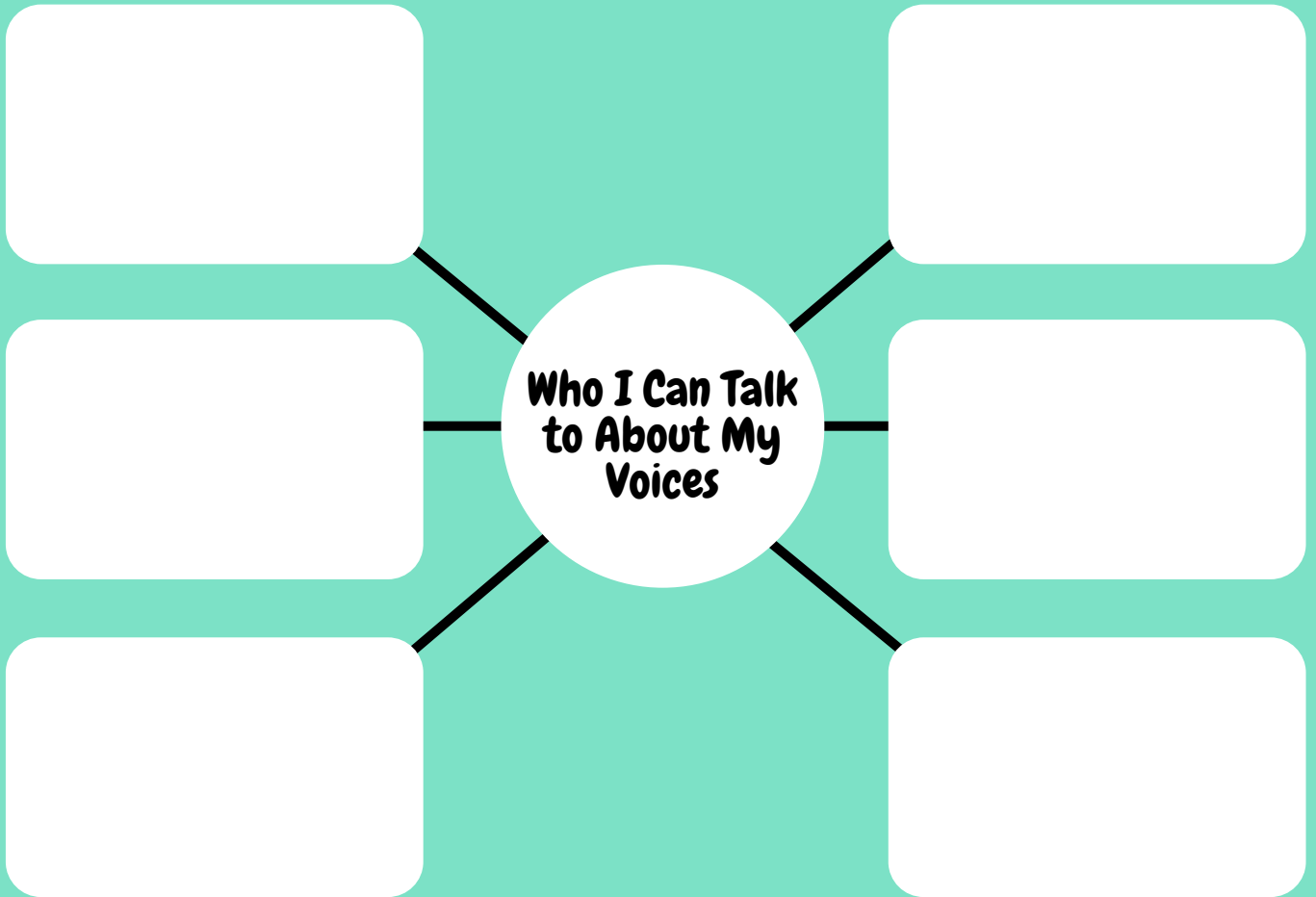
- "It makes me feel frustrated."
- "I feel like I'm crazy."
- "It makes me feel like I should be ashamed of who I am."
- "I feel different to other people."
- "I feel alone and isolated."
- "It makes me feel depressed."
- "It knocks my confidence and self-esteem."
- "I feel like I can't share who I really am with the people around me."





Activity

Who could you talk to about your voices? It could be friends, family, support workers, mental health clinicians, doctors or other trusted supports.



I talk to my two best friends about my voices! They are supportive of me and accept my voices.



I talk to the people in my Hearing Voices support group. They don't judge and they understand the voice hearing experience.



I talk to my support worker about my voices.





Congratulations!

You have completed all the worksheets for 'The Big Questions! Great job!

Want to keep exploring and working with your voices?

Take a look at these videos and worksheets:



**Introduction to
Hearing Voices**



Exploring Recovery



**Navigating the
Tough Times**



**Practical Coping
Strategies**



**The Compassionate
Approach**



**Exploring and
Explaining Voices**

Reference list

Hearing the Voice (2022). Understanding Voices.

<https://www.understandingvoices.com>

These worksheets have been developed by the MHDA Specialist Rehabilitation Service.