

# IF/THEN TOOL

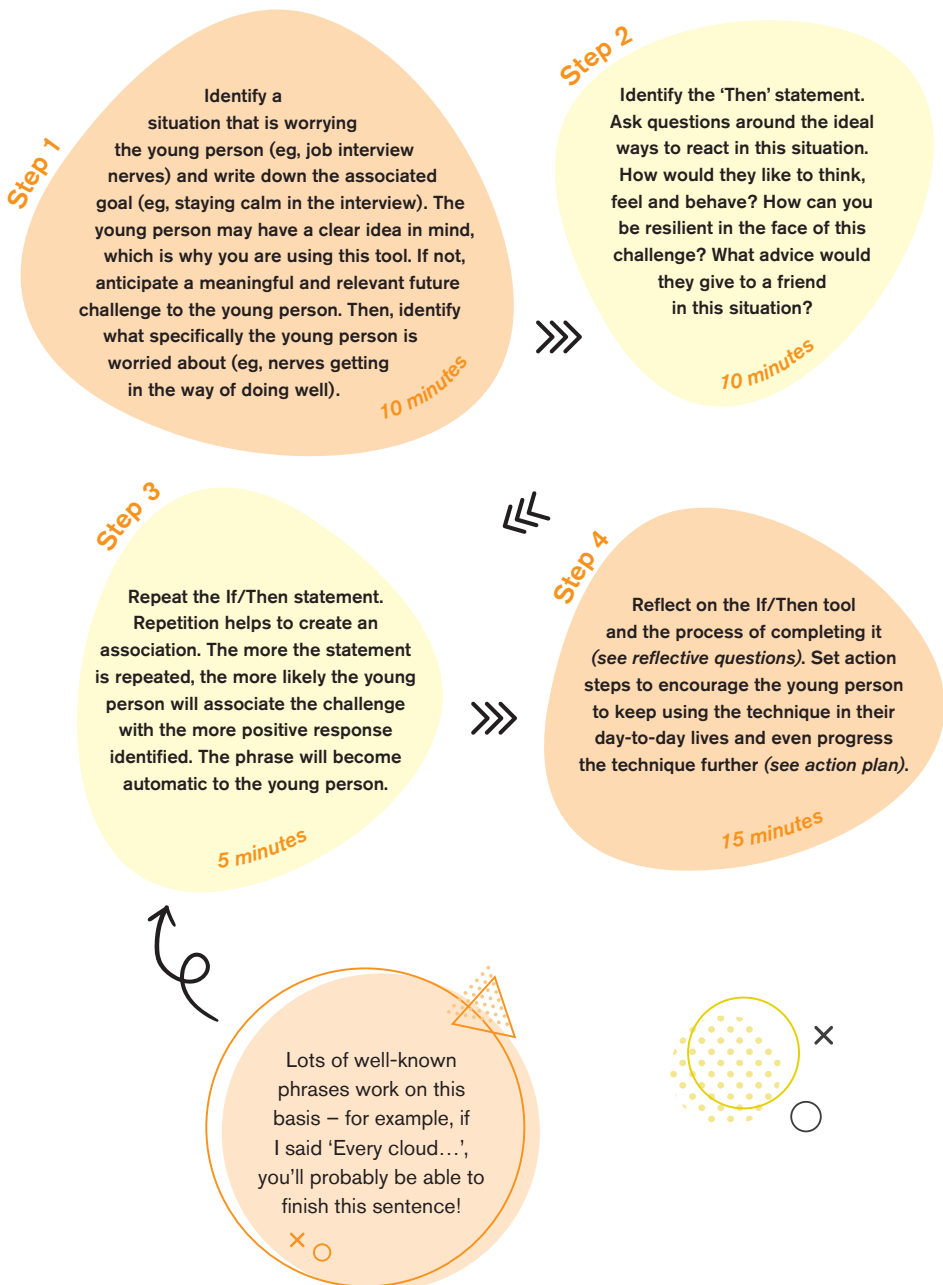
This simple technique is a great follow-on from the goal-setting activity on page 15, or it can be used as a stand-alone tool.

Originating from behaviour change psychology, the 'If/Then' technique is an ideal tool to use when there are perceived barriers in the way of achieving a goal or worries about an upcoming situation.

The 'If/Then' tool helps young people to use their strengths to plan how to be resilient when facing potential challenges. Eventually, with practice and repetition, the link between the 'If' statement and the 'Then' statement will become strong enough to help you change how you react.



## Using the If/Then tool (40 minutes)

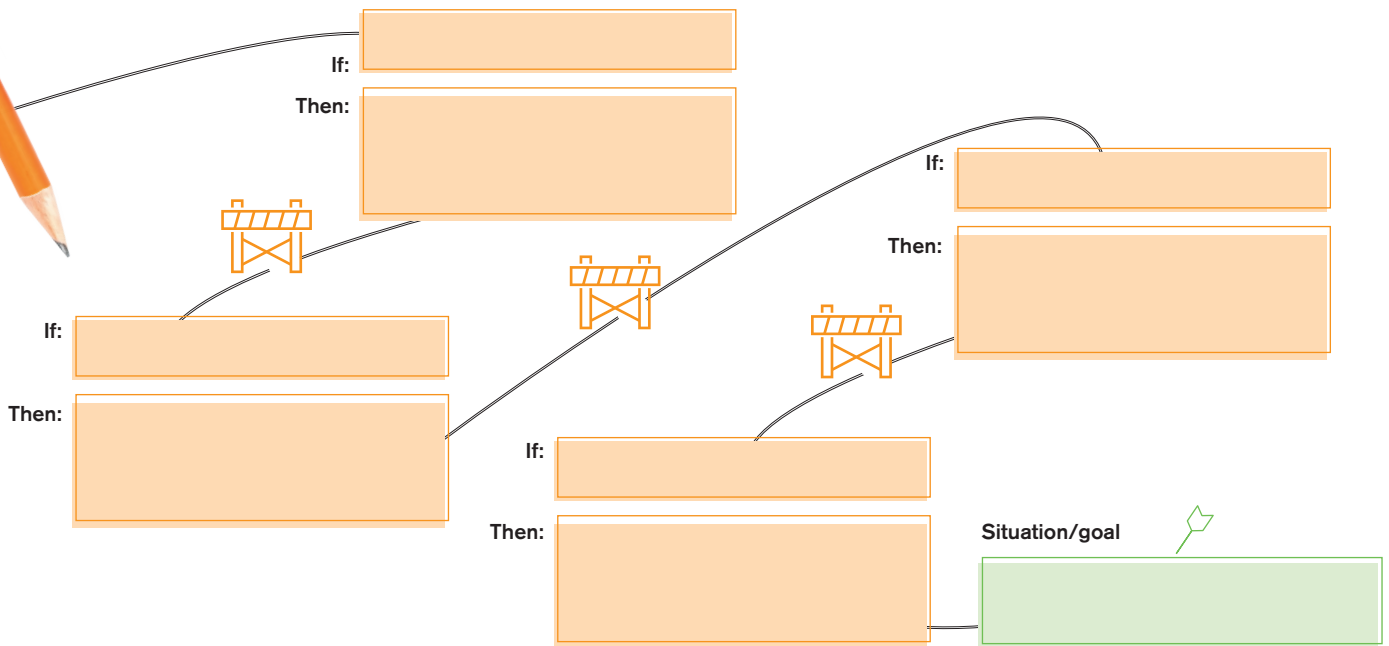


**Top Tip!**  
 Maintain positive language. Initially, young people might associate the 'If' statement with negative reactions, for example, 'If I feel like giving up, then I will stay in bed'. Instead, try to encourage them to reframe with a more positive lens, eg, 'If I feel like giving up, then I will think: I am up for this challenge; I will feel excited; I will smile, breathe and relax my shoulders'. For more information on reframing, revisit the solution-focused techniques in the accompanying delivery guide, available at [www.sprintproject.org](http://www.sprintproject.org)



**Top Tip!**  
 Try to relate the If statement to: 1) things that are within the young person's control (vs outside of their control) and 2) process goals (vs outcome goals).

## »»»» If/Then tool



## »»»» Reflection questions on the tool

Four yellow speech bubbles containing reflection questions:

- What mental strengths have you been using throughout this activity?
- How did you find completing this activity? What could we do differently next time?
- If you did succeed in your If/Then scenario, how would that make you feel? How might that change how you think and/or behave?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself or your strengths?

## »»»» Action plan

**✘**

**Eat, sleep, If/Then, repeat!**

Identify strategies to help the young person to remember to repeat the statement, eg, can they provide themselves with any visual prompts? How about a post-it note above their door handle?

To advance this technique, ask the young person if they can incorporate some imagery around their If/Then statement. Ask them to close their eyes while repeating their statement and imagine themselves responding to the 'If' statement in line with their 'Then' responses as clearly and vividly as they can – what do they notice about themselves? How do they look? How do they feel?

Remember to check in with the young person and revisit the If/Then statement after the situation has happened.

- Did you notice any differences in the way you responded to challenges using your If/Then statements?
- If so, what did you do differently (eg, behaviours, thoughts, feelings)?
- If not, how can we change the If/Then statements to make them more helpful in future?

Try counting backwards from 100, subtracting seven each time!

To do...

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