

Phrasal Verbs: Mental Health & Emotional Resilience

Intermediate (B1–B2)



WARM-UP DISCUSSION

Part 1. Read each statement and rate yourself from 1 (never) to 5 (always).

1. I bottle up my feelings when I'm upset.
2. I open up to friends or family when something's wrong.
3. I find it hard to calm down after an argument.
4. I've felt burnt out from work or study before.
5. I try to cheer up others when they're down.

Discuss:

- Which behaviours are healthy? Which could you improve?
- What helps you recover when life gets tough?

READING ACTIVITY

Part 1. Read the dialogue and underline all the phrasal verbs.

Emma: I used to bottle everything up — stress, sadness, even anger. Eventually, I completely shut down emotionally.

Liam: That sounds tough. What helped you change?

Emma: One night I broke down and cried. After that, I decided to open up to a therapist.

Liam: That's brave. I've found that talking helps me calm down and think more clearly.

Emma: Definitely. It's not easy, but I've started to cheer up again and get over the worst of it.

Liam: That's great. Just remember to rest — burning out is no joke.

Emma: I know. I'm taking better care of myself this time — more walks, fewer late nights.

Part 2. Answer the comprehension questions.

1. What did Emma use to do with her emotions?
2. What made her decide to open up?
3. What helps Liam stay calm?
4. Which habits are helping Emma recover?
5. Why does Liam warn her about burning out?

VOCABULARY & SPEAKING

Part 1. Match each phrasal verb to its meaning.

Bottle up	Open up	Calm down	Burn out
Cheer up	Break down	Shut down	Get over

1. _____ become happier or more positive
2. _____ recover after a difficult experience
3. _____ talk honestly about your feelings
4. _____ lose control of your emotions; cry
5. _____ stop showing emotion or become unresponsive
6. _____ hide or suppress emotions
7. _____ relax after being angry or upset
8. _____ become exhausted from stress or overwork

Part 2. Discuss the following questions.

1. Which of the phrasal verbs describe healthy reactions?
2. Which might be harmful if they happen too often?



Part 3. Complete each sentence with a suitable phrasal verb. Then, discuss if you've ever felt the same.

Bottle up	Open up	Calm down	Burn out
Cheer up	Break down	Shut down	Get over

1. I always try to _____ after arguments, but sometimes it takes a while.
2. She tends to _____ her feelings until she can't hold them in anymore.
3. He completely _____ during the meeting and walked out.
4. It took me months to _____ that experience.
5. You should _____ and tell someone what's going on.
6. After the news, it took her days to _____ again.
7. He's been working nonstop — I think he's starting to _____.
8. When I feel too overwhelmed, I sometimes just _____ and stop talking to anyone.

Part 4. Read each situation and decide what you would say or do. Try to use at least one phrasal verb in each response.

1. A friend hides their emotions and refuses to talk.
2. Your colleague looks exhausted and irritable.
3. Someone had a breakdown after months of stress.
4. You see someone crying at work but trying to hide it.

Discuss:

- Which situations do you find hardest to handle?
- What kind of support helps you calm down or cheer up?

REFLECTION

Discuss the following questions.

1. Which phrasal verb best describes your approach to stress?
2. What helps you cheer up when you feel down?
3. How do you usually calm down when emotions run high?
4. What's one small way you can protect your mental health this week?

WRAP-UP TASK (OPTIONAL HOMEWORK)

Write a short paragraph (100–120 words) about how you deal with challenges or difficult emotions.

Try to use at least five phrasal verbs from today's lesson.

