

**FUN AND ENGAGING ACTIVITIES
TO ENHANCE YOUR CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL
WELLBEING**

MENTAL HEALTH BOOSTERS FOR KIDS



BARRETT HUANG

Mental Health Boosters for Kids

*Fun and Engaging Activities to Enhance Your
Children's Emotional Wellbeing*

By Barrett Huang

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Introduction

Dear Parents/Caregivers:

It's a tough world out there. You know this. So, just imagine how your children must feel navigating this world! This is why it's important that they learn how to be mentally and emotionally strong as early as possible.

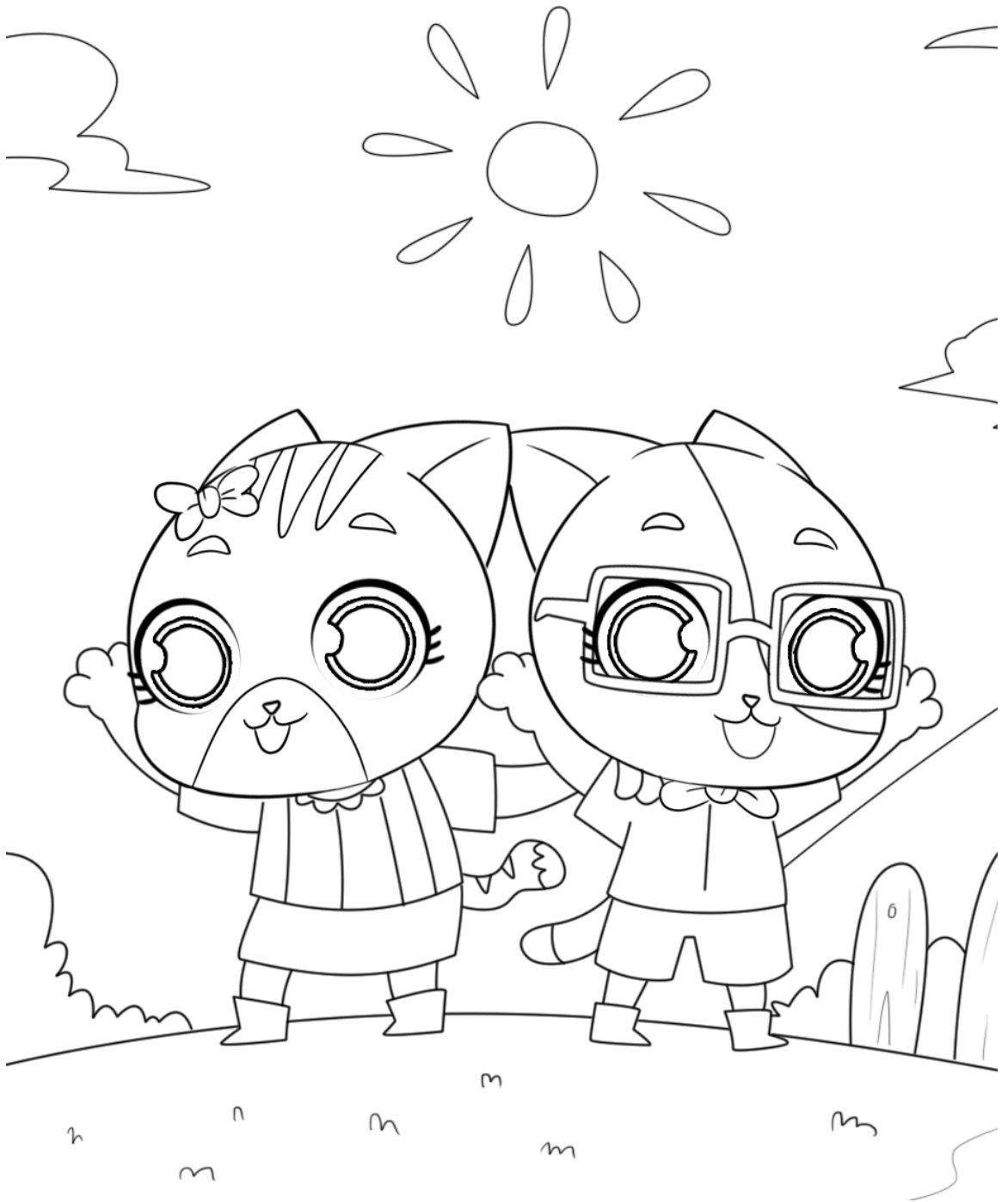
Kids need to understand that negative, distressing, unhelpful, or troubling thoughts and emotions are normal to experience. Instead of denying, ignoring, or pushing them away, they should be accepted and handled in a healthy manner.

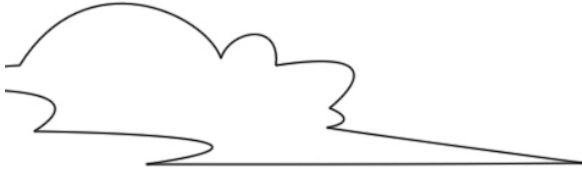
Pain, disappointment, stress, and challenges are all part of life, and children experience them in their own unique way. So, while our instinct is to protect and shield them from anything unpleasant, it's far more beneficial to equip them with the tools to manage life's ups and downs.

By helping them develop mental and emotional resilience, you help them grow into strong, capable individuals ready to face the world!

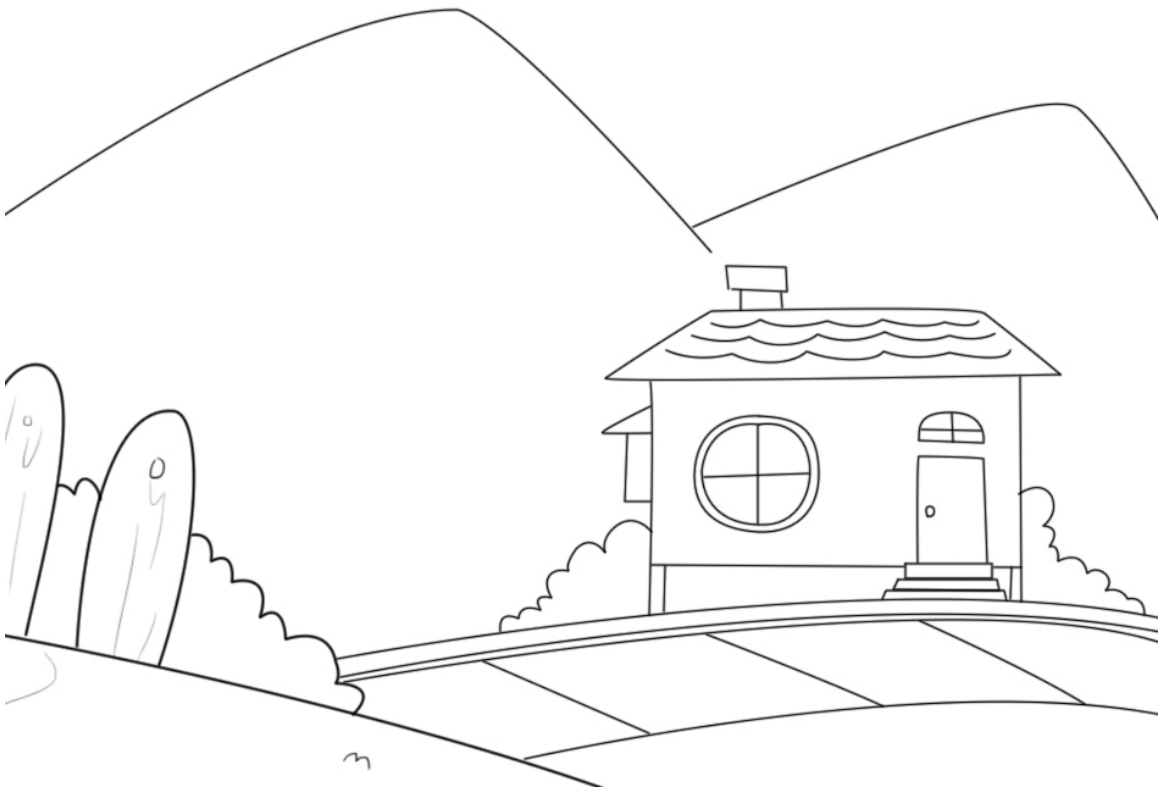
Still, you can't just sit them down at their age and try to explain how life works. So, to help your child learn, we'll introduce them to **Tibby and Zip**—the world's favorite sibling kitties! 🐾

Dear Kids:



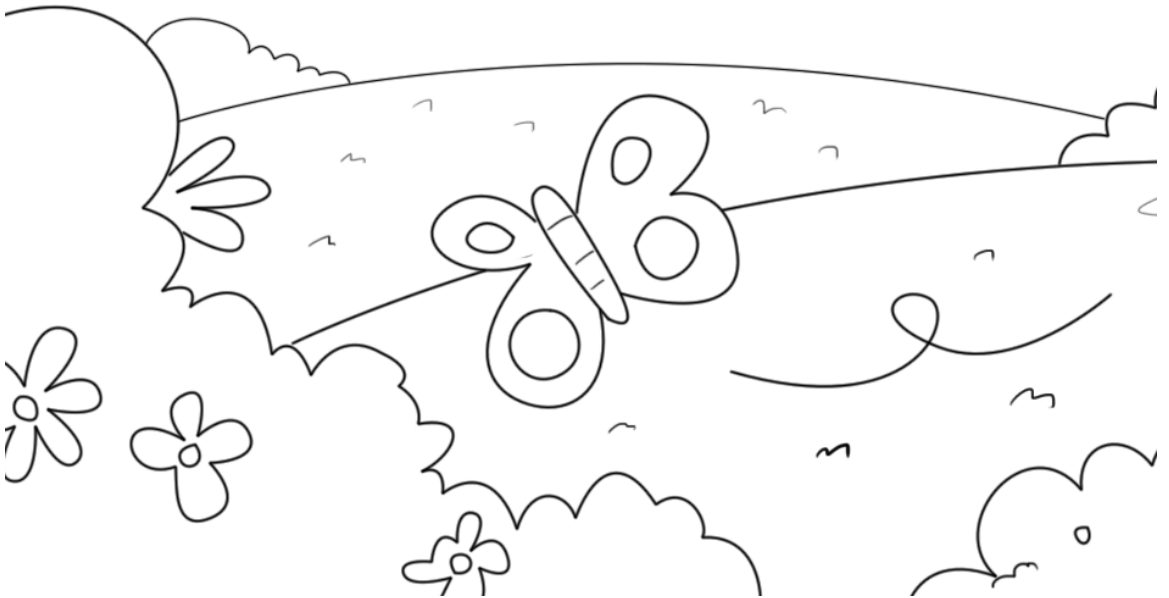


**Hi there! Meet Tibby and her younger brother Zip.
They live in Kittyville with their Mom and Dad.
They love playing outdoors, eating fish snacks, and
having lots of friendly fun with other kid kitties!**



Tibby and Zip play a lot, but it's not always fun and games. Sometimes, they trip and get hurt. Other times, they feel sad, angry, or bad over something.

In fact, one sunny morning, Tibby and Zip were playing in the garden. Zip was chasing butterflies while Tibby watched with a smile. Suddenly, Zip stopped and looked thoughtful.







"What's on your mind, Zip?" Tibby asked.

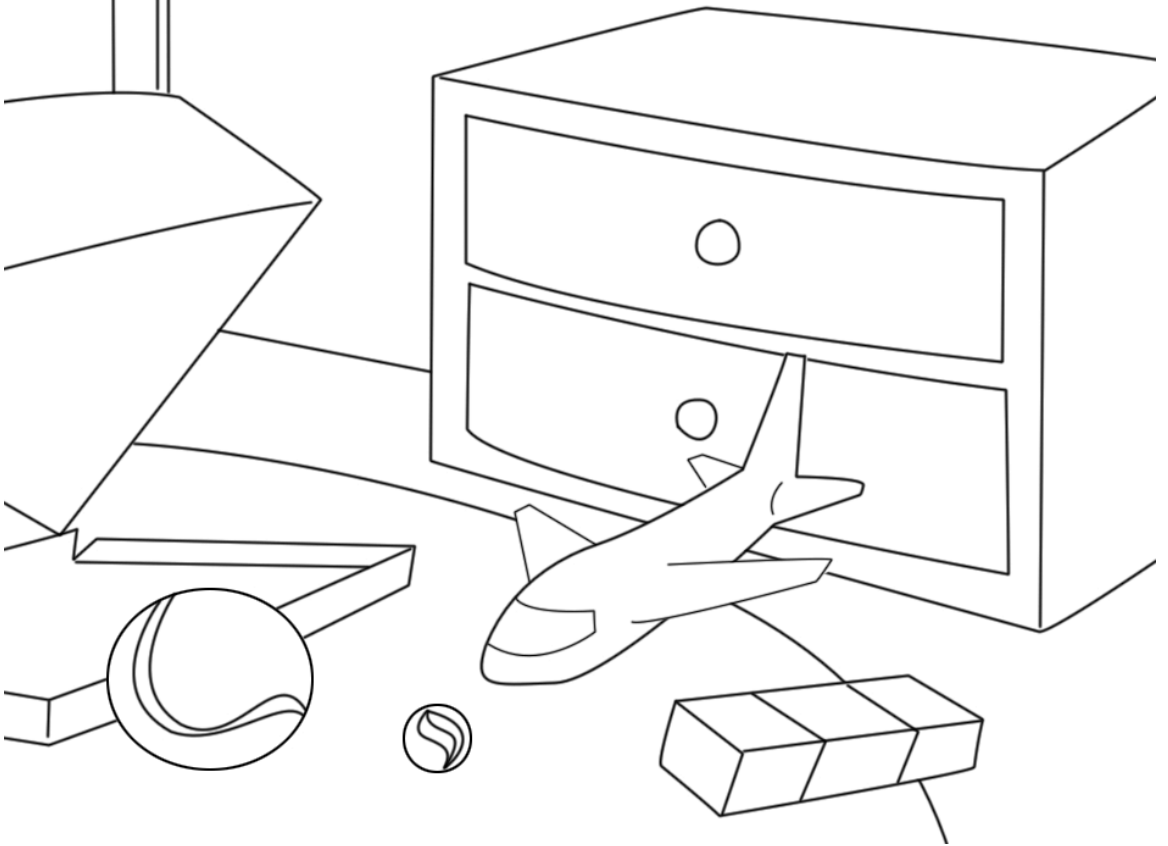
"Well, Tibby, I've been feeling a bit strange lately. Sometimes, I feel really happy, and other times, I get sad or angry over the smallest things. It's confusing!" Zip explained.


"Oh, Zip, that's perfectly normal. Our feelings can change a lot, and it's important to understand and handle them properly."





"But, how do you do that?" asked Zip. "Sometimes, when I'm sad, I just want to cry and not talk to anyone. The other day, I couldn't find my favorite kitty toy, and I got so angry that I turned over my toy box and almost broke it!"





Tibby sat down and patted the ground beside her, inviting Zip to join her. "There are many ways, Zip. Let's start by talking about our feelings. Sharing how you feel with someone you trust helps you understand and manage those feelings better."

Zip nodded eagerly. "So, if I'm feeling sad, I should tell you or Mom and Dad about it?"

"Exactly!" Tibby replied. "Talking helps a lot. And there are other things we can do, too. Like taking deep breaths when we're upset, or doing activities we enjoy to de-stress and relax our minds."







Zip's eyes lit up. "I love drawing!
It always makes me feel calm and happy."

"That's great, Zip!" Tibby said. "Drawing is a wonderful way to care for your mind and emotions. And remember, it's also important to get enough sleep, eat healthy foods, and play outside. All these things help keep our minds healthy."

Zip jumped up, feeling more cheerful. "Thanks, Tibby! I'll remember to do those things the next time I feel something troubling me. Can we draw together later?"

Tibby smiled and gave Zip a hug. "Of course, Zip! We'll draw together and have fun. And whenever you need to talk, I'll be here for you."



So, you see, kids, just like Tibby and Zip, it's important to find healthy ways to handle difficult thoughts or feelings or when you're feeling overwhelmed by something. The sooner you learn these helpful techniques, the sooner you'll feel better and happier when you face challenges. Let's get started!

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is like a special superpower you already have! It's all about paying attention to what's happening RIGHT NOW. This means you're not thinking about what happened yesterday or this morning or worrying about tomorrow; you're just enjoying the moment.

Mindfulness means noticing what you're doing, how you're feeling, and what's happening around you. For example, if you're eating an apple, pay attention to the taste, the crunch, and how it feels in your mouth. It's like using all your senses to experience something fully.

Being mindful is cool because it can help you:

- **Do Better in School.** Learning how to pay attention properly helps you learn and remember things better.
- **Feel Less Overwhelmed.** Being mindful makes you feel calmer and less worried about things that might bother you.
- **Understand Yourself Better.** Mindfulness helps you become more aware of your thoughts and feelings to better understand yourself.
- **Be a Great Friend.** When you're mindful, you're more aware of how others feel and can be kinder and helpful.
- **Enjoy More Every Day.** Mindfulness makes you notice and appreciate all the little things that make life awesome!

Activity 1. Balloon Breathing

Hey there, kids! Let's learn how to do a super cool mindful breathing exercise. This activity will help you feel calm and relaxed.



1. **Find a comfortable spot.** This could be your favorite chair, your bed, a pillow on the floor, or even outside in a peaceful spot. Turn off the TV, put away your toys, and ensure a calm environment.
2. Gently **close your eyes** if you feel comfortable doing so. If not, you can keep them open and look at a spot on the floor or a wall.
3. **Take a deep breath in.** Imagine you have a big balloon in your belly. Slowly breathe in through your nose and fill up your belly like you're blowing up that balloon. Count to 3 in your head as you breathe in. (1... 2... 3...)
4. Now, **hold your breath** for a count of 2. (1... 2...)
5. Next, **slowly breathe out** through your mouth like you're letting the air out of the balloon. Count to 4 in your head as you breathe out. (1... 2... 3... 4...)
6. Cool! Let's do this 5 more times! Remember.
 - Breathe in for 3 seconds.
 - Hold for 2 seconds.
 - Breathe out for 4 seconds.

You can even use your fingers to count if that helps!

7. **Remember to pay attention to your breathing!** As you breathe in and out, notice how the air feels coming into your nose and out of your mouth. Feel your belly rise as you fill-up the balloon in your belly and fall as you let the air out.

8. When you're done, **gently open your eyes** if they were closed. Take a moment to look around and just relax for a few minutes.

Activity 2. Mindful Playing

Today, you're going to learn about Mindful Playing. This exercise will help you enjoy your playtime even more by being fully present and aware of what you're doing. Ready to have some fun? Let's get started!



1. **Pick your favorite toy or game.** It could be a stuffed animal, a toy car, building blocks, a coloring book, or anything you like at all.
2. **Find a quiet place** where you can play without distractions. Make sure you have plenty of space to spread out and play.
3. Before you start playing, **take a deep breath** in through your nose and slowly breathe out through your mouth. This will help you feel calm and ready to play mindfully.
4. **Spend a few moments just looking at your toy.** Notice its colors, shapes, and any details that make it special. For example, if you're holding a stuffed animal, notice its fur or fabric. If it's a car, notice its wheels and design.
5. Next, **feel your toy.** Hold your toy in your hands and feel its texture. Is it soft, hard, smooth, or bumpy? Pay attention to how it feels against your skin.
6. **Start playing with your toy, but do it SLOWLY.** If you're building with blocks, notice how each piece fits together. If you're playing with a car, watch how it moves across the floor. If you're coloring, pay attention to your chosen colors and how the crayon feels on the paper.

7. As you play, **use all your senses**. Listen to the sounds your toy makes. Smell your toy if it has a scent. Notice how your body feels as you move and play.

8. Try to **keep your mind focused** on what you're doing. If you start thinking about something else, gently bring your attention back to your toy and your play.

9. If you're playing for a long time, take short breaks to stretch or take a deep breath. This helps you stay mindful and enjoy your playtime even more.

10. When you're done playing, return your toy or game where it belongs. Doing so keeps your space clean and organized. This doesn't only make your parents happy but also helps you feel relaxed because there's no clutter in your room, nothing you can trip on when you enter your space, and you know exactly where to get your toy or game next time. Notice how mindful playing can help you enjoy your toys and playtime even more!

Activity 3. Mindful Listening

Sometimes, you get so excited or busy in your head about something that you're not mindful when someone is talking to you. So, this exercise is to help you practice paying attention and being present by focusing on different sounds around you.



1. **Find a comfortable spot** where you can sit quietly without being disturbed. Turn off the TV, put away your toys, and ensure a calm environment.
2. **Set a timer** (your watch, phone, or kitchen timer) for 2-3 minutes to start. As you get better at this, you can increase the time. (Ask your parents for a timer or watch if you don't have one.)
3. You can close your eyes if it helps you focus better. Take a few deep breaths to relax.
4. **Start listening!**
 - Listen very carefully to all the sounds around you.
 - Try to notice sounds that are close by.
 - Next, try to notice sounds that far away.
 - If your mind starts to wander, that's okay. Just gently bring your focus back to the sounds.

Mindful listening superpower!

Try NOT to study, judge, or investigate the sound when listening. For example, if you hear "Chirp! Chirp!" Don't try to figure out what type of bird is making the sound or where it's located. Just say to yourself, "I hear Chirp!"



You're practicing this listening superpower because mindfulness is about being present, not about handing out judgments. So, when you practice mindful listening with someone like your parents, teacher, or friend, you'll be great at listening to what they're saying and understanding them better. This will make you a better listener and a more caring person!

5. **Notice the different sounds you hear.** Are there birds chirping outside? Do you hear the hum of a fan or air conditioner? Are there people talking or moving in another room or outside? Do you hear your own breathing?
6. When the timer goes off, slowly open your eyes if they are closed. Take a moment to think about what you heard.

You can practice mindful listening anytime you want, whether at home, school, or outside. It's a great way to calm your mind and pay attention to the world around you!

Acceptance

Acceptance means understanding and respecting yourself just the way you are and others just the way they are. It's also about accepting situations you may not like, such as a friend promising to come over and play and cancel. Acceptance is also about being okay with your feelings, thoughts, and actions, even if they aren't perfect or even happy ones.

Acceptance is important because it helps you:

- **Feel Good About Yourself.** When you accept yourself, you can be proud of who you are, with all your strengths and weaknesses.
- **Have Better Friendships.** Accepting others helps you make and keep friends because you can appreciate them for who they are, even if they're not like you.
- **Feel Good About Unhappy Situations.** Accepting situations as they are, instead of wishing they were different, helps you feel calmer and less worried.

For example, suppose you got a low grade on a Math test. There's nothing you can do about it now, right? So, instead of being sad, worried, or disappointed for a long time, the best thing to do is ACCEPT that you got a low grade *this time*. Accepting means you can move and focus on studying to do better on the *next* exam.

Activity 4. Accepting Anger or Sadness

For this activity, you will learn how to accept and deal with feelings like anger or sadness. You know, kid, it's okay to feel these emotions. What's important is to understand and manage them well.



1. **Find a comfortable spot** where you won't be disturbed. This could be your bedroom, a cozy corner, or even outside in the yard.
2. **Take three slow, deep breaths.** Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. This will help you feel a bit calmer.
3. Close your eyes and think about what you're feeling. Are you angry? Are you sad? Try to name your feelings. You can say to yourself, "I am feeling angry," or "I am feeling sad."

What are you feeling?

4. **Pay attention to your body when you're angry or sad.** Check if you're feeling any of these:
 - Do you feel tightness in your chest?
 - Are your eyes hurting or watering?
 - Is your heart beating fast?

- Are you frowning or clenching your fists?
- Are you clenching your jaw?
- Others:

IMPORTANT: Just notice these things. DO NOT try to change them.

5. **WHAT TO DO?** Here are some ideas you can try to feel better:

- Draw.** Get some paper and crayons or markers. Draw a picture of how you feel. If you're angry, you might draw a storm with dark clouds. If you're sad, you might draw a rainy day. Drawing helps you understand your feelings better.

What do you want to draw?



- **Talk.** If you feel comfortable sharing, talk to someone you trust about your feelings. This could be a parent, a teacher, or a friend. You can say, "I feel really angry because..." or "I feel sad because..."

- **Write.** If talking is hard for you or you're just not in the mood to talk to someone right now, try writing about your feelings in a notebook or journal. Writing helps you express and understand your emotions better. You can start with, "Today, I felt angry because..." or "I felt sad when..." Writing helps you express and understand your emotions.

What do you want to write?

- **Imagine.** Close your eyes and picture a place in your mind where you feel safe and happy. This could be a real place like your bedroom or an imaginary place like a magical forest! Imagine yourself there in your safe and happy place to feel calmer.

- **Move.** Sometimes, moving your body helps you feel better. You can try jumping up and down, running in place, or stretching your arms and legs. This helps release some of the tension you might be feeling.

- **Kindness.** Wrap your arms around yourself and give yourself a big hug. Say something kind to yourself, like, "It's okay to feel this way. I will be alright."

Activity 5. Accepting a New Friend

Today, you'll learn about accepting a new friend, even if they're different from you or like things you might not. Making new friends is exciting, and it's important to be kind and open-minded. Let's discover how to be a great friend to everyone!



1. **Say Hello.** When you meet someone new, smile and say, "Hi! My name is [Your Name]. What's your name?" It's a friendly way to start a conversation.

If you're feeling shy or nervous, that's okay! Just take a deep breath and try to smile. You can also practice what you want to say beforehand or start with a simple "Hi." Remember, everyone feels shy sometimes, and it's perfectly normal. Just take your time and be yourself.

If the kid you're trying to talk to seems shy or nervous, it's important to be patient and understanding. You can try saying something like, "It's okay, we can talk when you're ready." Sometimes giving them a little time can help them feel more comfortable.

2. **Listen carefully.** Remember mindful listening? Great! So, use that skill and pay attention to what your new friend likes to talk about. They might like different games, books, or hobbies than you do.

What are some things you want to ask a new friend about?

Examples:

What do you enjoy doing?

Tell me about your favorite toy.

3. **Share something about yourself.** Building friendships is not just about the other person; it's about you too! So, tell your new friend something about you, like your favorite game or what you like to do after school. This helps them get to know you, too.

What do you want to share about yourself?

Examples:

My favorite dinner is spaghetti!

I like swimming with Mom, Dad, and my little sister Megan on weekends.

4. **Respect your differences.** Even if your new friend likes things you don't, like a different sport or a type of music you're not familiar with, be respectful. You can say something like, "That's cool! Tell me more about it," or "I've never heard that before. You got some examples I can listen to?"
5. **Discover your similarities.** Look for things you both enjoy doing together. Maybe you both like playing outside, drawing pictures, or playing with animals. This helps you bond and have fun.

6. **Always show kindness.**

- To your friend: Treat your new friend with kindness. Share toys or take turns playing games. Offer to help them if needed, like picking up something they dropped.
- To yourself: Sometimes, a new friend might be so happy and excited to meet you that they want to spend A LOT of time with you. If you're cool with it, great! If not, and you want a little time and space for yourself, that's 100% okay too. You can say, "I'd love to play after school, too, but I want some alone time to draw today. How about tomorrow?"

There might also be times when you realize that you and the other person just don't "click," have nothing in common, or don't enjoy the same activities. That's okay too! You can still be friendly and polite.

Friendship is not something that should be forced so it's alright to spend time with other friends who share your interests. What's important is to be respectful and kind to everyone, even if you don't become close friends.

Activity 6. Accepting "No"

For this exercise, you will practice accepting "No" when someone disagrees with you or doesn't grant your request. Respecting others when they say "No" and learning how to handle it positively is important.

For this activity, we'll use the sample situation when your parents say "No" to you when you ask them to let you go over to your friend's house to play.



1. When your parents say "No," **take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth.** This helps you stay calm and think clearly.
2. **Listen carefully.** Pay attention to WHY your parents are saying "No." Are they explaining it's not a good time, or do they have other plans? Listen carefully to understand their reason. In short, don't focus on the "No" you heard or received, but on the reason behind it.
3. **Acknowledge your feelings.** It's okay to feel disappointed or upset. Say to yourself, "I really wanted to go, and it's okay to feel this way."
4. **Ask for understanding or clarity.** If you're still confused, politely ask your parents why you can't go to your friend's house. You can say, "Can you tell me why?" or "I'd like to understand."
5. **Accept the answer.** After hearing their explanation, say to yourself, "Okay, they said 'No.' I feel sad, but that's okay because it's not like they say "No" all the time." Remember, sometimes things don't go the way we want, and that's a normal part of life.

6. **Plan for another time.** If you really want to play with your friend, ask your parents if another day or time would work. You can say, "Can I go tomorrow instead?" or "How about this weekend?"

7. **Think of alternatives!** All right, your parents said "No." Instead of sulking and being sad all day, practice acceptance and move on to thinking of other fun things you can do at home. It could be playing with your toys, reading a book, drawing pictures, etc.

8. **Say Thank You.** Yes, practice kindness! Thank your parents for explaining their decision to you. By not being upset and reacting angrily, there's a BIG chance they'll say "Yes" next time!

Emotional Regulation

Emotions are like the different colors of your heart. They show how you feel inside. Here are some examples.

- **Happiness.** Feeling happy is like sunshine in your heart. You smile and feel excited about things you like.
- **Sadness.** Feeling sad is like rain in your heart. You might cry or feel quiet because something makes you feel down.
- **Anger.** Feeling angry is like a storm in your heart. You might feel mad or frustrated when things don't go how you want.
- **Fear.** Feeling scared is like a little thunder in your heart. You might feel afraid or worried about something.
- **Surprised.** Feeling surprised is like a big jump in your heart. You feel amazed and caught off guard in a good way.
- **Disgusted.** Feeling disgusted is like a yucky feeling in your heart. You might wrinkle your nose and feel grossed out by something you don't like.

ALL emotions are okay to have. They tell you something about yourself and help you understand how others feel. Happy feelings are, of course, awesome! But when you're feeling negative emotions, it helps to talk about it with someone you trust, like your family or friends, so you don't say or do anything you might regret. Remember, everyone has different feelings, and it's okay to feel them all!

Activity 7. HALT!

Today, you're going to learn a special technique called HALT. It will help you "check in" with yourself and determine if some basic needs or emotions need attention *before* they escalate.



For example, if you're physically hungry and don't eat on time. You might get *hangry* (hungry + angry) without realizing it. The next thing you know, your friend asks you something, and you reply angrily, upsetting your friend. You don't want that, do you?

So, go ahead and start "checking in" with yourself.

H	A	L	T
Hungry	Angry	Lonely	Tired

1. **Hungry (physically or emotionally).** Pay attention to your body and your heart. Are you feeling hungry for food or for something else? Sometimes, we feel hungry for attention, love, or fun activities. Taking care of your physical and emotional needs is important to feel balanced and happy.

- If you're physically hungry, think about the last time you ate and what you ate. Ask someone for a healthy snack if it's been a while since your last meal.
- If you're emotionally hungry, ask yourself if you need a hug, some one-on-one time with someone, or if you need to talk about something. If you do, don't hesitate to reach out. For example, you can say, "Mom/Dad, I need help," or "Mom/Dad, something's bothering me..."



2. **Angry.** Are you feeling angry or upset? Maybe something didn't go how you wanted, or someone made you mad. It's okay to feel angry, but it's also important to calm down before reacting.

Choose what you want to do to feel better:

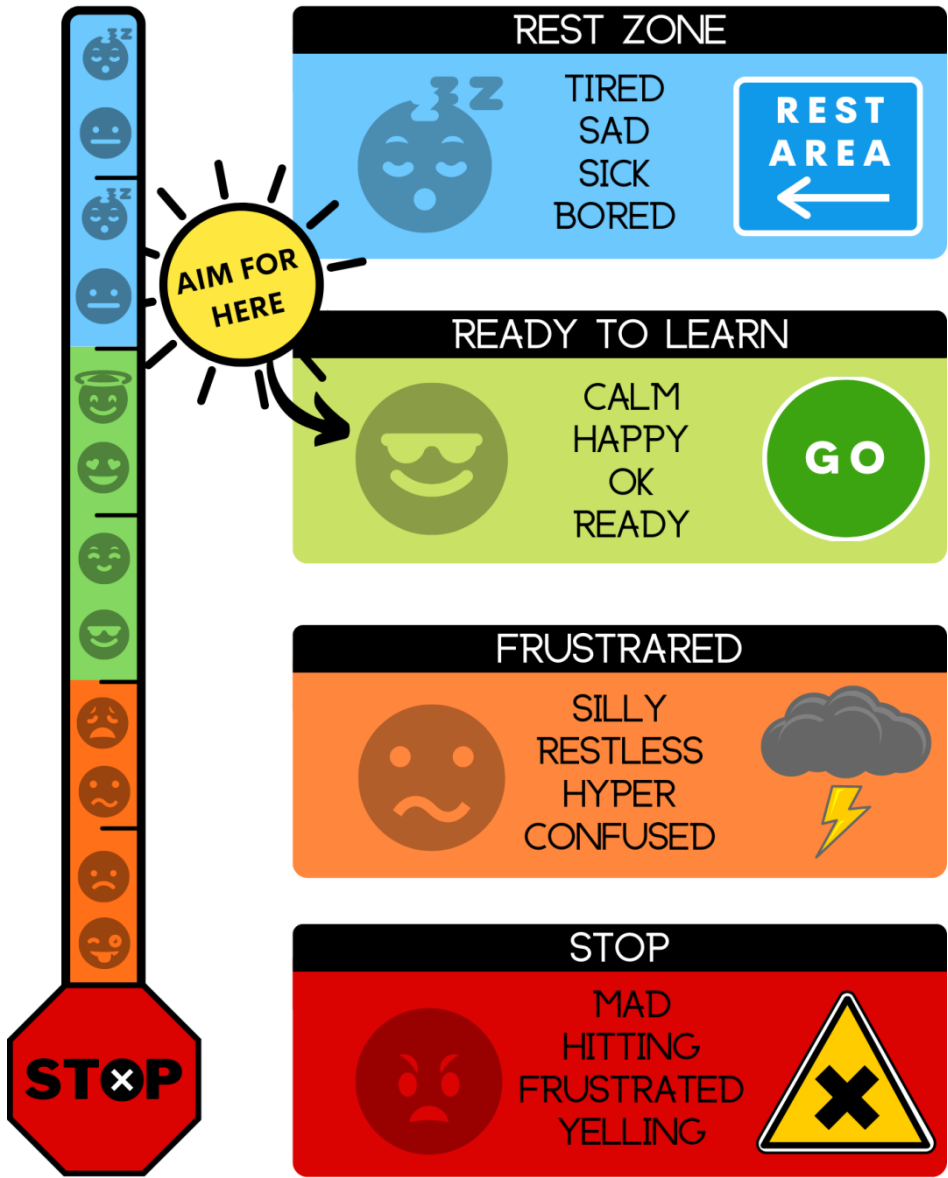
- Drink some water.
- Practice [Balloon Breathing](#) (page 22).
- Do something creative.
- Talk to someone.
- Watch a funny video.
- Read a book.
- Count down backwards from 100.
- Watch your pet fish.
- Walk your dog.
- Take a shower.
- Others:

3. **Lonely.** Do you feel lonely or left out? It's normal to feel this way sometimes, but remember that there are always people who care about you! Reach out to a friend or grown-up you trust to talk about your feelings. You can also write about your feelings in a notebook or journal.

4. **Tired.** Are you feeling tired or sleepy? When we're tired, it can be hard to concentrate or feel happy. To bring your energy back up, rest or take a short nap. Also, ensure you get enough sleep each night and take breaks during the day.

Activity 8. Feelings Zone

Confused about your emotions? That's okay. Sometimes, it's hard to pinpoint exactly what you're feeling and what to do about it. Luckily, we have the feelings zone chart below!



1. Look at the feelings zone chart and identify your current zone based on what you're feeling.
2. Here's what the different zones mean and what you can do about them.

REST ZONE (BLUE)

Emotions: Tired, Sad, Sick, Bored

What you can do:

- **Rest.** Find a quiet place to relax. Lie down, read a book, or simply close your eyes for a few minutes.
- **Comfort.** Get a blanket or a stuffed toy to cuddle.
- **Talk.** Contact a trusted friend or adult to talk about your thoughts or feelings.

READY TO LEARN (GREEN)

Emotions: Calm, Happy, OK, Ready

What you can do:

- **Positive Reinforcement.** Be proud of yourself for having the energy and enthusiasm to learn!
- **Do What Brings You Joy.** Don't wait; choose what you want to do and really focus on the activity.
- **Mindfulness.** Remember to pay attention to whatever you're doing (e.g., reading, playing, studying, drawing, etc.) to get the most out of the experience.

FRUSTRATED (ORANGE)

Emotions: Silly, Restless, Hyper, Confused

What you can do:

- **Calming Techniques.** Practice deep breathing exercises like [Balloon Breathing](#) (page 22) or take a short walk to release excess energy.

- **Creative Expression.** Try drawing, coloring, or writing about your feelings.
- **Physical Activity.** Do some physical exercises like jumping jacks or stretching to help manage hyperactivity.

STOP (RED)

Emotions: Mad, Hitting, Frustrated, Yelling

What you can do:

- **Safety First!** Make sure you and others around you are safe. If you feel like hitting or yelling, move to a safe space.
- **Calm Down.** Take some time alone to cool down. Try any of the following:
 - Wash your hands and face with cold water.
 - Practice [Balloon Breathing](#) (page 22) or any deep breathing exercise.
 - Grab a stress ball or sponge and squeeze and release it multiple times until you feel calmer.
 - Do 10-15 jumping jacks to release pent-up energy.
 - Others:

- **Expression.** Once you feel calmer, talk about what made you so angry with a trusted friend or adult. You can also pour out all your feelings in a notebook or journal.

Activity 9. Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a technique that helps you feel calmer and less stressed by focusing on tensing and then relaxing different muscle groups in your body. Your muscles can get tight when you're feeling strong emotions like anger, fear, or sadness. By doing this exercise, you can learn to relax your muscles, which helps your whole body feel more relaxed, and your mind feel more at ease.

1. **Find a comfortable spot** where you won't be disturbed. This could be your bedroom, a cozy corner, or even outside in the yard.
2. Close your eyes if you want, and **take some deep breaths**. Next, you will tense (squeeze) different muscle groups in your body, holding the tension for a few seconds and then releasing it.
3. **Start with your feet.** Bend your toes and hold for 5 seconds. Then, release the tension and let your feet relax completely. Notice how your feet feel when they are relaxed.
4. **Move to your legs.** Squeeze your calf muscles, the area at the back of your lower leg, between your knee and your ankle, by pointing your toes upward and holding for 5 seconds. Then, release and relax. Next, tighten your thigh muscles by straightening your legs and holding for 5 seconds. Release and relax.
5. **Focus on your stomach.** Tighten your stomach muscles by pulling your belly in and holding for 5 seconds. Then, release and let your stomach relax.



6. **Tense your hands and arms.** Make fists with your hands and squeeze tightly for 5 seconds. Release and let your hands relax. Bend your arms at the elbows and tense your biceps for 5 seconds. Release and relax.
7. **Move to your shoulders.** Shrug your shoulders up toward your ears and hold for 5 seconds. Release and let your shoulders drop and relax.
8. **Next, focus on your face.** Scrunch up your face by squeezing your eyes shut and wrinkling your nose and forehead for 5 seconds. Release and let your face relax.
9. **Finish with full-body relaxation.** Take a deep breath in, tense your whole body from head to toe, hold for 5 seconds, and then release everything at once. Let your whole body feel heavy and relaxed.
10. Breathe in deeply through your nose and out through your mouth a few more times. Notice how calm and relaxed your body feels.
11. When you're ready, slowly open your eyes if you had them closed, and take a moment to notice how relaxed and calm you feel.

Building Resilience

Resilience means handling problems, challenges, or tough times without giving up! It's like having a strong heart and mind that helps you keep going no matter what happens.



Here's how resilience works:

- **Facing Challenges.** When something upsetting happens, like not doing well on a test or losing a game, resilience helps you stay calm and try again.
- **Staying Positive.** Resilience is about staying positive even when you feel sad or disappointed. So even if something unpleasant happens, you believe in your heart that things will get better.
- **Learning from Mistakes.** Resilient kids learn from their mistakes. Instead of feeling bad, resilience makes you figure out what went wrong and try a different way next time!
- **Being Flexible.** When you're resilient, you're flexible or adaptable to changes. It's like being able to bend with the wind but not break.
- **Asking for Help.** Resilience knows there's no shame in asking for help when needed. If you're resilient, it's not about focusing on what happened or all the negative stuff. It's focusing on how to make things better next time. So, if you find it hard to find answers or solutions on your own, asking others for their help or input is part of the process to be better.

Activity 10. Positive Affirmations BINGO!

Today, you'll play a fun game called Positive Affirmations BINGO. Positive affirmations are like little magic words you say to yourself to help you feel good and strong. Imagine telling yourself, "I can do this!" or "I am brave!" These special words help you believe in yourself, like having a cheerleader in your head. When you're happy and positive, it can feel like you can overcome everything in the world! So, let's play!

Note: If you find it hard to choose a positive quality, ask your parent or a trusted adult or friend for help.

BINGO!				
I am brave.	I am kind.	I am creative.	I am strong.	I am smart.
I am loved.	I am honest.	I am unique.	I am a good friend.	I am helpful.
I am a good listener.	I am respectful.	<i>You're an AMAZING Kid!</i>	I can do hard things.	I believe in myself.
I am proud of myself.	I am caring.	I am thoughtful.	I learn from my mistakes.	I can make a difference.
I am a problem solver.	I am fun to be around.	I am grateful.	I have a big heart.	I make people smile.

1. Each day, pick one positive affirmation from your BINGO card. Read it out loud, think about what it means, and try to remember times that support this positive affirmation.

For example, if today's affirmation is "I am respectful." Try to remember the last time you said, "Thank You," "Sir," "Ma'am," or "Please" to someone. It could also be a gesture. For instance, when was the last time you opened the door and waited for someone to pass it before you did?

2. **Repeat it and believe it.** Repeat the positive affirmation several times throughout the day, like during breakfast, before bed, or when you need a boost of confidence.
3. **Play for BINGO!** Try to get a line of five marked squares in a row, column, or diagonal on your BINGO card. (Mark it on the card so you know what you've already done.) When you get BINGO, celebrate and feel proud of all the positive things you've told yourself! For example, you can do a happy dance, enjoy a small treat like a favorite snack or a piece of fruit, share your achievement with someone, etc.

Note to parents:

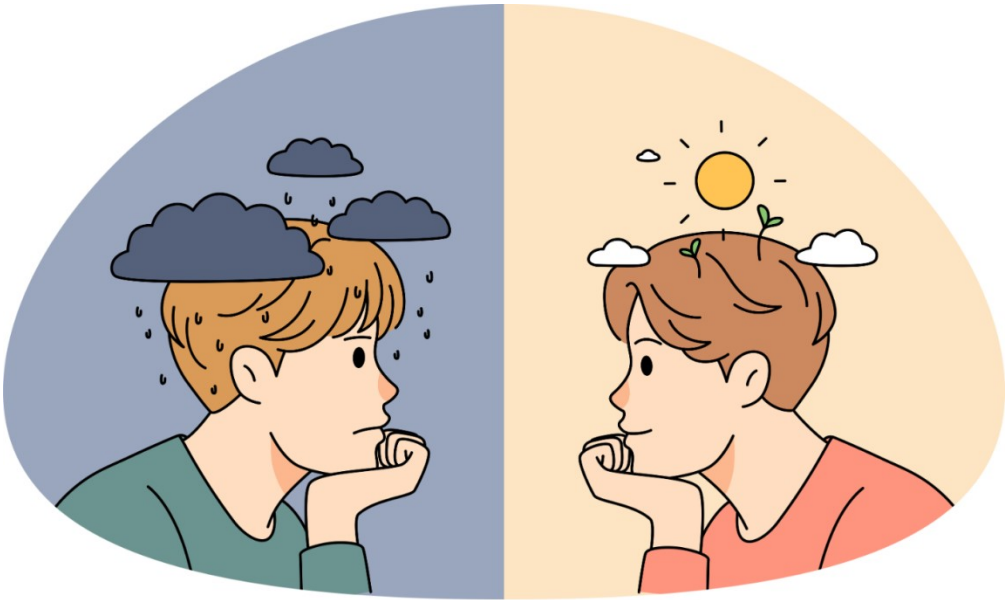
If your child finds it hard to pick a positive quality or feels unsure about saying these affirmations, it's a great opportunity for a supportive conversation. You can help by discussing each affirmation on the BINGO card, explaining what they mean, and giving real examples of how your child has demonstrated these qualities in their daily life.

Encouragement and recognition from a parent are incredibly powerful. They can help your child feel more confident and secure in expressing positive self-statements. Plus, this activity isn't just about winning the game—it's about

building a habit of positive thinking that can boost your child's self-esteem and overall happiness.

Activity 11. Turning a Negative Into a Positive

This activity is a fun way to change how you think about challenges and find the good in every situation. Let's go!



1. **Identify the negative feeling.** Think about something that recently made you feel upset, sad, or frustrated. For example, you didn't do well on a school project, lost a game, or felt left out.
2. **Say what you feel.** It's okay to feel upset or disappointed. Talk to someone you trust, like a family member or friend, about how you feel. Share what happened and why it made you feel that way. For example, talk to your Mom and say, "I was just really so sad my friends at school didn't invite me to play tag."
3. **Find a positive side to what happened.** Think about what good things came from that situation or what you can learn from it. For example:
 - Did you learn something new from making a mistake?

- Did you reach out to someone else and make a new friend when you felt left out?
- Did not winning a game make you want to try harder next time?

4. **Create a positive statement for yourself.** Turn your positive thoughts into a statement. A statement is like a special sentence you say to yourself. It's something you tell yourself to feel good and strong. For example:

- I made a mistake, but I learned the RIGHT way to do it next time.
- I made a new friend when I felt left out. I'm proud of myself because I didn't let my sadness or shyness hold me back.
- Not winning this time will make me stronger and smarter for the next game!

Activity 12. Kid Coping Strategies

Today, you'll learn some cool strategies to help you cope with different feelings and situations you might find tricky or tough. You see, despite doing your best, some things just don't go your way sometimes. (By the way, this happens to adults, too, so don't ever feel like you're the only one who's made a mistake or failed at something.)



The super important thing is to KNOW how to bounce right back up when you find things difficult. Now, you don't need to do everything on the list below. Just pick one whenever you're unhappy or upset. If one coping strategy is not enough, pick another one. Just keep on going until you feel good. Are you ready? Let's go!

1. **Figure out what you're feeling.** Are you sad, angry, worried, or something else? Use the feelings chart below.

If you don't find exactly what you're feeling in the feelings chart below, that's okay. People experience many different kinds of emotions. So, if you can't find what you're feeling below, just say it out loud. For example, you can say, "I feel lonely."

Also, you can have more than one feeling at a time. For example, you might feel "lonely and angry." That's okay, too.



happy



awkward



bored



disappointed



excited



miserable



sad



clueless



worried



confused



content



edgy



cranky



deflated



elated



nervous



dizzy



happy



angry



silly

2. Try **Balloon Breathing** (page 7) to feel calmer whenever you feel overwhelmed by strong emotions.

3. **Practice positive self-talk.** Talk to yourself with kindness and encouragement. For example, replace thoughts like "I can't do this" with "I will try my best." Also, remember your great qualities while doing the **Positive Affirmations BINGO** (page 46).

4. **Create a coping toolbox.** Make a box where you can keep things that make you feel better. You might include:
 - A notebook for drawing or a journal for writing what you feel.
 - A soft toy or blanket for comfort.
 - Your favorite book or a puzzle to distract you.
 - Headphones to listen to calming music or an audiobook.

5. **Practice mindfulness.** Spend a few minutes each day sitting quietly and focusing on your breath or the sounds around you. This can help you feel more relaxed and less worried.

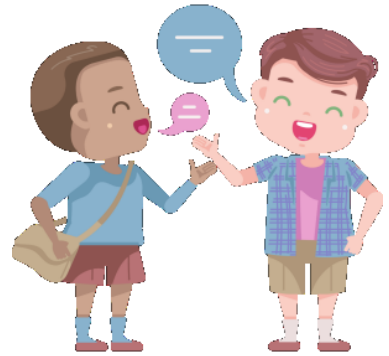
6. **Get some exercise.** Physical activity can really help reduce stress. Jump rope, dance, ride your bike, or just run around outside. The important thing is to move your body, especially when you start feeling bottled up with energy or emotion.

7. **Talk to someone.** Sometimes, talking to someone can help a lot. This could be a parent, a teacher, a counselor, or a friend. Share what's on your mind. They can offer support, advice, or just a listening ear.

8. **Visualize calmness.** Close your eyes and picture a place that makes you feel happy and peaceful. It might be a beach, a favorite park, or your room. Imagine yourself there and think about the details that make you feel calm.

Social Skills and Communication

Social connections are all about spending time with friends, family, and others in a respectful and positive way. Sure, it's great to have some alone time for studying and maybe even gaming, but it's important to have balance because it's great to have people you can count on.



When you have real and happy relationships with others:

- **You Have Lots of Fun Together.** When you have friends and people you like to talk to, you can have lots of fun playing games, going on adventures, or just talking about cool things.
- **You Feel Happy.** Being around friends and family who care about you makes you feel happy, loved, and safe. It's like having a big group of cheerleaders rooting for you!
- **You Learn from Each Other.** When you talk to different people, you learn different things and see the world in different ways. It helps you grow smarter and understand more about the world.
- **You Get Support During Tough Times.** Friends and family are there for you when things are tough. They listen to you, hug you, and help you solve problems.

Activity 13. Polite Words and Gestures Wheel

Hey kids! Get ready to spin the Polite Words and Gestures Wheel! It's a fun game where you'll practice using polite words and gestures to show respect and kindness to others. Being polite means using kind words and actions to show respect and care for others.



Below are TWO wheels; one is about Polite Words, and the other is about Polite Gestures.

Words are things we say with our mouths. For example, when you say "hello," "please," or "thank you," those are words.

Gestures are things we do with our bodies to show how we feel or what we mean. For example, waving your hand to say "hi," giving a thumbs up to show you like something, or nodding your head to say "yes," are all gestures.

Following are the instructions on how to make the wheels. Ask your parents or another adult if you need help gathering your supplies or making the wheels. (**Note:** If you don't want to make them, that's okay; just get a small coin and go to step 1 below.)

What you will need:

- a large piece of cardboard or thick paper
- scissors (with adult supervision)
- a ruler
- a pencil
- markers or crayons
- a paper fastener (brad)

- a small piece of cardboard or thick paper for the arrow
- optional: stickers, glitter, or other decorations

How to make the wheel:

1. Draw the Wheel.

- Take a large piece of cardboard or thick paper and draw a large circle with a pencil. You can use a plate or a round object to trace a perfect circle.
- Divide the circle into 8 equal sections using a ruler and pencil. Draw lines from the center to the edge, like slicing a pizza.

2. Label the Sections.

- Polite Words Wheel: Write the words you see below in each section or "slice" of the wheel.
 - Please
 - Thank You
 - I'm Sorry
 - May I?
 - Excuse Me
 - You're Welcome
 - Would You like?
 - ???
- Polite Gestures Wheel: Write the gestures you see below in each section or "slice" of the wheel.
 - Use a Gentle Voice
 - Smile
 - Eye Contact
 - ???
 - Handshake
 - A Slight Bow

- Open a Door for Someone
 - Offer Your Seat To Someone,
-
- What's "???" That's a wildcard! If you land on that section, you can say any polite word or do any polite gesture you want.

3. Decorate the Wheel.

- Use markers, crayons, stickers, and glitter to decorate each section of the wheel. Make it colorful and fun!

4. Make the arrow.

- Cut a small arrow from the extra piece of cardboard or thick paper. You can decorate the arrow, too, if you like.

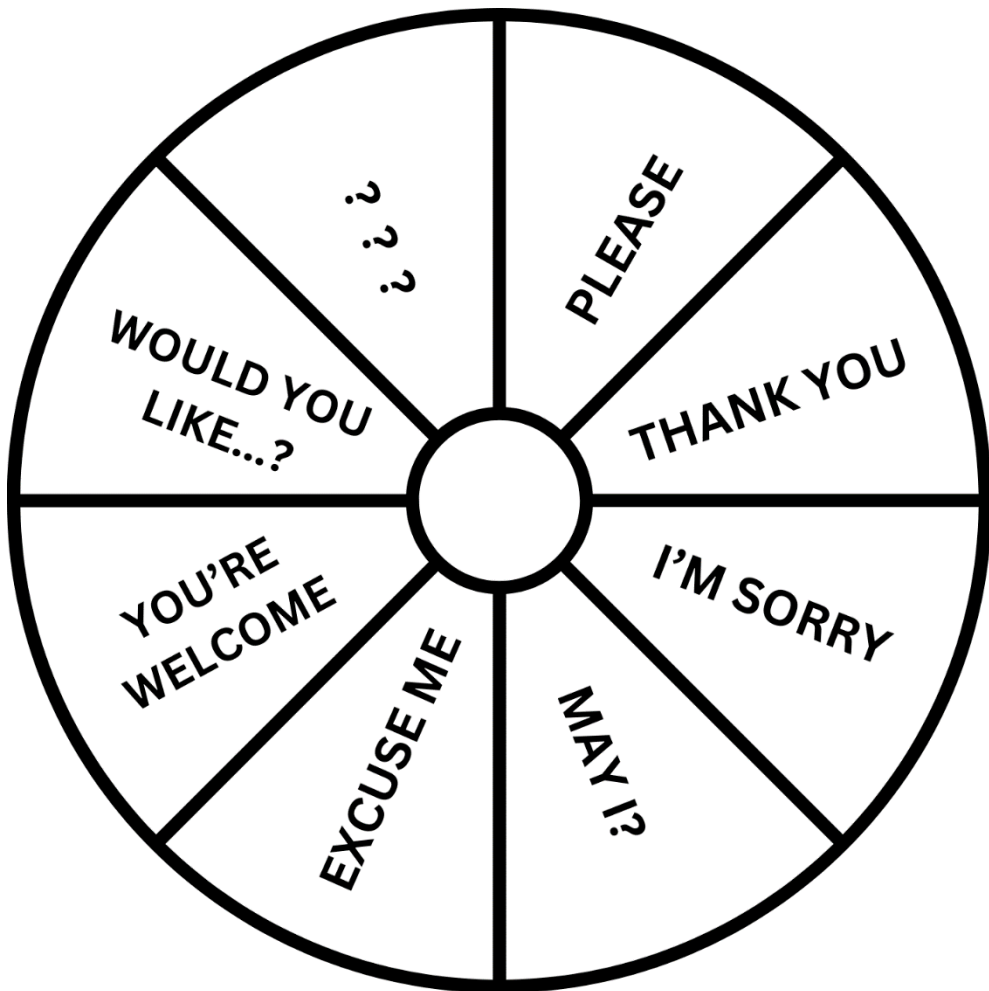
5. Attach the arrow.

- Use the paper fastener to attach the arrow to the center of the wheel. Make sure it's loose enough to spin freely.

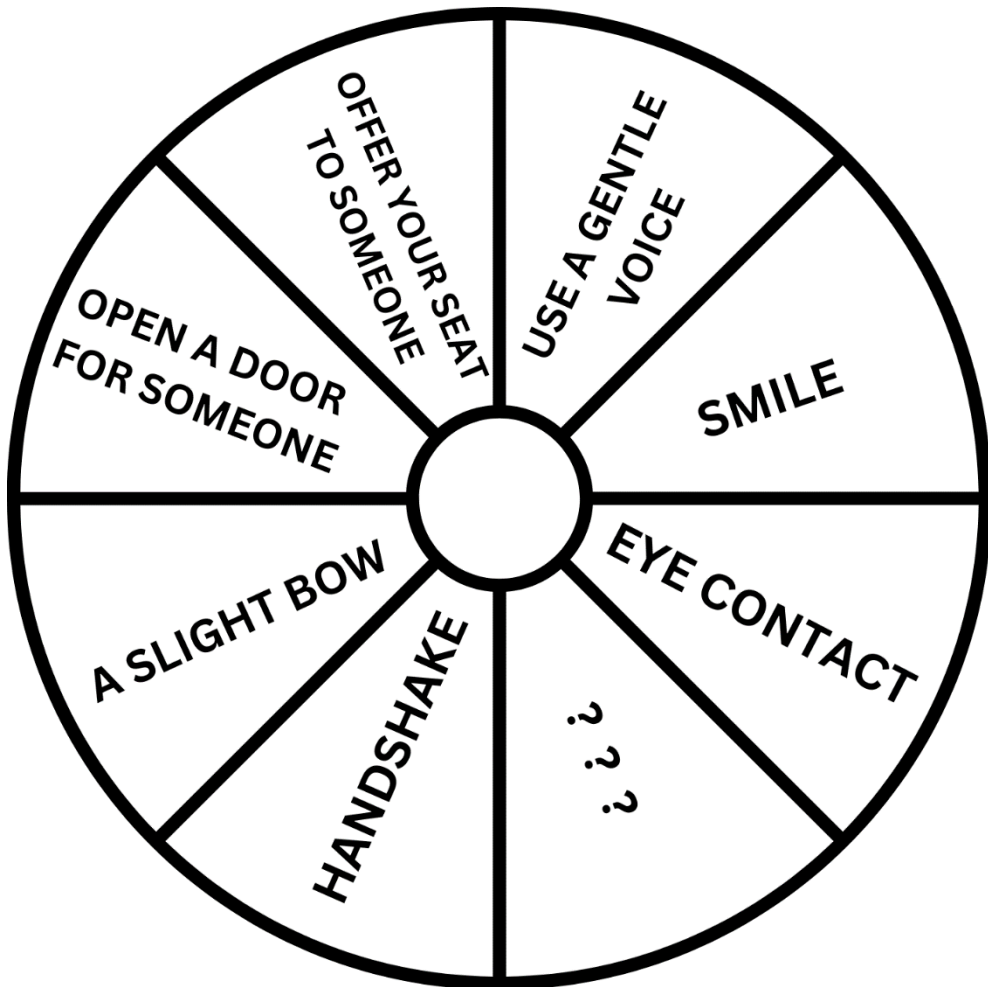
6. Test the wheel.

- Spin the arrow to make sure it works properly and lands on different sections.

THE POLITE WORDS WHEEL



THE POLITE GESTURES WHEEL



1. Every day, spin the wheel to see where it lands. You can use one just wheel or both. (If you didn't make the wheel, toss a small coin on the wheels above and see where it lands. If it doesn't land on the wheel, do it again until it does.)
2. Polite Words Wheel: Wherever the arrow (or coin) lands, you must say that polite word at least once that day. For example, if you get "Thank you," thank someone today. For example, thank your Mom or Dad for packing your food

or bringing you to school, thank your teacher after class for the lesson, thank a schoolmate for helping you with a project, etc.

3. Polite Gestures Wheel: Wherever the arrow (or coin) lands, you must perform that polite gesture at least once that day. For example, if you get "Smile," ensure you smile at your parents in the morning, smile at your teacher, smile at your best friend, etc.
4. At the end of the day, think about how using polite words and gestures made you and others feel. Share your experiences with your family and talk about how you can continue being polite and respectful daily.
5. Keep playing until you've said every polite word and made every polite gesture on the wheels. If you want, put a mark or sticker on the ones you've done to mark it off the wheel.

Activity 14. Social Skills Card Game

Hey kids! Get ready to have a blast with this Social Skills Card Game! This fun and exciting game is designed to help you practice and improve your social skills while playing with your friends and family.



Through different activities and challenges, you'll learn how to communicate better, understand others' feelings, and make great friendships. This game will help you become a social superstar, whether you're shy or outgoing. So, let's start building awesome social skills together!

Ask your parents or another adult whenever you need help with any of the activities below.

1. Select a "card" or activity each day, depending on your feelings. For example, pick an activity from the *Emotion Management* category if you're having difficult or negative thoughts or emotions that day. Otherwise, pick ANY activity you want to do.
2. Complete the activity or challenge described on the card on the same day.
3. After you've done the task, cross it off the table below.
4. Keep on going until you've done every social skill challenge!

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Start a Conversation

Find someone and ask them about their favorite hobby.

Share a Story

Tell a story about a fun day you had recently.

Ask a Question

Ask someone a question about their day.

Give a Compliment

Give a sincere compliment to a friend or family member.

A compliment is a nice thing you say to someone to make them feel good.

EMOTION MANAGEMENT

Deep Breathing

Practice taking five deep breaths to calm down when you feel upset.

Identify Emotions

Draw a face showing how you feel right now and explain why you feel that way.

For example, draw a sad emoji 😞 if you feel sad or lonely.

Find a Calm Space

Think of a place where you feel calm. Describe it or draw a picture of it.

For example, draw a picture of a magical forest where you feel happy.

Count to Ten

When you feel upset, count to ten slowly before reacting.

EMPATHY AND KINDNESS

Acts of Kindness

Do something kind for someone else today, like sharing a toy or helping with a task.

Put Yourself in Their Shoes

Think about a time when a friend was sad.

How do you think they felt? What could you have done to help them feel better?

Say Thank You

Write a Thank-You note to someone who has helped you recently.

Apologize

Think of a time when you might have hurt someone's feelings.

Practice saying, 'I'm sorry' and mean it.

FRIENDSHIP BUILDING

Make a New Friend

Introduce yourself to someone new and ask if they want to play.

Take Turns

Practice taking turns during a game or activity.

Play Together

Invite someone to join you in a group activity or game.

Plan a Playdate

Plan a fun activity to do with a friend this weekend.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

Solve a Conflict

Think of a time you disagreed with a friend. How did you solve it? What could you do differently next time?

Teamwork

Work with a friend or sibling to build something using blocks or draw a picture together.

Ask for Help

Think of a time you were stuck on a problem.

Who did you ask for help? How did it feel to get help?

Compromise

Practice compromising by choosing a game or activity that everyone in a group wants to do.

A compromise is when two (or more) people both give up a little bit of what they want to find a way that works for both of them. Imagine you and a friend want to play different games. Instead of arguing, you could agree to play your friend's game first, and then play your game next. That way, you both get to be happy.

Conclusion



Wow, kiddo, you've done an **AMAZING** job learning
and doing all the exercises in this mini-book.
Tibby and Zip are proud of you!



It's not always easy practicing the skills in this book, but you can do it! You just have to remember that YOU are the boss of your thoughts, feelings, and actions—not the other way around.

For example, when you're feeling super mad, you might want to behave in a way that's not helpful. For instance, you might want to slam your bedroom really hard. But that might shock your Mom downstairs in the kitchen and drop a plate, or it might surprise your dog, who starts to bark uncontrollably, giving you a headache.

Acting on upsetting feelings often leads to more upsetting stuff. The best thing to do is step back and calm down. After that, you can move on to other things that make you feel better more quickly.

Did you know that the best way to learn the skills in this book is to keep practicing them even when you don't need them? By continuously practicing, you'll find handling whatever comes your way easier and more natural. Think of it like training to be a superhero. The more you practice, the stronger and more confident you become in your abilities!

Tibby and Zip are always here on these pages whenever you need a reminder or a friend to help you through tough times.

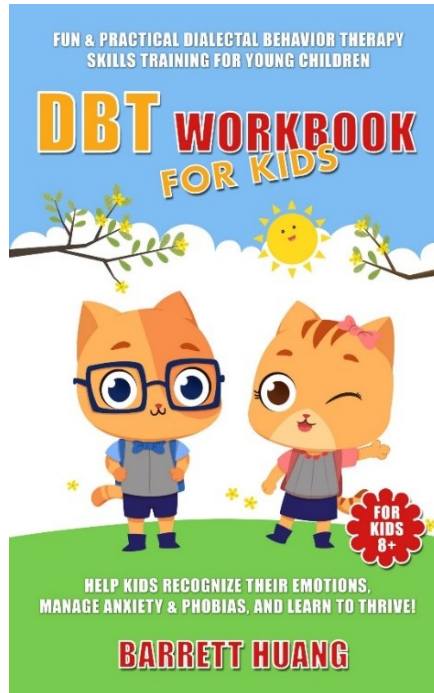
So, keep your Mental Health Activity Pack close, and whenever you need a little boost, open it up, pick an exercise, and give it a go!

Further Reading

DBT Workbook for Kids

*Fun & Practical Dialectal Behavior Therapy Skills Training
For Children*

*Help Kids Recognize Their Emotions, Manage Anxiety &
Phobias, and Learn To Thrive!*



Get your copy here:

<https://tinyurl.com/dbtkids>

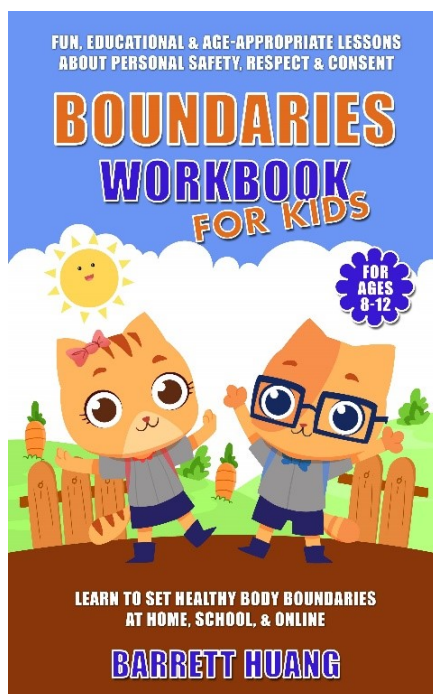


[Boundaries Workbook for Kids](#)

Fun, Educational & Age-Appropriate Lessons About Personal
Safety & Consent

Learn to Set Healthy Body Boundaries at Home, School, &
Online

(For Ages 8-12)



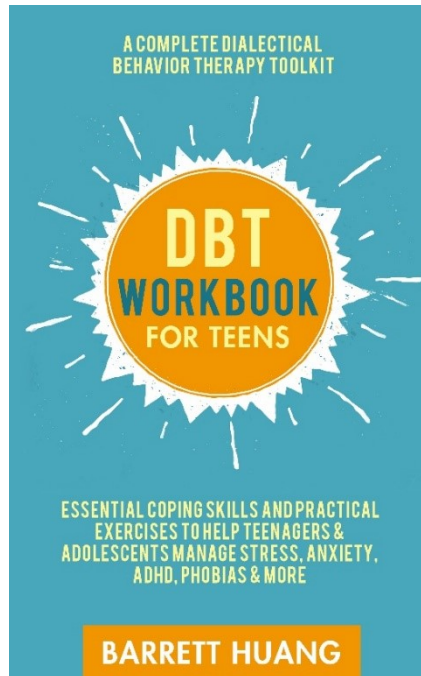
Get your copy here:

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DBT Workbook For Teens

*A Complete Dialectical Behavior Therapy Toolkit
Essential Coping Skills and Practical Activities To Help
Teenagers & Adolescents Manage Stress, Anxiety, ADHD,
Phobias & More*



Get your copy here:

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About the Author

Barrett Huang is an author and businessman. Barrett spent years discovering the best ways to manage his OCD, overcome his anxiety, and learn to embrace life. Through his writing, he hopes to share his knowledge with readers, empowering people of all backgrounds with the tools and strategies they need to improve their mental wellbeing and be happy and healthy.

When not writing or running his business, Barrett loves to spend his time studying. He has majored in psychology and completed the DBT skills certificate course by Dr. Marsha Linehan. Barrett's idol is Bruce Lee, who said, "The key to immortality is first living a life worth remembering."

<https://barretthuang.com/>