

## **Bonus Activity**

# **Identifying Your Target Feelings**

### ***For You to Know***

Target feelings can get really big and feel out of control. When these feelings are really big, it can seem like you do not have control when you actually *do* have control. These are the feelings you have to work on the most.

Let's pretend you are sitting in a boat on a lake. Just take a moment to imagine this.

Now imagine you are drifting along in your boat when suddenly, out of nowhere, your boat hits a big rock and springs a leak. When your boat is leaking and water starts to come in, it can be easy to feel overwhelmed and not know what to do.

Sometimes your brain starts to become overwhelmed with messages from your feeling mind, such as when you are talking to a new group of friends or have to spend time with someone you do not like. When that happens, your feelings can become overwhelming, and it can feel like you have "sprung a leak" in your boat.

Sometimes you can see a big feeling coming and make a plan to prevent it from getting too big, but sometimes you cannot. When you cannot plan for a big feeling, it is like riding along in your boat and coming across a big rock that is just under the surface of the water. You might not see the event that starts a big feeling, but when you hit it, you spring a leak and feel overwhelmed.

The first step to patching a leak in your boat is to notice that there is a leak. This is like noticing that your brain is filling up with feeling-mind thoughts. Noticing your feeling is happening and naming your feeling helps you figure out what to do.

When your boat is no longer leaking, you can figure out how to solve the problem that caused the leak in the first place.



## ***More for You to Do***

Boats are made of different materials. People's brains are all different as well. Some brains react in anger. Some brains react in fear. When your boat hits a rock, what is your most common reaction? Do you get angry a lot, or do you feel sad more often? Those are your target feelings, the ones you might have to work on the most.

On the lines below, write down your target feelings and what you usually do when you notice each of those feelings:

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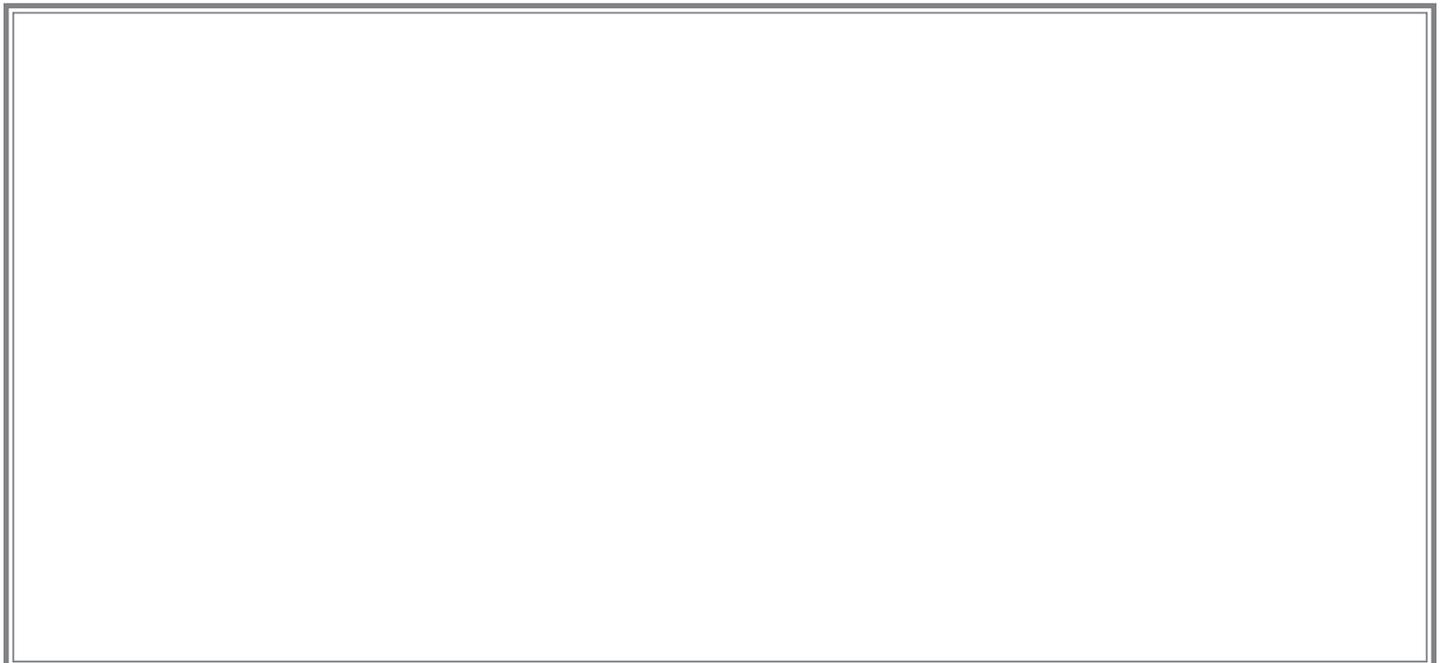
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Draw a picture of a boat. The boat is your brain. Then draw a picture of a big rock. Label the rock as the event that starts your feeling. Think of the water that comes into the boat as messages from your feeling mind.





## Bonus Activity **Practice, Practice, Practice**

### *For You to Know*

Practicing and rehearsing what you learn in social interactions, like with friends, parents, and teachers, is the best way to keep all the tools you have been using fresh.

Practice is a very important part of making changes in your behavior. As you have been going through the activities in *Don't Let Your Emotions Run Your Life for Kids*, you have been learning about many tools that can help you respond to your feelings in a more helpful way. But just reading the book and doing the activity pages will not be enough; you also need to try the things every day when you notice that you are having big feelings.

## ***For You to Do***

In activity 21 of the printed workbook, you learned a game that helps you explore situations, feelings, and intensities. By adding the cards below to this game, you will have another way to practice using your new tools to gain control of your feelings and make good choices.

Print a set of these cards for each player, and cut them out. When playing the situation, feeling, intensity game, add to your turn the tool (or tools) card that you could try to use to help manage each situation. Just like in activity 21, give each player one of each feeling card and one of each intensity card (1–10).

Place the situation cards facedown in the middle of the table. The player whose turn it is picks a card and lays it faceup for all to see. In turn, players each lay down the feeling that makes sense to them and the intensity they would feel. Then players each lay down the tools they might use to try to manage that feeling, reduce the intensity, and make good choices. Discuss any differences or similarities among the players. Remember that everyone might have a different feeling and intensity.

Ask your parents to play too! It is important for them to also learn the tools so they can help you when you need it.

BRAKE!

Deep Breathing

PLEASE

Cooling Your Face

DEAL

HALT

Relaxing Your Muscles

Soothing Yourself

CARE

DISTRACT

PLAN

Superpowers

## **Bonus Activity**

# **Soothing Yourself with Happy Moments**

### ***For You to Know***

It can be easy to get discouraged and think that your uncomfortable feelings will last forever. With practice, you can learn to soothe yourself by doing things that promote happy feelings. This can take your attention away from big or uncomfortable feelings.

Big and uncomfortable feelings can fill up your mind quickly and make you feel out of control. When big feelings fill your mind and you feel out of control, it can be hard to make room for the facts.

Did you know that you could slow down a big feeling before it completely fills your mind?

It is possible! One way to do this is to find something that will start a different feeling. If you start filling your mind with different kinds of feelings, you can stop yourself from being stuck on just one out-of-control feeling. Filling your mind with different feelings does not always make you feel happy, but it can help your big feeling feel less out of control. If you notice that you did not act on a big emotion and that nothing is worse, that is good news. It means your skills are working!

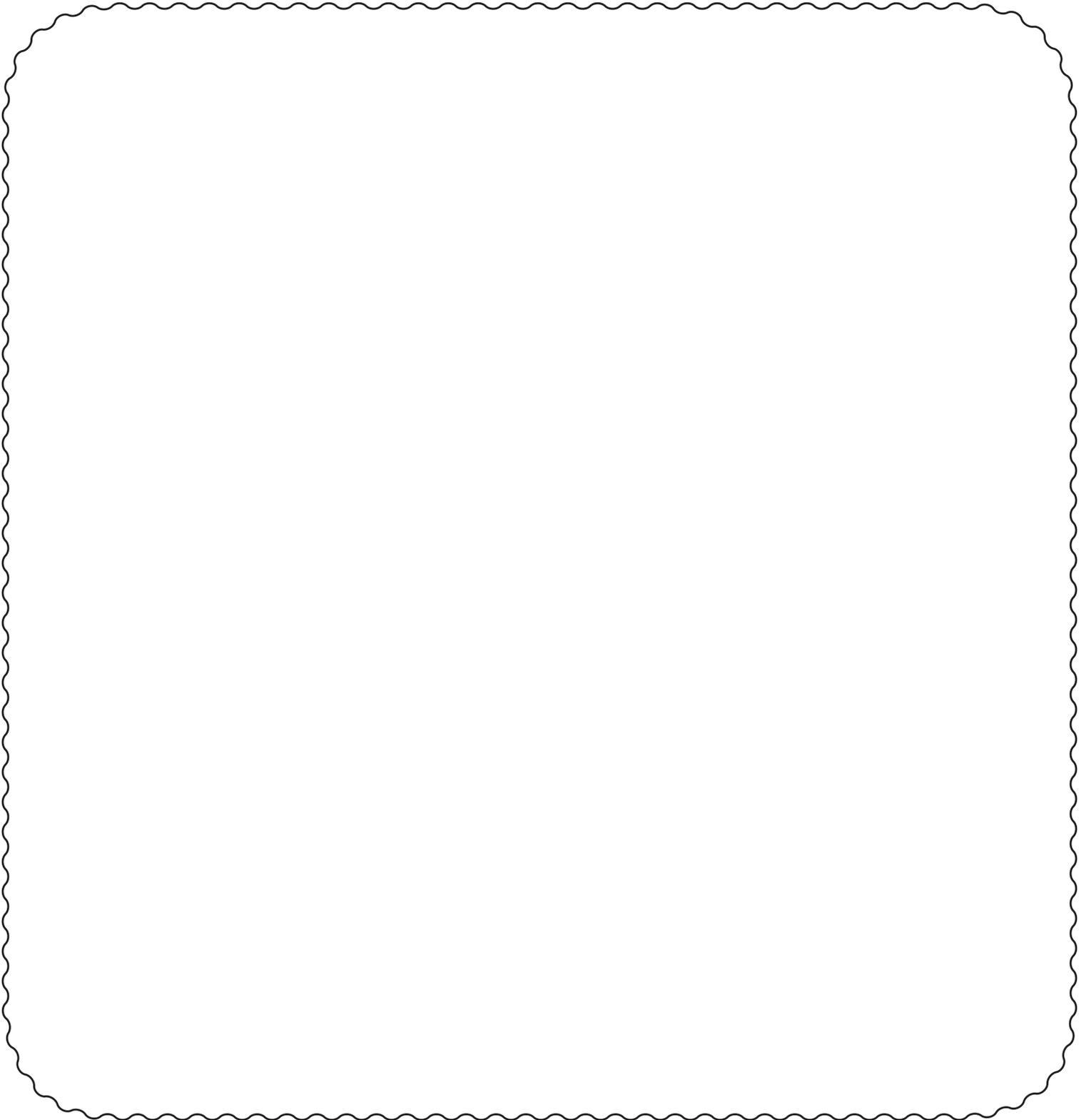
One way to change a feeling is to do something that makes your mind think of something soothing. Doing this can distract you from big feelings and help you feel in control. The trick is to find an activity that really grabs your attention so that it is hard to think about anything else.

Here are some ways to soothe yourself that help promote happy feelings:

- Cuddle in a soft blanket.
- Take a bubble bath.
- Listen to soft, relaxing music.
- Hum a familiar, soothing song to yourself.
- Put on soothing lotion.
- Smell a flower or your favorite scent.
- Work on a puzzle or draw a picture.
- Gently stretch while breathing slowly.

### ***For You to Do***

Draw some pictures of things that are soothing to you. Keep this page in mind when you feel an uncomfortable or big feeling, and see if practicing your soothing skills helps you feel a little happy and a little less uncomfortable.



## **Bonus Activity**

# **Setting SMART Goals**

### ***For You to Know***

When a goal is hard but possible, there is a sense of accomplishment in being able to achieve it. Reaching your goals is important because it helps you build up your self-esteem, or good feelings about yourself. Building up your self-esteem can help you manage big uncomfortable feelings, like anger, sadness, and guilt.

Sometimes goals seem impossible to reach. This can get in the way of working toward them. You can set your goals in a way that makes them easier to reach by using the SMART approach:

**S—Specific**

**M—Measurable**

**A—Achievable**

**R—Realistic**

**T—Time targeted**

To make a goal measurable, you might have to break it down into smaller steps. If a step seems too big, you might just need to break it down into even smaller steps. When your goal is measurable, you can tell how you are progressing toward it.

Here is an example of how to be SMART about setting a goal.

Kevin wants to be able to spend more time with his friends. The problem is that Kevin's friends spend a lot of their time riding their bikes, both after school and during summer. Kevin has a bike, but he has never learned how to ride it.

How can Kevin spend more time with his friends if they are out riding bikes and he doesn't know how? He can do this by setting a SMART goal. First, Kevin decides on his specific goal: to be able to ride his bike by summer.

Next, Kevin thinks about how to take small steps so he can measure his progress. Kevin's small steps look like this:

**Step 1:** Kevin decides it would help if he watched some YouTube videos of people riding bikes. In one video, he watches a person riding a bike as the narrator talks about riding bikes. Kevin practices imagining himself on his bike while watching the video.

**Step 2:** Kevin spends some time watching his friends ride their bikes, and he asks questions. Watching others and asking questions can be a great way to learn a new skill.

**Step 3:** Kevin decides to practice balancing on his bike without using the pedals. This helps him get a feel of how to balance himself without going too fast. He could also practice using the brakes so he knows how hard to squeeze them if he wants to stop.

**Step 4:** Kevin practices balancing, coasting, and braking for a while and then starts trying to use his pedals. He practices near the grass and wears his helmet so that he is less likely to get hurt if he falls.

**Step 5:** Kevin repeats practicing his balancing, braking, and trying to balance while pedaling. He keeps practicing until he can keep up with his friends and can brake without falling over when he needs to stop.

Goal achieved! By practicing the small steps, Kevin learned to ride his bike.

You might ask, how did Kevin know his goal was achievable or realistic? The answer is, you might not always know until you try. Kevin saw his friends riding bikes, and this made his goal seem more achievable and realistic for him, but he might not have known if he had not tried to ride his bike. Also, Kevin set a time target for his goal: by summer. Why is this important? If you set a time for when you want to reach your goal, you will be more likely to keep working on that goal, especially as you get closer to your time target.

## ***For You to Do***

Pick one of the goals you listed in activity 37 of the printed workbook. You can pick a long-term or a short-term goal, though it might help to start with a goal you can reach soon so you get practice.

Write down your specific goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Think of small steps that allow you to measure your progress. List those here:

Step 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Step 2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Step 3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Step 4: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Step 5: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do your steps seem achievable? Are they realistic? If any step seems too hard for you, it might need to be broken down into smaller steps. You can ask someone if you are not sure about this.

Now set your time target.

Goal to be achieved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Track your thoughts and feelings as you work toward this goal. Do you notice any good feelings after completing a step? Even a tiny bit of a good feeling can count. At each point, write down what you notice.

Before taking any steps, I feel: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

After taking a few steps, I feel: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I have reached my goal, and I feel: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Being aware of how you feel along the way can help you prepare for how you might feel while working toward goals in the future. This is why it is helpful to write your feelings down.

## Bonus Activity

# Activate to Regulate— Every Step Counts

### *For You to Know*

Taking the first small steps toward reaching a goal does not always feel good. It can also be hard to do something that *might* be fun if you have been noticing a lot of sadness or low energy. It is important to remind yourself that each small step counts, even if it does not feel supergood in the moment.

Challenging yourself is important, but it can be extra hard when big feelings get in the way of noticing happiness. If you started taking steps toward a goal, big or small, and you have not noticed any boost in your self-esteem, try not to let this get you down. Your effort still counts! Common thoughts like these can get in the way of boosting self-esteem when you are working on goals:

- Thinking a step is too small to count or that you should already be taking this step
- Worrying that you won't be able to keep making steps and might let others down
- Thinking about all the times you tried a step that did not work out

If you notice any of those thoughts getting in the way, these reminders can help:

- Tell yourself that no step is too small.

Even if you do not believe this, keep reminding yourself that every effort really does count. You might catch yourself believing it if you remind yourself enough times.

- Remind yourself that you cannot know what will happen in the future.

If you get stuck taking a step in the future, you might just need to break it down into a smaller step.

- Focus on the present.

Look back at activity 5 in the printed workbook, and use the acronym GIFT as a tool to help bring your mind into the present moment.

It can also help to think of the phrase “activate to regulate.” By taking a step, even a small one, you are activating parts of your brain that can produce happy feelings. It does not mean you will feel happiness right away, but with time and effort, activating your brain helps improve your mood. When you notice an improved mood, you will feel more regulated. That means that you will feel more in control of your feelings over time.

### ***For You to Do***

Look back at the list of thoughts that can get in the way of self-esteem. Have you ever noticed these thoughts? List thoughts that you notice getting in the way here:

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Remember, activate to regulate! You could try using the GIFT tool from activity 5 in the printed workbook. You could also try writing down one of the reminders and carrying it with you in your pocket or backpack so you can read it whenever big feelings start to get in the way of you noticing happiness. List your helpful reminder thoughts and what tools you are going to try here:

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After you have tried some of these tools, write down anything you notice. Think about whether the tools helped you change the thoughts that get in the way of taking steps, and whether your emotion has changed. These can be helpful things to share with an adult when you feel ready.

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## **Section 7**

# What to Do If Your Tools Are Not Working

Congratulations! It's likely that you have already learned many tools to use to gain control of your feelings. What if you find that the tools you are using are just not working? Well, do not give up! Changing your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors is hard work, and it makes sense that you may feel frustrated and overwhelmed at times when trying something new.

A few of the activities in this section provide an overview of almost every tool in the printed workbook. Once you already have an understanding of what the tools are, these activities can help you notice if you are using them the way they were meant to be used. There are also tools in this section that help you think about using your tools even when you might not feel like using them. This section ends with a tool you can use to pinpoint upcoming events that have brought up big feelings in the past.

## **Bonus Activity**

# **Am I at Risk for Big Feelings Right Now?**

### ***For You to Know***

It is helpful to have a general plan to keep your body from getting tired or rundown. It is a good idea to have a separate plan for times when you already don't feel well or you know that there will be changes in your environment. By following this plan, you are less likely to experience feelings, thoughts, or behaviors that feel out of control.

In activity 23 of the printed workbook, you developed a SEEDS plan to help you keep from getting tired or rundown. This bonus activity is meant to help you better control your feelings if your body is already tired or rundown, like if you were sick, or if things in your life will be changing. Maybe your family will be moving and you'll be going to a new school; maybe a new baby is arriving at your house; maybe you recently started a bunch of new activities. Just like planting your SEEDS in your everyday SEEDS garden, planting SEEDS to help you recover from being sick or from extra stress will take some time.

Here are some ideas to help you recover from being sick on feeling stress.

**S**—You will usually need from nine to eleven hours of **sleep**, but when you are sick it is normal for you to need a lot more. You might even need to stay in bed for most of the day. If you need extra sleep when you don't feel well, you can try relaxing your muscles (activity 27 in the printed workbook) or deep breathing (activity 29) to help you relax. It might also help to fill an old tube sock with rice and a few drops of lavender oil. If you microwave this for ten to fifteen seconds, you'll have something warm to snuggle that smells good and promotes relaxation. Take time out from social media. You might be surprised at how much more rested you feel if you take a break from screen time.

**E**—**Eating healthy** is even more important if you have extra stress or aren't feeling well. It is especially important to drink a lot of water so that your body can cleanse itself. Having a lot of soups, drinks with electrolytes, ginger ale, and water can help you recover.

**E**—While **exercise** is usually really good for you, it is important to rest more when you are extra stressed or feeling sick. It can be good to get up and move around or take a slow walk, but to let your body heal you will want to take a break from sports and running fast.

**D**—**Downtime** is always important, but it is even more important if you have a lot going on or are feeling sick. Adding at least thirty extra minutes of downtime a day when you are healing or adjusting to big changes can make a big difference in reducing how long it will take for you to feel back to your normal self.

**S**—**Socializing** with others is still important, though now might be a time to try to socialize a little less than usual. If you do spend time socializing, be sure to recognize when your mind and body are feeling really tired, and have a plan for getting back to downtime and sleep, if needed.

***For You to Do***

Put together a SEEDS plan for yourself so you remember what to do when you are feeling sick or extra stressed. Write down your plan here:

Sleep: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Eating healthy: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Exercise: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Downtime: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Socializing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Bonus Activity

# What Tools Do You Use for the Job?

### *For You to Know*

You need to have the right tools for the job. A calculator is not going to help you learn vocabulary words; you need a dictionary. The same is true for managing your feelings. You have to use the right tool.

You have learned a lot of tools in the printed workbook. The chart that follows reviews what each tool is meant to do and when it is best to use it. Read it through, and then use the “For You to Do” section to practice and test your knowledge.

<b><i>Tool</i></b>	<b><i>When to Use It</i></b>	<b><i>What You Will Be Doing</i></b>
Mindfulness (activities 1–6)	When you are in a situation where your feelings are big, and you do not know what to do	Looking at both the facts of a situation and your feelings to help you make good choices
Putting Your Mind in the Present Moment (activity 5)	When you notice that you want to be doing something else and it is hard to stay focused	Giving yourself a break from strong feelings by focusing only on what you are supposed to be doing
Does Your Feeling Fit the Facts? (activity 17)	When you want to understand why you feel the way you do	Labeling your feeling, then checking the facts about what caused the emotion to see if it makes sense
You Don't Have to Act on Your Urge (activity 20)	When you want to make better choices	Identifying your feelings and urges to help you decide on your actions

<b><i>Tool</i></b>	<b><i>When to Use It</i></b>	<b><i>What You Will Be Doing</i></b>
Your Piggy Bank of Happy Moments (activity 22)	When big feelings pop up and you want to help yourself feel better	Collecting happy moments to save for times when you have strong feelings
Planting SEEDS in Your Skills Garden (activity 23)	Always! These skills are important ways of taking care of your mind and body so you can be successful in using your tools.	Making a plan to help you remember the importance of <b>S—Sleep</b> <b>E—Eating healthy</b> <b>E—Exercise</b> <b>D—Downtime</b> <b>S—Socializing</b>
<b>BRAKE!</b> (activity 25)	When your feelings are big and trying to tell you what to do, and when you need to calm down before making a choice	Slowing yourself down by remembering to <b>B—Take a deep breath.</b> <b>R—Relax</b> your muscles. <b>A—Ask</b> your fact mind. <b>K—Be kind.</b> <b>E—Enter</b> the situation when you are ready.
When Your Brain Overheats (activity 26)	When you are not able to think straight and need to calm down right away	Putting something cold on your eyes and face to help the parts of your brain work together
Relaxing Your Muscles: Noodles, Noodles, Noodles (activity 27)	When your muscles are tense and you need to calm your body down	Relaxing the muscles in each area of your body

<b><i>Tool</i></b>	<b><i>When to Use It</i></b>	<b><i>What You Will Be Doing</i></b>
<p>DISTRACT (activity 28)</p>	<p>When you need a way to distract your thoughts from getting stuck on negative feelings</p>	<p>Changing your feeling by changing what you're doing:</p> <p><b>D—Do</b> something else, like a puzzle or playing "I Spy."</p> <p><b>I—Imagine</b> being somewhere else; for example, in your favorite spot.</p> <p><b>S—Tune in to your senses:</b> sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell.</p> <p><b>T—Think</b> about something else, like your favorite memory.</p> <p><b>R—Read</b> a book.</p> <p><b>A—Do an art or craft</b> project.</p> <p><b>C—Play a computer</b> game.</p> <p><b>T—Try</b> a new game.</p>
<p>Deep Breathing (activity 29)</p>	<p>When your emotions are big and you need to slow down your breathing in order to make a good choice</p>	<p>Noticing when your breaths are short and fast, and controlling your breathing so it's long and deep, like that of a deep-sea diver</p>
<p>You Have to DEAL (activity 30)</p>	<p>When things are not going your way and you want to make the best choice in the moment</p>	<p>Letting go of getting your way with these steps:</p> <p><b>D—Take deep</b> breaths.</p> <p><b>E—Examine</b> your options.</p> <p><b>A—Ask</b> yourself, <i>What is most important right now, in this very moment?</i></p> <p><b>L—Listen</b> to your full mind and do your best.</p>

<b><i>Tool</i></b>	<b><i>When to Use It</i></b>	<b><i>What You Will Be Doing</i></b>
<p>Planning Ahead for Big Feelings—PLAN (activity 31)</p>	<p>When you know something coming up will be hard for you, and you want to make good choices</p>	<p>Plan for coping well by following these steps:</p> <p><b>P—Picture</b> yourself controlling a big feeling.</p> <p><b>L—List</b> the tools you can use.</p> <p><b>A—Write</b> down specific <b>actions</b> you want to do and practice actually doing these actions.</p> <p><b>N—Make</b> a plan or schedule for practicing <b>now</b>.</p>
<p>Getting What You Need from Others—PLEASE (activity 32)</p>	<p>When you need to ask someone for something you need</p>	<p>Thinking ahead about how to ask for something by using these steps:</p> <p><b>P—Pick</b> a good time.</p> <p><b>L—List</b> the facts of the situation.</p> <p><b>E—Express</b> how you feel about the situation.</p> <p><b>A—Ask</b> for what you need.</p> <p><b>S—Stay</b> calm!</p> <p><b>E—End</b> your request with a statement about how the conversation felt.</p>

<b><i>Tool</i></b>	<b><i>When to Use It</i></b>	<b><i>What You Will Be Doing</i></b>
Nurturing Relationships with Others—CARE (activity 33)	When you want to help those you care about feel good	Showing others that you care about them by  <b>C—Being curious</b>  <b>A—Asking</b> questions  <b>R—Really</b> listening to what you hear and repeating it back  <b>E—Expressing</b> understanding
Setting Limits with Others—HALT (activity 34)	When you have to say no to someone and want to feel good about yourself afterward	Telling others how you want to be treated by following these steps:  <b>H—Having a goal</b> when speaking to someone and sticking to that goal  <b>A—Asking</b> for what you want or stating what you need directly  <b>L—Looking</b> the person in the eye  <b>T—Taking deep breaths</b> and keeping your muscles relaxed
Your Superhero and Superpower (activity 35)	When you need help staying in control of what you say and do	Imagining yourself as a superhero with powers that help you deal with big feelings
Soothing Yourself with Happy Moments (bonus activity)	When you need to distract yourself from big feelings and feel more in control	Doing something on purpose that makes your mind think of something calming

## ***For You to Do***

Print out a copy of this chart. Find a place in your home to post the chart so you have a handy reminder of your tools and when to use them. You can also cut out the squares of your chart to help you practice and test how well you know the skills. This will help you remember what skills you can use, and how you can use them, when you need them the most.

## **Bonus Activity**

# **When Your Tools Are Not Working**

### *For You to Know*

When your computer or tablet is not working, you may have to turn it off and back on or charge it up a little. Figuring out what is wrong with it is called troubleshooting. You can do the same thing when your tools are not working.

You may be practicing using your tools, only to find out they are still not working. Ugh! This can be very frustrating. This activity is going to walk you through the steps of troubleshooting to find out what is going on. It may be that you need to go back and review how to use the skills. It may be that you need to just use the tools over and over, or it may be that you are using the wrong tool for the job. Let's see what we learn.

### *Check Your SEEDS*

Remember that your SEEDS (sleep, eating healthy, exercise, downtime, and socializing) are important because they help you take care of your mind and body so you can be at your best and use your tools in the best possible way.

### *Be Mindful*

Check on which area of your mind your thoughts are coming from. Are you listening only to Fiona Feeling and not thinking about the facts of the situation that you cannot change? Are you listening only to Frankie Fact and not considering your feelings or the feelings of others?

### *Do You Have The Right Tool?*

If your feelings are superbig and intense, you first need to focus on calming down. You can use these tools to help you:

- Naming your feeling
- BRAKE!
- Putting something cold on your face
- Relaxing your muscles
- Distracting yourself
- Using deep breathing
- Soothing yourself with happy moments
- Noticing your urge without acting

After calming down and getting your feeling from big to small (or less powerful), you can problem solve or use tools meant to help you interact well with others. Remember, these work only after you have calmed down! If you try to problem solve while your feelings are big, you will not make the best choices, and things are likely to get worse.

- Do you need to ask someone for something? Then you would use PLEASE.
- Do you need to plan ahead for a situation that causes big feelings? Then you would use PLAN.
- Do you need to tend to a relationship? Then you would use CARE.
- Do you need to say no to someone? Then you would use HALT.

### *You Have the Right Tool, and It Is Still Not Working*

Go back to the activity where you learned this tool, and read it again. Ask an adult to help make sure that you understand how to use the tool. Feelings are difficult to understand, and it makes sense that you would need an adult to help you.

### *Repeat, Repeat, Repeat...and Repeat!*

Feelings can be very stubborn at times. If you have gone through all the troubleshooting steps, you might just need to keep using a tool over and over until it works! Practicing a skill by repeating it can take time, and sometimes time is what it takes to make a big feeling change or to help a negative thought go away.

## ***For You to Do***

Use the checklist below to help you troubleshoot when you are having problems using your tools:

- Check on your SEEDS.

Are you missing some? If you are, focus on those. If not, move on with troubleshooting.

- Check in with your full mind.

Are you listening only to your fact mind? If so, check in with your feeling mind.

Are you listening only to your feeling mind? If so, check in with your fact mind.

- Do you have the right tool?

Are your feelings too big? If so, you should be using the tools listed above to make big feelings smaller. If your feelings are not too big and the situation is the problem, you need to use problem-solving tools (PLAN, PLEASE, CARE, or HALT).

- Are you using the tool correctly?

If you are not sure, go back to the activity in which you learned the tool and review the section. Ask an adult for help.

- Have you repeatedly used the tool until you felt better?

If you have tried all of these things and you know you have the right tool, then you need to continue using the tool until it works!

## Bonus Activity

# Practicing with the Tools You Have

### *For You to Know*

Sometimes the tools you have will keep you from feeling worse but might not help you feel better—at least not right away. This can make it hard to keep using them. It is important to remember that not feeling worse by using the tools you have is still better than using no tools at all and feeling worse.

As you start using your tools more and more, you will find some situations where none of your tools seem to be working. If you notice this, it will be important for you to ask yourself, *Is it possible that my tools are helping me not feel worse?* This is important because there will be times when no tool will be able to completely dissolve a really big feeling. It does not mean that your big feeling will never go away. By asking the question, you can help yourself see how your tools are actually working, even though you are not feeling better yet. Not feeling worse is often a big sign that the tools you are using are actually working.

Let's look at an example. Lauren and Henry are playing a game of UNO with two other friends. Lauren smiles and giggles every time a friend places down a red or a blue card. Henry figures out that Lauren has only red and blue cards left, so he makes sure to place green and yellow cards down right before Lauren's turn. Not only that, Henry gives Lauren his "skip a turn" and "draw four" cards a few turns in a row! Lauren starts to feel angry and does not like the cards she has anymore. "I hate this game! I don't want to play anymore!" Lauren exclaims, and she quits the game early.

If you were Henry, or one of the other friends, would you want to play UNO with Lauren, knowing she might quit if she does not like the cards she has to take? Probably not.



## Bonus Activity

# Ready for Action or Stuck Demanding Your Own Way?

### *For You to Know*

We often get stuck demanding our own way even when those around us can't always change the facts of the situation.

In activity 30 of the printed workbook, we learned about DEAL. Let's take a minute to review what DEAL is:

**D**—Take **deep** breaths.

**E**—**Examine** your options.

**A**—**Ask** yourself, *What is most important right now, in this very moment?*

**L**—**Listen** to your full mind and do your best.

There are times when we have to accept the fact that we cannot have our way, and that can be really hard.

Have you ever thought to yourself, *I know I'm not going to get my way but I don't care. I'm going to show them that I am mad. I'm going to just be mad all day!* This probably didn't help you at all, and it's likely that you ended up having a bad day.

Imagine you planned to go to a park, but on the day you are supposed to go, it is raining and you cannot go. You are mad about this, and you do not like that it's raining. Now imagine that your anger and sadness become so intense that you whine or cry for hours. Does this make the rain stop? No. Does this make your parents change their minds and take you to the park in the rain? No. Does this help you feel less angry or

sad? No. What it does do is make you and your family miserable all day. This is where it can come in handy to accept the facts (that it is raining) and that you cannot change them, even though you don't like it. You could choose to use tools to calm down your feeling and then be ready for action. What else could you do with your time? How could you be willing to make the best of the situation and not get stuck demanding your own way?

## ***For You to Do***

Think about the story above and respond to the following prompts about how to be ready for action instead of getting stuck demanding your own way.

List the things you would not like about this situation:

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List tools from your toolbox that you could use to help make those feelings smaller and more manageable:

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List five things you could do to show you are ready for action or willing to accept the situation even though you do not like it:

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2. 

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3. 

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4. 

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5. 

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## **Bonus Activity**

# **It's a RAP**

### ***For You to Know***

Once you understand the events and warning signs that a big feeling or out-of-control behavior might occur, you can come up with a ready-for-action (RAP) plan that can help you be better prepared to gain control and change your path.

Now that you know about your feelings and about how your feelings are different from your thoughts and behaviors, you are ready to use your mindfulness tools to notice situations and events that tend to start big feelings and out-of-control behaviors.

The first step is to identify a big feeling that you struggle with and notice what behaviors tend to happen when that feeling gets out of control. You can use your mindfulness tools to notice what it feels like in your body before your feeling is too big and before you act on any behaviors. This will be the perfect time to use your full mind by noticing both facts and your feelings about the facts. Once you have a feeling and behavior identified, try to write down anything that tends to happen before you notice that feeling or behavior. For example, you might notice big feelings if you did not sleep well or strong opinions that turn into big feelings quickly when you are in a new environment.

Let's look at Beth's signals that indicate she could have a big feeling soon and needs her ready-for-action plan:

- I didn't sleep well.
- I have a math test coming up.
- I couldn't have my favorite breakfast.
- I feel hot in my face.
- My shoulders feel tight.

Now that Beth knows some signals that indicate she might have a big feeling, she can also prepare a list of tools that respond to those signals before her feelings get too big. These tools are on her list:

- I practice relaxing my muscles before getting out of bed.
- I splash cold water—as cold as I can get it—on my face first thing when I get up.
- I use CARE on purpose with DEAL to be sure that my signals do not lead to misunderstandings and big emotions.
- I practice deep breathing as much as possible today.
- I bring a soft stone to school to help me feel calm.
- I look at my superhero self, and remind myself of how my powers can help me use my best manners.

It can also be helpful to review some past consequences of times when you did not use tools. This can help you remember why you want to use any tool you can get when signals show that a big feeling is about to occur. Beth wants to use her tools today so these things do not happen:

- I yell at Mom and she cries.
- I don't get to pick my favorite breakfast out at the store this week because I didn't ask for it more politely.
- I feel more tense and more tired.
- I forget what I studied and don't do well on my tests.
- I feel guilty and sad later because I don't like hurting other people's feelings when my anger gets out of control.
- I have a harder time sleeping.

Sometimes it helps to remind yourself of positive things that happen when you use your tools, not just the negative consequences of not using them. Beth wants to use her tools today because these things might happen:

- I feel better.
- I can usually ask Mom to get more of my favorite cereal if I use my best-manners superpower.
- I don't feel so tight all day.
- I can remember test items better with deep breathing.
- My mind doesn't feel like it's racing.
- I don't feel bad about anything at the end of the day, and sometimes I feel good that I used skills all day.
- I sleep better.

That's it! Now you are ready to create your own ready-for-action plan. It will be helpful to have a copy so you can read it when you really need to; for example, if going on trips is a signal that you might soon be having a big feeling, bring a copy of your plan with you and make sure to read it before you go.

### ***For You to Do***

Create your own ready-for-action plan using this outline.

These signals are a warning that I need my ready-for-action plan:

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These tools can help address my signals:

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I want to use my tools today so these things do not happen:

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I want to use my tools today because these things might happen:

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