



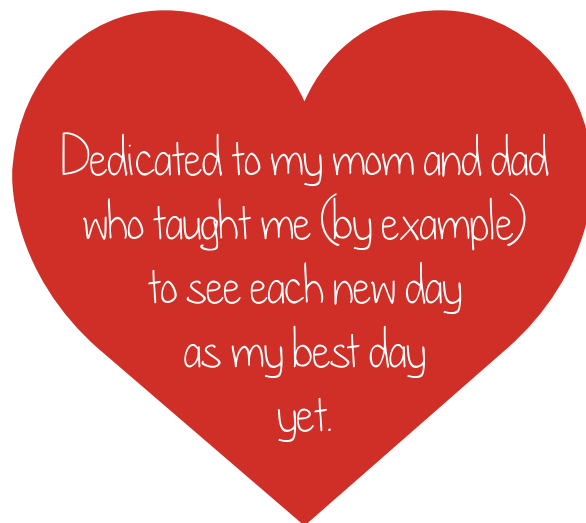
TIME-IN ToolKit

DIGITAL MANUAL

By Suzanne Tucker

“The privilege of a lifetime is to become who you truly are.”

-Carl Jung



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**Saint Louis, Missouri 63144
The United States of America**

PREFACE

Growing up in the Midwest of America in the 70's, the fifth of seven children in a big Catholic family, I guess you could say I was a watcher. I was the sort of child that, if you had met me when I was about three, might have spent a good full hour hiding out behind my mother's leg observing you.

As a watcher, I internalized early the notion that society wanted me to be strong and independent. One of the most common phrases spoken to a young child when they do something new is: "Look at you!!! You did it all by yourself!" And so, as a three-year-old deep in my studies of human nature, it did not take me long to conclude that being perceived as strong and independent was the safest path to travel. I can recall the exact moment I decided that looking good to others (aka appearing strong and independent) would be the route I would travel over continuing on as a sensitive child, feeling things deeply at the risk of appearing weak or needy. I was six years old when I put on my mask.

I look back now at my elementary and high school years and can see the quieter, deeply feeling and intuitive me hiding out there just underneath the more socially acceptable, intelligent, adventurous and curious side of myself. This is how it came to be that for the first two decades of my life, I mistakenly lived with the unconscious belief that strength lived in being who others wanted me to be. You might guess how that turned out as I sit here, writing a manual on how adults can support children in doing the exact opposite.

My college years brought with them experiences in meditation, breath work, prayer, yoga and bodywork. In my mid-twenties, while working with Myers Briggs and enneagrams, I rediscovered myself to be an Introvert. Through these experiences, a reset button was hit. I began to tap into my more intuitive, feeling abilities. It took motherhood, birthing four children and healing through five miscarriages for me to fully awaken to the intuitive being that I am (that we all are). Someone once said that adulthood gives each of us the opportunity to be the person that we needed when we were young. This has become the inspiration for my life's work.

From becoming a physical therapist, teaching infant massage and mindful parenting classes, to opening a holistic health center, founding Generation Mindful and creating the Time-In ToolKit, the thread that binds my life's work is connection. Connection with myself and connection with other human beings. My hope is that this work brings you and the children in your world closer to your true selves. May it help you feel connected, and may it remind you of things you already know.

xo, Suzanne

Part One

WE ARE GEN:M

Generation Mindful (GEN:M) creates tools, toys and programs that build emotional intelligence through play and positive discipline. Our products are designed for use in homes, classrooms, play therapy settings and more, supporting adults and children around the world in making connection a habit.

We are ChangeMakers. We are a community of individuals who believe that all people are imperfectly perfect, whole and complete. We believe our emotions are sacred and that there is wisdom in listening to them. We believe that every time we choose to act with love, we invite love into our lives. We believe that mindfulness and emotional intelligence are skills that can be nurtured in our children to create a more peaceful and loving world.

We are Generation Mindful.

OUR CORE PRINCIPLES

There are six core principles of Generation Mindful. I encourage you to return to this page frequently as you bring your Time-In ToolKit to life.

● **PLAYING IS LEARNING**

Play is how we learn to learn, and play is, well, fun! In the nurturing of children, we hold play and the connection it brings above all.

● **TEACHING BY EXAMPLE**

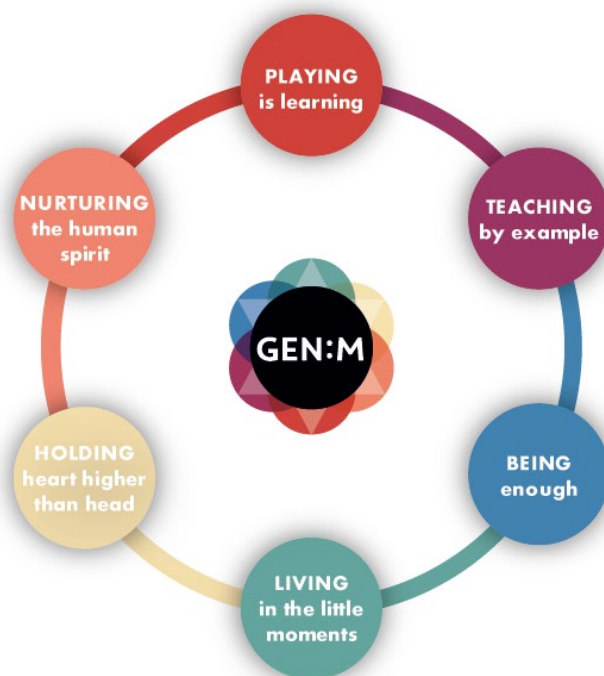
Our actions speak louder than our words, and every moment is both a teaching and a learning moment.

● **BEING ENOUGH**

We are enough, today, just the way we are.

● **LIVING IN THE LITTLE MOMENTS**

We can be present and live inside every moment, most especially the curve-balls, because it is there we find the greatest joy.



● **HOLDING HEART HIGHER THAN HEAD**

We can make connection a habit™, aligning action with intuition supported by emotions, evidence, and reason alike.

● **NURTURING THE HUMAN SPIRIT**

When we nurture connection rather than control, we cultivate wisdom over knowledge alone, leading to a lifetime of self-discovery and compassion.

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to recognize and understand our emotions and the emotions of others. It helps us discern between different feelings and label them appropriately, use emotional information to guide our thinking and behavior, and manage and/or adjust emotions to achieve our goals. Decades of research shows that these skills are essential to effective teaching and learning, sound decision making, physical and mental health, and success in school and beyond.

Children can be taught these social and emotional skills in much the same way we teach them to read and write. Gen:M provides you with everything you need to begin your children's emotional education. They can practice noticing what different emotions feel like inside their body, naming and expressing those emotions, and then intentionally choosing an activity to help them calm their body.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

“Play is the highest form of research” - Albert Einstein

Play is more than just fun. Playing games designed to encourage children to share their ideas and feelings is a great way to nurture their emotional intelligence. A few minutes each morning or at the end of the day spent playing a game like PeaceMakers can make practicing social and emotional skills as enjoyable as say, hiding kale in your smoothies makes eating your greens. Playing games gives children the opportunity to practice taking turns, cooperating, expressing themselves and more.

WHY POSITIVE DISCIPLINE?

Positive discipline is a parenting practice that uses affirming, rather than negative or punitive, approaches to raising children. Positive discipline is kind and firm at the same time (respectful and encouraging), helps children feel a sense of belonging and significance (connection), is effective long-term (punishment works short-term, but has negative long-term results), teaches valuable social and life skills for good character (respect, concern for others, problem-solving, accountability, contribution, cooperation) and invites children to discover how capable they are and to use their personal power in constructive ways.

When we embrace these practices, we are modeling the skills we are asking of our children, namely, the ability to stay in control of our thoughts, words and actions (even in the face of challenging circumstances). When we punish a child, we trigger the release of more stress hormones in our children's brains rather than the hormones of calm and connection that we want to trigger in them to help them learn new social and emotional skills.

CONNECTING BRAIN TO BRAIN *Printable A*

Simply put, human beings (including children) operate from one of three different brain states, similar to a stoplight: green, yellow and red. Green brain lives in the prefrontal cortex and occurs when we feel safe and connected. Yellow brain lives in the midbrain and occurs when we are feeling emotional. Red brain is in our brain stem and occurs when we feel threatened; this holds true for both perceived and real threats. When a child is acting out, they are most likely in their yellow or red brain. In order to move a child into a different brain state, we first need to meet them where they are, connecting our brain with theirs, also known as co-regulation. Co-regulation is a necessary first step in teaching children to regulate. Each of these brain states has an important role to play and, when recognized and understood, can aid in the development of our emotional intelligence.

Below is a reference guide highlighting the different brain states your children may be in, what behaviors they may display in that state, and how to respond (instead of react), facilitating connection and emotional regulation. Refer to this chart or your printable often.



BRAIN STATE & BEHAVIORS

RESPOND INSTEAD OF REACT

GREEN LIGHT BRAIN: GO/LEARNING

TEACH

(Prefrontal cortex)

Child will appear: calm, open, receptive, engaged, thinking, playing, reasoning, loving.

Your child's brain is receptive, and his/her brain is ready to learn and grow! Talk, play, model, explain, guide, and appreciate.

YELLOW LIGHT BRAIN: PAUSE/FEELING

REGULATE

(Midbrain)

Child will appear: emotional, needy, clingy, cuddly, demanding, distracted, hyper, uncooperative, nervous, crying.

Help your child learn to regulate their body using your words and actions. Set and hold to limits calmly. Pause. Breathe. Model the skills you are teaching. Affirm that emotions are safe, allowed and helpful. Use mindfulness, compassion, ritual, and play.

RED LIGHT BRAIN: STOP/FEARING

CALM & CONNECT

(Brain Stem)

Child will present in one of three states:
 Fight: hitting, biting, screaming, spitting.
 Flight: run away, look away, push away.
 Freeze: shut down.

Look to your body language. Soothe your child. Get low. Make eye contact. Offer gentle touch/hug. Less talking, more being. You might say: "You're safe." Meet unmet needs (sleep, hunger, order, routine).

Part Two

BECOMING A CHANGEMAKER

Becoming a ChangeMaker does not mean you have to be the perfect parent/teacher/therapist/ etc. It means you are giving yourself and the children in your life the freedom to be imperfectly perfect, to know that you are always enough just how you are and that mindfulness and a focus on the present moment (in all of its messy glory) is not a skill to be perfected, but a lifelong practice. This is a way of life we never outgrow. Be open to the new levels of self-awareness and healing that will come as you support children in this learning.

You are part of a movement that is evolving the way we raise children as a society. We know that misbehavior is an unmet need and must be met with connection and positivity. This movement is evidence based, rooted in love, and while it may not always feel easy, it will always feel empowering. Lean into this community for inspiration and support in the months and years to come, as making connection a habit is what Generation Mindful is all about.

THIS EXPERIENCE STARTS WITH YOU

When education is organized around our own experiences, we are empowered to be active participants in our learning, making meaning of these experiences rather than passively absorbing facts, data and information. This is the approach the Time-In ToolKit takes in nurturing social emotional skills in both you and your children. This mindful approach to child rearing begins with self awareness. To support the integration of this approach into your everyday life, take a minute to reflect on what life was like for you growing up. If you had to write a preface for a manual like this one, summarizing your childhood in just a handful of paragraphs, how might it read?

Take a moment to pause here. Reflect and breathe. Consider the following questions, and if you feel so led, journal about the thoughts, memories and ideas each question brings up for you.

- What messages did the world send you when you were young?
- Were you taught that mistakes are safe and that your feelings (all of them, both the logical ones and the ones that make absolutely no sense at all) matter?
- As an adult, how aware are you of your feelings at any given moment of the day?
- How comfortable would you say you are on a scale of 1 to 10 in accepting your own mistakes and/or in accepting the mistakes of others?

WE ARE ENOUGH

Responding instead of reacting takes practice. Be forgiving with yourself as you teach these tools. None of us will be able to model or adopt them completely 100% of the time. Being perfect is not a requirement for this approach. Quite the opposite, our children are not perfect, and they benefit from having fellow not-perfect adults around them. Each and every mistake we make as an adult with our children, when we become aware of them and respectfully hold ourselves accountable for them, is an opportunity for us to model self-love in the face of our own imperfections. We teach and guide children by example, and this includes the ways we manage ourselves when we notice that we are off center and/or have made a mistake. We will all inevitably fall into old speech patterns and actions rooted in shame. Mistakes are natural and all part of the process. Let go of any pressure you might be putting on yourself to model social and emotional skills to perfection. Perfection is not practical. In fact, it would be a disservice to our children who are just as imperfectly perfect and as deserving of our love and forgiveness as we ourselves are. Be as gentle with yourself as you are striving to be with your children.

USING EMPOWERING LANGUAGE

There are a few common phrases in our thoughts and words that trigger the feelings of guilt, shame, and powerlessness in the person using them and in the person receiving them. Here we will review three of these often dis-empowering phrases so that we can remove them from our thought patterns and the words we use with children.

AVOID THE PHRASE, “YOU MAKE ME SO _____.”

Avoid using this phrase when you are sharing about your feelings with your children. Using this phrase teaches children that humans are powerless to outside forces when it comes to their emotions. Although this belief is common for many, it is dis-empowering to grow up in this kind of belief system. Instead, send children the message that people and events in our lives trigger the feelings we have inside of us, but in the end, we get to manage our own feelings through our thoughts and how we respond to those feelings. Model empowering speech patterns for children by turning, “You make me so (emotion)” into, “I feel (emotion).” I feel (emotion) is an empowering way to share your feelings.

DIS-EMPOWERING LANGUAGE

“You make me so angry.”

“It makes me happy when you eat all of your vegetables.”

“You made me sad.”

EMPOWERING ALTERNATIVE

“I feel angry when you don’t listen to me.”

“I feel happy when you eat all of your vegetables.”

“I felt sad when you did that.”

AVOID THE WORD “SHOULD”

“Should” is another word to consider removing from your speech patterns with children. Watch for it in your own language and you will find that this word generally precedes statements that evoke a sense of guilt or shame. Here are just a few examples of some empowering alternatives.

DIS-EMPOWERING LANGUAGE

“I should be on a diet.”

“You shouldn’t be drawing without a drawing pad under your paper.”

“You should not talk while you are eating.”

EMPOWERING ALTERNATIVE

“Tomorrow I will start my diet.”

“Always use a drawing pad under your paper when you draw.”

“Please close your mouth when you are eating.”

AVOID THE WORD “TRY”

“Try” is a third dis-empowering word to watch for as it often signals a lack of confidence in the very next thing that is said. Remember that positive discipline is respectful and firm. Here are just a few examples of some empowering alternatives to using the word try.

DIS-EMPOWERING LANGUAGE

“Try to pick up your room, please.”

“I want to try to eat more fruits and vegetables.”

“Try not to be so loud.”

EMPOWERING ALTERNATIVE

“Pick up your room, please.”

“We will be eating more fruits and vegetables.”

“Please whisper.”

Say each one of these statements aloud and then take a moment to feel what is happening inside your body when you say them. Which list of statements feels light and bright? Which might have the power to inspire you to take action in creating a new habit? Which statements lead you to feel lower vibrations in your body including panic, fear, shame, worry, or pain? Choose positive over negative statements whenever possible (and the more you work at using positive statements, you will find that doing so is almost always possible). Play this game with your children as well. Teach them to watch for the words “should” and “try” and when they find themselves using one of them, to replace it with other, more empowering words.

LEARNING MOMENTS

Take some time now to introduce your children to the concept that everybody makes mistakes and that mistakes are vital for us as human beings if we are to learn from our experiences. It is important to introduce this concept before we set up our Calming Corner together lest children mentally and emotionally write off Time-Ins as just another form of punishment for them when they are “bad;” a dressed-up version of Time-Outs. This is 110% absolutely not the case, and we want to be clear about this, both within ourselves and with our children.

Talk with your children about mistakes. Call these moments “learning moments.” Share the idea that even though a learning moment might sometimes feel bad, a learning moment does not mean that we are bad. If in the past you used Time-Outs, talk about how they left you feeling. As you open this conversation about learning moments with children age three and up, it can be helpful to begin with a question.

“Do you think it’s okay (or safe) for us to make mistakes?”

Ask this question without leading the jury and then sit back and listen. See if you can come to better understand your children’s thoughts, ideas, and feelings when it comes to making mistakes. What do they have to say? Write down the things you hear in response to this question, withholding any judgment. Repeat your children’s responses back to them without commentary, so they know that they have been heard.

If your children respond saying that they feel mistakes are not okay or safe to make, accept this both as their reality and as a valid response, with no negative reflection on you. For many children, making mistakes does not feel okay or safe, but these feelings can evolve over time. Your children’s answers are a starting point that you might better meet them where they are. And meeting children where they are is just about the most powerful thing in the world that you can do.

The purpose of this exercise is to help children move away from thinking that if they do good, then they are good, and if they do bad, then they are bad. We want to affirm your child’s sense of self and their innate goodness separate from their behaviors. With a group of three and four-year olds, you might simply say, “You are LOVE. Did you know that?! Yes, you are! It’s who you are. You are love all the time, even when you feel sad or mad or bad inside.” The green PeaceMakers cards you received with this kit are particularly helpful in affirming this as they are focused on the theme love. The entire deck, though it explores seven different themes, was created to affirm this basic truth of our innate worthiness and connection to one another.

Now, take some time for you and your children to color the Mistakes Help Me Learn and Grow Coloring Sheet (***Printable B***). You can hang these in your Calming Corner as reminders and keep extra blank copies for use as Time-In Activities.

Part Three

INTRODUCING TIME-INS

While Time-Outs are traditionally punitive experiences that isolate the child for a set amount of time as determined by the adult, Time-Ins are a way to help children learn to calm their body and process their emotions in a safe space (or “Calming Corner”) so that they can problem-solve, learn and grow. Time-Ins empower children to check in with their bodies when they are feeling strong emotions so that they are able to respond to situations rather than react.

When our children feel powerful, safe, and connected, they can learn.

SAY GOODBYE TO TIME-OUTS

As you make this transition, start a conversation with your children by asking a question. You might ask them something like, “How about we say GOODBYE to Time-Outs?” and then listen to what your children have to say.

Talk about the difference between Time-Outs and Time-Ins. You might say something like, “Instead of getting punished or having to sit on the step/Time-Out chair when we are having trouble controlling our bodies, we can go to our Calming Corner for a Time-In. And if we notice we are mad or sad or scared, we can take a Time-In then too. We will practice calming our bodies and taking a do-over.”

If your children are older or able to absorb more information, add, “That way, if we say or do something that hurts others or something we wish we would not have said or done, we can learn from it. We can do our best to correct it too. We can learn from our mistakes and do it differently next time.” Below is a list of some of the main differences between Time-Outs and Time-Ins to help you with this conversation:

TIME-OUTS

You are in trouble for your thoughts, words, actions and/or feelings.

You are being punished for being bad.

Only children get put in Time-Outs.

We feel bad about ourselves for getting in trouble.

We feel angry with or hurt by the person who put us in a Time-Out.

TIME-INS

You are having trouble with your thoughts, words, actions and/or feelings.

You are having a learning moment where you can practice new skills.

People of all ages benefit from taking a Time-In.

We feel good about ourselves afterwards, proud of what we have learned.

We feel closer to ourselves and closer to others after taking a Time-In.

LITERALLY SAY GOODBYE TO TIME-OUTS

Next, brainstorm silly, fun and creative ways to say goodbye to Time-Outs. Have fun with this important step. Having a memorable, concrete, and playful experience saying goodbye to Time-Outs is a great way to encourage children to trust and take ownership of using Time-Ins during this transition period. Being playful will improve your children's interest level and cooperation as you begin to use your Calming Corner. The more memorable and child-led, the better! Here are some ideas of how you can say goodbye to Time-Outs to help get your creative juices flowing:

- Write Time-Outs on a piece of toilet paper and flush it down the toilet.
- Remove the Time-Out chair from your space (if you had one) and put it into storage as you play an upbeat song and dance. You can make up your own jingle/song for this (it doesn't have to be complicated): "Bye-Bye Time-Outs, we are going to use Time-Ins!"
- Have your children draw a picture of how they felt when they were put in Time-Outs. Have them draw a picture of how they think they will feel when they take a Time-In instead. Ask them to draw a big heart around the one they like better.
- Print the words Time-Out and Time-In on a piece of paper. Ask children to cross out the word "OUT" and to put a heart around the word "IN". Invite them to doodle or draw as they might like on this paper. Hang these papers together where all can see them.

Maintain a positive approach as you introduce your children to these new concepts and tools. This will help inspire their trust in you and these new rituals. Once you make the switch to using your Calming Corner and Time-Ins instead of Time-Outs, children may want to test the waters a bit to be sure you have really said goodbye to Time-Outs for good. Do not let this discourage you. Stay calm and hold to whatever boundaries you have in place. If your children are used to receiving Time-Outs, some resistance to this transition is to be expected. Predictable and consistent boundaries, when calmly delivered, are a pivotal part of this approach. Mindful child-rearing is both firm and respectful.

MEETING RESISTANCE WITH COMPASSION

Teaching social and emotional skills starts when we can meet each child where they are, helping them to feel powerful, safe and connected. Getting to this place takes trust, and trust takes time.

“Misbehavior” is a term we use to mean that a child is acting out due to an unmet need. When a child is acting out, instead of thinking “What is wrong with this child?” or “How can I punish/force this child to do what I want?” we can ask ourselves “How can I help this child?” We can train our brain to assess the situation, looking for the unmet need that is underneath their behavior. Is it attention? Power? Social skills? Emotional skills? Sensory? Clear and predictable limits? What was the trigger for their outburst? How can you transform this trigger into a loving thought?

TRANSFORMING TRIGGERS

Transforming triggers is a skill we must be able to do for ourselves if we want to be able to do it for our children. Practice managing your emotions in the face of your child’s resistance. Use our Transforming Triggers Worksheet (*Printable C*) for 30 days, completing one sheet a day. On this sheet, you can work through your feelings, thoughts and goals when you are feeling agitated or upset.

- 1. What was my trigger? (Describe the situation and rate my upset 1-10)*
- 2. What feelings was I experiencing?*
- 3. What thoughts did I have?*
- 4. What was the goal I was trying to achieve? (What was the reason I was triggered?)*
- 5. What are some insights I have about myself, my past and/or this goal?*
- 6. What is a loving thought I can have instead?*
- 7. What is a new goal I can set for myself? (rate my upset 1-10)*

Once you have worked on your own triggers for 30 days, you can introduce the “My Work It Out Worksheet” (*Printable D*) to your children. This worksheet is a fun and playful way for them to break down their triggers. When they are done, they can color this sheet and hang it somewhere to let them know and reinforce that this is not a punishment.

USE AND MODEL THE TOOLS YOURSELF

If a child is resisting this transition and the tools we are introducing from the start, move slowly and stay the course by integrating the tools into your day and modeling them rather than demanding they adopt them. Your compassionate understanding and listening will help to make this transition feel safe and inviting to your children in time.

CREATE PLAYFUL RITUALS TO ADDRESS REPEAT CHALLENGES

Invite children to brainstorm and co-create these rituals with you. You can begin brainstorming by discussing the games and activities listed in Part Five of this manual. Choose one ritual to put into action, joyfully and consistently. Build on this positive experience, introducing others and eventually the entire Time-In ToolKit when the opening is there.

ASK QUESTIONS

- *How do you (we) want to feel here at ___ (home/school/daycare/therapy/etc.)?*
- *What things help us feel these ways? (Make a list together)*
- *What things keep us from feeling these ways? (Make a list together)*
- *If we had a special place to go to be with our feelings and to feel safe, powerful and connected, where would it be?*
- *What things might we want to have in this space? (Pillows/chair/a beanbag?)*
- *If we had books in a basket, what books might we want to have in that basket?*
- *If we had crafts, what materials might we want to have there?*
- *We have these posters to help us with our feelings (show children the ToolKit posters) Let's look at each one together and then can you help me decide where and how we might hang them?*

If you are meeting a great deal of resistance, please consider taking our six part online positive parenting course where we go into great detail on how to hit a reset button, restoring connection with even the most oppositional of children, in a depth that is difficult for me to cover in this manual alone. (www.genmindful.com/products/online-positive-parenting-course)

The social emotional skills you are teaching with this approach are the basis of all learning. Incorporate the activities included in this ToolKit into your life/space over time. Each activity is a playful way to connect with kids while teaching them important social emotional skills and can be integrated as rituals into your day/week. Let children know that you are on their team, even in the face of "misbehavior."

Part Four

CREATING YOUR CALMING CORNER

Talk to your children about the idea of using a Calming Corner. Explain that this space is a new place for you to practice noticing your feelings and calming your bodies; a place you can go together or by yourselves to feel better and to learn.

By using their Calming Corner, your children will be strengthening their ability to notice their emotions, name their emotions and regulate their actions. They will be noticing what different emotions feel like inside their body, naming and expressing those emotions and then intentionally choosing an activity to help them calm their body. All of this happens alongside a heavy dose of connection and play.

For older children, elaborate and explain that a Calming Corner is a place where we can practice noticing our thoughts and feelings as well as calming our bodies and our minds. We can even introduce the topic of mindfulness and its many benefits if this is a topic we feel comfortable talking about. Whatever their ages, let our children know that when we use our Calming Corner, the skills we practice there get easier and eventually we are able to use these skills whether we are in our Calming Corner or not.

CHOOSING A SPACE...TOGETHER!

Invite your children to help you pick a spot. Listen for their ideas and write them down. Yes, even the crazy ones. Do not rule anything out during this brainstorming process, just laugh about it and add each idea your children share to the list. In the end, settle on a space that you find practical, as once you set this area up, you will want to keep it there. Make this space a permanent addition to your home, classroom, etc. Don't worry if your space is small, perhaps just a beanbag, posters on the wall and a basket of tools. Even a tiny space can work beautifully.

If a more targeted brainstorming session would be more supportive, limit or guide the suggestions by saying, "Would you like our Calming Corner to be (here) or (there)?" The important part is to include your children in the decision-making process.

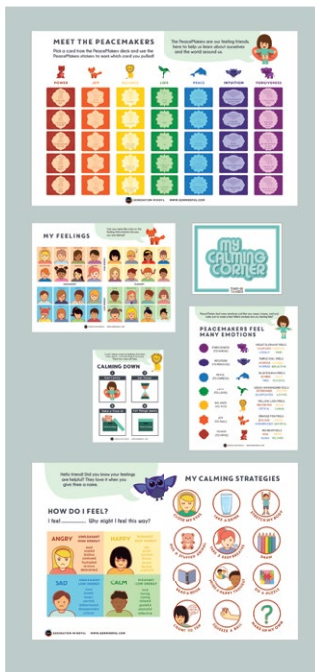
Name your space! We call this space a "Calming Corner" and have included a sign to help you mark this place, but if you'd like to give your space a different name, you are welcome to do this and then create a sign of your own.

ASSEMBLING YOUR TOOLKIT

1. HANG YOUR POSTERS

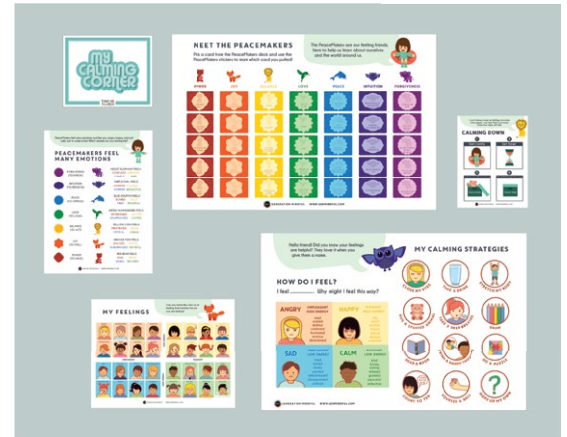
Hang your posters on the wall (if you have the space). Below are 3 layouts we like, but the posters can be arranged however they work best for you and your Calming Corner. If you are going to frame your posters, take this time to frame them, otherwise you can secure the sticky squares found in your box to the backside of the corners of each poster, and they will be ready to hang. Make this a group activity so children are actively participating in creating their Calming Corner!

Your posters can also be laminated for a more portable version to use in a variety of places (morning meeting, circle time, reading groups, yoga, discussion groups, etc.).



Vertical Layout

Corner Layout



Horizontal Wall Layout



2. GATHER YOUR TOOLS

Find a small child-friendly storage bin for your activities and label it Time-In Tools (**Printable E**). This bin will be your child's physical Toolkit they can use when they need to take a Time-In and calm their bodies. Be sure this Toolkit is easy for your children to access. Place all of your Time-In activities, PeaceMakers cards, Feelings Flashcards, Calming Strategies, and any other tools in this bin. You can make it an activity by using our Suggested Toolkit Items Checklist (**Printable F**). Print out some extra copies of the Printables Activity Sheets found in your Digital Materials to keep in your Toolkit as well. As you gather these materials, show them to your children, let them touch, hold and flip through different cards and pages. You can hang a small mirror or include a hand mirror for your children to see their faces as they decide how they are feeling. Have a special place for each item and practice putting the tools back where they belong after you use them.

3. POST A LIST OF GUIDELINES FOR YOUR SPACE

Create and post a list of simply stated guidelines to help children use your space how you intend them to use it. Use words that tell children what you want them to do instead of what you do not want them to do. Involve your children in the creation of this list and you will find they will need much less reminding to follow them. Add guidelines (or rules) to address areas where you are having challenges. For instance: "Hands to yourself. Lips are quiet. Feet on the floor." If you are using this in a classroom, you might add "Raise your hand" or "Return to class" as a final suggestion.

TIPS FOR DECORATING YOUR SPACE

We encourage you to make this space your own; somewhere both you and your children will enjoy spending time. You can add a small table and chair, a beanbag, or pillows and a blanket. Create a space for your children to sit and read, color, work a puzzle, complete one of the activity sheets, etc. Think cozy, comfortable and relaxing.

Avoid clutter and sensory elements that might overwhelm a child. In general, avoid electronics (with the possible exception of music though music is not necessary). Take all the senses into consideration when creating your space. Opt for soothing colors, lighting, aromas, and textures. Remember that what is calming to one child might be very different for another so have your children help.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS TO AID REGULATION

Here are some additional items you may want to keep near your space which can assist in regulation. Some children find that spending time outdoors and in nature helps them listen to their bodies, so consider including a trip outside as a calming strategy for your space as well.

Balance Ball (or wobble chair type seating):

For children ages 5-8 the recommended height is about 45" to 50".

- Using a balance ball is a supportive, flexible seat solution for active, high energy kids.
- Encourages children to build their core strength from active sitting while they work at their desk in the classroom, do homework, exercise, read, play, etc.
- Helps increase focus, reduces restlessness, and prevents boredom and distractions by keeping the body active and the mind engaged simultaneously.
- Increases blood flow to the brain, improving concentration.
- Provides an outlet for excess energy.

Sensory Tunnel:

9 feet long, approximately 28-32 inches wide when flat. Search Amazon or Pinterest to buy or make your own.

- Fun for kids of all kinds to crawl through, popping out the other end.
- Therapeutic for children requiring tactile input, sensory integration therapy and/or crawling practice.
- A supportive place for kids to cuddle up in when they are seeking comfort and/or security.

Weighted Vests and Blankets

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE A CALMING CORNER

Take some time to relax together in your new, safe and calming space. Encourage your children to visit this special place when they are having “big feelings.” Children can start with a sensory motor/breathing activity or other calming strategy to help them calm their bodies and then, when they are ready, they can move into a feeling game, activity and/or sheet to practice recognizing, understanding, naming, and managing their feelings.

Your Calming Corner will evolve over time. When this space is new and still a novelty, it is okay to allow children to play in this area, practicing the calming strategies and working with the activities you place there. This is a great way for children to become comfortable with the space and how to use it. Role-play different challenging scenarios, pretending to use your Calming Corner as you would like to see your children using it in the very near future.

Encourage a sense of joy and playfulness in your children for the learning adventure you are embarking on as you begin to incorporate the tools and activities you will find inside this ToolKit.

Here are three additional tips to help you introduce this ToolKit to your children:

- **Move slowly, playfully and follow your children’s lead.**
- **Encourage a sense of empowerment, safety and connection in the way you introduce these tools to your children. You cannot control how your children will feel about the tools you are introducing, but you can control your thoughts, your words and your actions. Keep your interactions upbeat!**
- **Spread the activities introduced in this ToolKit out in the days, weeks and months to come. Move at your own pace and, more than following every point within this guide, tune in and trust your intuition to guide you through this process. You’ve got this!**

Part Five

TIME-IN ACTIVITIES

Now is when we put what we have learned into action! Remember to move slowly and mindfully, observing and connecting with your child during every phase of their Time-In. If a child is showing resistance to the ideas you are presenting to them, please refer back to our section called “Meeting Resistance with Compassion” on page 12 of this manual. **Begin each lesson by taking a moment to do the activity yourself.** Be open to the thoughts, ideas and feelings these lessons will stir in you, for as we teach, so too we learn.

Instructional videos for Time-In activities are available on Genmindful.com.

Our first coloring sheet activity is for you! Color the Misbehavior is an Unmet Need and the Emotions are Sacred Coloring Sheets (*Printables G and H*) and write down any thoughts that come up for you in the margins or on the back. These two basic principles are backed by volumes of evidence and create the foundation for all future lessons found within this ToolKit. Post this art somewhere it will inspire you in the weeks and months to come. Depending on the ages of the children you are working with, you may choose to share these printables and the



PRACTICING OUR CALMING STRATEGIES

When using a Time-In in the heat of a more challenging moment, particularly when either you or your child has been feeling one of the red mood emotions (which will be discussed further below), it is important to connect with your child before you move into processing the moment with one of your many Time-In activities. Start by introducing the different ways we can calm our bodies when we are having “big feelings.” Model these strategies. You can refer to your My Feelings & Calming Strategies cards or the My Calming Strategies poster in your ToolKit. Explain that everyone’s body is unique and that different calming strategies work better for different people. Keep playing with these strategies until you find what feels most supportive!

Activities to Calm & Connect

In this section, we will focus on concrete ways your children can practice calming their bodies when they are experiencing a high energy feeling. When the body and brain are overstimulated in these high energy feelings, it is essential to calm the body (and brain) before moving onto activities that require thoughtful engagement.

USE YOUR CALMING STRATEGIES

The My Feelings & Calming Strategies cards has one card for each calming strategy you will find on the My Calming Strategies poster. Below are some ideas for how to use them, but as always, we encourage you to make up your own games with your children and use them in whatever way feels right for you.

- Lay your cards face down and spread out in a big “Go Fish” type pile. Have your children pick a card and practice whatever card they chose. If they choose the “Make Your Own” card, you can gently suggest an activity you think they might enjoy, but allow them to lead the conversation whenever possible.
- Have a morning or nighttime ritual of shuffling the cards, picking a card and then practicing that calming strategy. It is important to practice these strategies before you need them in the heat of a high energy moment!
- Play Calming Strategy Charades! In a group, have one child pick a card without showing the other children which card they picked. Have them act out the calming strategy (with or without props) and have the group guess which strategy they are using.

USE YOUR CALMING STRATEGY POSTER

Using your 20x30 poster with My Calming Strategies on the right hand side, you can come up with different games and ways to have your children engage with the strategies.

- Have your children pick a card from your Calming Strategies deck and match it to the same Calming Strategy on the poster. They can then practice the strategy they picked.
- Play Pin the Tail on the Calming Strategy! Have your child stand one or two steps in front of the poster with their eyes closed (or you can make a homemade blindfold). Spin them around a few times then have them point their finger out towards the strategies, take a step forward and pick one at random. Whichever strategy their finger lands on they can practice!

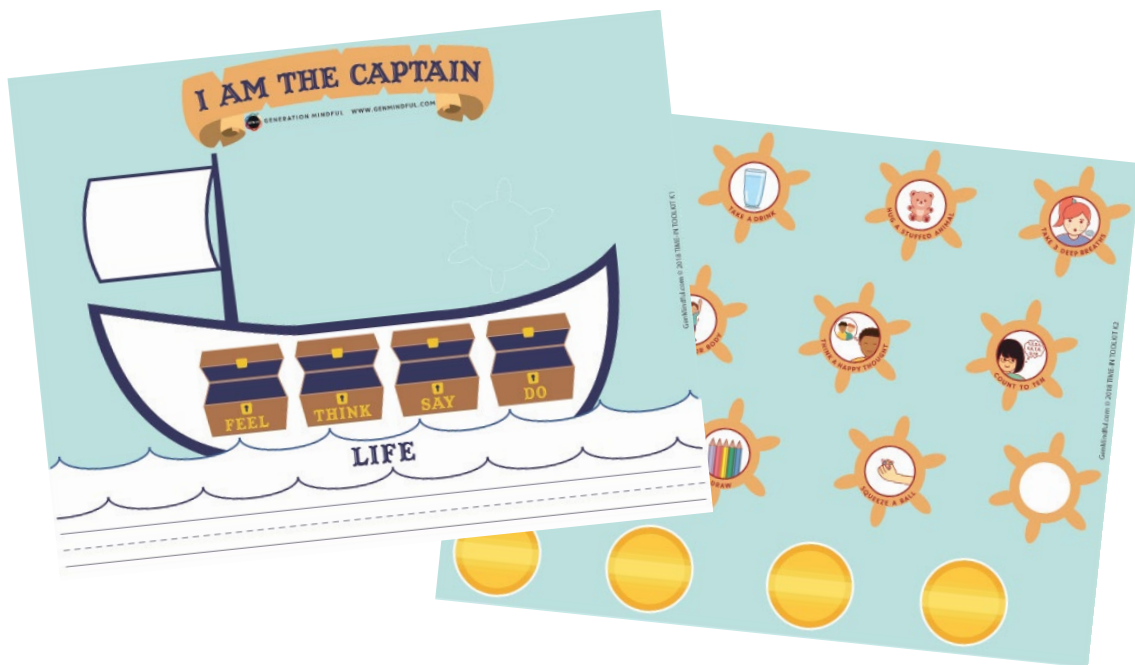
“I AM THE CAPTAIN” ACTIVITY SHEET

Printable 1 (2 pages)

The “I am the Captain” activity will help introduce the practice of self-awareness to your children. It teaches them that we are powerful and can control how we respond to big feelings and gives them the opportunity to practice the 11 Calming Strategies.

We will be using a two-page printable (11-12), one for every child, along with a story I wrote to help you walk your children through the activity sheets (13). If you are sharing this activity at home with your own children, you might say, “Let’s pretend I am the teacher and you are my class.” Really get into the role as you read the following script with as many animated expressions as you can muster.

Read through the story and review the activity sheets completely before sharing it with your children. Once you have finished the activity and your children have been introduced to the 11 Calming Strategies featured in the Time-In ToolKit, you are ready to set sail and share more Time-In ToolKit adventures together.



MAKING YOUR OWN CALMING STRATEGIES

When making your own calming strategies with your children, allow the process to be fun and child-led wherever possible. Listen to and write down all of their suggestions, even if they sound silly. You can also suggest your own ideas to write down as long as your child is also a part of the brainstorming process. Go through the list and practice the calming strategies you have written down (even the silly ones!). After each activity, ask your children if they feel like that activity helped to calm their body or if it gave them more energy. You can have them circle or star the activities that helped calm their bodies. They can also make Calming Strategy cards for these activities from the blank cards in the Calming Strategies Coloring Booklet (*Printable J*).

CALMING STRATEGIES COLORING BOOKLET

Printable J

Print these pages out as needed on a black and white printer. Children can color in the different calming strategies or draw their own. This will help them learn and remember these strategies when they are having a challenging moment and need to calm their bodies. As you color, talk through each one. Remove any strategies your child does not like and add ones that they do like. If your children are old enough to use scissors, you can have them cut out and assemble their own booklets from these sheets, writing their name on the front of the booklet. Try punching a hole in the top-left corner of all cards and tying them together with a fun colored string or ribbon! Laminate the pages for added durability

GET PHYSICAL!

This may seem counter-intuitive, but activities that involve heavy work or resistance such as wall push-ups are often an effective way to help children calm down. Many children will benefit from starting their calm down time with whole body activities before moving into the Calming Corner and/or thinking and talking about their emotions. If you find one of these activities is especially helpful for your child, add it to your space.

- Wall or Chair Push-ups
- Jumping on a mini trampoline
- Jumping Jacks
- Popcorn Jumps (jumping from a squat position)
- Stretching resistance bands
- Chewing Gum
- Lifting light weights
- Swinging
- Animal Crawls (pretend to crawl like a crab, bear, frog or seal)
- Crawling through tunnels or under objects
- Lying on tummy to read or do puzzle

Activities to recognize & name our feelings

As a child we may have been taught that certain feelings were better than others, and/or that certain feelings are not “allowed.” This is not true! The truth is that all of our feelings play an important role in helping us to learn and grow. On your My Feelings poster, we have organized 32 different feelings into 4 color coded categories based on research done by the Yale School of Emotional Intelligence. Each mood category is marked as being either high or low in energy and high or low in terms of how pleasant it feels in our body when we feel that emotion. Go through this list with your children and talk about how the different moods feel in their bodies. Ask them to act out the different feelings, make faces, and talk about times they might remember feeling these different ways. Have fun with this activity, making silly faces and/or sharing stories together! Let children know that all emotions matter. Encourage a sense of joy and playfulness for the learning adventure you are embarking on together.



RECOGNIZING & NAMING FEELINGS

Start by teaching children to recognize and name these four different feeling states. You can use your How Am I Feeling poster (*Printable K*) practice naming the colors and the moods together as you make a face and act out each one. For example, you could say “Angry is red!” as you scrunch up your face and look real mad; extra points for being silly or funny with your mad self as you do this. The more fun your children are having as you introduce these categories, the more you can be sure your children will remember them. When you feel like your children have a good understanding of the four main feeling states, you can introduce them to the other feelings in each category on the 12x16 My Feelings poster. Explain that while each emotion in a color section might feel similar (high energy and pleasant, low energy and unpleasant, etc), they probably won’t feel exactly the same and that it takes practice to be able to tell which feeling you are having.

- Scared is another very important red emotion. For some children, feeling scared is the more common default red emotion (high energy, unpleasant), more so than angry. Follow your children's lead on which emotions seem to resonate for them to identify or discuss during the feelings' activities.

MY FEELINGS FLASHCARDS

Your Time-In ToolKit includes one set of My Feelings Flashcards. These cards have a feeling face illustration on one side and the name of that feeling on the other side. Let your children touch, study and flip through these cards. When they are ready, you can hold up a card with the illustration facing them and ask them to name that feeling. You can also hold the card up with the feeling name facing your children and have them make a face that expresses that emotion.

● Naming Feelings Face Game

Have a small group of children sit in a circle around a set of cards with Feeling Faces up. For younger children, you can stick to the four main emotions (Angry, Happy, Sad, Calm) until they start to understand and can identify more complex emotions. Place a plastic cup or easy to grasp cone upside down in the middle of the circle.

Sing "Let's go to happy face. Happy face. Happy face. Let's go to happy face. Here I am!" to the tune of "London Bridges Falling Down". As you sing this song, move the cup around the circle, bouncing from feeling to feeling and land on the happy face when you finish the song.

Next, take turns as each child chooses a feeling they want to land on. Have the group sing along as each child moves the cup around until they find the feeling they selected.

If children stop on the wrong feeling face, instead of correcting them by saying, "No, that is not it." gently redirect them to try again by saying, "Is that silly face?" and then help them look for signs that the face they landed on is other than silly. You might say, "I see a teardrop falling out of his eye. What do you think that face is?" Until the child says "Sad." And then you would say, "Yes, that is the sad face." And then start to sing again, "Let's go to silly face. Silly face, silly face..." until the child finds silly face. Give each child as much time as they need to discover the face you are singing about.

If children are having a hard time waiting for their turn in a group setting, you can give each child their own set of feelings (Printable L) and invite each child to find the feeling face you are singing about. Graduate to doing this exercise in a small group as it is a great opportunity to practice self-control.

MY FEELINGS PLAYING CARDS

Your Time-In ToolKit also includes two sets of My Feelings Playing Cards. These cards have a feeling face illustration with the name of that feeling on one side and a fun Gen:M pattern on the back so the cards will all look the same when facing down. There are many games you can play with these cards, but below are a few of our favorites to get your creative juices flowing!

● Matching Game

Place both sets of cards face down on a flat surface and take turns drawing two cards at a time, trying to draw two of the same Feeling Card. If you do not draw two matching cards, place them back on the ground for the next person's turn. Keep taking turns until all of the cards are matched. To make this game a little easier, try making a separate pile for each set of cards and draw one card from each pile.

● Go Fish!

Shuffle both sets of cards together and deal out an equal number of cards to each player. Play a classic game of "Go Fish!", taking turns asking each other for Feeling Cards to make a matching set. If the other player doesn't have that card, they say "Go Fish!" and the asking player pulls a card from the middle "pond" pile.

VERBALLY EXPRESSING OUR FEELINGS

To play this game, tape a craft stick to the backside of each Feelings Faces Card (masking tape or something easy to remove). Hold up a single Feeling Face in front of your own face (like a mask) and ask the children "What feeling am I feeling?" Once they can guess each emotion correctly, invite the children to complete the following "I feel" statements.

"I feel _____ when _____."

Show them how to do this with each new emotion you hold up by giving them an example. "I feel angry when my neighbor's dog poops on my lawn!" And then ask if anyone else has ever felt angry. Invite the child to tell you about this time using the "I feel ___ when ___" statement just like you did.

With each new feeling you explore, give children an example and then ask them to share their feelings' statements. To make this even more fun for younger children, play this game alongside a board game (like Candy Land, Trouble or Sorry) pulling a Feeling Face and acting it out with every turn.

RECOGNIZING THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS

- Read a book aloud together and encourage children to practice looking for and naming the emotions the characters in the book are feeling. Start by inviting children to yell out the feeling words or feeling colors (Red, Blue, Green, Yellow) they notice as you read the story. In the classroom, you can ask children to raise their hands when they notice the character is feeling a new mood and to share that feeling's name and/or color with the group. You can dig a little deeper, asking them to share what clues in the story helped them guess how the character was feeling. Children might have different responses to how the character is feeling, which is great! This gives you the chance to talk through the idea that we can feel a different feeling than someone else does even when the same thing happens to both people. Or sometimes we feel one way when something happens and, other times, we feel a completely different way when the very same thing happens!
- Have children practice noticing and naming feelings throughout their day. Encourage this behavior in your children by doing it yourself! If you are at home and your child draws a picture for you, when they hand it to you, say, "Oh thank you, I'm feeling so happy that you made this for me." Conversely, upon finding all the toys still spread out all over the floor when you asked for them to be picked up, you might say, "I'm feeling frustrated that the toys are still out." Ask them to share how they are feeling too.

OTHER RECOGNIZING FEELINGS GAMES

- **Hokey Pokey**
Do the hokey pokey but use your feeling faces! Stand in a big circle and sing, "ANGRY! You put your angry face in, you put your angry face out, you put your angry face in and you shake it all about! You do the feeling pokey and you turn yourself around. That's what it's all about. SAD! You put your sad face in, you put your sad face out...," you get the idea. Make the face of the feeling you are singing about, putting your face or your entire body in and out of the circle as a group, just as if you were doing the hokey pokey.
- **Simon Says**
"Simon says hop on one foot and make an angry face." If your children are older and you have been practicing the color/mood associations for some time, you can make this game more challenging by saying, "Simon says hop on one foot making a red face. Now sit down making a blue face. Gotcha! I didn't say Simon says!... (and so on)."

Activities to empower & regulate our emotions

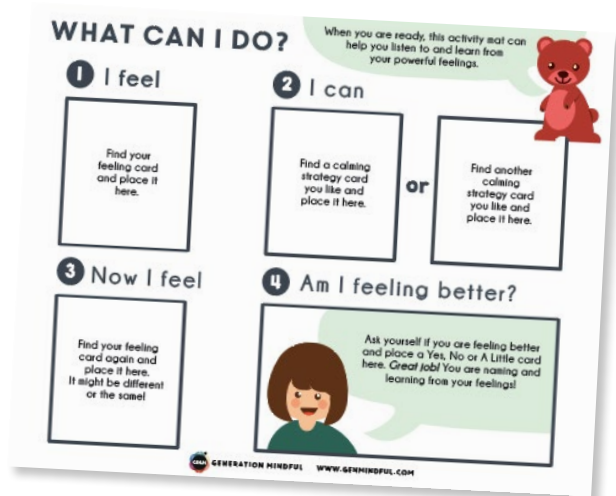
This section contains activities and games that can help your children feel empowered and capable of listening to their bodies and understanding what they are feeling in order to change their behaviors and regulate their emotions.

“WHAT CAN I DO” ACTIVITY MAT

The “What Can I Do” activity mat is a great go-to Time-In activity as it combines everything we have learned into one activity. For this activity, you will need your 8x10 “What Can I Do” mat, your My Feelings Playing Cards, your My Calming Strategies Cards, and the three “Yes, No, A Little” response cards (all provided in your ToolKit).

1. Ask your child to find the Feeling Card that shows how they are feeling in that moment and place it face up in box #1.
2. Have your child choose two Calming Strategies they would like to practice and place them face up in the #2 boxes.
3. Have your child practice the Calming Strategies they chose.
4. Ask your child to find the Feeling Card that shows how they are feeling in that moment and place it face up in box #3 (this could be the same or a different emotion).
5. Ask your child if they are feeling better and have them place a Yes, No or A Little card face up in box #4

Let your children know that they can do this activity whenever they are having big feelings and want to practice changing their emotions. If they are older and have been doing this activity for a while, you can urge them to practice this activity in their heads without using the mat!



MINDFULNESS & LISTENING TO OUR BODIES

Start this lesson by asking your children “Did you know that you can listen with more than just your ears??....Yes! It’s true!” Go on to explain that we can listen with all different parts of our bodies, for example, our ears, eyes, mouth, hands, body, feet, chest, stomach. Go through and ask how we listen with each body part? You can talk about our 5 senses and then go on to talk about how we can listen inside of our bodies when we are having big feelings! Give examples like “Sometimes when I am scared, my tummy feels like there are worms wiggling around in there!” or “When I am really happy, I feel like my chest is really full of air!” Ask your children if they can think of any other ways our bodies listen?

Practice playing games that encourage your children to practice self-control.

- Play Simon Says
- Play Red Light, Green Light
- Feed the fish (or any fun activity) in silence! To keep young children engaged, act sneaky/silly in the way you go about this activity, moving silently.
- Sit in a circle and pass a musical triangle or a small (not loud) gong around. Give each child the chance to ring the bell when it gets to them, holding it still until the sound of the bell is gone and then passing it to the child next to them. Ask children to practice sitting in their “listening body” while the bell makes its way around the circle. Gauge this challenge based on the group/age/ability level of the children. The smaller the circle (2-4 children) the easier. The larger the circle (4 - 25) the harder.
- Ringing a triangle/gong (or use an entirely different playful ritual) at a set time each day when children need to move from one task to another. Invite children to pause what they are doing, close their eyes and/or put their head down and to see how long they can hear the bell/sound. Invite kids to silently raise their hand or open their eyes when they no longer hear the bell, and then to use their listening bodies to move into the next task.

Example: A teacher might use this every day before going to lunch, asking children to get their lunch and line up at the door once they can no longer hear the sound.

Keep this task the same/predictable so that children know what to expect each time you do it. Incorporating rituals like this can ease the stress involved in asking children to move from one task to another. If children struggle with this or any other suggestion made in this manual, adjust the challenge to make it easier and increase the challenge over time. As children practice this activity, their “listening body” abilities will improve! You might need to practice this skill for weeks before linking it to a task.

OUR FEELINGS ARE ALWAYS ALLOWED

To teach this concept to children, invite your children to get comfy. Ask them to close their eyes and have them take three deep breaths. Ask them to practice what it feels like to feel happy. Give them some time to get to a happy place. Have them take a deep breath and ask for them to blow happy away. Now ask your children to practice what it feels like to feel mad. Give them some time to get to a mad place and to experience what this feels like in their body. Now have them take a deep breath and ask them to blow mad away. Finally, do this same exercise with one to three more feelings, ending on an upbeat note with the feeling of gratitude.

Have everybody open their eyes and ask children what this experience was like for them. Were they able to feel the different feelings? How did they do it? How were they able to feel all of those different feelings when really, they were all just sitting on the floor with you? Explain that they were able to feel all of those different feeling states because of their thoughts and memories.

Our thoughts and our memories are a big part of our feelings! You can talk about how everyone has different thoughts, memories and experiences and because of that, everyone has different feelings! Explain to children that we can also have thoughts on purpose and that our thoughts can at times help us with our feelings. Drive home the idea that our feelings are ours. They are not good or bad, right or wrong, and they are always allowed. It's what we do with those feelings that turns our thoughts and feelings into our actions.

MISTAKES HELP US LEARN & GROW

With your children, explore the idea that all people, and even animals, tend to act out when they feel bad, until they learn and/or become capable of doing something else. Ask your children to share their thoughts, ideas and/or questions about this concept.

Share a story about a learning moment you experienced as a child.

- Share how you felt and what you learned.
- Stress the idea that learning moments happen to everybody, even you.
- Explain that hard moments and yes, even our mistakes, help us learn and grow.

Share a story about a learning moment you have witnessed your children experience and/or ask them to share about such a moment with you. *(if you are working with a large group, pick a moment that you feel everyone will relate to without shaming or isolating any one child in the process)*

- Recount (or help your children recount) what happened.
- Ask children how they were feeling when this happened and discuss what they learned from this moment (or how others might have grown because of it).

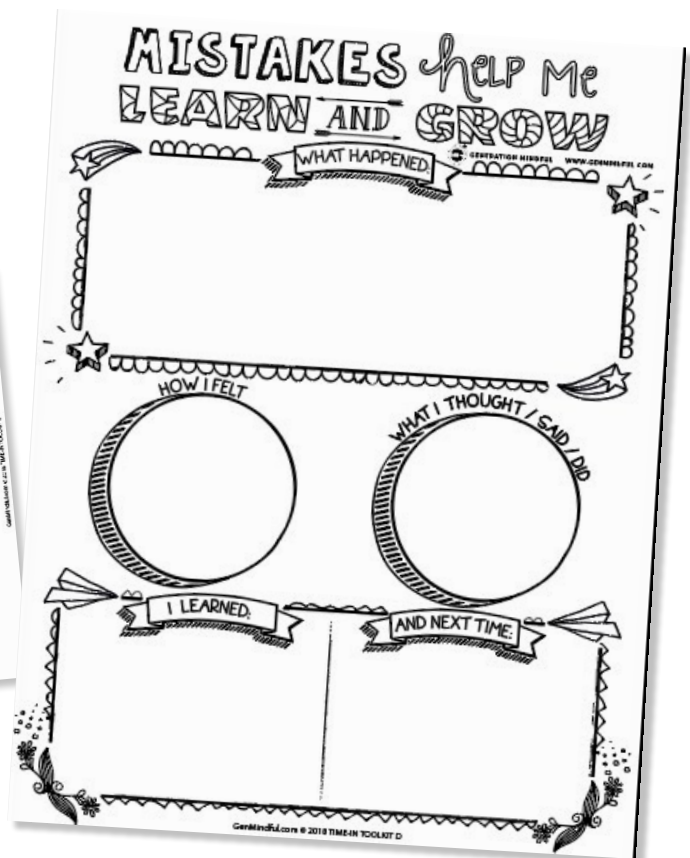
MISTAKES HELP US LEARN & GROW ACTIVITY SHEET

Printable L

Invite children age 5+ to complete a Mistakes Help Me Learn and Grow Activity Sheet. Complete one yourself as well, digging deeper into a mistake you made that your children might remember you making or one they might be able to relate to themselves. Younger children can draw pictures to answer the questions on this activity sheet and/or you can write their responses in for them. This sheet is a helpful tool to promote self-reflection and learning during Time-Ins. Older children can learn to use this sheet independently when they are using the Calming Corner. Have blank copies of this printable available on a clipboard wherever you will be doing your Time-Ins.

Do not introduce this worksheet in the middle of a child's upset. It is best to introduce this sheet in a moment of calm and playful connection and to do a few sheets before using one in a moment of upset so that the child feels familiar with it and thereby safer and less defensive using it with you. This activity sheet was designed to help children learn from their mistakes without feeling shameful and as such, *it is not a punishment*. See it as a tool that can help children (and ourselves!) feel confident in their ability to notice their feelings and learn from their mistakes. Present the sheet this way and your children will open their hearts to the experience as well.

To reinforce this idea, have your children color the Mistakes Help Me Learn & Grow coloring sheet! (Printable B)



PEACEMAKERS CARD DECK

PeaceMakers is an interactive card deck that explores the seven themes of power, joy, balance, love, peace, intuition and forgiveness represented by our peace-making pals Bear, Fox, Lion, Hummingbird, Dolphin, Owl, and Elephant. These cards help children and adults connect and share their thoughts, ideas, and feelings in daily, playful ways. Every card in the deck has an affirming message designed to nurture social and emotional skills, self-love, a growth mindset, confidence, and more, in as little as five minutes a day.



POWER

Red Bear reminds us that we are safe, powerful and FREE!



JOY

Orange Fox reminds us to be silly...and to enjoy all the fun this life has to offer.



BALANCE

Yellow Lion reminds us that our love is fierce...and to roar!!! :)



LOVE

Green Hummingbird reminds us that we are love, just the way we are.



PEACE

Blue Dolphin reminds us that our words can bring peace to the world.



INTUITION

Indigo Owl reminds us to tune-in and to trust...our body knows what to do.



FORGIVENESS

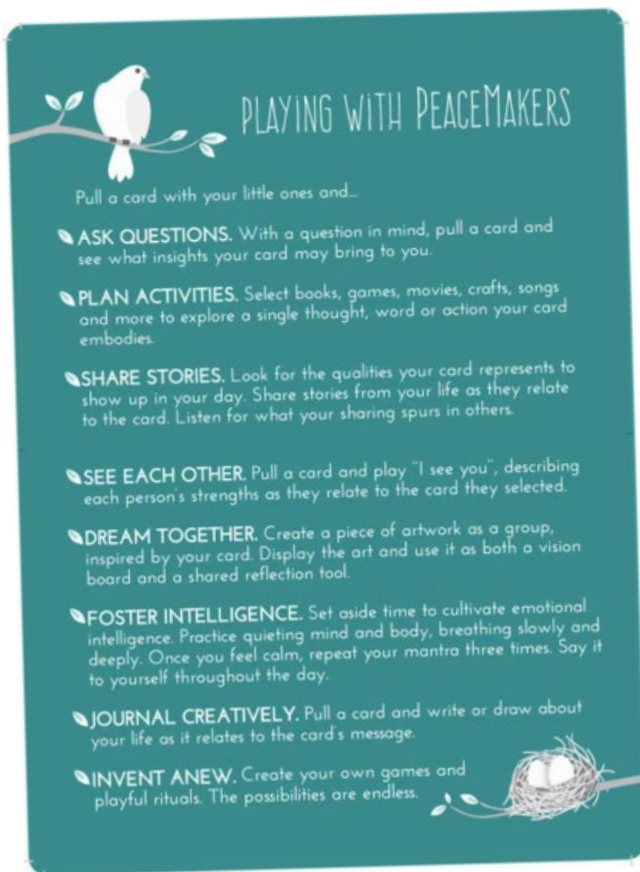
Violet Elephant reminds us that our forgiveness heals.

Take a few minutes now to read through the Welcome Cards found in your PeaceMakers deck with your children.

Your Time-In ToolKit also comes with a 20x30 Meet the PeaceMakers poster, which shows all 35 PeaceMakers cards on one page. You can use your PeaceMakers stickers on your poster to mark off cards that your children have pulled, but remember that the stickers are never to be used as a carrot or any sort of external motivation! Some people like to remove the cards they pull each time until they collect all 35 animal stickers for their chart. Others keep all the cards together, shuffle and pull, working with repeat messages depending on what card comes to them that day. Play with the cards in whatever way inspires you and your children the most.

Below are some examples of games you can play with your PeaceMakers cards and poster:

- Have children pull a card and act out what the card says.
- Have children pull a card from the deck and match it to the same card on the poster.
- Create a simple, daily ritual (in the morning, at dinner, at bedtime, etc) where everyone pulls a PeaceMakers card and talks about a time they felt that way.



For more ideas of things you can do with your PeaceMakers cards, look through the Playing with PeaceMakers card inside of your PeaceMakers Card Deck.

ADDITIONAL EMPOWERING ACTIVITIES

Reinforce the concept of your children's innate value and worthiness as separate from their actions and/or behaviors. If you are concerned that this will somehow cause more misbehavior, remind yourself that you are now getting to the source of the behaviors you may have been struggling with. No amount of negative reinforcement can help a child believe that they are worthy, but your clear, firm and respectful love and belief in them can.

- Sing & dance to songs that explore the idea that mistakes help us to learn & grow.
Daniel Tiger: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLVYtfqSsK0>
Make Mistakes (Shake It Off): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4-Hve9RKtg>
- Read children's books focused on cultivating a growth mindset like this one by Todd Parr called *It's Okay to Make Mistakes*.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqp5kvnKg5k>
- Check out the Big Life Journal, created to help cultivate a growth mindset in children ages 6+.
bit.ly/GrowthMindsetJournal
- Play a bean bag toss game (or any game of skill) and notice how the game gets easier the more you practice! Talk about how practicing something involves getting it wrong so that eventually you are able to get it right.
- Make superhero capes out of old t-shirts/other (search Pinterest for ideas). Mark your capes with the words FEELINGS and MISTAKES along with other words your children suggest that help them feel powerful as well. (*Example: friends, mom, dad, family, helping a friend, running, jumping, laughing, hugs, etc.*)
- Make up a song around the idea that we each are love and/or how mistakes help us learn and grow.
- Make a music video to go with your song or think of your own fun, creative ways to play with these concepts!

Share your own fun and creative ways to play with the concepts and ideas present in this manual to your Gen:M Online Community on Facebook, Instagram or GenMindful.com! For any additional questions or comments, you can always reach us at info@genmindful.com.

CONNECTING BRAIN TO BRAIN



BRAIN STATE & BEHAVIOR

RESPOND (NOT REACT)

GO

GREEN LIGHT BRAIN:

Child will appear calm, open, receptive, engaged. Thinking, playing, reasoning, loving.

**(PREFRONTAL CORTEX)
LEARNING**

PAUSE

YELLOW LIGHT BRAIN:

Child will appear emotional, needy, clingy, cuddly, demanding, distracted, hyper, uncooperative, nervous laughter, crying.

**(MIDBRAIN)
FEELING**

STOP

RED LIGHT BRAIN:

Child will present in one of three states:
Fight: hitting, biting, screaming, spitting.
Flight: run away, look away, push away.
Freeze: shut down.

**(BRAIN STEM)
FEARING**

TEACH

Your child's brain is receptive, and his/her brain is ready to learn and grow! Talk, play, model, explain, guide, and appreciate.

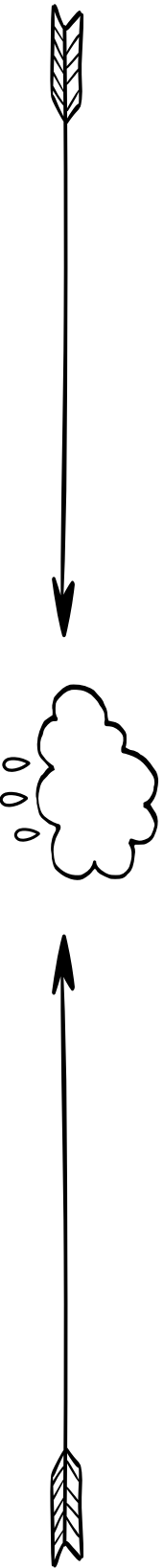
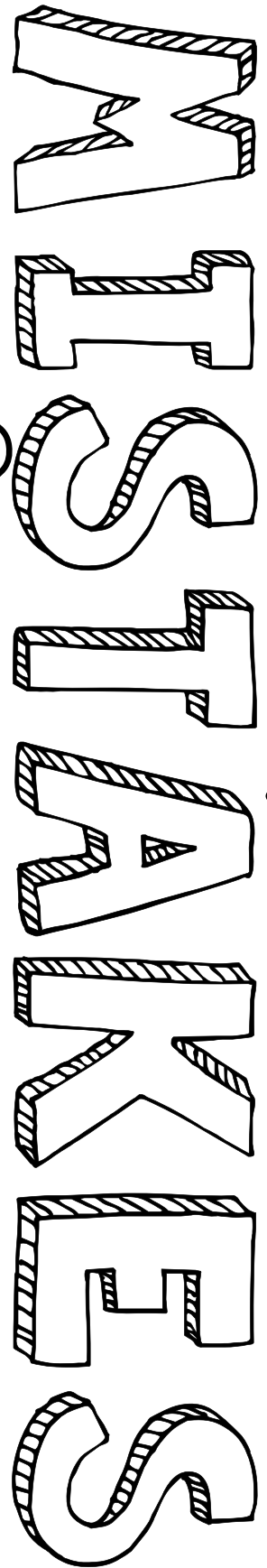
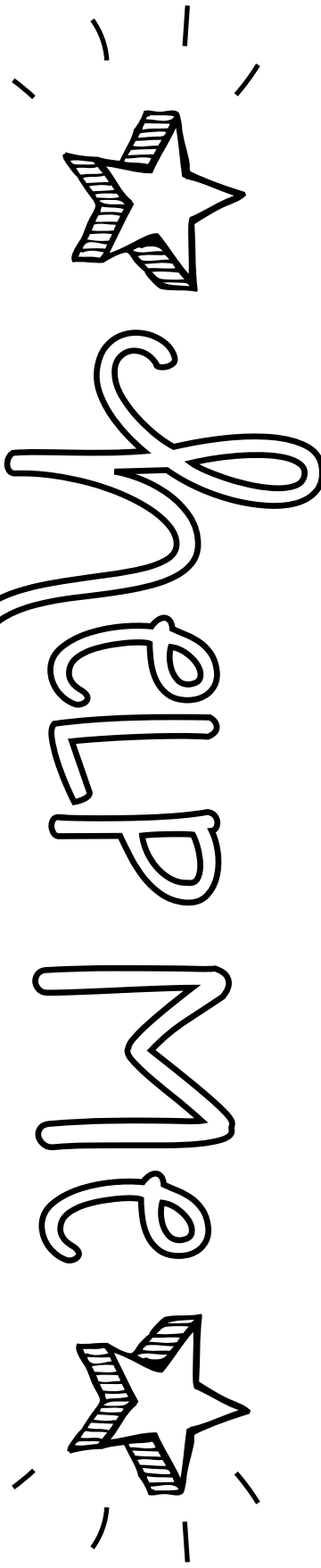
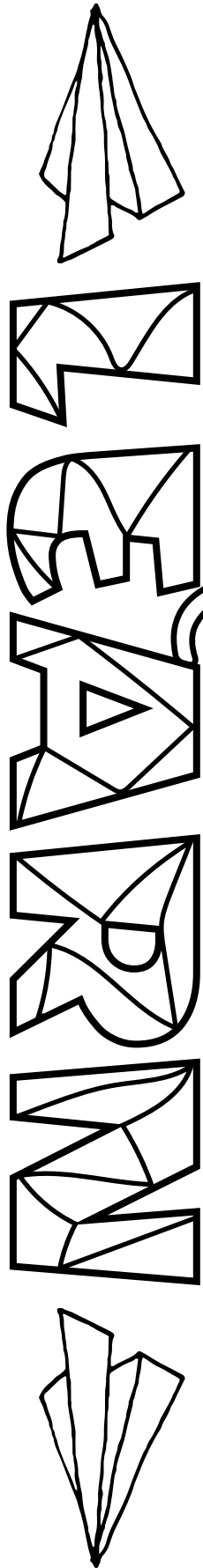
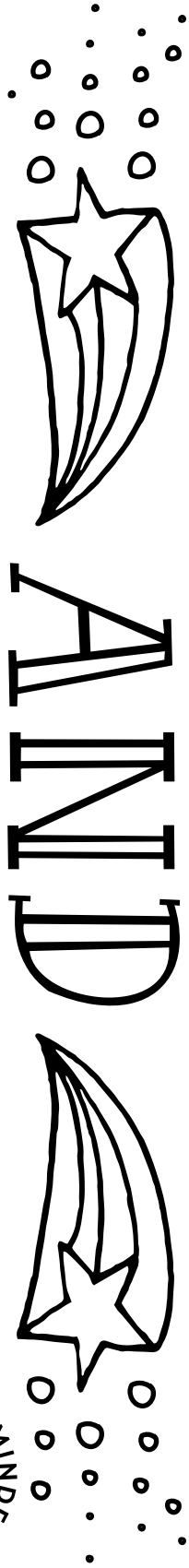
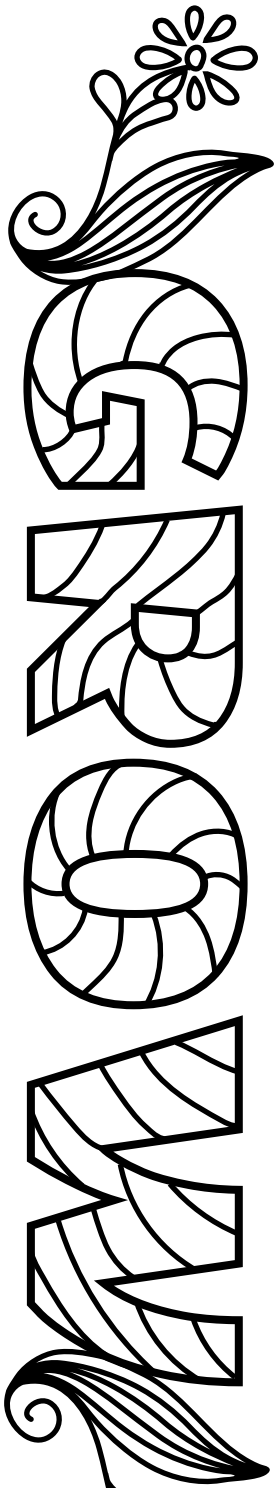
REGULATE

Help your child learn to regulate their body using your words and actions. Meet emotion with emotion. Set and hold to limits calmly. Pause. Breathe. Model the skills you are teaching. Affirm that emotions are safe, allowed and helpful. Use mindfulness, compassion, ritual, and play.

COMFORT AND CALM

Meet unmet needs (sleep, hunger, order, routine). Look to your body language. Soothe your child. Get low. Make eye contact. Offer gentle touch/hug. Less talking, more being. You might say: "You're safe."





TRANSFORMING TRIGGERS (7 STEPS)

1. MY TRIGGER... (DESCRIBE THE SITUATION & RATE MY UPSET 1-10)

2. MY FEELINGS...

3. MY THOUGHTS...

4. MY GOAL... (FOR MY TRIGGER)

5. "I CANCEL MY GOAL...". SOME INSIGHTS I HAVE ABOUT MYSELF, MY PAST AND/OR THIS GOAL ARE...

6. I CHOOSE LOVE. (LOVING THOUGHT TEST)

7. MY NEW GOAL FOR MYSELF IS... (RATE MY UPSET 1-10)



A special thanks to my teacher, Dr. Michael Ryce [WhyAgain.org], from whose work this sheet is inspired. This may be copied and shared. For additional support using this sheet, visit GenMindful.com.

MY WORK IT OUT SHEET

WHAT HAPPENED:

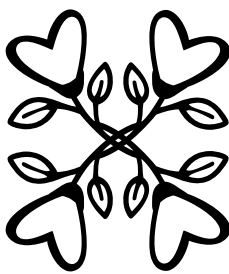
I FEEL:

MY UNMET GOAL: 

(SOMETHING I WANTED OTHERS TO THINK, SAY, OR DO)

LOVE TEST:

WHAT IS A LOVING THOUGHT
I CAN THINK ABOUT MYSELF
OR THE PEOPLE / THINGS
I FEEL UPSET
ABOUT?



MY  NEW GOAL: 











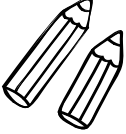

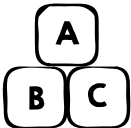
(SOMETHING I WANT TO THINK, SAY, OR DO THAT LIFTS ME UP)

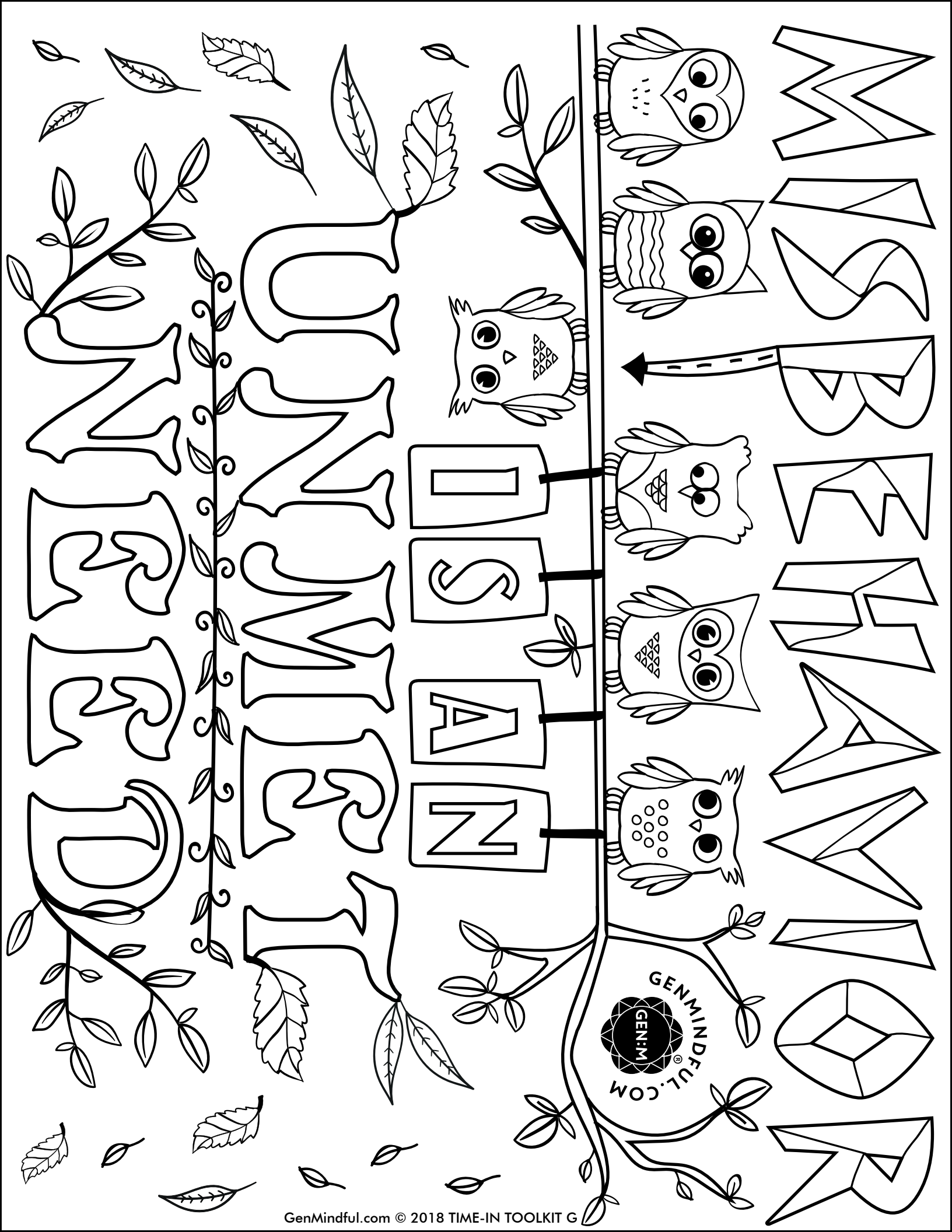


TIME-IN Tools

Suggested ToolKit Items:

This list will vary with the ages and sensory needs of your children as well as the setting you are in. Please make this suggested list your own! You do not need everything on the list and you can absolutely add things that are not on the list. Have fun with it. Include items you feel your children will be able to work with well independently.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> small selection of books  | <input type="checkbox"/> small stuffed animal  | <input type="checkbox"/> small 'light up' balls with a LED light inside |
| <input type="checkbox"/> calming strategies cards | <input type="checkbox"/> bubbles to blow  | <input type="checkbox"/> family photographs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cards illustrating deep breathing techniques  | <input type="checkbox"/> pinwheel to blow on  | <input type="checkbox"/> a small puzzle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> personalized calming strategies booklet  | <input type="checkbox"/> bubble wrap to pop  | <input type="checkbox"/> eye mask (sleeping mask) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cards illustrating yoga poses, stretches or simple exercises | <input type="checkbox"/> playdoh | <input type="checkbox"/> noise reducing headphones |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a cup or a mini bottle of water, to encourage having a drink  | <input type="checkbox"/> items with a calming scent, like Lavender  | <input type="checkbox"/> small musical instruments to shake |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fruit snacks for oral stimulation  | <input type="checkbox"/> coloring books or paper | <input type="checkbox"/> classical music or nature sounds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fidget toys | <input type="checkbox"/> coloring materials  | <input type="checkbox"/> small bottle lotion which you can label "calming cream" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> plastic ball | <input type="checkbox"/> scarves or handkerchiefs to toss into the air | <input type="checkbox"/> colored pipe cleaners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stress balls  | <input type="checkbox"/> small box of mints  | <input type="checkbox"/> legos or building blocks |



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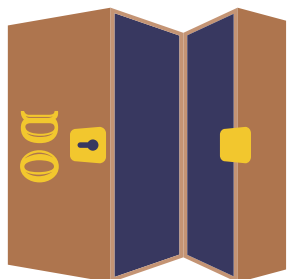
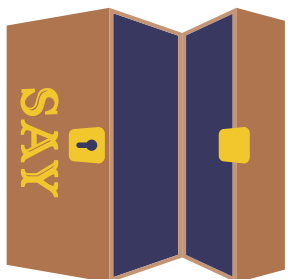
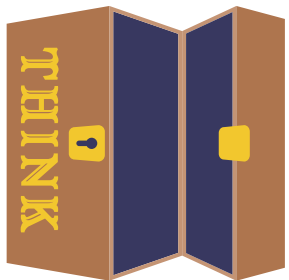
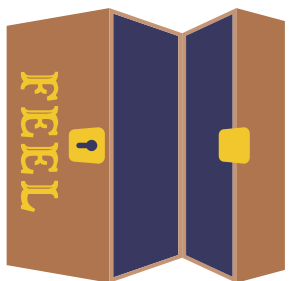
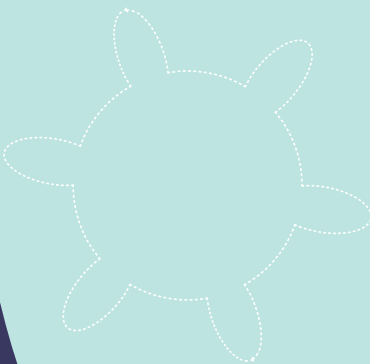
FORGET THE
SAD FEELINGS



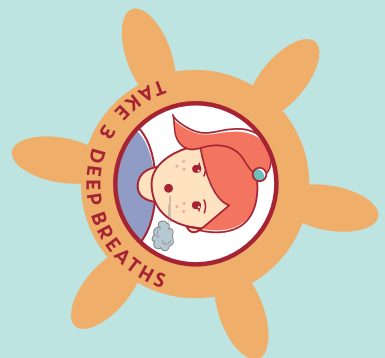
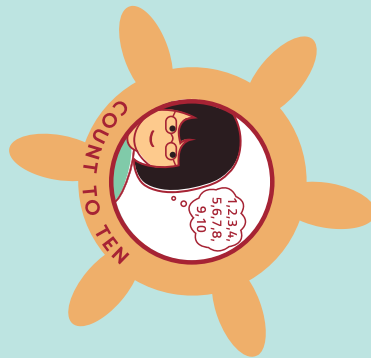
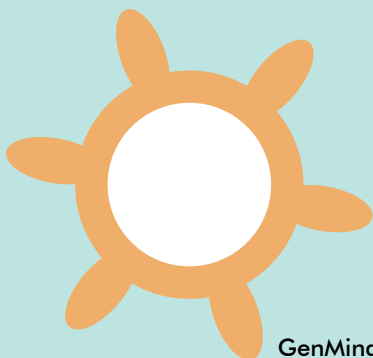
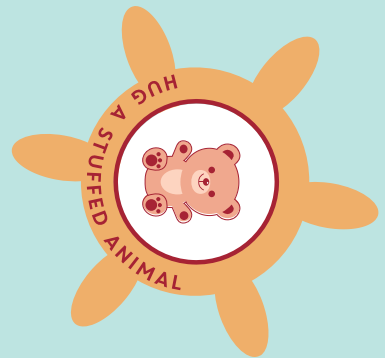
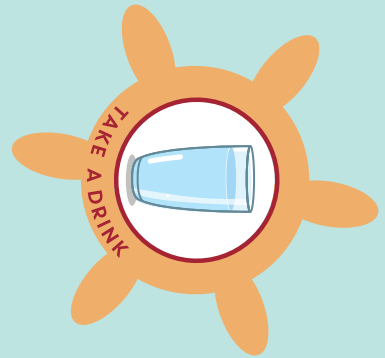
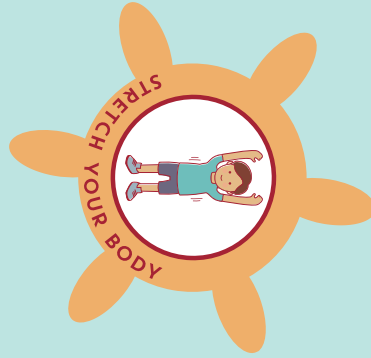
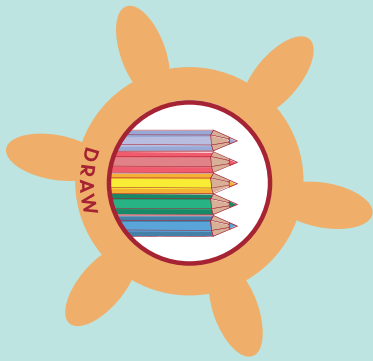
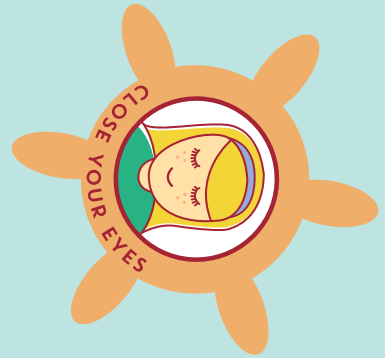
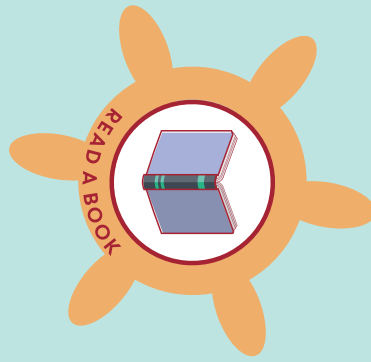
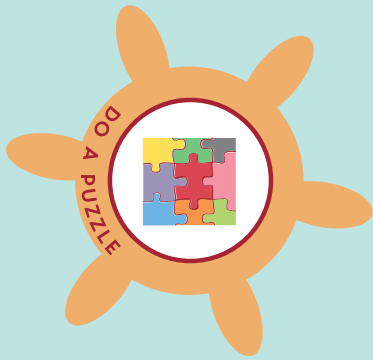
I AM THE CAPTAIN



GENERATION MINDFUL WWW.GENMINDFUL.COM



LIFE



CAPTAIN ACTIVITY NARRATIVE

TIME: 30-45 MINUTES

MATERIALS:

One copy of this story for leader to read.

A color set of the I Am the Captain Activity Sheets (2 pages) for every child.

Safety scissors for each child or precut the activity (see page 2).

Glue sticks to share or for each child.

Writing and coloring materials.

NARRATIVE:

1) Ahoy!!! Can you say hello like the captain of a ship?!

(Invite children to greet you by saying "AHOY!!!" together loudly.)

2) Well hello to you too!

Has anyone here ever been on a boat? You have?!?! Can you tell me about that?

(Call on 1-3 people to share their experiences and stories about boats.)

3) Well in this story, YOU are the captain of your very own ship.

So, as we start our story, I want you to draw yourself in there, standing at the steering wheel of your very own ship. And then we have some fun activities to help us make our ships even more special.

4) Arrrrr, Maties! Okay! Now I see your pictures and I see that each and every one of you are standing there, ready to be the Captain of your very own ship.

So, go ahead and let's make it your ship. You can add your name or draw a picture/name right there on your ship's flag. Decorate your flag however you like. (Pause while children color ship's flag.) This is your ship!



5) Okay, are we all ready my Captains?!? Can everybody stand up? (You can make this a statement instead if you feel your kids might resist, "Now everybody stand up!".)

So as our story begins, we are setting out to sea. (Pretend to be looking into a telescope you make with your hands. Invite children to do the same.)

Where do you think we are sailing? (Work to spark each and every child's imagination. Encourage engagement, silliness even.)

6) All right now, I want you to pretend that you are holding your ship's BIG, round steering wheel in your hands, and when you move it, you are steering your ship.

Can you do that? (Kids will pretend to be steering the big ship using their big steering wheels and this part of the activity will be animated. They will be moving their bodies, laughing and being silly. You might need a reminder to keep their hands in their ship and to themselves if they are standing close. This is an opportunity to practice self-awareness, self-control and boundaries, often without you needing to say a word.)

7) Okay you all, I see a big, big wave coming!!! Can you see it?! It's right there and it is getting closer!

I'm feeling a little worried you guys. (You can pause here to talk about worry, asking the children how they are feeling, or move ahead with the story and talk about their feelings and how they showed up/felt inside their bodies when they felt these different ways later.)

8) But you know what??! I think if we work together and we all turn our steering wheels to the LEFT at the very same time, we can move out of the way! Then that big old wave will not hit our boats! Let's do it!

On the count of three, let's all turn our steering wheels to the left. Hold it realllllly still. Okay...1----2----3! TURN YOUR WHEEL TO THE LEFT! (Show signs of relief.)

We did it! 



9) Wait, I see another wave coming! This one is far off, but I see it. Can you see it? Get out your telescopes (using hands) and look with me!

You see it?!?!?!? Right there!!! And it's coming closer, and closer, and closer... (Suspense)

It is almost here! On the count of three let's all steer our ships the other way (or to the right)! 1-----2-----3-----TURN YOUR WHEELS MY CAPTAINS!!! TURN THEM!!!!

Shweeew, we did it! We saw that wave coming a mile away, didn't we? Yep, we did! We saw that wave coming and we worked together to move out of its way.

Sometimes we can see the big waves coming and we can be ready for them.

(Act like a big wave hits you and your boat knocking you off your feet.)

WAIT A MINUTE!!!! What was that?! A wave just crashed onto my ship! Man, I am soaking wet. I REALLY did not want to get wet today. I'm all cold now too! That wave got me didn't it? Did anyone else get wet? (Act like you are soaking wet and sad about it. Listen to children's responses. If you want this to be more orderly, ask them to raise their hand and to share about if they got wet.)

10) We didn't see those waves coming at all did we?! But we are okay now aren't we?

The wave hit us, and we felt it. And then the wave went away, just as quickly as it came.

11) Okay let's all put our anchors down into the ocean, so we can make our ships feel really, really steady and still. Our anchors will make sure that even if the waves come and try to knock our boats around, they will not be able to. Our anchors will help us to keep our boats safe. Then we can sit down and take a good look around our boats because there are some really neat things on our boats that we haven't had the chance to talk about yet. Okay everyone, throw out your anchors!



(Act like you are throwing a big, heavy anchor overboard and have the children do the same. Then have everyone sit down on the floor or in their chairs. Have them pretend that they are now anchored down to the ground, steady, calm and still, sitting in their chairs or at their desks in front of the materials they will use to complete their activity sheets.)

12) Can you think of something in real life that felt like that wave when it hit you? The wave that we did not see coming? The one that knocked us right off our feet and got us all wet?

Maybe, just like that wave, this thing that happened in your real life took you by surprise.

Maybe it didn't feel good when it surprised you, just like that wave jumping up onto our ships and getting us all wet.

Can you think of something like that? (Encourage talking, sharing.)

Let's write that thing on the lines there in the waves. This thing that happened is just like the waves in our story, isn't it?

13) When we are out here on the ocean, we are going to have some waves around us, aren't we? Sometimes we will see them coming and sometimes, we won't!

Let's take a look around our ships and see what we might have to help us with all those waves when we are out to sea.

What do you see there on each and every one of your ships?

That's right!!! You have some treasure chests right there on your ship, don't you?! Yes, you do! How many of them do you see? Yes, four. You have four treasure chests!!!



14) Can anyone raise their hand and tell me (or if it is one child, simply direct the question to them alone) what your treasure chests say on them? (Continue until all four words have been read aloud.)

FEEL, THINK, SAY, DO, yes, that's right!

The things we feel, think, say and do; these are the four treasure chests we each have on our ships.

FEEL, THINK, SAY, DO. Can you say those with me? (Say them with the children. FEEL, THINK, SAY, DO.) Yes! These four things must be pretty special to be kept in treasure chests huh?

15) Our feelings go right here in this first chest. (Lead age appropriate discussion as child cuts and/or pastes a gold coin into the chest. After gluing it onto their ship, they can label the coin with a feeling word to describe how they felt when the experience they wrote about on the lines inside the waves happened.)

Can anyone guess what I am feeling? (Make a happy, sad, and then an angry face. Allow children to guess.) Can anyone think of a different feeling that we haven't said yet? What might it look like if you were feeling that feeling? (If in a group, call children up to role-play different feelings.) Yes, there are so many ways we feel, and you know what?! They are all important. They all belong here in our treasure chests.

(OPTIONAL DISCUSSION) Do you think even the hard feelings or what you might think of as bad feelings belong in our chest? Why/why not? Did you know that EVERY person sailing their own little ship on this great, big ocean we are all sailing our ships on can feel all of these many different types of feelings too? Yes! We can all feel many different ways, and all of our feelings are very helpful and important; even the ones that don't feel so good.

Feelings can sometimes feel bad when we feel them in our bodies. Have you ever had a feeling in your body that didn't feel good? Maybe you were mad?! Or maybe you were nervous? This happens to all of us. Our stomach can start to hurt. Our head can start to feel fuzzy, and sometimes we can feel like our heart is pounding so fast, that it might jump right out of our chest! But even when our feelings feel bad, they are not bad. They can actually help us!



Just think about, if there was a fire in front of us and we were getting really too close to it, our body would let us know to stop or to move back by helping us to feel scared or maybe worried. Our feelings have things to tell us when we listen to them.

Our feelings, even the ones that don't feel good, are important. Our feelings matter, and all of our feelings have a place here in our treasure chests.

16) Okay, so now let's look at this second chest that we have there on your ships, Captains. "THINK". Can anyone give me an example of a happy thought? How about a sad (or silly) thought? (Lead discussion.)

Yes, we have lots and lots of thoughts in a day. Thousands and thousands, and every one of them matters.

Our thoughts are important, and they too get to have their very own treasure chest. (Have each child cut and/or paste another gold coin into the second treasure chest and to write in a thought they had during the "wave" experience they are writing about.)

17) Okay, so now let's look at the third chest we have there on our ships, Captains. "SAY". Can anyone give me an example of the things we say to one another person that might leave us feeling happy? Can anyone think of something we might say to ourselves that might leave us feeling sad? (Lead discussion.)

How about silly? What is something silly that we could say? All of these things we say with our words are important, and they get their very own treasure chest. Write in something you remember saying when you had the experience you wrote about in your wave.

18) All right, we have one treasure chest left. What do you think it is? That's right! It says DO. These are the many things we do in a day. Can anyone tell me something that we did when we were steering our ship, and that big wave was coming? What did we do? We turned the steering wheel, didn't we? Yes, we did. And there are so many other things we could do. Could we ask a friend to help us turn the wheel if it was feeling too hard or too big to turn? (Lead discussion. Draw a parallel to home-life/classroom, and turning to others for help. Many topics could be talked about here including mindfulness, the power of the present moment, grit, adaptability and more.)



19) When things feel hard or bad, we have 11 different calming strategies on our feeling poster to help us and there are so many more.

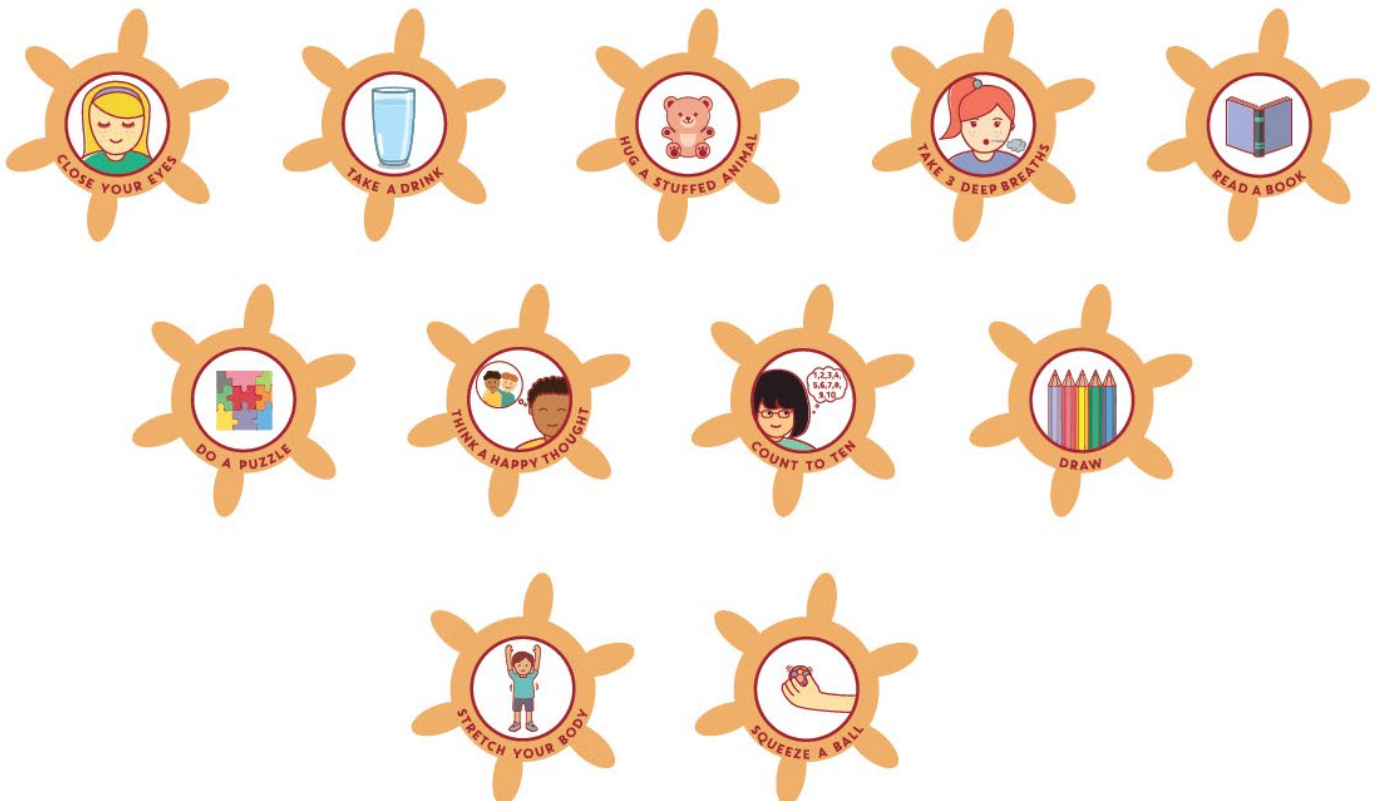
There is a blank one and we can make that steering wheel stand for something we think will help us keep our bodies calm and help us steer our ships when the waves come crashing down.

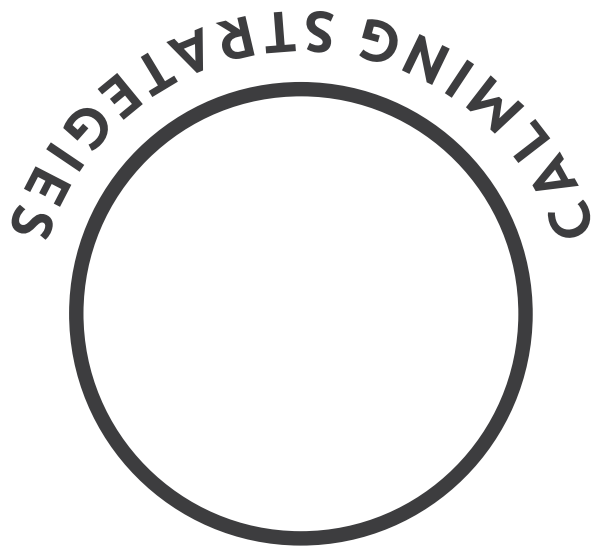
Let's practice our strategies one by one together. (Practice them.)

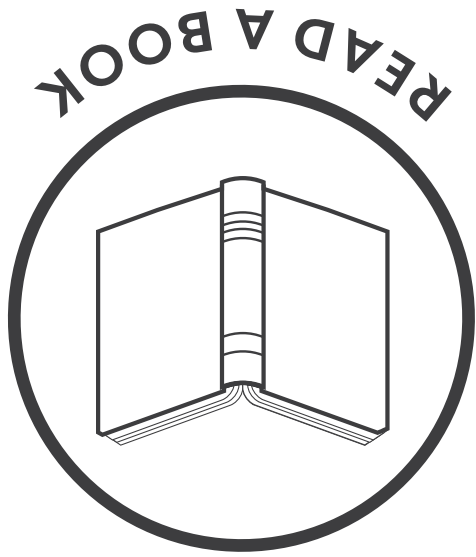
These are the things that can keep our ship from going under water or sinking when the waves are rough.

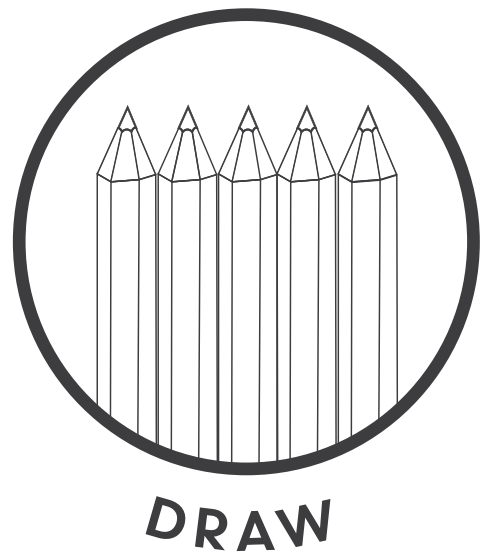
Cut out your favorite steering wheel and paste it onto your ship! If you'd like, you can even add more than one steering wheel to your boat or picture. It is up to you!

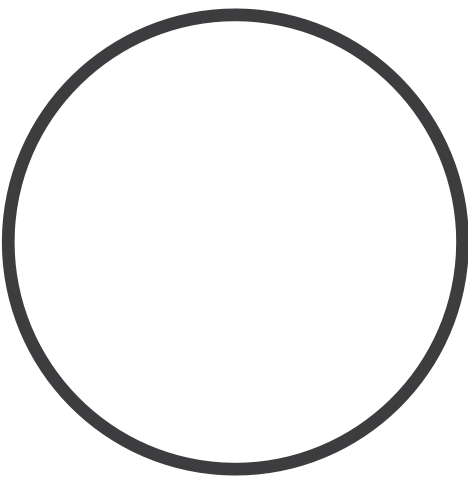
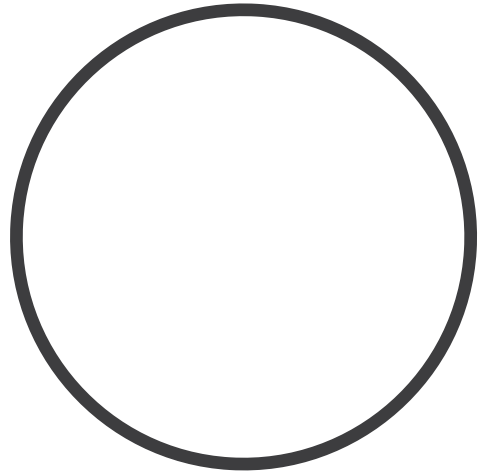
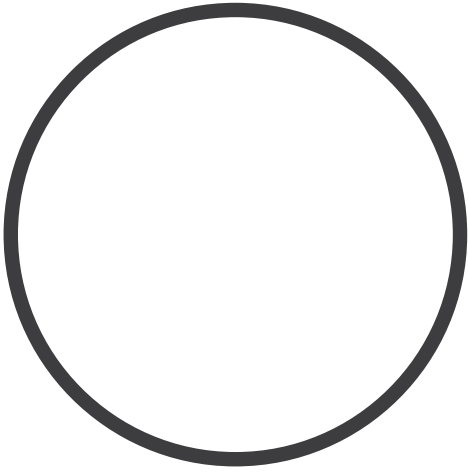
THE END











HOW AM I FEELING?

ANGRY



HAPPY



SAD



CALM



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WHAT HAPPENED:

HOW I FELT

WHAT I THOUGHT / SAID / DID

I LEARNED:

AND NEXT TIME: