# MIGHTY Moe

An Anxiety Workbook for Children

## Facilitator Notes

This is an anxiety workbook for children age 5-11. The story about Mighty Moe relates directly to the material in the workbook, and can be used as a reference to enhance the child's understanding of the content. The language and concepts in this manual are concrete and have been simplified to facilitate the child's comprehension.

Any child using this workbook should do so with the guidance of a parent, counsellor, or other qualified mental health professional. Children should not be expected to work through this book on their own. Although concepts have been simplified to maximize the child's independent use of this book, support is still required to ensure comprehension and maximum benefit.

The language in this workbook is broad. Specific reference is made to 'worries' and a definition is given. Throughout the book, anxiety is typically referred to simply, as 'BIG feelings'. This allows for the child to attach their own personal meaning to their experience of anxiety. For some children, anxiety presents as anger or intense sadness. Although the term 'BIG feelings' is broad, the facilitator should help the child identify this connection between feeling states while keeping the focus on the root causes of the child's anxiety.

The Best Practice Guidelines for managing anxiety in this workbook have been adapted to be fun, engaging, and child friendly. The material in this manual is not intended to replace the advice of professional mental health experts.

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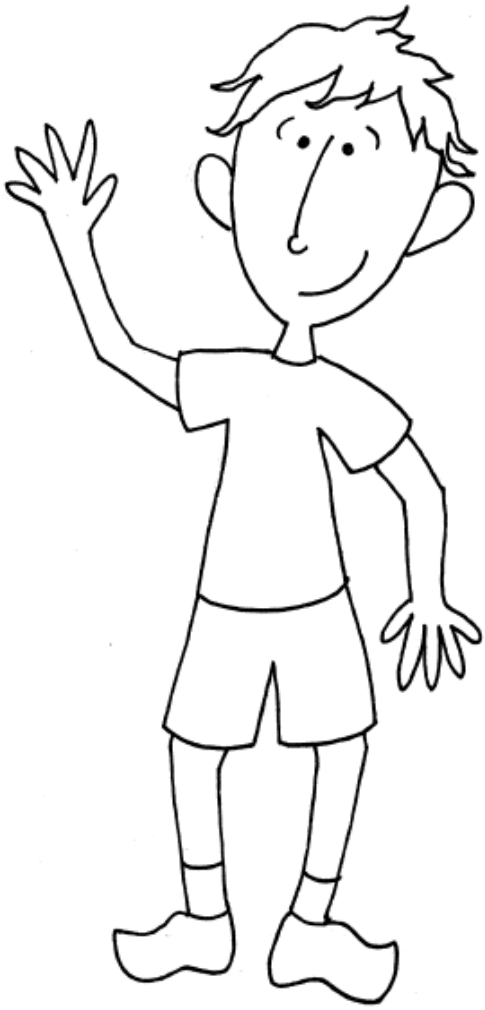
Moe was a kid just like any other.

He went to school everyday.  He liked math and art the best, but he was not a big fan of homework.

He lived in a house with his family.  He tried hard to get along with his parents, but things were not always perfect.

He had lots of friends.  Together, they would play soccer and other fun games.



Moe really was a kid just like any other… or so it *seemed*.

Moe *seemed* to be a kid just like any other, but he didn't *feel* that way. He had something that made him special… something that made him different.

Moe had special powers. He was strong, fast, and creative, just as much as the next kid. But when Moe's Mighty Powers kicked in, he became extra strong, extra fast, and extra creative.

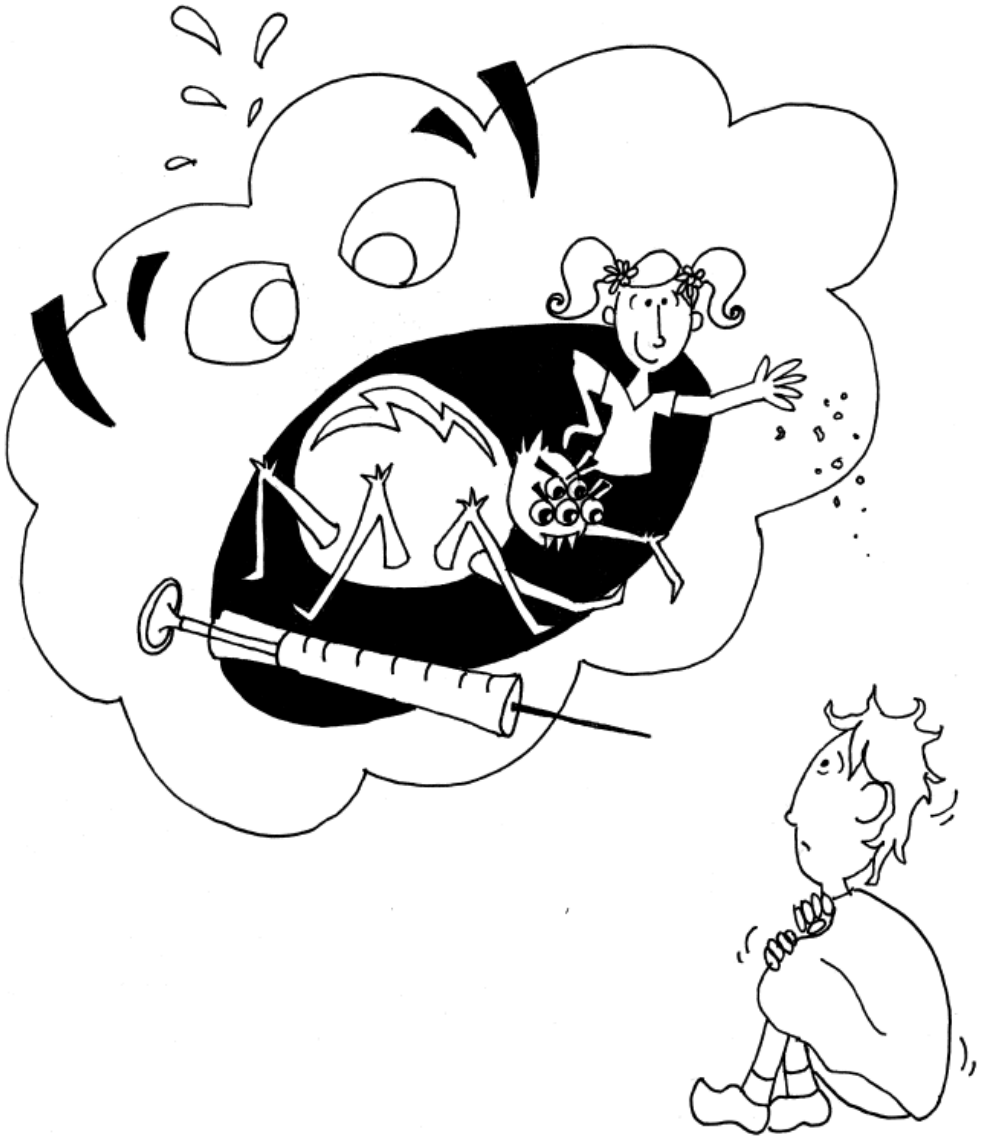
Having special powers may seem like a great thing, but there was another side to Moe's Mighty Powers.

Having Mighty Powers meant that everything got really BIG in Moe's mind. His thoughts and feelings got so big they were often out of his control.

When Moe got mad, he got MIGHTY mad!

And when Moe got scared, he got MIGHTY scared!

Not only did Moe get mighty BIG feelings, but he was also scared of many, many things!



Moe was scared of being away from his family, dark rooms, needles, spiders, sharks, deep water, and his sister's koodies, just to name a few.

No matter how hard he tried, Moe couldn't get rid of his mighty big feelings.  Moe's family felt frustrated because they didn't understand why he was scared of so many things. They said, "Moe, why do you *worry* so much?"

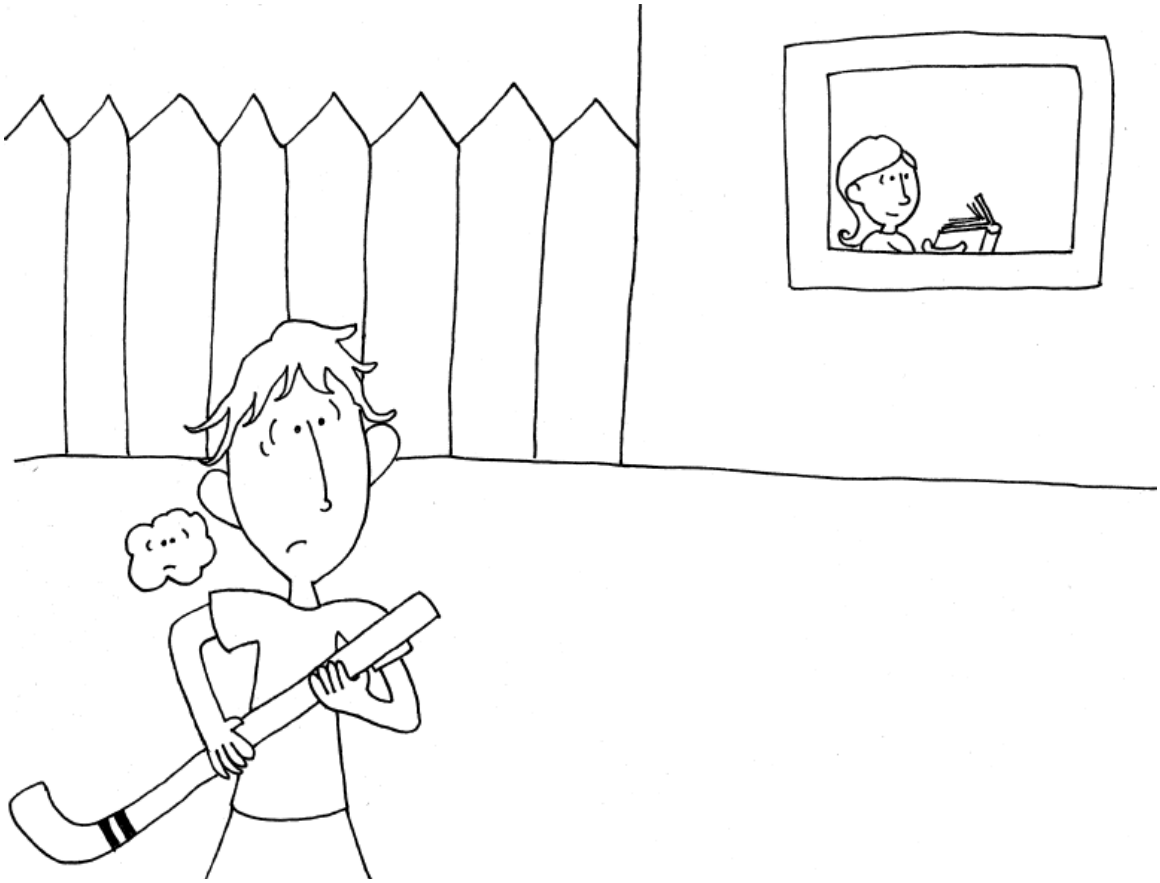
Moe was confused…

"*Worry* is a feeling.  Worries can be small or they can grow to be very very BIG.  Everyone gets small worries sometimes, and everyone gets BIG worries as well.

But some people get BIG worries A LOT.  If you get a lot of BIG worries, then it can be hard to do things like school work, meeting new people, or playing with friends."

This made Moe scared and sad.  He wondered…

One day, Moe was outside playing with his friend, Sam. It was getting late in the afternoon and Sam was tired of playing outside. Sam invited Moe to come over to his house to play.



Moe didn’t know what to say.  He liked Sam and wanted to play with him more but he didn’t want to go to Sam’s house. Moe was happy playing in his own yard because his mom was just inside the house and he could see her through the window.  Moe felt safe when he could see his mom.

Moe knew if he went to Sam's house he wouldn't be able to see his mom through the window and this made him feel scared.

Moe could feel his Mighty Powers kick in!  His small feeling started to get bigger and BIGGER.  His tummy was doing funny things and his skin was getting hot and tingly all over.

Moe started to back away from Sam…

Moe turned and ran inside his house.  Sam called to Moe and asked him to come back, but Moe was already gone.

Moe felt horrible! He wanted to play with Sam and was mad that he couldn't. He was too scared to tell Sam the truth because he was afraid Sam would make fun of him. Moe's Mighty Powers had taken control again!

When Moe came inside, his mom asked:

"But Moe…" said Moe's mom.

"I don't want to talk about it!!" yelled Moe.

Moe knew he was being rude but he didn't care. All he wanted to do was hide his feelings from everyone.

A few days later, Moe was at school and his teacher asked him to read in front of the class.  Moe hated reading in front of the class.  He thought he was a bad reader and that all the kids would laugh at him if he made a mistake.

Moe was feeling very very scared inside.  He could feel his Mighty Powers at work and his scared feeling was getting bigger and bigger and BIGGER.

Moe's teacher handed him the book.

Moe could feel his tummy doing funny things and his knees were wobbly. His heart was beating so fast and so hard he could hear it thumping in his ears. He was certain that everyone in the room could hear his heartbeat thumping and see his wobbly knees wobbling.

Moe didn't want anyone to know he was feeling scared.  Moe tried to calm down but his Mighty Powers were taking control and his scared feeling was getting bigger and bigger and BIGGER!

Moe tried as hard as he could but he couldn't make his lips move to read the words.

All the kids were staring at Moe, waiting for him to read. He felt sick to his stomach. Scared, and not knowing what else to do, Moe yelled:

Moe was so scared and frustrated and angry that he ripped the pages out of the book, threw them on the ground, and ran out of class!

As Moe ran down the hall he could hear all the kids laughing at him. He could also hear his teacher calling him to come back, but Moe didn't care. He just wanted to hide his feelings from everyone, again.

Moe ran… and ran… and ran.

Moe ran so fast and so hard he could feel his leg muscles burning.

Moe ran all the way home.

Moe's mom was at home when he got there.  She was surprised to see him home from school so early.  Mom's mom said:

Moe's mom was scared and worried that something was wrong.  She loved Moe so much and cared for him a lot.

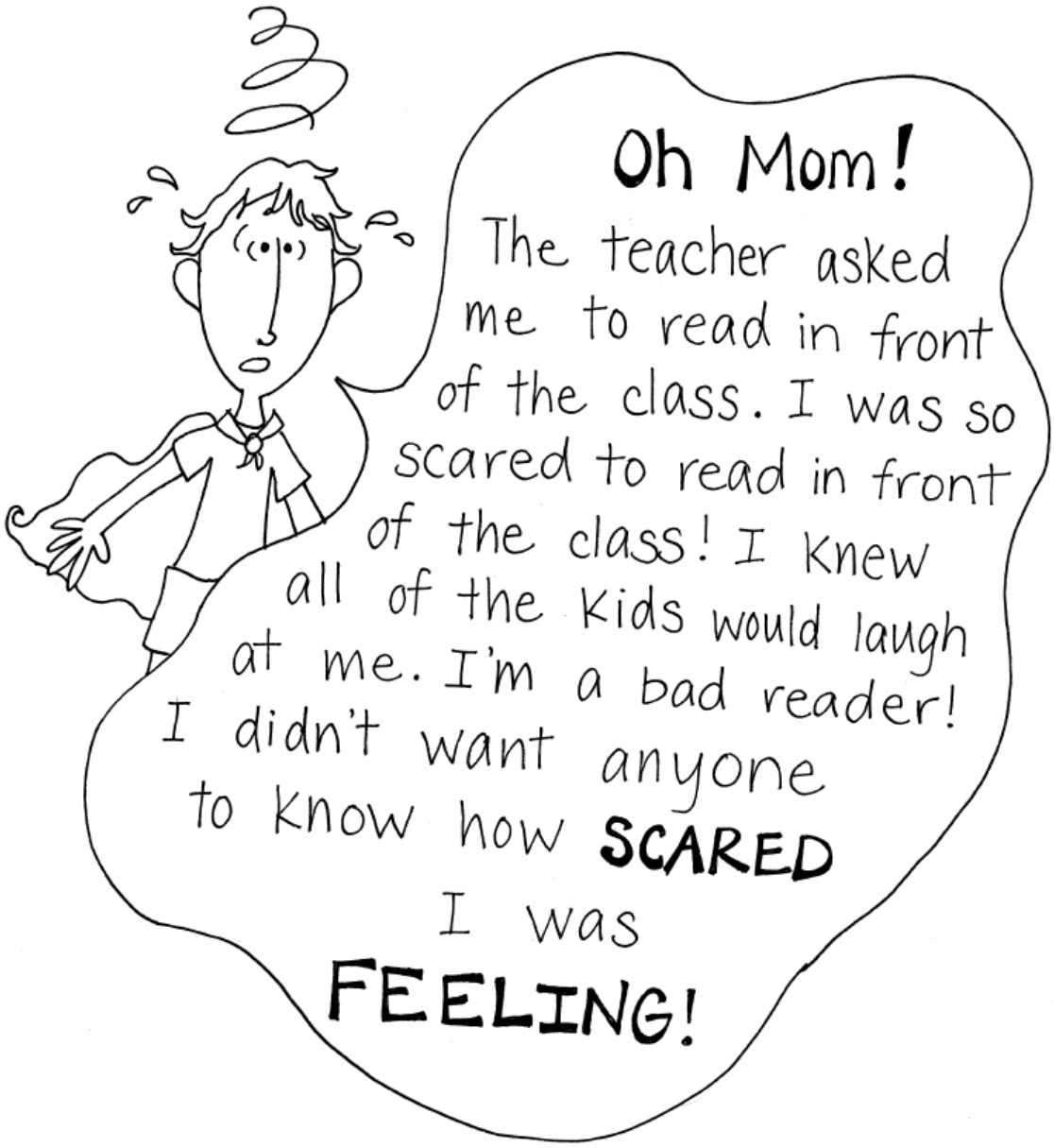
Moe didn't know what to do.  Moe had Mighty BIG feelings but he also had a Mighty BIG problem: he couldn't keep letting his Mighty Powers take control all the time!  Moe knew he had to solve this problem… but how?

Should he tell his mom about his feelings?

Should he get mad, be rude, and not talk about the problem?

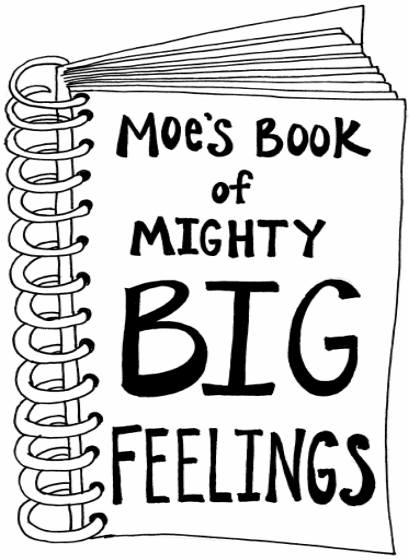
Moe could feel his tummy doing funny things again and there was his heartbeat thumping in his ears… boom, boom… boom, boom… boom, boom…

Moe couldn't keep it all inside anymore.  He burst into tears!



Moe's mom knew she had to help him. Moe's Mighty Powers were out of control! Moe's feelings were getting too BIG and this was making it hard for him to do things. Moe's feelings were so BIG and out of control that he couldn't even do school work or have fun with his friends!

Moe's mom took him to see a counsellor.  Moe and his counsellor talked about a lot of things like feelings, people, school work, and even worries.  The counsellor gave Moe a book called:




Everyday, Moe and his mom would work on the book together.  The work wasn't easy, but Moe tried his hardest and slowly, things started to get better.

Moe worked very hard and he learnt a lot of things from his book.

He learnt he COULD make his big feelings smaller and he COULD stop being scared of so many things.

Moe learned how to take control of his Mighty Powers instead of them controlling him.  This made Moe feel Mighty happy.

Moe felt good about his Mighty Powers because learning about them made him feel strong and brave.  He felt proud to be Mighty Moe.

Now, Moe still got Mighty BIG feelings sometimes but he felt confident because he had learnt what to do to stay in control of his Mighty Powers.

But of all the things Moe learnt, the MOST IMPORTANT was…

He realized he really WAS a kid, just like ANY OTHER.

's

Print your name here

# BOOK of MIGHTY BIG FEELINGS

Remember the story about Moe and his Mighty Powers?

Moe's feelings got very BIG and it was hard for him to do things.

Moe didn't like having such BIG feelings.

## What BIG Feelings DO

BIG feelings stopped Moe from going to his friend's house to play.

BIG feelings stopped Moe from reading in front of the class.

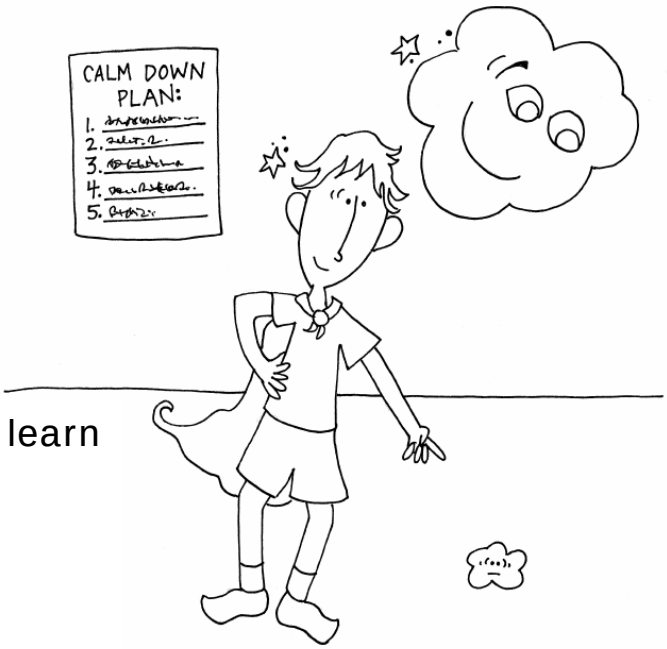
BIG feelings can stop you from having fun.

BIG feelings can make it hard to do schoolwork.

BIG feelings can make it hard to talk to people, hard to play, and even hard to smile!

# What BIG Feelings SAY

It can be very hard to have BIG feelings inside!




This book will help you learn how to make your BIG feelings smaller.

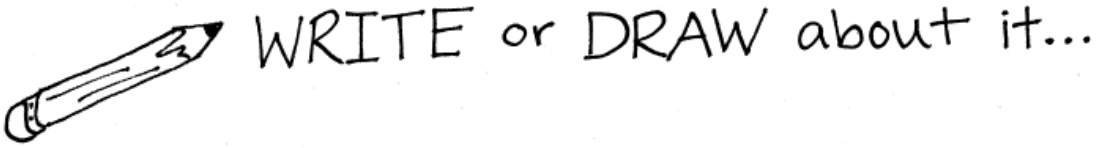
You can also learn to have more control when you have BIG feelings.

Remember what *worry* means?

What is a worry?

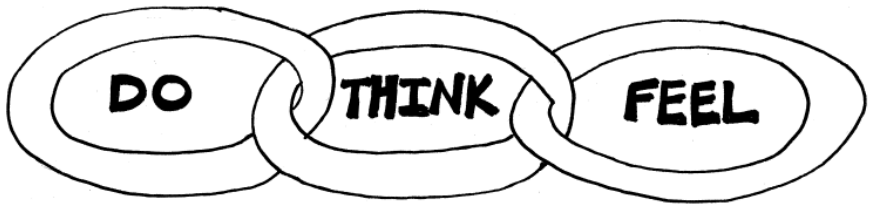
WRITE or DRAW about it...

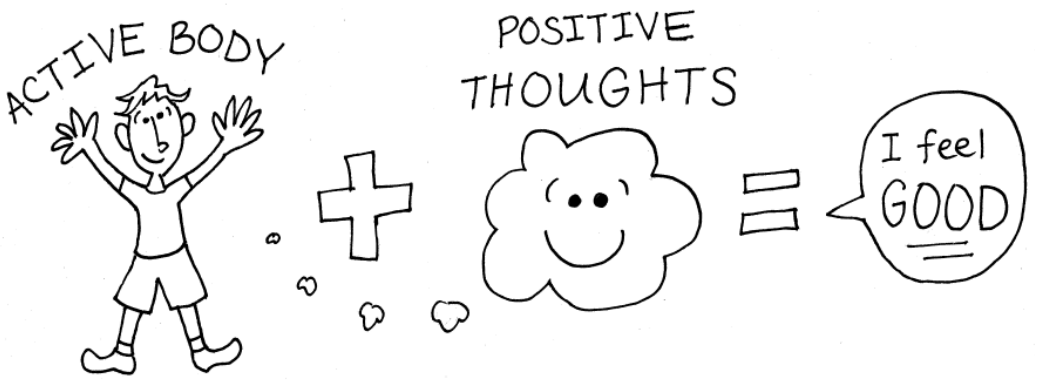
Think of a time when you had BIG feelings.
What happened?

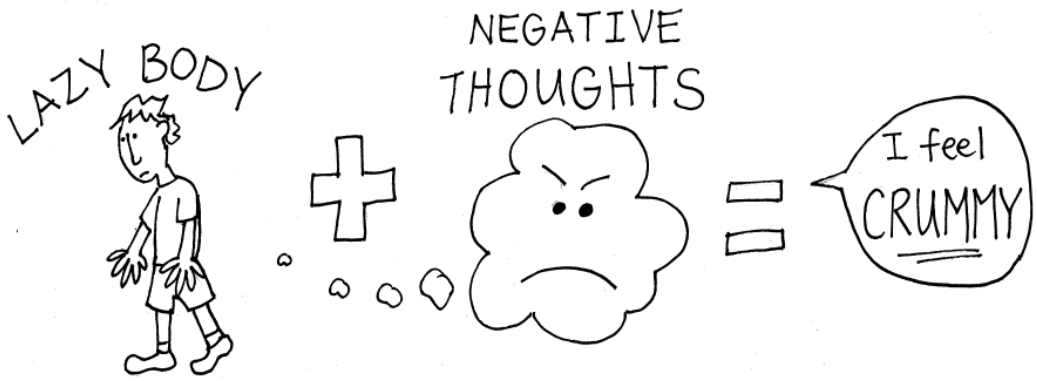


## The Amazing Body-Mind-Feeling Chain

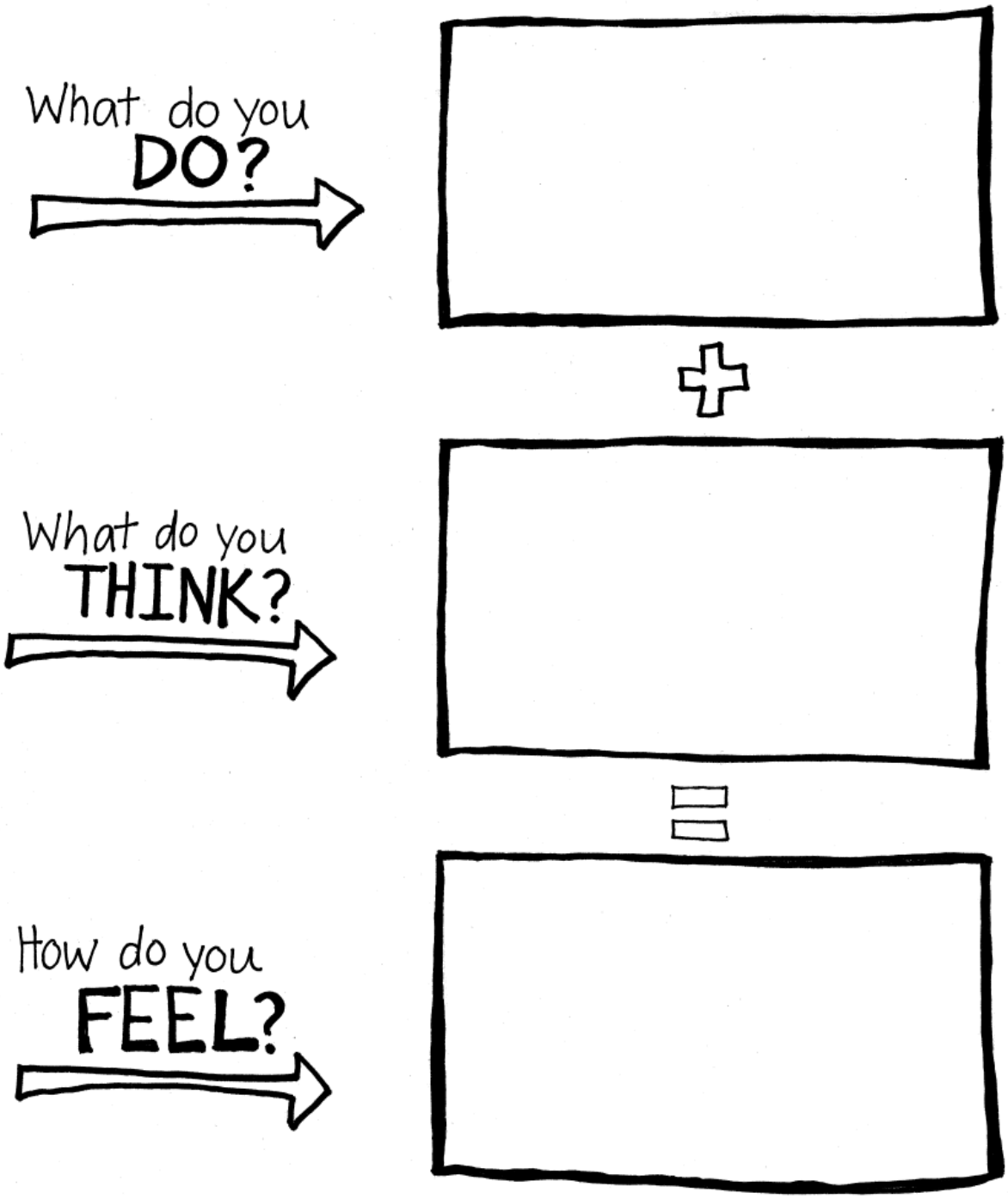
What you DO, how you THINK, and how you FEEL, are all connected.



What happens to you when you have BIG feelings?



To make BIG feelings smaller, you will need
Body Tools, Thinking Tools, and Feeling Tools.

## BODY TOOLS

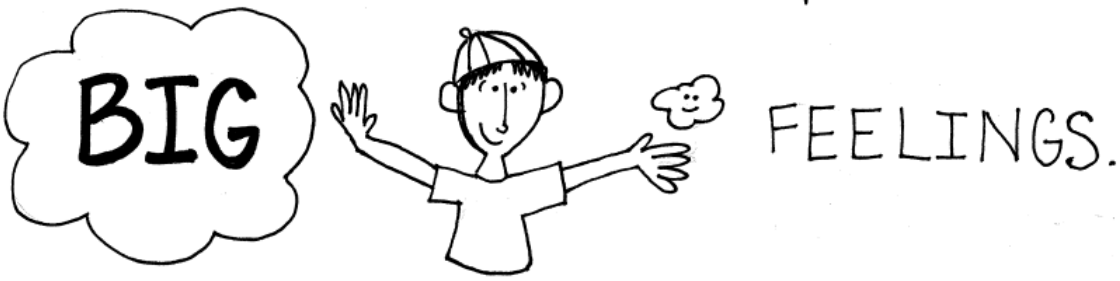
help keep your body strong and healthy.

## THINKING TOOLS

help keep your brain thinking positive thoughts.

## FEELING TOOLS

help you stay in control when you have




Now, let’s talk about feelings!

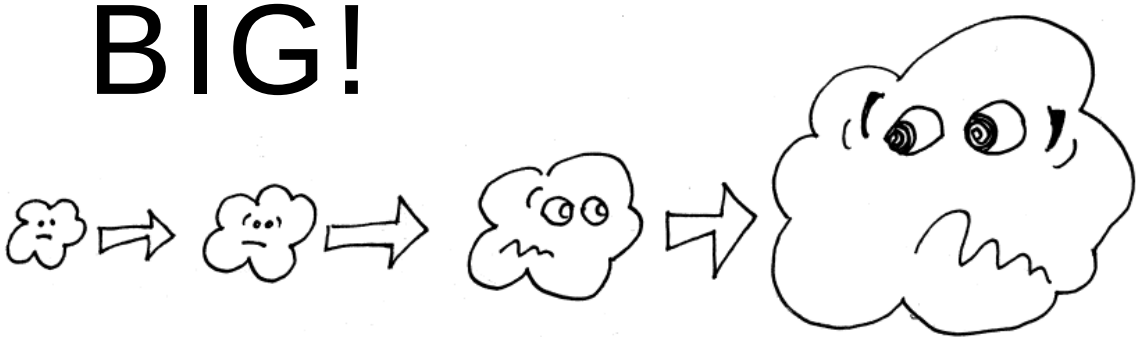
## The thing about feelings is...

You can have one feeling inside or you can have many feelings inside at the same time.

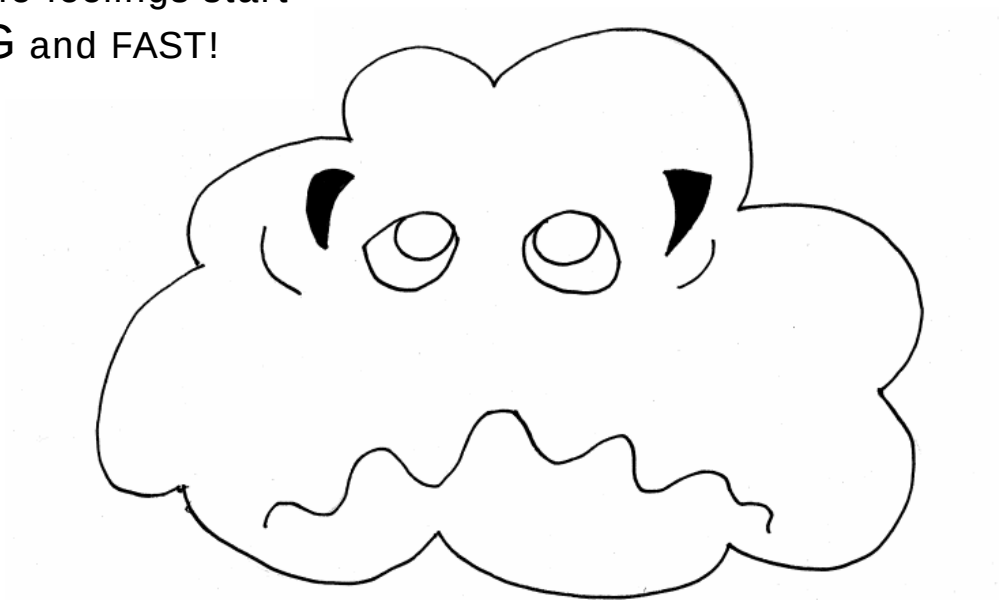
Some feelings start small and stay small.

Some feelings start small and grow to be very

# BIG!



Some feelings start BIG and FAST!

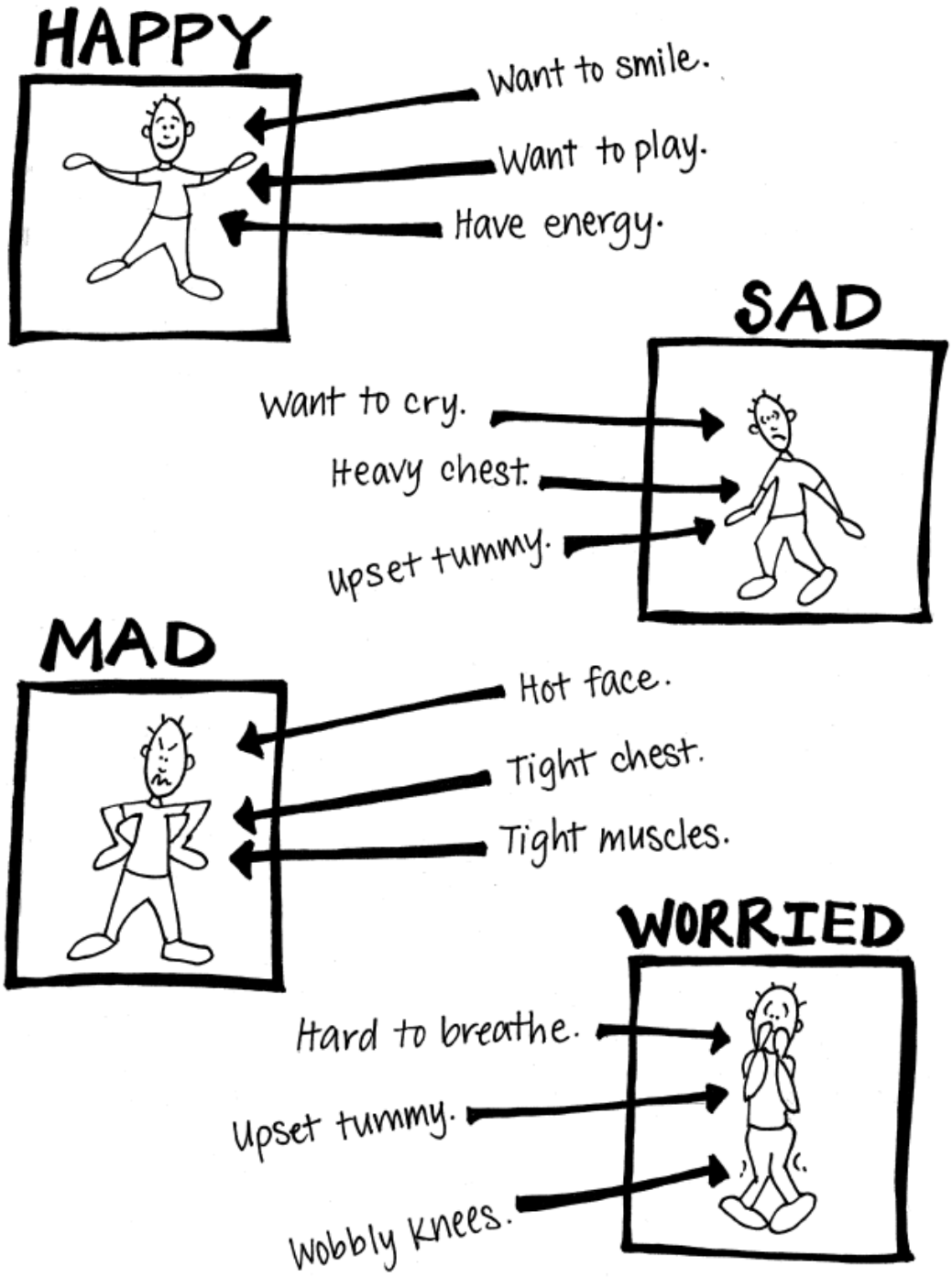


**Feelings sure can be confusing!**

Knowing how you feel can help you figure out what to do about it.

## Body Cues

Your body gives you clues to help you figure out HOW you feel. These are called Body Cues.



Fill out the “Know Your Feelings” Chart below with your own body cues for each feeling.

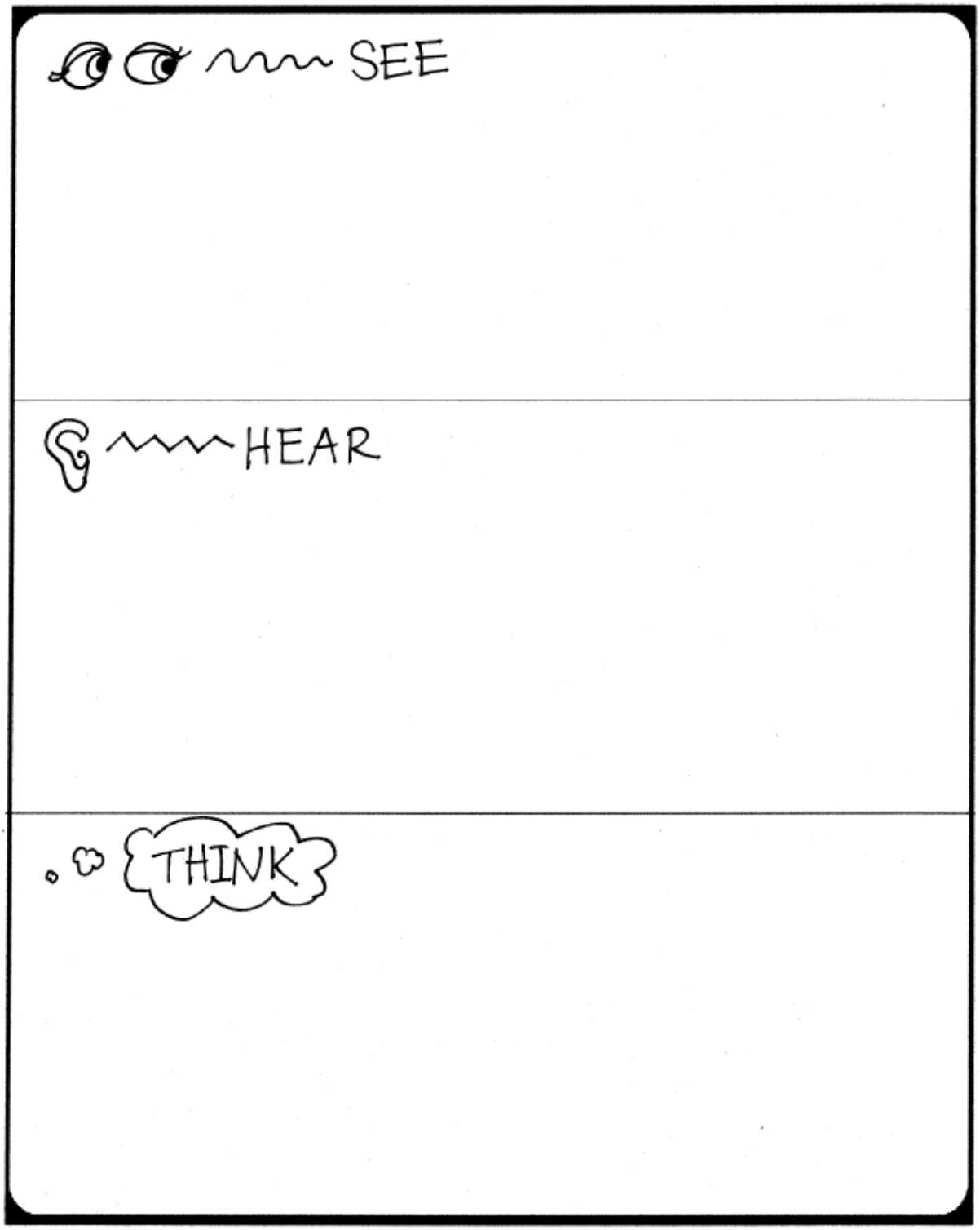
| | |
|---|---|
| When I feel happy, my body: | When I feel sad, my body: |
| When I feel mad, my body: | When I feel scared, my body: |

## How do feelings start?

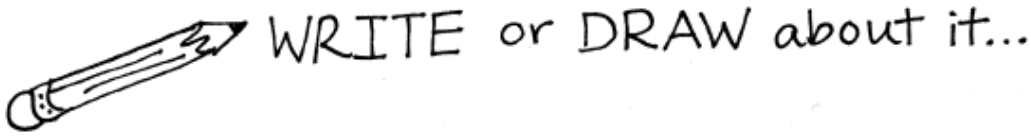
Feelings start when you…

…or when something happens.

Think about things that you SEE, HEAR, or THINK that give you BIG feelings. Fill in this chart with pictures or words:



Think about something that HAPPENED that gave you BIG feelings.

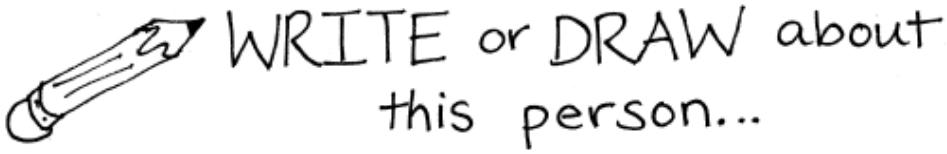


Knowing HOW you feel and WHY you feel that way is hard work.  This takes a lot of practice, even for adults.

It can help to talk to someone about your feelings.

Remember Moe?  He talked to his mom about his BIG feelings and together they were able to make things better.

Who can you talk to about your BIG feelings?



## Body Tool #1: Healthy Choices

Eating health food and staying active will help keep your body healthy and feeling good.

A healthy body and mind are important when learning to manage BIG feelings.

Make time everyday for exercise.

Exercise can be fun!  Play a game of tag, jump rope, or have a race with friends.  Make sure you get all your muscles working hard and get your heartbeat up to help you stay strong and healthy.

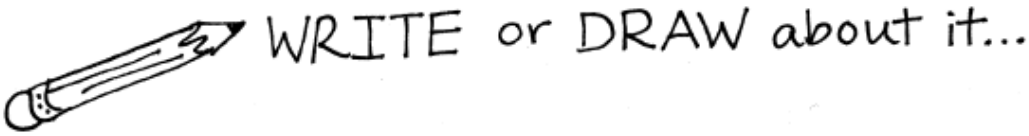
What FUN activities can you do to keep your body healthy?

WRITE or DRAW about it...

What time each day will you do something

active? _____

What healthy foods do you like to eat?




Try to eat 5-10 healthy foods every day!

# Take the Healthy Body Challenge!

Follow the star chart on the next page for one week.

Every time you eat healthy food, give yourself one star.

Every time you exercise for at least 15 minutes, give yourself one star.

How many ☆s can you collect in one week?

☆ • ☆ • ☆ • ☆ • ☆ • ☆ • ☆ • ☆ • ☆

# The Healthy Body Challenge Star Chart

| | |
|---|---|
| Monday | |
| Tuesday | |
| Wednesday | |
| Thursday | |
| Friday | |
| Saturday | |
| Sunday | |

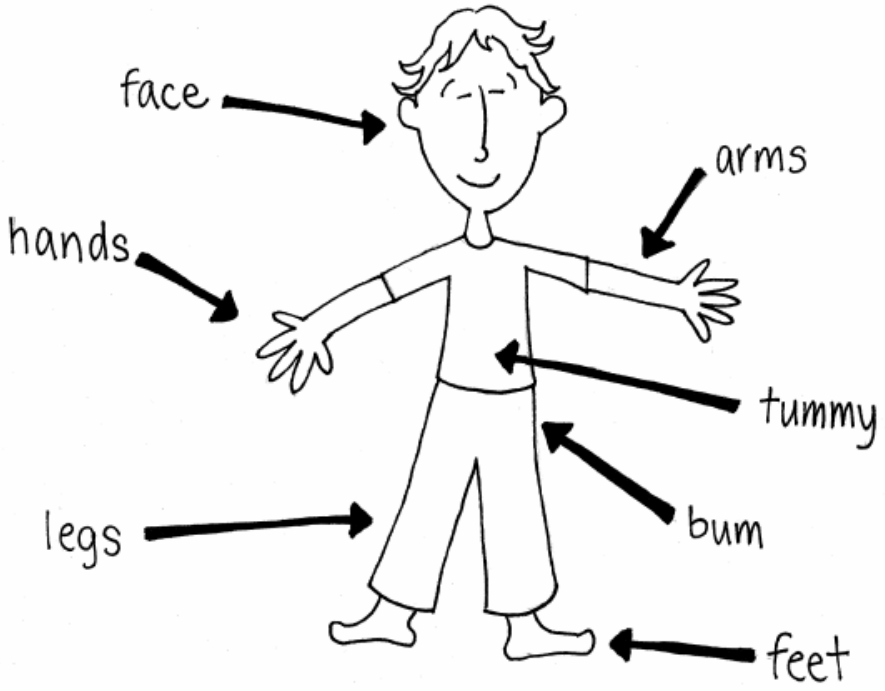
Total stars earned this week = ☐ Good job!

## Body Tool #2: Relax

BIG feelings can make your body feel tight and sore. This body tool can help your body feel better.

Try this:

1. Lay down in a quiet comfortable place, like your bedroom.
2. Take slow, deep breaths.
3. One body part at a time, squeeze to make it tight, hold it, and then let it go to relax.

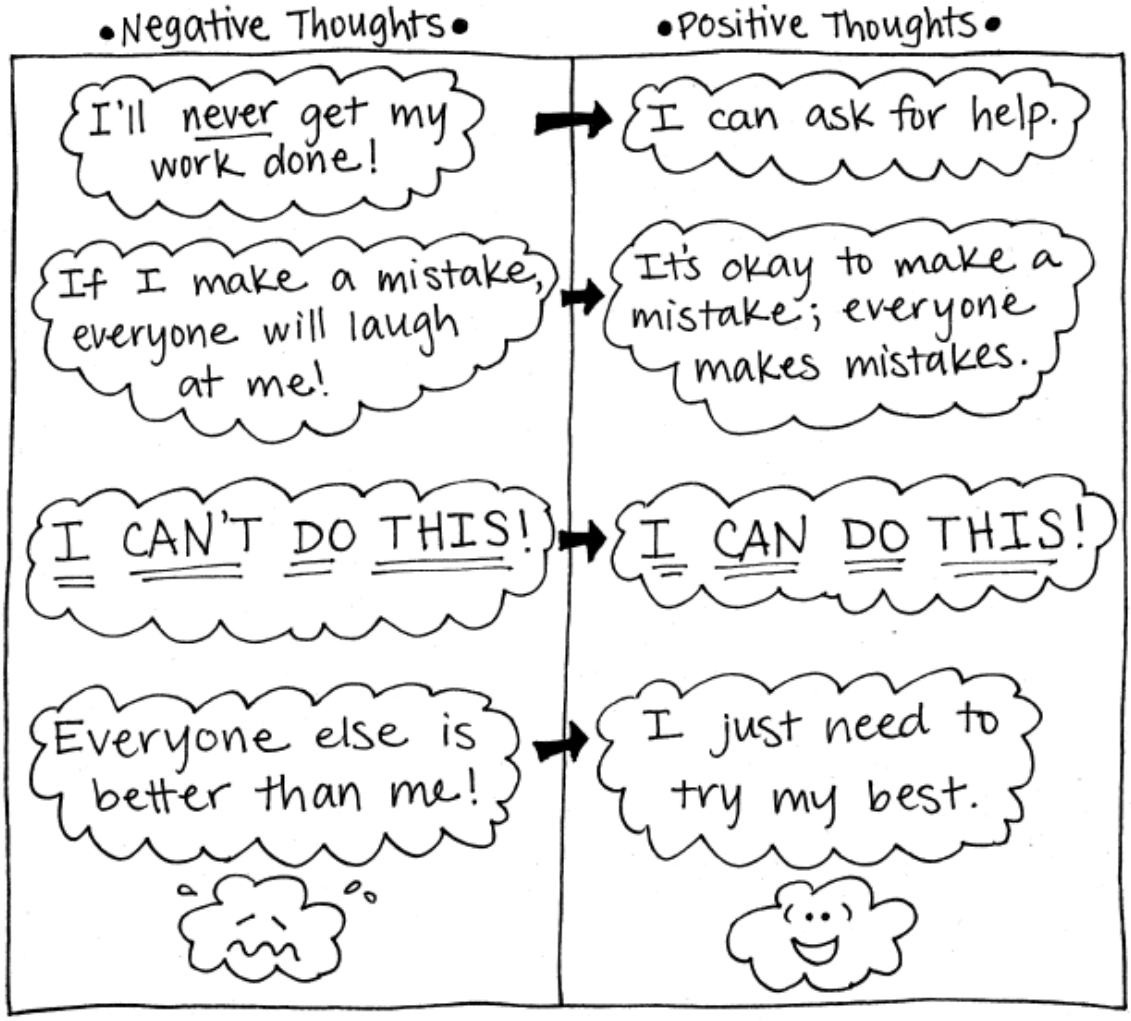



Notice how warm and relaxed your muscles feel? You can even try to do this exercise while sitting at your school desk if you need to, or any other places you go.

## Thinking Tool #1: Positive Thoughts

When you have BIG feelings, your mind thinks BIG negative thoughts and this can make you feel worse!

If your brain is thinking BIG negative thoughts try to say a positive thought to yourself instead.  Here are some ideas:



Write or draw about your own negative thoughts that you have had. Write down a positive thought you can say to yourself instead.

| | |
|---|---|
| Negative thought: | Positive thought: |
| Negative thought: | Positive thought: |
| Negative thought: | Positive thought: |

## Thinking Tool #2: Put it on Paper

Remember how Moe wanted to hide his feelings?

This only made his problem bigger.

It can be really hard to talk about BIG feelings.

It can help to write them down, or draw about them.

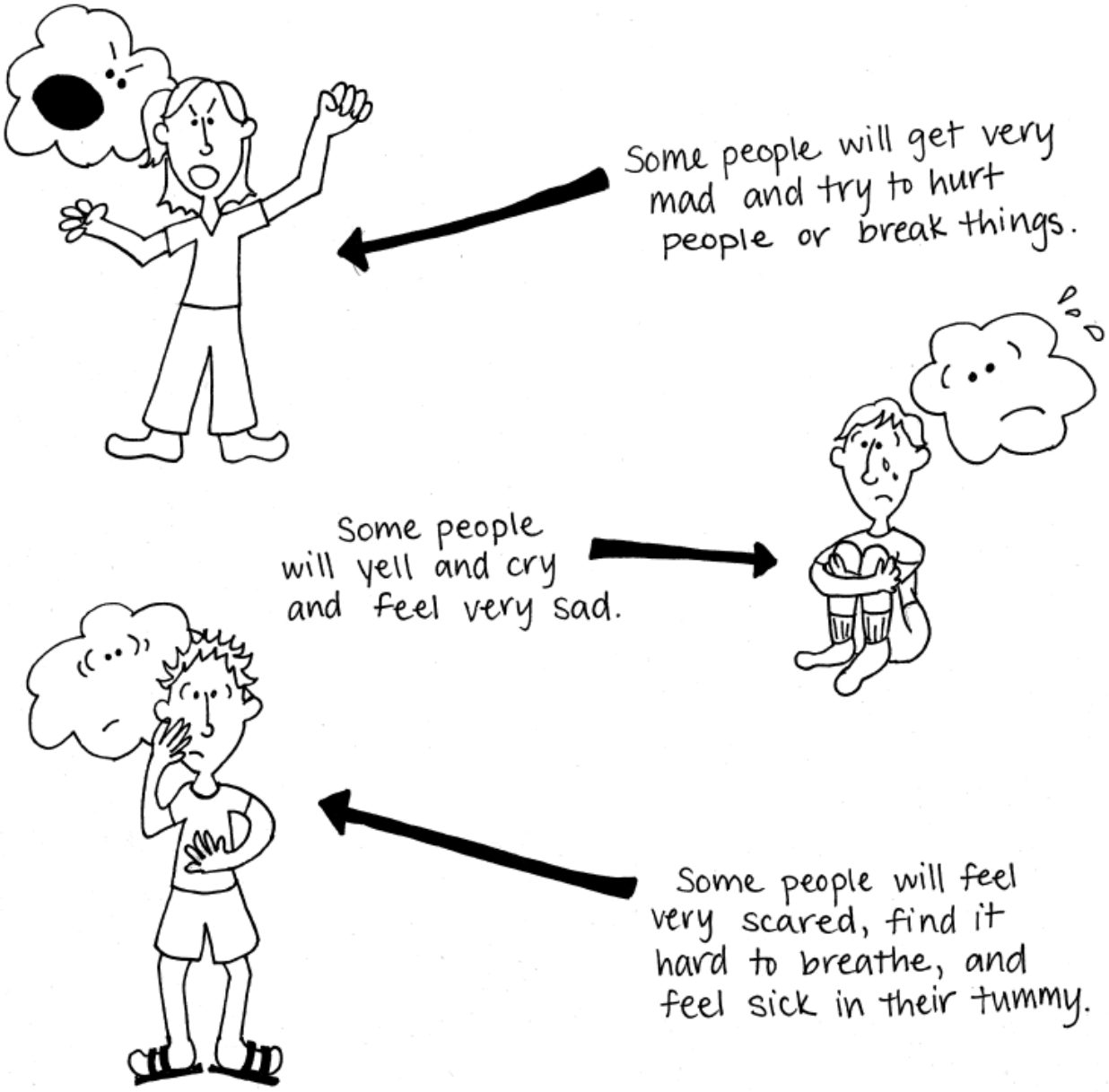
When you feel safe and ready to talk, you can take your paper to an adult you trust and talk about what happened.

Sometimes, just getting your thoughts and feelings out will help you feel better.

Try WRITING or DRAWING
about
BIG Feelings

## Feeling Tool #1: Calm Down Plan

When you have BIG feelings it can be hard to control your body.



No matter what happens when you have BIG feelings, it's important to have a plan to help yourself Stay Safe, Calm Down and Feel Better.

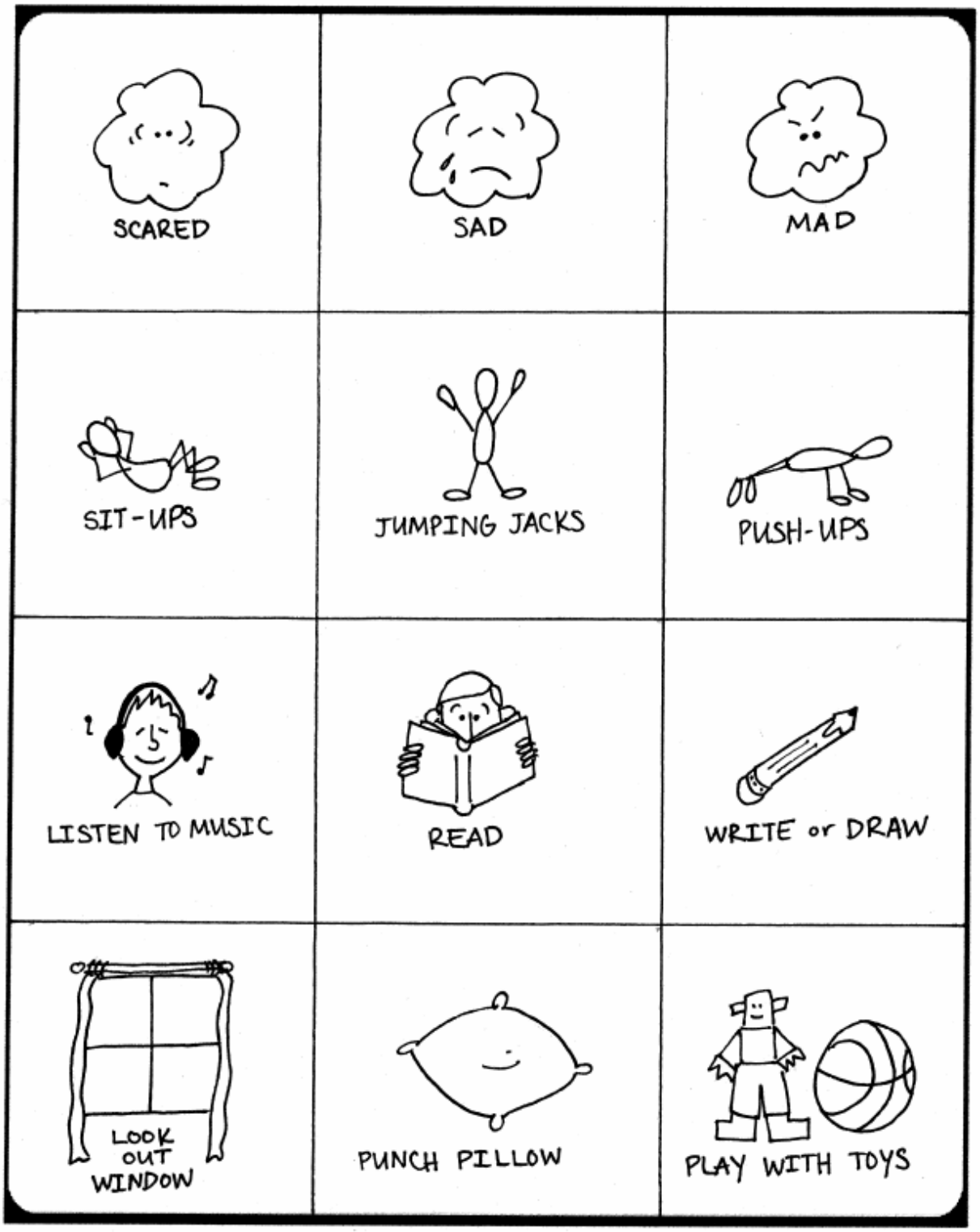
Here is an example of a Calm Down Plan:

## Make your own Calm Down Plan

It's a good idea to make a poster and hang it up where you can see it.  It will help remind you what to do when you have BIG feelings and how to stay in control.

On the next two pages you will find many different pictures. You can cut out these pictures to make a calm down plan or you can draw your own!

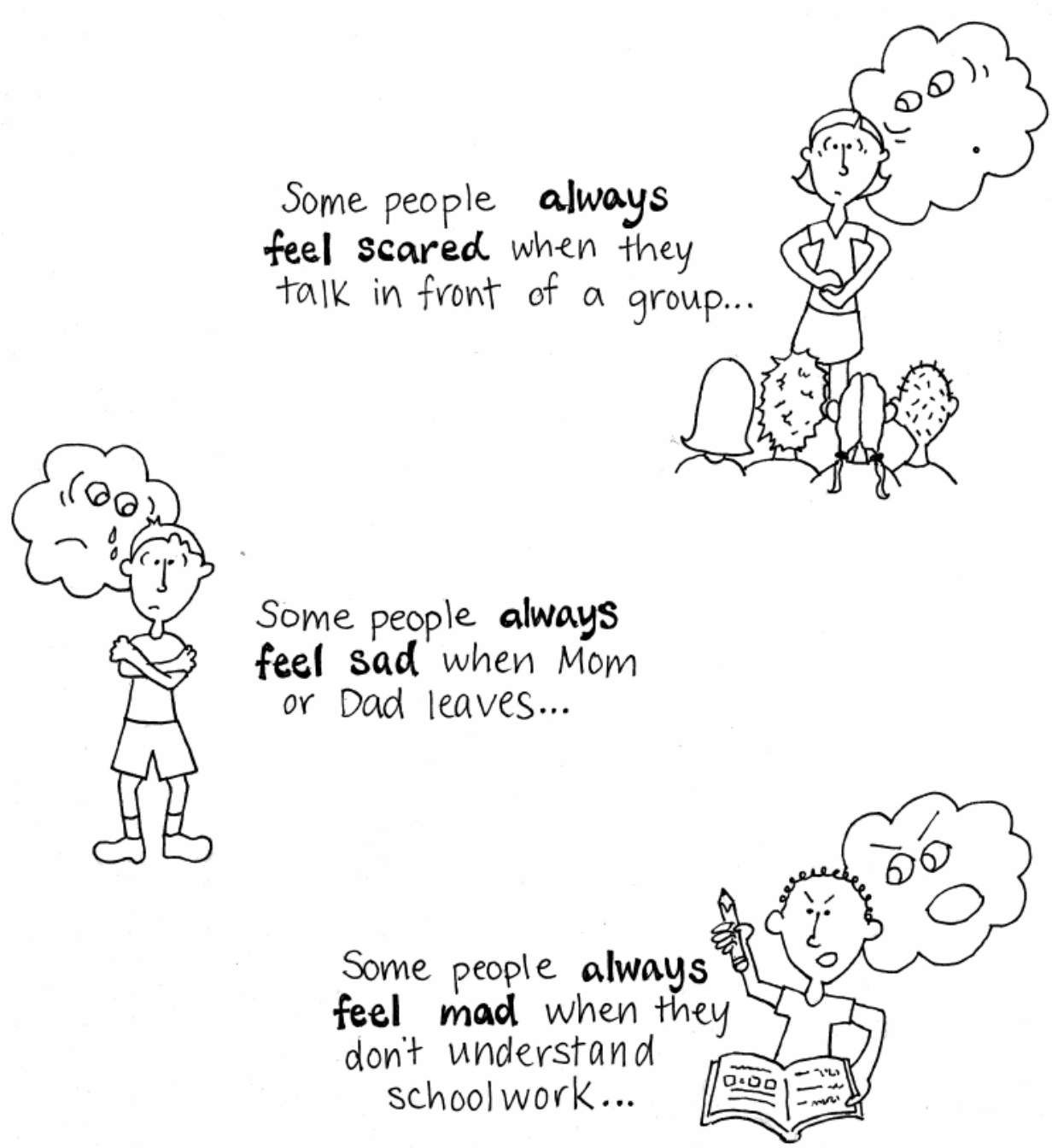
Have fun!


SCARED
SAD
MAD
SIT-UPS
JUMPING JACKS
PUSH-UPS
LISTEN TO MUSIC
READ
WRITE or DRAW
LOOK OUT WINDOW
PUNCH PILLOW
PLAY WITH TOYS

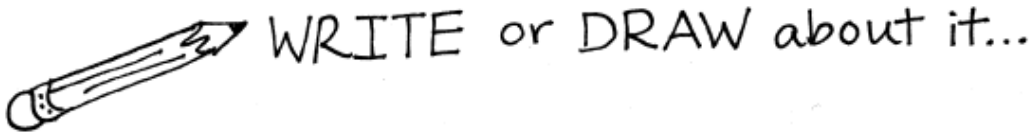
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| •WRITE YOUR OWN IDEA• | •WRITE YOUR OWN IDEA• | •WRITE YOUR OWN IDEA• |
| CRY | YELL INTO MY PILLOW | PUSH AGAINST THE WALL |
| SQUEEZE A STRESS BALL | TAKE DEEP BREATHS | COLOUR |
| PUNCH MY PILLOW OR MATTRESS | HUG MY STUFFED TOY | DO THE PLANK POSE |

## Feeling Tool #2: Special Plan

Some people KNOW when they will get BIG feelings:

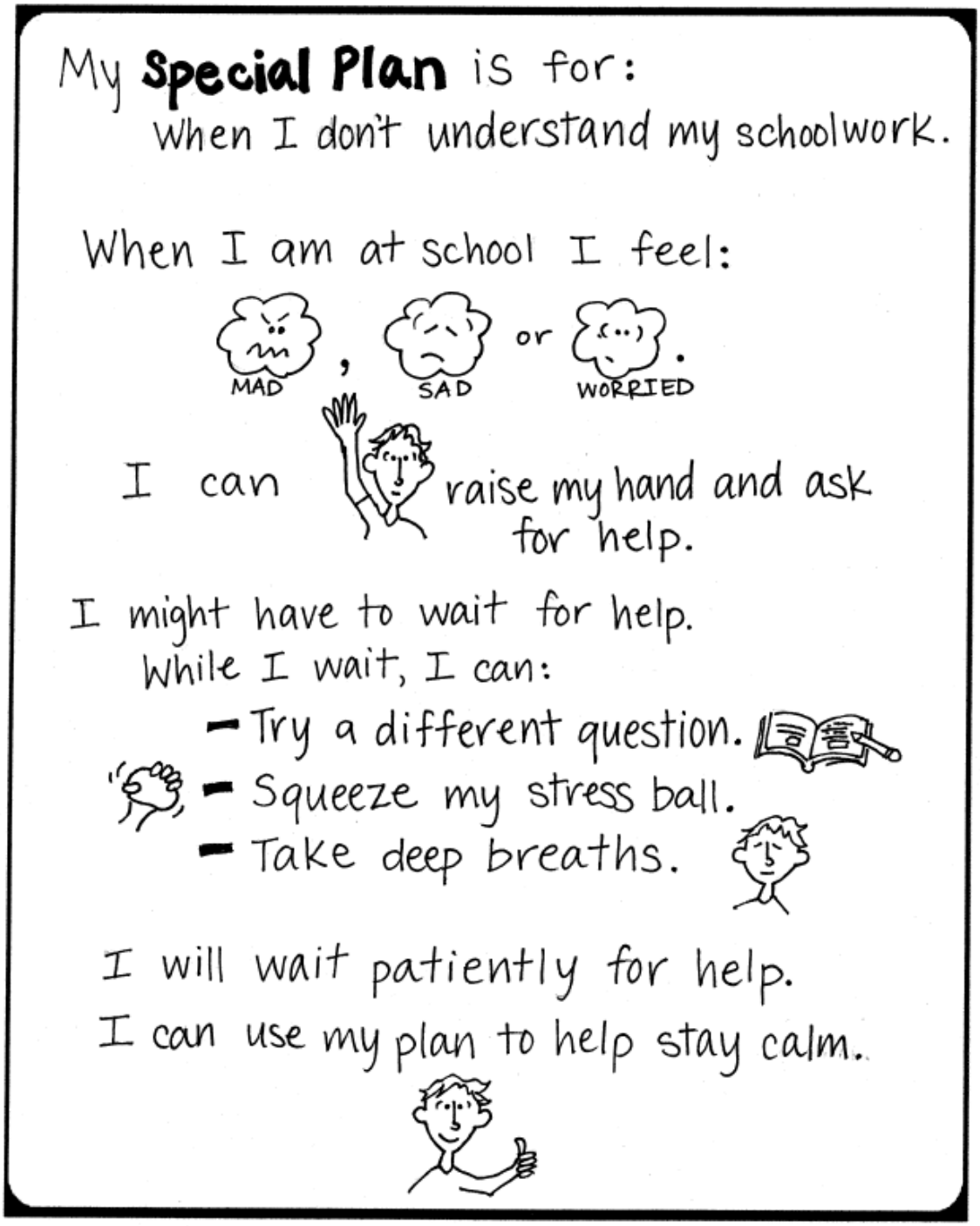


Write or draw about a time when you often have BIG feelings.



When you KNOW BIG feelings are coming, it's a good idea to have a Special Plan. A Special Plan will help you manage your BIG feelings so you can stay in control.

Here is an example of a Special Plan:



Here is another example of a Special Plan for a different situation:

My **Special Plan** is for:
when Mom or Dad leave.

When I feel: SAD, MAD or WORRIED

I can: go to my room or safe place.

In my room, I can:

- Look out my window.
- Hug my stuffed toy.
- Read a book.

When I feel better, I will talk to an adult about my feelings.

I will come out of my room and do something fun with other people.

Now, make your own Special Plan for school, home, or for any other place you often get BIG feelings. If you need help, ask and adult who knows you best.

CONNECTION

## Using your Tools to put it all together…

On the next page you will see a bar numbered 0 to 10.
You can use this scale to figure out just how BIG your feelings get.

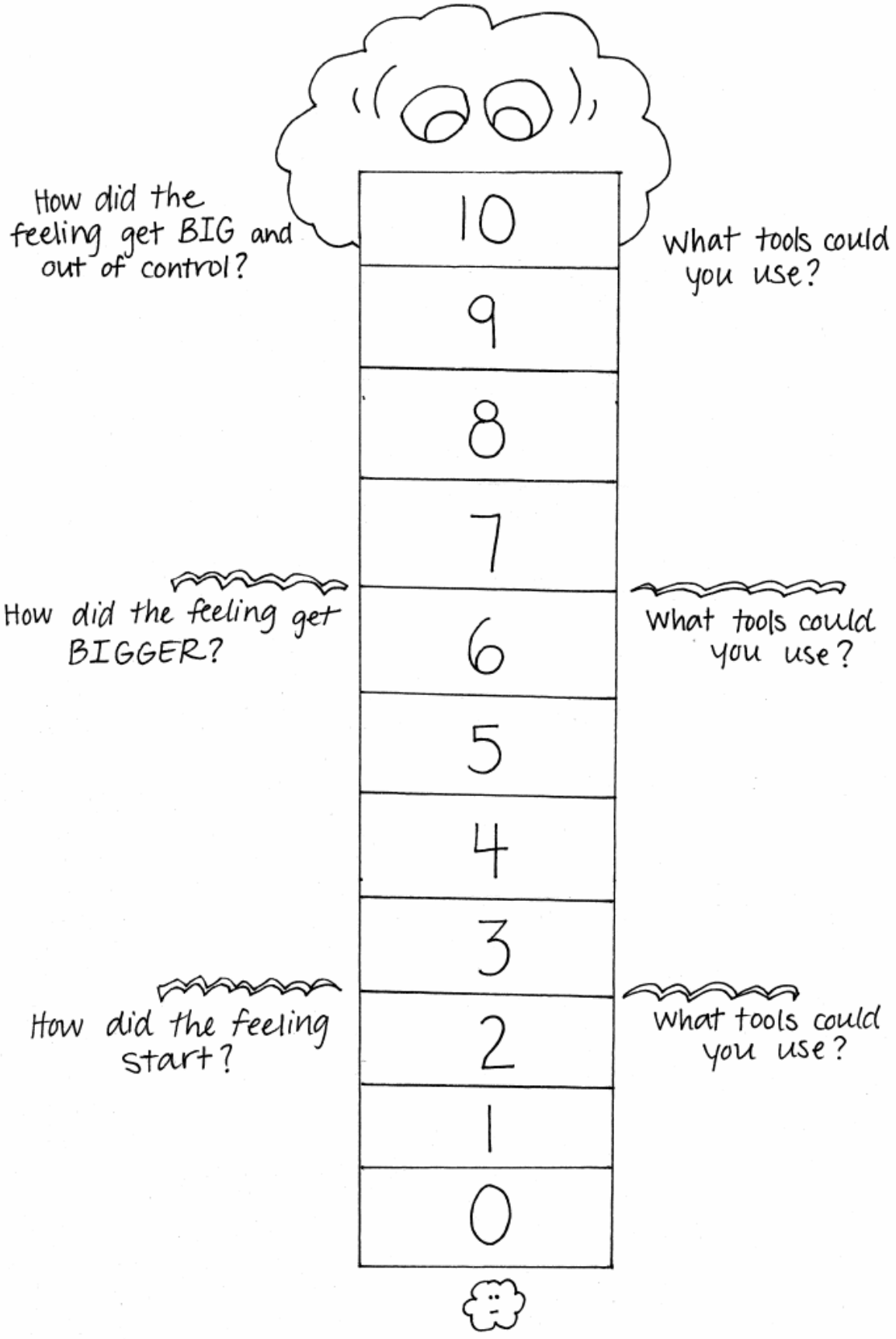
0=smallest feelings
10=BIGGEST feelings

Step 1: Colour the boxes 0, 1, and 2 in GREEN
Colour the boxes 3, 4, 5, and 6 in YELLOW
Colour the boxes 7, 8, 9, and 10 in RED

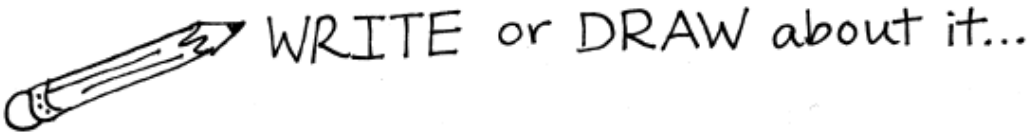
Step 2: Think of a time when you had a worry.
Think about how BIG the feeling got and what happened.
You can look back at your Body Cues sheet to help you remember.

Step 3: In the GREEN section, write down how the feeling started.
In the YELLOW section, write down how the feeling got BIGGER.
In the RED section, write down how the feeling got OUT OF CONTROL.

Step 4: On the other side of the bar, write down what you could do to help yourself feel better. Think of what tools you can use when the feeling is in the GREEN ZONE, the YELLOW ZONE, and the RED ZONE.


How did the feeling get BIG and out of control?
What tools could you use?
10
9
8
7
How did the feeling get BIGGER?
What tools could you use?
6
5
4
3
How did the feeling start?
What tools could you use?
2
1
0

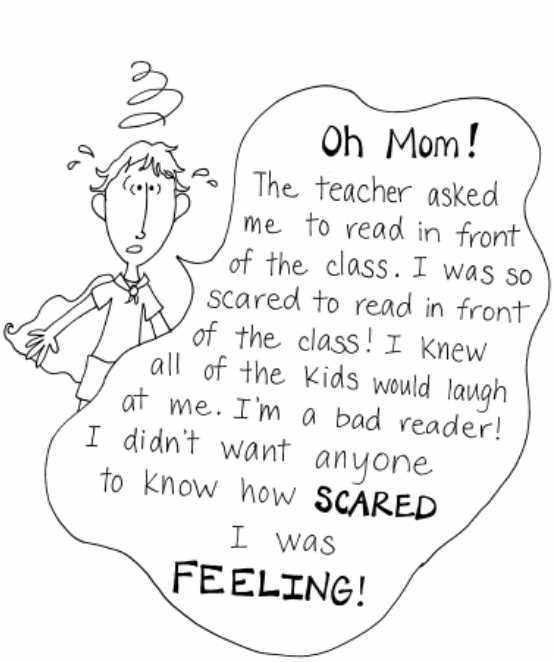
Look at the chart you filled out on the previous page.  Is it easier to use your Tools when your feelings are small or BIG?  Why?



When Moe had BIG feelings, he also ended up having BIG problems. Moe tried to solve his problems a few different ways.

Some of Moe's choices made his problem BIGGER:

Some of Moe's choices made his problem smaller:



Learning to solve problems is tough! The next page will help you figure out how to become Mighty good at Problem Solving.

# To **Solve** a **Problem** you can:

**1.** Stop and Think...
- What is the problem?
- How do I feel about it?
- What can I do about it?

**2.** Make a list of things you can do about the problem.
- Which choices might make the problem bigger?
- Which choices might make the problem smaller?

**3.** Pick one of your choices from your list and try it!

**4.** Stop and Think...
- Did my choice work?
- Why or why not?

If it didn't work, that's okay!
Go back to your list of choices and try again. You can always ask an adult for help if you need it.

# Problem Solving

The problem is _____

_____.

I **feel** _____

_____.

My **choices** are _____

_____

_____

_____

Stop and Think... which choices will make the problem bigger? Which choices will make the problem smaller?

To help **solve my problem** I will try

_____

_____

Did it work? ☐ YES ☐ NO

This book has shown you many Tools you can use to help manage BIG feelings.

Remember, you are still learning about yourself and practicing using these tools is HARD WORK!

Sometimes, even though you try your best, things might not go as well as you had hoped.  That's OK: if things don't go well, talk to an adult about what happened.  Try to think about these questions:

What good choices did I make?
What did I do well?
What helped me?
What didn't help me?
What will I try to do differently next time?

Don't give up, this is hard work and it takes practice. The most important thing is to try your best!

Good job!

Working through this book took a lot of hard work!

It is a good idea to keep this book in a safe place so you can look at it whenever you want. Looking through this book will help you remember your Body Tools, Thinking Tools, and Feeling Tools. When you look at this book, remember how strong and brave you are for learning to manage your BIG feelings!

And remember…

Just like Moe, you too are a kid, just like ANY OTHER!