

10 Lessons to Understanding Big Feelings



My Pillow Has Wings COMPANION WORKBOOK

BASED ON THE BOOK: MY PILLOW HAS WINGS



PILLOWS WITH WINGS™

Dedicated to change, guided by faith.



A Note to Educators

Thank you for partnering with Pillows With Wings as we teach our children to learn to manage their feelings and learn to deal with the disappointments of life. Growing up is hard work. While many adults feel that children “have it easy just playing all day,” it is important, as you know, to note that “play” is what they use to learn.

Teaching is investing in our children, with a reward that continues into generations to come. It is crucial to help our little ones deal with the feelings they experience in healthy ways so when they are teenagers, they have the skills needed to make good choices.

The job of childhood is to begin learning how to navigate the emotional and relational situations of life. Children need to be able to make sense of their world to grow. The role of teacher, is essential to this process. While children are great observers, they lack the experience to develop accurate conclusions. If not aware, it can be easy to oversimplify the stressors and invalidate their emotions. These experiences can be all-consuming to a child.

Empathy.

One of the essential skills we model for our children is empathy. Empathy is the ability to understand and connect to the feelings of another. Empathy is not learned intellectually; it must be experienced and observed.

In the book, *My pillow has wings*, Nana responds in helpful and empathic ways to a young, growing Taelor. She can be present to her granddaughter in ways that model genuine empathy and care.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to read and understand emotion in a holy and healthy way. We want to use this guide to help children learn to:

- 1. Identify emotions.*
- 2. Express those emotions.*
- 3. Connect feelings to body sensations.*
- 4. Begin to explore empathy.*
- 5. Learn to be a kind friend.*

For ease of understanding, we have broken this workbook into 10 lessons. Please adapt these lessons to your specific students and environment. Our hope is you use the book, *My pillow has wings*, and this Companion Workbook to prayerfully guide these lessons in a way that benefits the particular children you teach.

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LESSON ONE:

Uniquely You - The Same and Different

In order to be empathic, a child must grasp the concept that not all people feel the same. Our first step is understanding the same and different.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

Unique means “one of a kind”.

Not everything is exactly the same.

Being the same, or different, is not bad or good; it just is.

Getting to know you.



In the story, we met a little girl named Taelor. She liked to run and jump and play in the snow.

Teacher's Note: Use Book

Draw a picture of yourself and write your name so that we can meet you.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a student to draw a picture of themselves and write their name.

My name is:

Each of us is Unique.



Unique means one of a kind. You are unique-no one is just like you. Even though Taelor loved to do activities that many children like to do, she was still one of a kind. Our story told us that she loved to run, skip, and jump. She loved to eat fluffy, white, mashed potatoes! She loved building snowmen in winter and jumping in mud puddles in spring.

**You are probably the same as Taelor in some ways,
but you are also uniquely different.**

Do you like to do any of Taelor's favorite things?

Circle the ones you like.

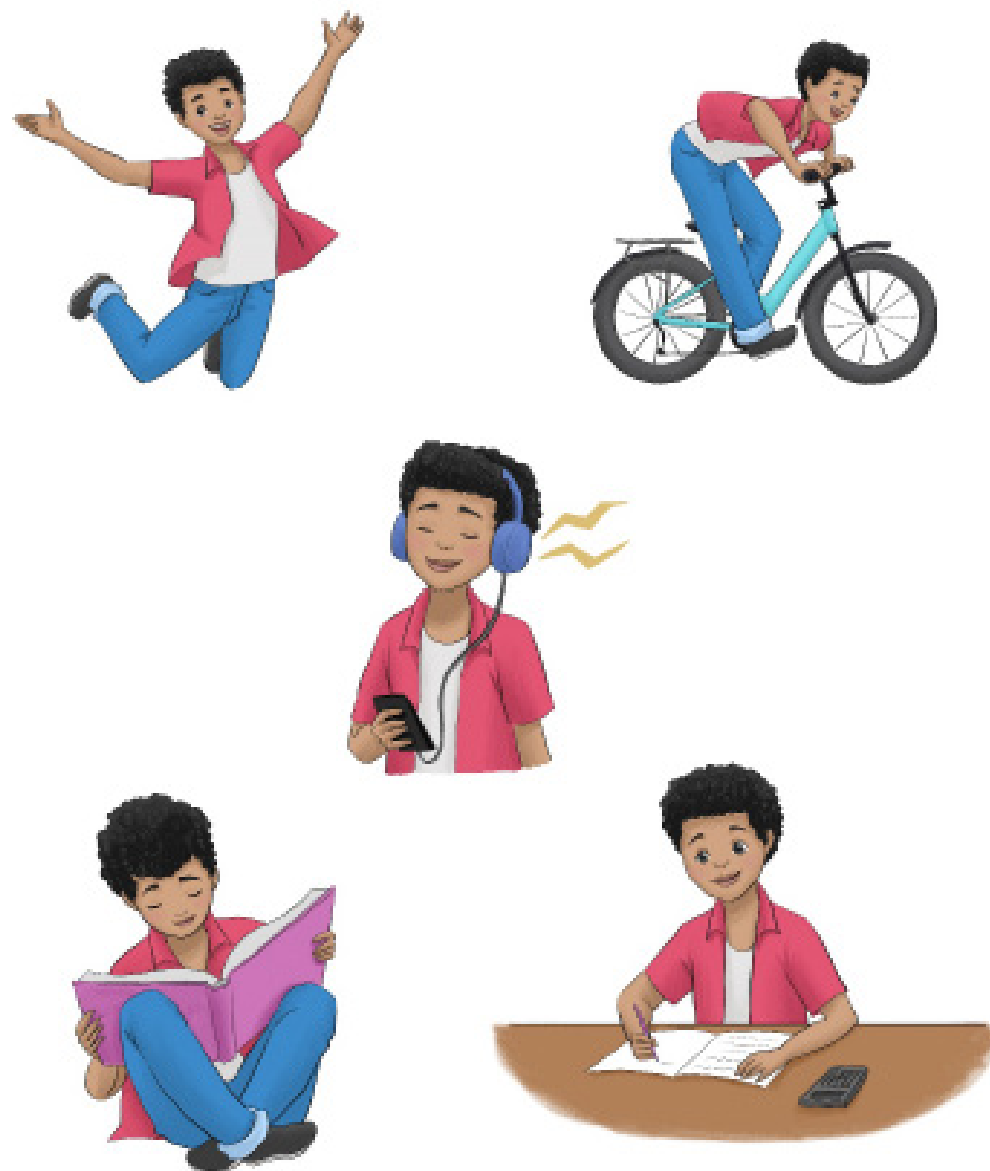


Meet Jordan! He is one of Taelor's best friends. Most of the time, Jordan and Taelor have fun together because they like to do many of the same things. Here are some of the things Jordan likes to do.

EXERCISE 3

Is there anything on Jordan's list that you DON'T like to do?

Put an **X** over the pictures you don't like.



Not everything is exactly the same.

In some ways we are the same, and in some, we are different. Being the same or different is not bad or good; it just is. You probably like some of the same things that Taelor and Jordan do. But just because Taelor and Jordan are good friends doesn't mean she wants to do all the same things he does, and that's okay. In some ways, they are the same and in some, they are different.



People come in all different shades, shapes, and sizes. They have different emotions as well because not everyone is the same. Our world is more interesting because of how we are the same and different.

LESSON TWO:

Become a “Feelings Detective”

Emotions are how individuals deal with matters or situations they find personally significant. By increasing a child’s awareness of their emotions, we improve their emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is vital to healthy relational connection and an important part of growing up.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

How do we know what others are feeling?

Body language – what we feel in our bodies and how our faces look are hints as to what we feel inside. These are called feelings.

BIG FEELINGS are strong emotions we feel inside our bodies.

**We all experience lots of feelings.
That is what you feel inside!
Get it? Feel-feelings?**

Every day that we live in this big world, we will experience feelings...excited, mad, sad, and silly are just a few. Emotion is another way of saying feelings. We have those emotions to help us do the right thing.

Being a Feelings Detective

Have you ever watched a show with a detective in it? They often use a magnifying glass so they can see little things bigger. Then, a detective looks for clues to figure out what has happened.

We all want to be a good friend. For us to connect to our friends, it helps if we understand what they are feeling. You can be a “feelings detective” to figure out what you and other people feel by following the clues.



EXERCISE 1

What we feel in our bodies and how our faces look are hints as to what we feel inside. Look at the faces above.

Point to which face looks tired. How can you tell?

Which face looks embarrassed? How can you tell?

Which face looks sick? How can you tell?

Which one looks bored? How can you tell?

Which one looks happy? How can you tell?

Great Detective Work!

Big Feelings

There are lots of times we experience big feelings. Some emotions are easy to have, like feeling happy; we like to feel happy. But, some feelings are harder to experience. We all have BIG FEELINGS sometimes. This means the emotions we feel are strong.



Look at the picture on the left to see what you think Taelor's friend Kim is feeling. Time to be a detective again!

EXERCISE 2

Kim's eyebrows are scrunched up in the middle, her mouth is pointed down on the sides, and her arms are crossed...what do you think she is feeling?

Do you think she is MAD? How do you know?

Show me what your face looks like when you are mad.

It turns out, someone broke Kim's favorite toy...how would you feel if someone broke your favorite toy?

Maybe you said sad, or perhaps you said mad...both of those feelings make sense when you lose something important.

EXERCISE 3

Can you believe that two people can feel two different ways about the same situation?

What is something you could say or do that might help Kim?

We all have days we feel happy. Some days we feel sad. Some days we feel silly.

We have to know whatever we are feeling is okay!

LESSON THREE:

Same Experience - Different Feelings

If two people have had different experiences, they might have different thoughts and emotions in the same situation. Understanding that we are all different, in the way we look, the way we feel, and the way we react, is one way to get children to practice empathy.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

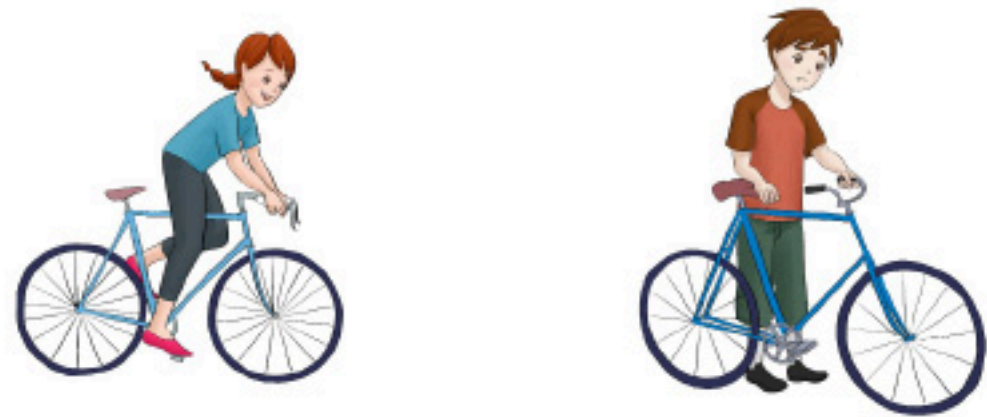
People can experience the same situation but feel different about it.

It's ok to be different than others.

**When feeling worried or scared about being different from others,
you can share your emotions and ask for help.**

Sometimes people feel differently.

We have talked about how Taelor and Jordan like some things the same and some things different. Now we are going to talk about how sometimes people feel differently, too. Vinny and Victoria are Taelor's cousins. They are twins. That means they were born on the same day to the same mom. Even though they have the same birthday and the same mom, they don't always feel the same.



Sometimes we feel the same as another friend, but lots of times we feel different. We all have things we like and things we don't like.

Vinny loves big dogs, and Victoria feels unsure and scared around them.

Victoria loves riding her bike fast, but Vinny is unsure...he likes to take his time and talk to his friends while he rides.

Vinny loves lots of loud cheering at a baseball game, but sometimes it hurts Victoria's ears.

EXERCISE 1

Do you always feel the same as the people around you?

Many times we don't feel the same as grown-ups or our friends.

And that's OK.

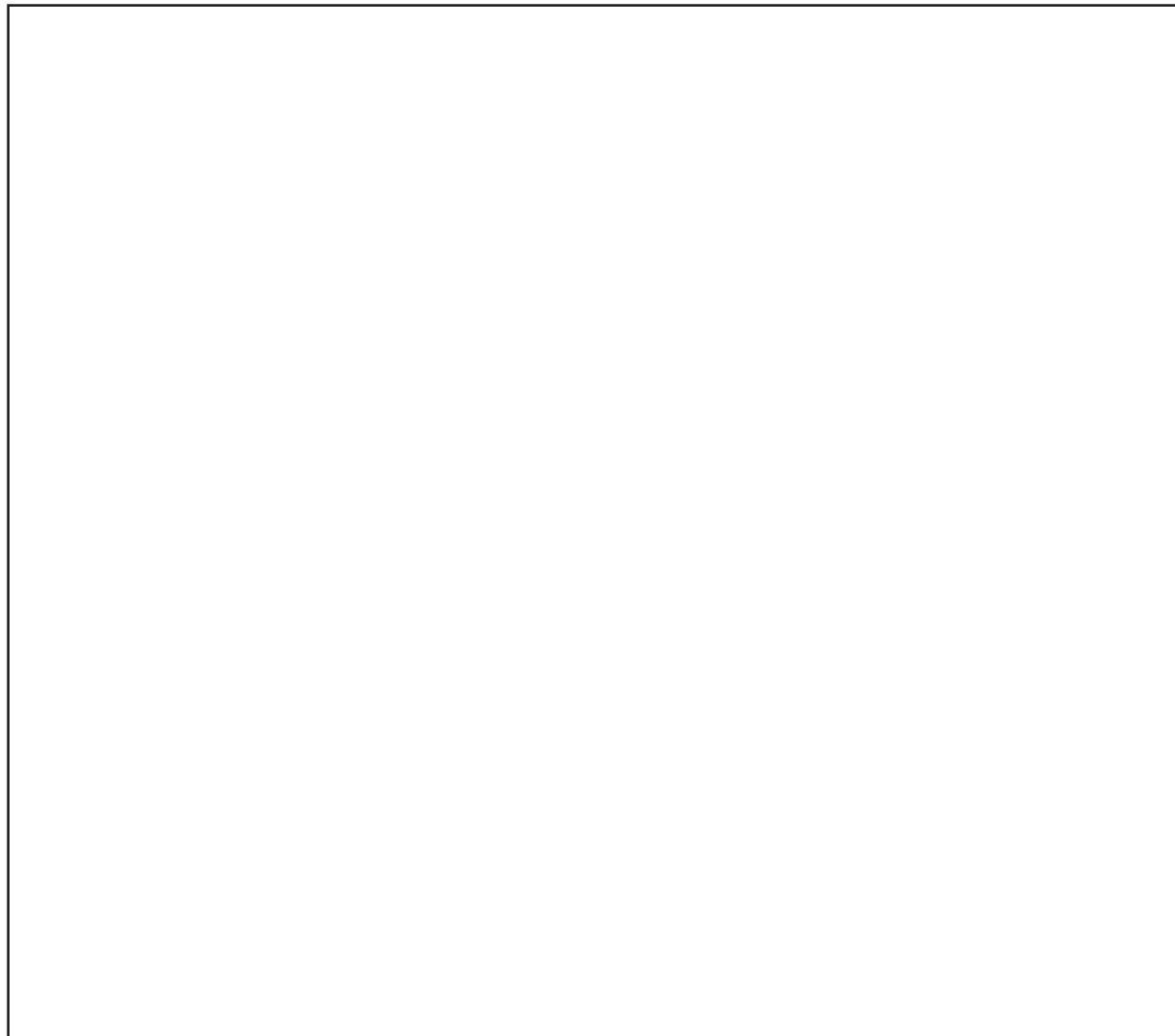
Taelor has blue eyes and Jordan has brown eyes. They are different. Sometimes other things about us are different. Like maybe we go to a different school than our friends.

In our book, Taelor said she felt different than other kids because she lived with Nana and not with her mom.

EXERCISE 1

What is something about you that is different than one of your friends?

Draw it here.



Sometimes we don't like being different.

Sometimes we wish we could be
the same as someone else.

When we feel scared about something,
we can reach out and ask for help.

You are Important!



LESSON FOUR:

Dealing with Loss

By recognizing that there are strong feelings associated with loss, we can begin introducing how to process those feelings healthily.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

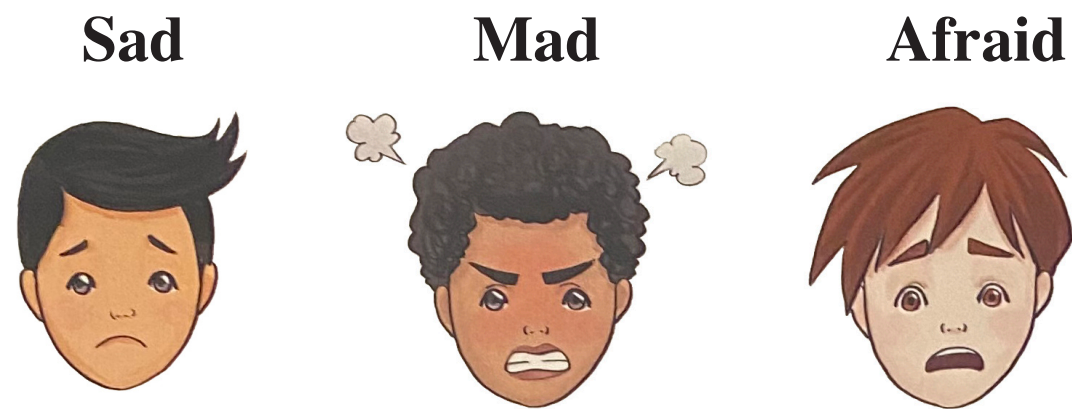
A wide range of emotions are common with loss.

There are exercises you can do to help you deal with loss.

Dealing with your emotions with a friend, parent, teacher, or someone who cares about you, will help you to feel better.

Together, you can handle it.

It's hard when something you love gets lost or broken. When that happens, you might feel:



You may feel sad because you won't have the toy you liked so much, which is disappointing.

You might feel mad because you feel your friend broke your toy on purpose.

Maybe you are afraid because you think you won't find another toy you like as much, or you are scared whoever bought it for you might be upset.

If you didn't have your favorite toy anymore, that would be **HARD!** It's hard, but you can handle it. When you are feeling something that seems complicated, you can reach out to someone who cares about you. You don't have to experience it alone.

Even if it is hard, you can handle it together!

EXERCISE 1

What are some things that tend to make you mad?

Color the word MAD with a color that represents angry to you.

MAD

EXERCISE 2

What are some things that tend to make you glad?

Color the word GLAD with a color that represents happy to you.

GLAD

LESSON FIVE:

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a choice to let go of anger toward someone who hurt you and to think, feel, or act with kindness toward that person.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

See a situation from another person's point of view.

Explains how a child can move towards the freedom to let go of offenses and process the intense feelings associated with them.

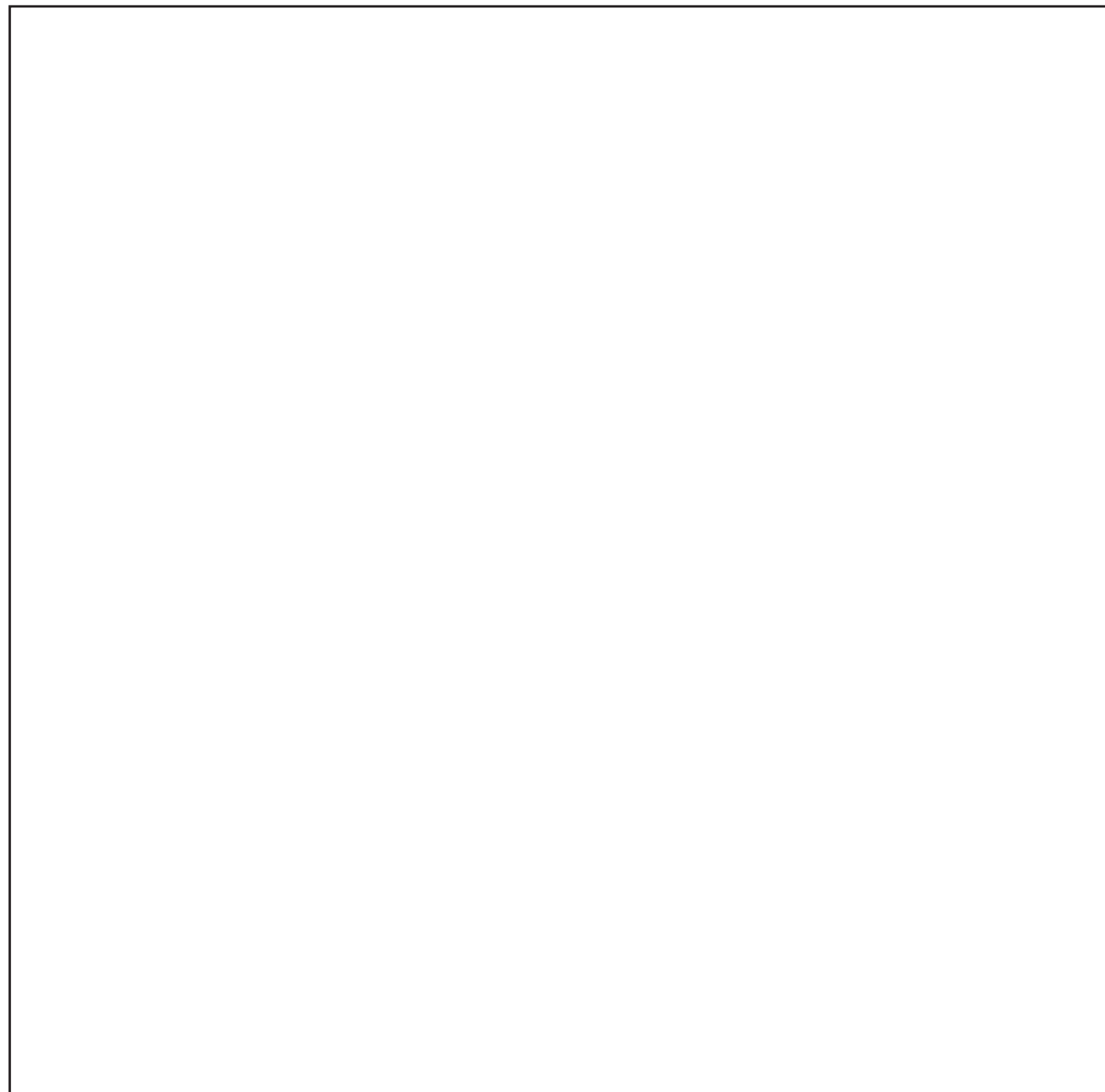
Saying "I'm sorry" for hurting a friend and accepting someone's forgiveness for hurting you.

Can you think of a time you accidentally broke or lost something that belonged to someone else?

EXERCISE 1

How did you feel?

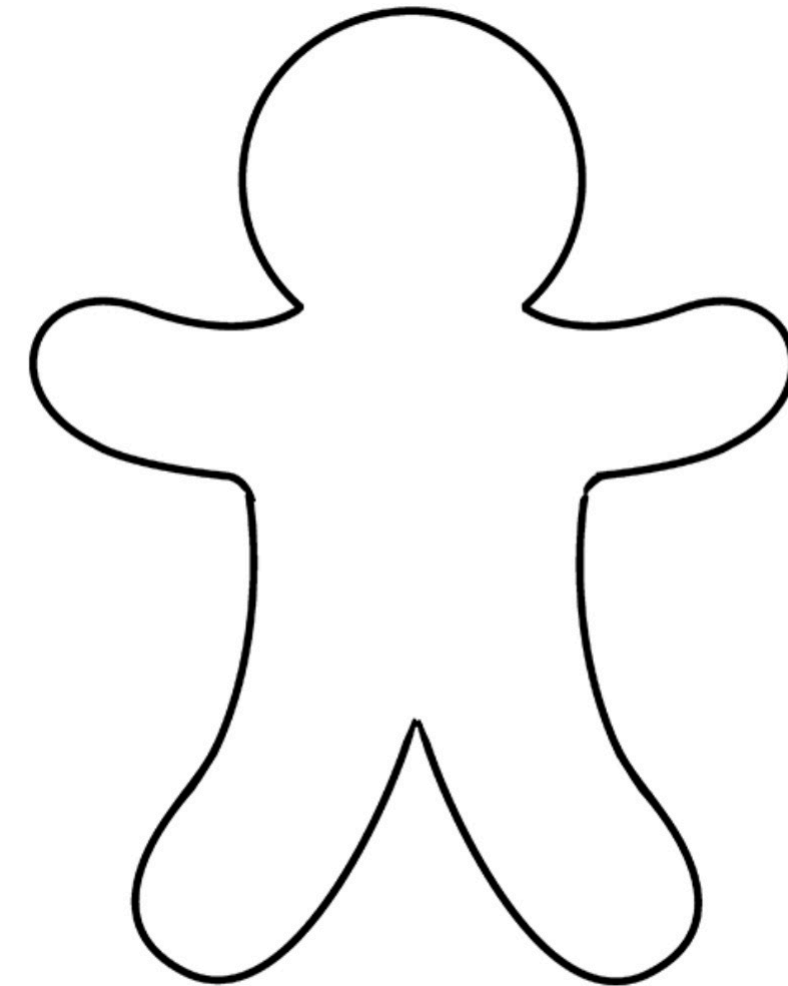
Draw it here.



EXERCISE 2

When something bothers us, we feel it in our bodies.

Color where you feel sadness in your body.



When something disappoints our friends, our hearts hurt for them. Some people say their belly feels “yucky” when they are sad. We don’t have to be alone when we feel “yucky.”

Just a few deep breaths.

Would you feel badly if you lost control of your bike and broke a friend's toy?

When we hurt someone, we can say "I am sorry." This lets them know we feel bad and wish it hadn't happened. How easy would it be for you to let it go if someone broke YOUR toy? That would be VERY hard.

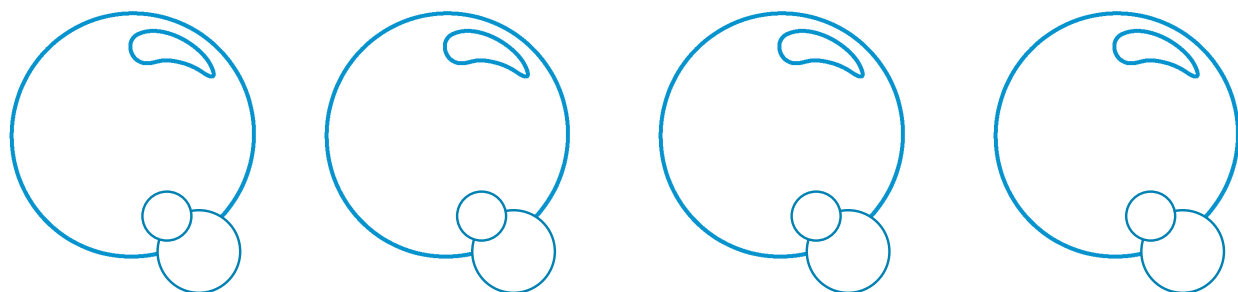
Sometimes when someone says they are sorry, we still feel mad because it still hurts. BUT...SOMETIMES ACCIDENTS HAPPEN. Holding on to our mad feelings can make it harder. We can choose to forgive.

Sometimes we need to take a few deep breaths and calm down before we are ready to say "I forgive you."

Can you practice taking some deep belly breaths? Take a slow, deep breath in through your nose and let the air out of your mouth. You can pretend you are trying to blow some bubbles outside. Slow and steady.

EXERCISE 3

Let's do four more, touch each bubble as you breathe:



After a few deep breaths you can begin to say:

I am calm

I am strong

I can handle it

I am calm

I am strong

I can handle it

If we can tell someone is sorry, we don't want them to feel bad forever, so we forgive them.

This is being a good friend.

If we are having a hard time letting it go, try doing something you enjoy or take more deep breaths.

LESSON SIX:

Being a Kind Friend

Nana modeled being present for Taelor during a hard time. This example of empathy highlights a caring friendship. Helping a friend relax and release difficult emotions makes you a kind friend.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

Friends can help us through hard times.

Be present.

Practicing different breathing exercises can help you feel calm.

How to be a kind friend.

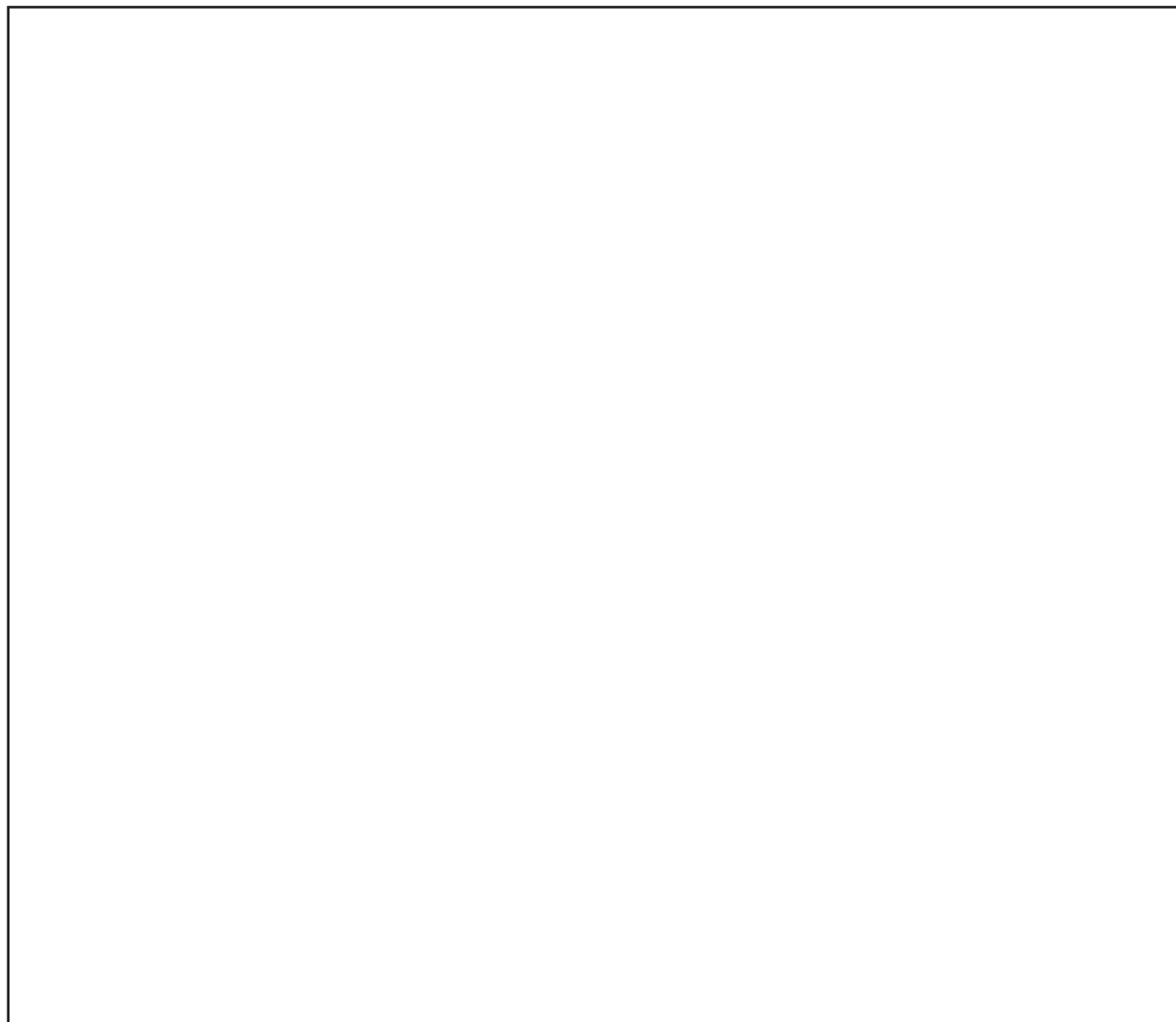
Last class we learned how to take deep belly breaths when we need to calm down. But, sometimes it's our friends who are unhappy and need help. It's better when we have friends to help us through hard times.

When Taelor got in the car after school, she told Nana about what was upsetting her.

EXERCISE 1

Who can you go to when you're upset?

Draw a picture of them here.



EXERCISE 2

Teacher's Note: Use Book

Let's look at how Nana helped Taelor. Do you remember what she did?

She...

STOPPED what she was doing,

LOOKED lovingly into her sad eyes,

And **LISTENED** to Taelor so that she could understand.

It helps when we have a friend stay with us while we're upset. Nana allowed Taelor to express her feelings, and stayed close by to help.

THAT is being a GOOD FRIEND.

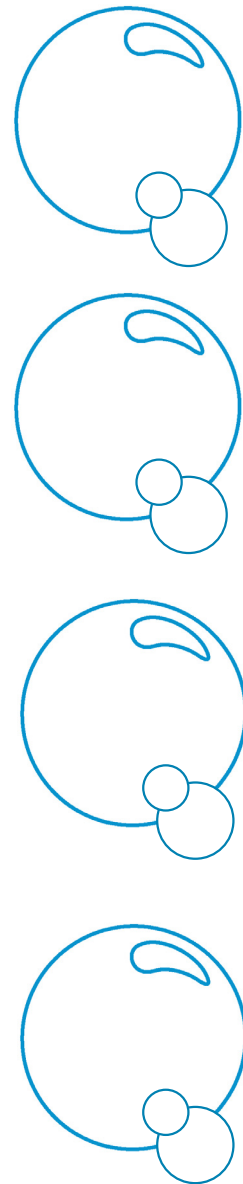


How can you be a kind friend to someone who is having a hard time? Maybe you can teach them belly breathing.

EXERCISE 3

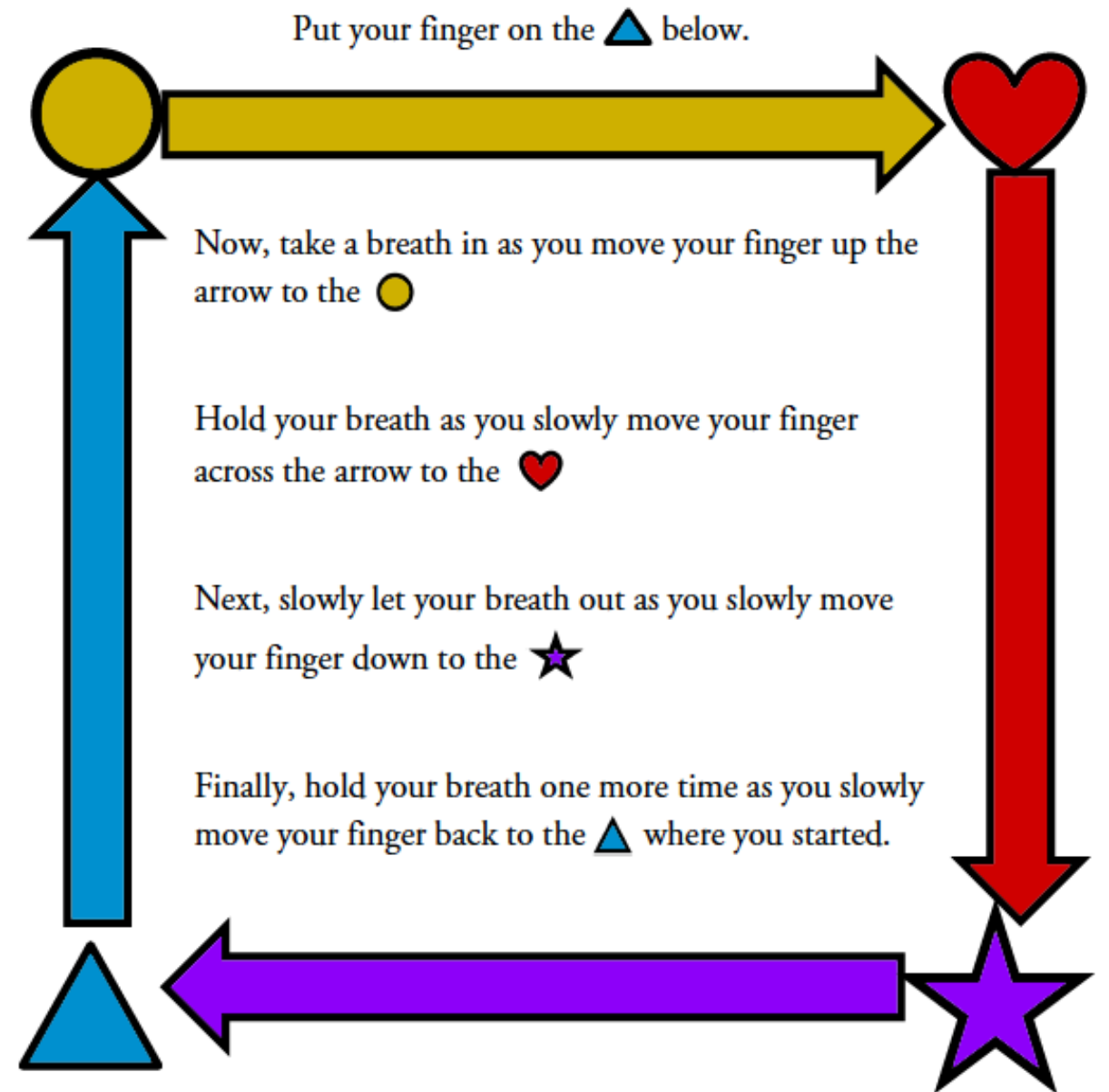
Let's practice belly breathing again so we can teach a friend when they need it.

Let's do four breaths, touch each bubble as you breathe:



EXERCISE 4

Breathing is a good exercise and can be done many ways. You learned belly breathing, now lets do something called *square breathing*.



GREAT JOB!
You just did *Square Breathing*.

LESSON SEVEN:

Together is Better

Helping a friend calm down by being present and practicing breathing exercises are skills that show we care. We can also help friends by stopping what we are doing, looking them in the eye, to show we care, and listen to your friend so you can help, or get help for them.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

STOP, LOOK and LISTEN.

You can talk to others about your BIG FEELINGS.

We can help each other in hard times by checking in and showing we care.

We all have big feelings sometimes.

When Taelor had big feelings because she missed her mom, she talked to Nana about it, and Nana stayed with her. This let Taelor understand that she didn't have to be alone in her BIG feelings.



EXERCISE 1

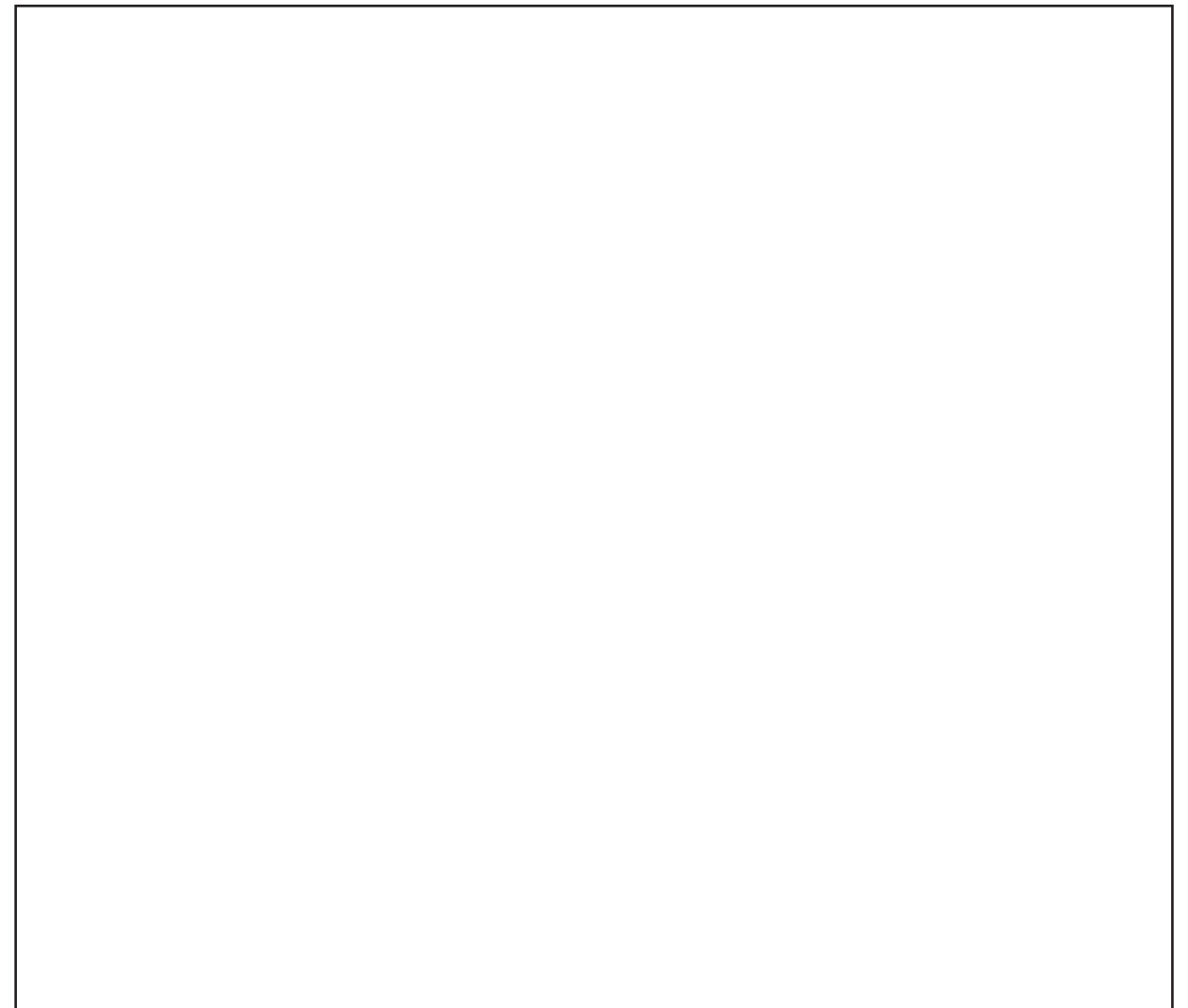
Who can you talk to when you have Big Feelings?

Can you think of anything you wish you could tell someone right now?

EXERCISE 2

Use your “Feelings Detective” skills to figure out who you might be able to talk to when you have a hard time. Draw a picture of SAFE people you could talk to when you have BIG FEELINGS. Safe means you know they would do what is good for you. It could be someone from your school, a family member, teacher, police officer, an adult that works at your school, or maybe even your principal.

Draw a picture of them here.



Use your detective skills to find clues in this picture.

What do you think happened?



How do you think the boy in the red shirt feels?

How could you be a good friend to him like Nana was for Taelor?

REMEMBER: STOP, LOOK and LISTEN. YES! That will help.

STOP

what you are doing to attend to your friend or get help.

LOOK

your friend in the eye and let him know you care.

LISTEN

to what your friend is asking so you can help.

If you get upset or hurt, you can say what you need too!



LESSON EIGHT:

Everybody Feels

By tackling common and often troublesome feelings of sadness and worry, we can normalize these experiences and teach children coping skills. In time, they will be able to regulate themselves.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

Everyone feels sad or worried at times, and we don't all express it in the same way.

We can learn how to take care of ourselves when we are feeling sad or worried.

Strategies you can use to help yourself if you worry at night.



Even though everyone feels sad, we don't all express it the same way. Sometimes when we are sad, we cry. Sometimes we are quiet. Sometimes we want to be alone, or maybe we DON'T want to be alone. All of these are normal for sadness. We don't all respond the same way.

Let's learn what we can do to take care of ourselves when we are feeling sad.

1. It often helps if we can tell someone we are feeling sad.

When we feel understood, we feel less alone.

2. It helps if we can figure out why we are sad.

Think about a time you felt sad.

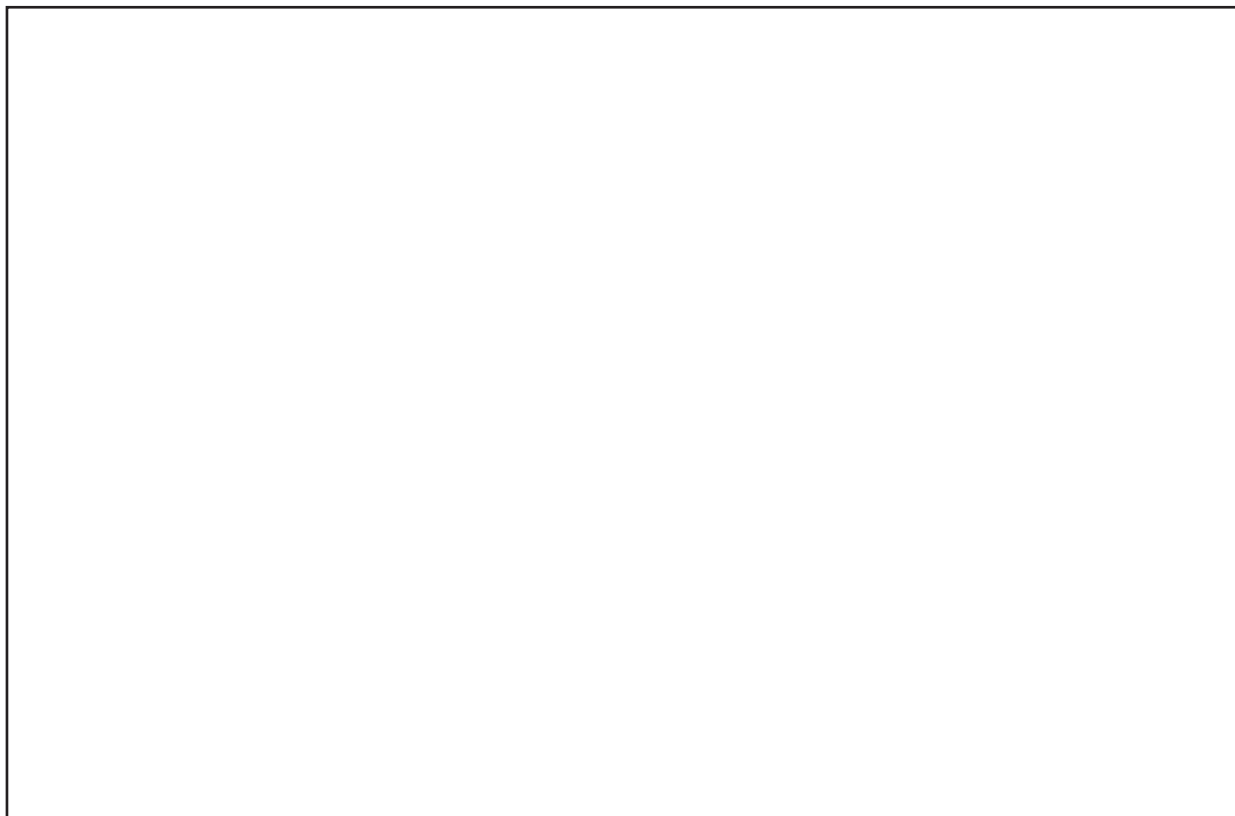
3. It helps if we can listen to our bodies to know what we need.

Do we need rest? Maybe a healthy snack or a drink of water.

Taylor said she felt sad at night. Everyone feels sad sometimes.

Draw a picture of something that made you feel sad at night.

EXERCISE 1



Any of these things might help when you are sad.

Nighttime is often quiet. Many people think when it is quiet. Taelor talked about being worried at night. Worry means you think something is wrong or you think about it again and again. Taelor had some worry thoughts.

EXERCISE 1

What things worry kids like you?

Color the word WORRY with a color that represents fear to you.



Some kids have trouble sleeping at night. Here are some things you can do to help yourself if that happens to you:

- 1. Choose quiet activities before bed to help your body start to calm down—NO phone or television screens at night.*
- 2. Once you lie down, close your eyes, and pretend to be melting into your bed. This is called “relaxing your muscles.”*
- 3. Play a game and test yourself to see if you can lay SUPER still. You can’t sleep if you’re moving. If you have trouble, take a WIGGLE break and then be perfectly still again.*
- 4. Bring a calm picture to mind. What would you choose?*
- 5. If something is bothering you, you can take a trip in your mind. Your pillow can fly. Fly to dump off what is bothering you. Then fly back to bed. (All in your mind, of course).*

It takes practice to sleep, especially if something is bothering you, but
You can do it!

LESSON NINE:

Your Pillow has Wings

We can increase a child's coping skills by engaging their imagination.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

Imagination is powerful and magical.

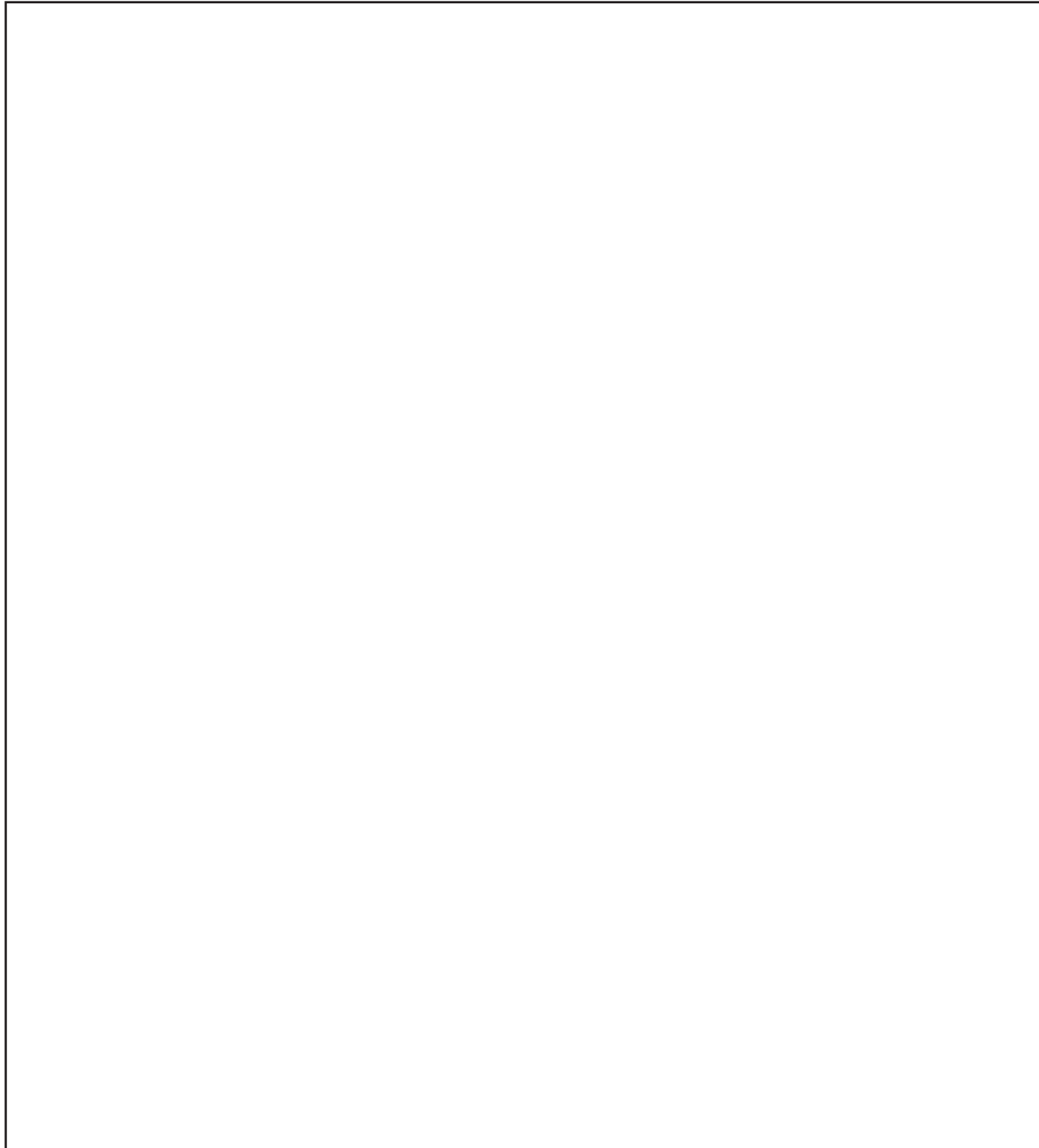
As children develop their imagination, they are able to tell a story, relate to other people, keep themselves emotionally grounded and enter their imaginary worlds.

Imagination can enhance problem-solving skills.

EXERCISE 1

Close your eyes and imagine that you are flying on your pillow to the best place you can think of...What does it look like there?

Draw it here.



EXERCISE 2

Color this picture with colors that make you feel calm.

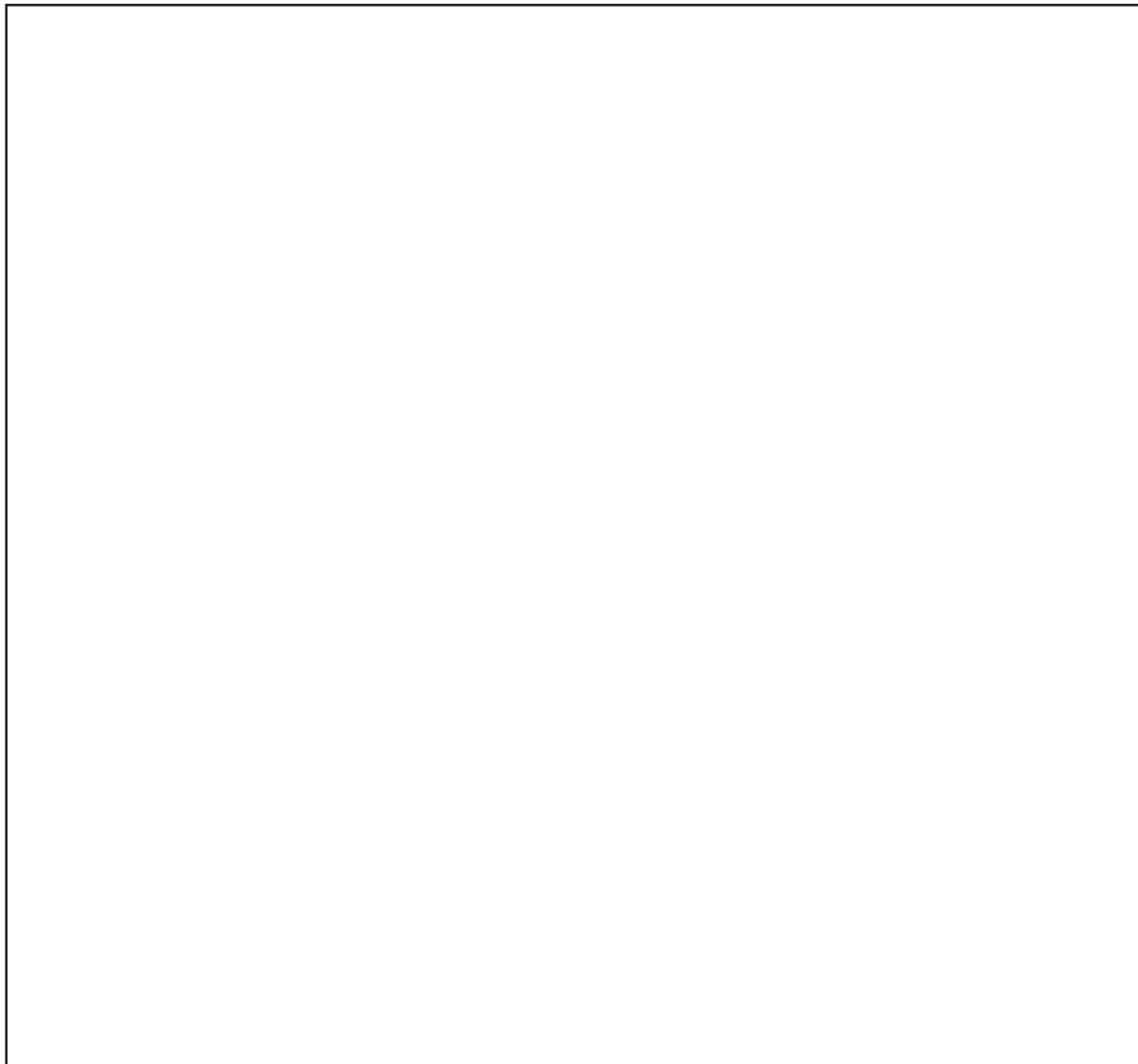


Put your worries to rest. You can do these any time!

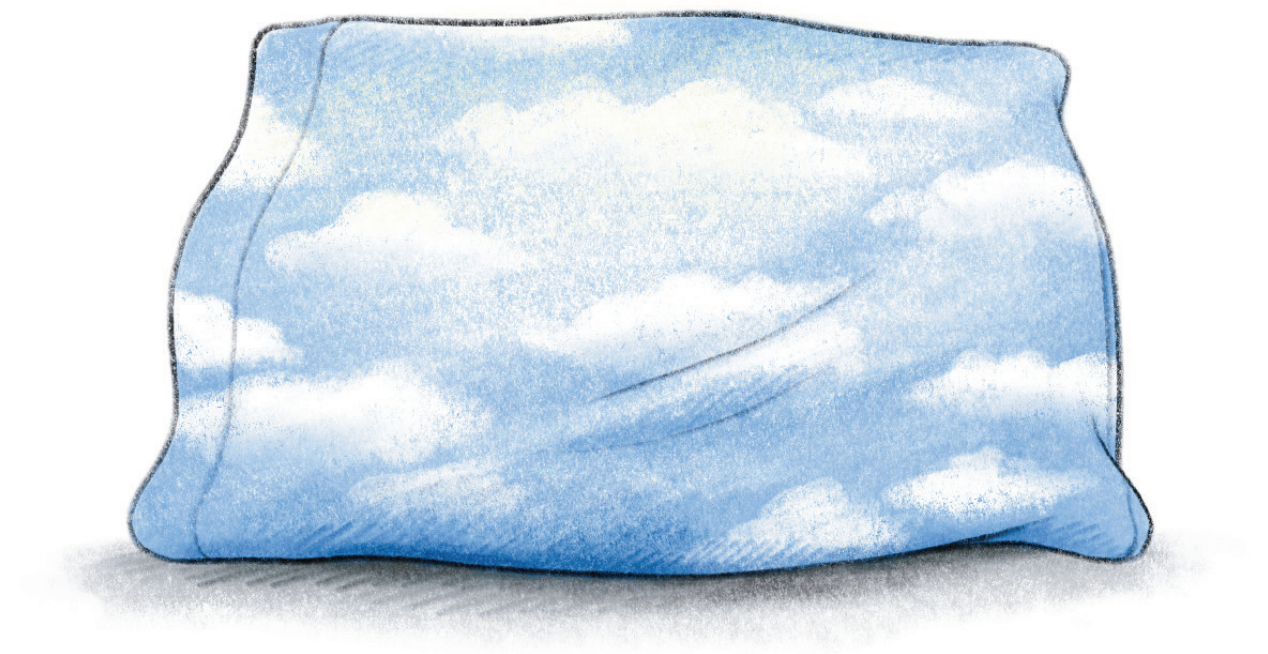
Can you think of something that is bothering you right now or something that upset you in the past? It may be something you were nervous about. It could be something you lost or someone you were missing.

EXERCISE 3

Draw a picture of your worry and leave it right here.



Take a trip on your pillow to drop that worry off in the clouds.



LESSON TEN:

Connecting to the World around You

When we experience BIG feelings, we often feel overwhelmed and alone. By connecting to ourselves, friends, and the world around us, we expand our inner resources making complex situations much more manageable.

TOP 3 MESSAGES

Simply walking or listening to music can affect how we feel.

Doing yoga, or being in nature can help you clear your mind.

**You are never alone. You can talk to a friend, to God, to a safe person;
or when you are sleeping, you can take a trip on your pillow,
and drop off your worries.**



Another way you can clear your mind is to connect with nature. There are millions of amazing things to explore in our big world of nature.

You can be an earth detective to look for clues.



EXERCISE 1

Imagine you are outside:

- Can you breathe in the air?
- Can you close your eyes and pretend to feel the warm sun on your face?
- Now pretend you are smelling a flower.
- Stand up tall and show me how you can look like a tree. By stopping and paying attention to the world around us, we can feel connected.

Ways to change your mood.

You can take a vacation from your worries by becoming a feelings detective!

We can change our mood if we want to. Mood is another way of saying “what we are feeling inside.” Sometimes BIG feelings hold lots of power, and it feels good to take our control back.

Ways you can do it.

Going for a walk can calm your mind.

Soft music can help us settle down when we have big feelings, and upbeat music can give us energy when we are feeling sleepy. What is a song you like that makes you feel happy? Can you sing it?

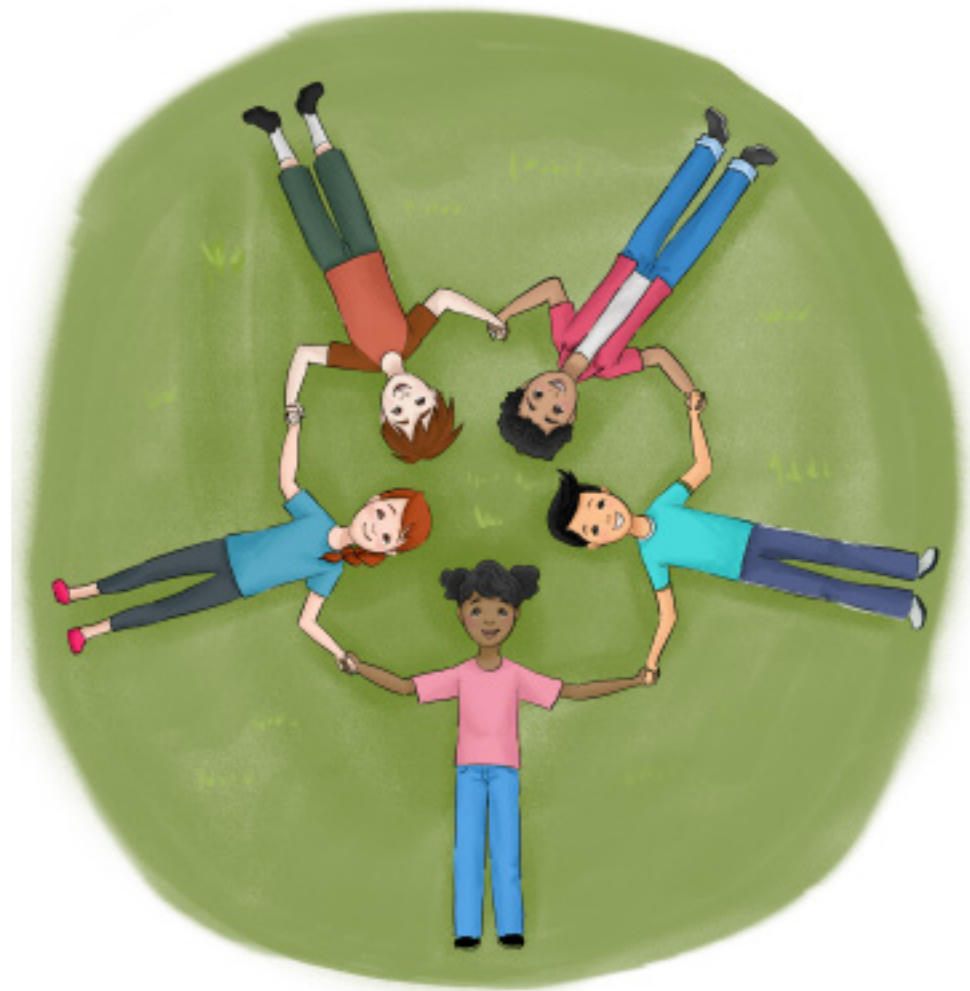
Doing yoga can quiet your mind and awaken your body.

Let's remember what we learned together.

Sometimes we go through hard things, but it's easier to do hard things with a friend.

You can ask for help when you need it and help someone else when they need it.

You can know what you are feeling and begin to sense what others are feeling too.



You are Calm.
You are Strong.
You can HANDLE IT.
You're not in this world alone.

And whenever you are trying to fall asleep, and your brain gets to think-think-thinking... just remember, you can take a trip on your pillow to drop off your worries or talk to someone special, because your pillow has wings. Just like Taelors.



PILLOWS WITH WINGS™

Devoted to change, guided by faith.

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