

Handouts & Refrigerator Notes



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How to Communicate Effectively With Adults and Children

“Active Listening”



Caution: Remember to continue special time!

How to Communicate Effectively With Adults and Children

“Active Listening” and “Speaking Up”



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **CONTINUE PRACTICING “ACTIVE LISTENING”** One time during the next week, practice “active listening” for five minutes, either with your partner, your child, a friend, or a colleague. Remember to allow the speaker to finish, listen for the content and feelings of the speaker, and validate those feelings.
- **PRACTICE “SPEAKING UP”** Once during the next week, practice speaking up about an issue or problem that has been worrying you. Remember to be positive, be clear and brief, be selective, communicate your feelings, and ask for feedback.

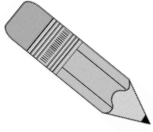
READ/REVIEW:



- Handouts and Chapter Sixteen, “*Effective Communication Skills*” in *The Incredible Years* book.

Caution: Remember to continue special time!

HANDOUT



PARENT RECORD SHEET: LISTENING AND SPEAKING UP

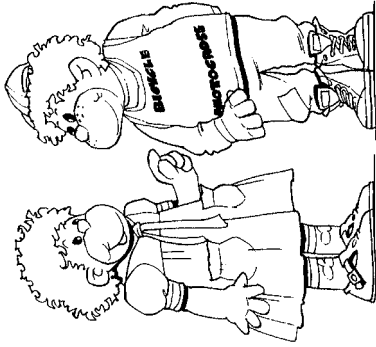
Describe your responses and your understanding of the speaker's response to the two exercises.

1. Active Listening

Example

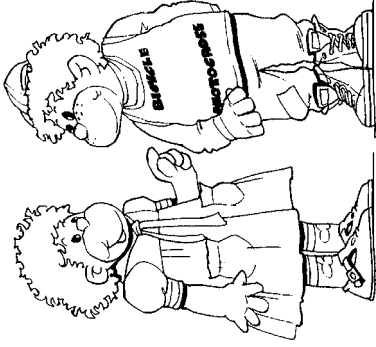
2. Speaking Up

Example



REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT ACTIVE LISTENING

- Try to put yourself in the other person's shoes and think about their point of view.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Allow the speaker to finish.
- Listen for the content and feelings of the speaker.
- Summarize and validate the speaker's feelings.
- Encourage the speaker to continue talking.
- Avoid "why" questions.



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REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT SPEAKING UP



- Choose timing for speaking up—ask if listener has time.
- Be positive.
- Use “I” messages to explain feelings.
- Be clear and specific.
- Be “present” oriented (edit old complaints).
- Ask for feedback.
- Avoid too much negative speaking up—be brief and selective.
- Express positive feelings as well.

REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT SPEAKING UP



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Brainstorm/Buzz–Positive Statements



Practice turning the following negative gripes or blaming statements into positive suggestions & “I” statements:



<u>Negative Gripe</u>	<u>Positive Suggestions</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. You rarely pay me a compliment.2. You spend money without figuring out the balance.3. You haven't cleaned the living room in 3 months.4. You haven't taken the children to daycare in a year.5. You don't ask for my opinion in parenting.6. You don't help me prepare any meals.7. At breakfast you bury your head in the newspaper.8. You never throw out your beer cans (newspaper).9. On Friday you didn't say anything about dinner, after I spent three hours preparing it.10. You don't help the children with homework.11. You make fun of Billy's opinions.12. You keep saying “that's dumb” if you disagree with the children.13. You don't do what I ask you to do.14. You throw your food on the floor.15. You eat with your fingers instead of your utensils.16. You keep yelling and criticizing me.	<p>I would like you to compliment me once a day.</p>

Communicating More Positively to Oneself and Children



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

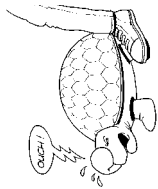
- **THINK ABOUT** a problem that causes you to get emotionally upset. Listen to your upsetting thoughts and describe what you would say or do to change your negative self-talk. Use the “Self-Talk in Problem Situations” worksheet to change some of your negative thoughts into constructive thoughts. Bring worksheet to next session.
- **PRACTICE** turning negative gripes into positive suggestions. Describe what you would say to stop or change your negative self-talk. Record on the homework handout sheet.
- **NOTICE** when your child is getting upset and encourage him/her to use Tiny’s secrets.

READ/REVIEW:



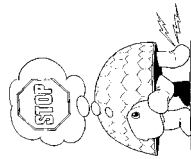
Handouts and Chapter Fourteen, “Controlling Upsetting Thoughts” in *The Incredible Years* book (if not completed in prior sessions).

Caution: Remember to continue special time!

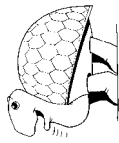


REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT UPSETTING THOUGHTS

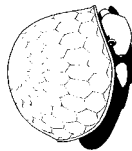
- Refute negative labels that may come to mind.
- Avoid speculating about intentions.
- Paint a positive future.
- Use thought-stopping when tempted to catastrophize and substitute coping thoughts.
- Normalize behavior and use flexible standards.
- Get control of your anger.
- Don't be self-critical; instead objectify and use self-praise.
- Support your partner or others involved in caring for your child and seek their support.
- Focus on coping.
- Be positive and use humor.
- Reschedule anger or worry times.
- Model positive, coping self-talk.



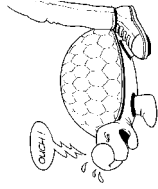
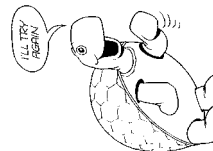
2 Think STOP



3 Take a slow breath

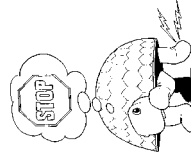


4 Withdrawing into shell

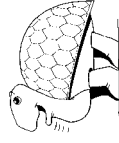


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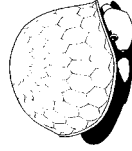
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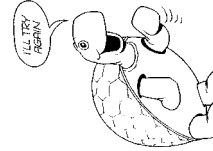
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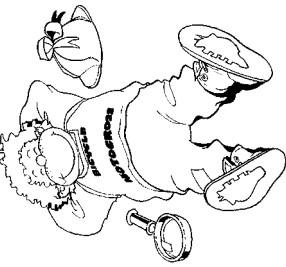


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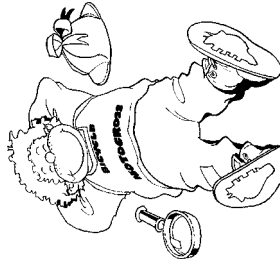
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REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT STRESS AND ANGER

- Scan your body for tension, and breathe and relax or do the exercises.
- Notice any negative self-statements and replace them with soothing self-encouragement.
- Ask yourself if what is making you feel tense is really that important? Will it make a difference a week from now? A year? When you are 70?
- Visualize some marvelous past event or dream of the future.
- In the middle of conflict, breathe, cool off, get playful, or get away for a few minutes.
- Take a break (go for a walk, take a bath, read a magazine).



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REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT SELF-TALK



- Avoid griping, criticisms and “put downs” .
- Use a “stop action” when personal anger seems to be escalating out of control or getting nowhere.
- Stop and dispute negative thoughts. Substitute coping or calming thoughts.
- Be polite with others by focusing on the positive, on what you can do rather than what you can't do.
- Think about the other person’s needs and point of view. Recognize that everyone’s problem is legitimate.
- Focus on fixing the problem, not the blame.

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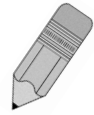


Tips to Being Polite

1. **Say what you can do and what you want to do.** When possible, avoid statements referring to what you can't do.
2. **Focus on the positive.** Stop complaints. Imagine a situation where your child tries to clean up the dishes but gets water all over the floor. Or think about a father who makes dinner but leaves the kitchen in a mess. In these situations, the adult has a choice: to complain and criticize or to edit out the complaint and give an honest statement of appreciation for the effort made. "Gee, it's great to have the dishes all cleaned up. Thanks for taking the time to do that." (If a messy kitchen is an important issue for a parent, s/he can always decide to discuss it at a later time.)
3. **Edit self-criticisms.** An adult has a fight or loses his temper and then realizes that s/he was wrong. S/he might say, "I'm a rotten parent. Why do I always lose control and get angry?" Instead, s/he could edit these put-downs and say, "I was wrong for saying that. I'm sorry. What can I do to make things better?" "That wasn't a good idea. Let's think of a better idea," would also be constructive self-statements. The point is to focus on the mistaken ideas or actions, to accept responsibility for error but not to devalue oneself as a person. Everyone makes mistakes. It is important to model this attitude for children in an appropriate manner and provide positive alternatives for future behavior. For example, a parent might say, "Next time I'll try to stay calm" or "Another time I'll go outside for few minutes rather than get so angry."
4. **Focus on the present and edit out "old business."** Avoid digging up old events and unloading old conflicts. These tactics only complicate the problem and raise the anger level of everyone involved. Remember, "unloading" tends to occur most for people who don't communicate about problems as they arise.
5. **Think about the other person's needs and point of view.** If a person finds s/he is thinking only of him/herself those thoughts should be edited. It would be useful to decide, instead, to think about what one's spouse/partner or child needs. For example, "I wonder if he is feeling left out because the new baby is taking so much of my attention. Perhaps we should get a sitter for the baby and go out." One of the most powerful responses a parent can make to a complaining child or spouse/partner is, "Gee, I see your point. What can we do to make things better?"



Brainstorm/Buzz–Practice Coping Thoughts



Practice turning the following negative and irrational thoughts into coping thoughts:



Negative Thoughts	Examples of Coping Thoughts
<p>"My child is a monster. This is ridiculous. He'll never change." (negative labeling)</p> <p>"He just married me to have a maid. Things are going to change or else!" (threats)</p> <p>"He's just like his father. I can't handle it when he's angry." (blame spouse)</p> <p>"She does it on purpose." (mind-reading)</p> <p>"I know he'll say no so I won't ask." (mind-reading)</p> <p>"He'll never outgrow it." (prophesize gloom)</p> <p>"She's driving me crazy, I can't stand it." (catastrophizing)</p> <p>"They should respect me." (shoulds and musts)</p> <p>"He deserves to be spanked." (desire for revenge)</p> <p>"I can't, it's my fault." (self-criticism)</p> <p>"She doesn't love me, forget it!" (give up, walk away)</p> <p>"People belonging to that organization are dishonest." (over-generalizing)</p> <p>"Well, he yelled, so I can, too." (rationalizing a mistake or lie)</p> <p>"It was nothing, anyone could have done that." (discounting positive)</p> <p>"I should not have done that..." (unrealistic expectations)</p> <p>"No one will see my skills, I'll never get a job." (exaggerating)</p>	<p>"My child is testing the limits, he's had a bad day. I can help him calm down."</p>

Handout

Learning Self-Control

1. Identify your negative thoughts when they first occur. Pay attention to how your body feels (for example, tenseness, fidgeting, anger, headaches).
2. Use one of the following constructive thoughts to replace the negative thought.
 - STOP the negative thought—"think STOP."
 - Dispute the negative thought;
 - Substitute a positive thought or self-praise;
 - Substitute a coping or calming thought;
 - Use humor;
 - Think about a future time when this will not be a problem.

Non-constructive Thoughts

"Jack never helps. All I get is work, work, work. I fix the food, take care of the house, the kids, everything. Boy, would I like to throw this at him!"

"After working 10 hours, I'm tired and frustrated. When I get home, all I get are hassles. The kids interrupt and yell, and Joan criticizes me. This place is a mess. What does she do all day? I feel like screaming or walking out of here."

Constructive Thoughts

"I'd better watch it and calm down before I do something I'll regret. What I need is help. Maybe if I ask Jack in a nice way, he'll give me some help. That's the best way. Then maybe I can have a relaxing bath."

"Take it easy now. Take a few breaths. What I really need is a few minutes of peace to relax and read the paper. Maybe if I ask Joan nicely to play with the kids while I read, then I could give her a break and play with the kids later. She needs a rest too. That's the most helpful way. I can already feel myself relaxing."

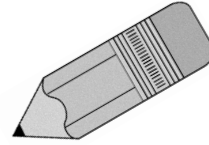
"I can handle this. I can stay in control. "She's just testing the limits. My job is to stay calm and help her learn better ways".

Handout

SELF-TALK IN PROBLEM SITUATIONS

Identify a problem situation and the upsetting thoughts you have at the time. Write down some alternative calming thoughts that you might use to redefine the situation. Next time you find yourself using negative self-talk, give yourself some time to think positively and consider the alternatives available to you for dealing with the situation.

Problem Situation: _____



Upsetting Thoughts

A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for writing upsetting thoughts. It has a drop shadow effect.

Calming Thoughts

A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for writing calming thoughts. It has a drop shadow effect.

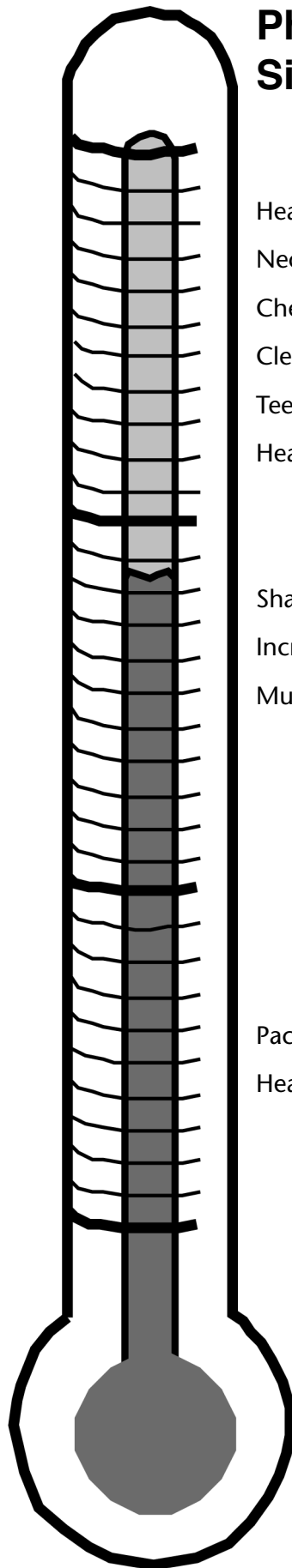
Feelings

Furious
Contemptuous
Angry

Defensive
Guilt
Withdrawn
Frustrated
Depression

Irritated
Anxious
Worried

Alert/Interested
Receptive/Open to
Influence/Flexible
Calm
Happy
Confident
Content
Loving/Affectionate



Physiological Signs

Heart racing
Neck muscles tight
Chest Tight
Clenched fists
Teeth clenched
Headache

Shallow rapid breathing
Increased perspiration
Muscles tense

Pacing
Headache developing

Behaviors

Yelling
Hitting

Threatening
Withdrawing
Stonewalling
Criticizing

Difficulty listening
Thinking narrow
Less open to new ideas

Calm
Pleasant
Able to problem solve
Able to listen

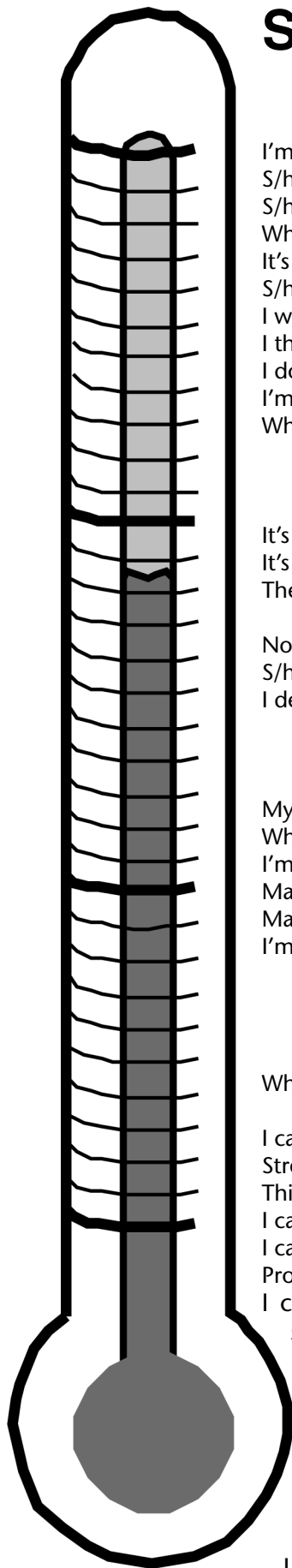
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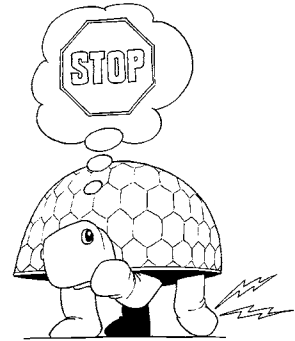
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- Receptive/Open to
Influence/Flexible
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- Happy
- Confident
- Content
- Loving/Affectionate



Self-Talk

I'm so mad I could hurt...
S/he deserves to be...
S/he is no good/rotten.
What did I do to deserve...
It's not my fault; it's his/hers.
S/he's just like...
I was never like this.
I think s/he'll end up in jail.
I don't have time to deal with this.
I'm a bad parent (partner). I'm hopeless
Why me? This is too stressful.



It's not working to stay calm.
It's useless...
There's no point in doing anything for him/her.
It never helps.
No matter what I do, nothing changes.
S/he just throws it back at me.
I deserve this for what I did when...

My parents told me I was...(a criticism)
What's going to happen when s/he's a teenager?
I'm getting stressed; I need to take a personal time out.
Maybe this is too much for me to handle.
Maybe I'm not a good parent/spouse.
I'm not sure I can do this.

When change occurs, it's supposed to get worse
before it gets better.
I can make a difference to our future.
Stress is a normal part of any relationship.
This stage won't last forever. Things will get better.
I can handle this; I can control my anger.
I can teach him to...
Problems occur so we can all learn to manage conflict.
I can talk to him about...and come up with some
solutions.
We'll manage; we all need learning trials.
Everyone makes mistakes.
I can help by...
His/her positive qualities are...
I'm a caring parent/partner because I'm trying by...
I stay calm most of the time.
I enjoy being with him/her, especially when we...
I love (appreciate)...



TIME OUT FOR PARENTS WHO ARE ANGRY

All parents and couples when stressed find themselves losing control of their anger from time to time. Therefore, it is important to establish a Time Out procedure for yourself just as it was important to set one up for the children. The following are some steps to interrupt the anger cycle:

1. Be aware of cues that signal increasing anger.

Anger increases progressively rather than appearing full-blown, therefore it is important to be aware of signals you are getting that tells you your anger is increasing. For example, such signals can include physiological changes (rapid breathing, increased pulse rate); or cognitive thinking such as self-statements that involve blaming (“that jerk or bitch”; or catastrophizing, “I can’t stand it,” or mind-reading “she’s doing it on purpose”); or specific behaviors such as pacing, shouting, clenching fists.

2. Establish a Time Out signal.

Let your family know what your Time Out signal is that will alert them to your anger rising. This should be a neutral and nonblaming signal such as a T-signal with your hands or saying Time Out.

3. Decide where you will go.

Choose a location where you will go and that everyone else knows you will be. This should be agreed upon by both parents and children, otherwise it will be seen as abandonment and efforts will be made to restrain you.

4. Decide on duration of Time Out.

A time limit should be decided upon by the person who calls the Time Out. This person is responsible for signaling readiness to resume discussion. It should be understood that the discussion will always be resumed so Time Out does not become an avoidance tactic. (30 minutes or less)

5. Rules about Time Out

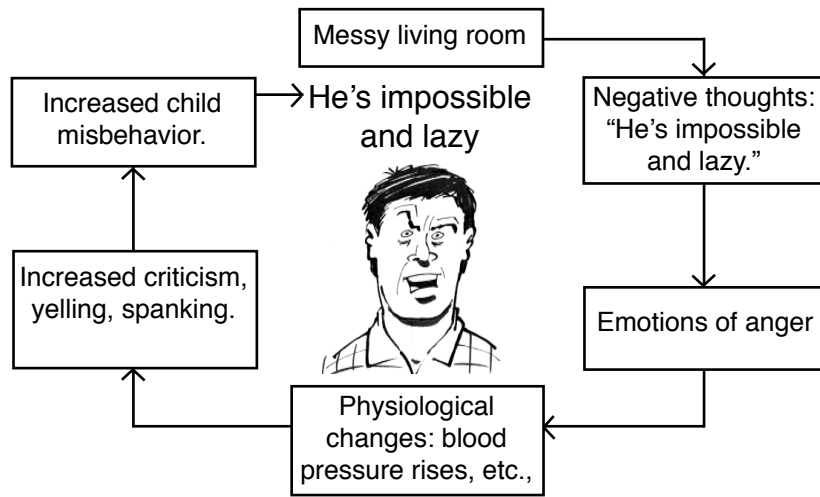
Rules about Time Out should be agreed upon such as whether the person can leave the house, go to a friend’s or call home. Drinking should not be allowed.

Problems with “Blowing off Steam” or “Getting it Out of Your System.”

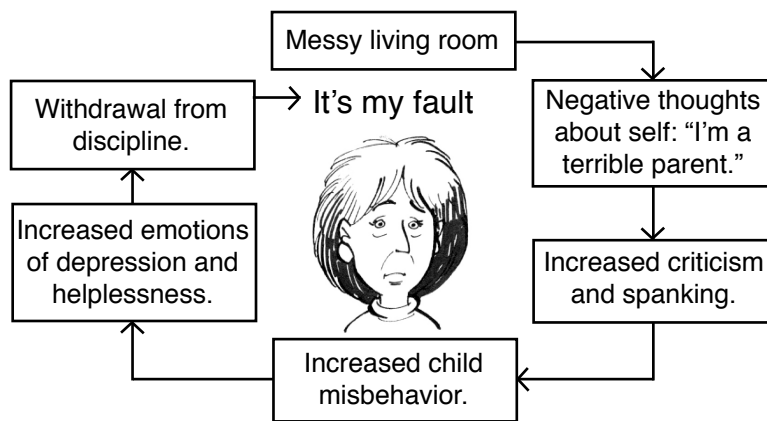
It was once felt that blowing off steam by shouting and swearing would tend to drain off violent energy and reduce aggression. People were thought of as tea kettles which could only contain a fixed amount of aggressive energy and therefore it was necessary to open the kettle pot every so often. It is now well understood that rather than having a cathartic or beneficial effect, blowing off steam actually “inflames” aggression and violence. Studies have shown that couples who yell at each other do not feel less angry afterwards but more angry. Actually expressing anger will make you angrier! Fuming and criticizing legitimizes rage and increases anger. The reason for this is that often the anger is reinforced by giving the person a false sense of power, control over others (vs. defeat), making others pay attention or take us seriously, getting others to reply, or obtaining revenge. However, these are short-term effects. It is important to look at the long-term effects of anger as well. In the long term, because anger is frequently reinforced it is likely you will develop a “habit” of dealing with frustration by lashing out. Moreover, in the long term, parents who model angry outbursts make other people in the family angrier, defensive and fearful.

Substitute Coping Thoughts for Angry or Depressive Thoughts

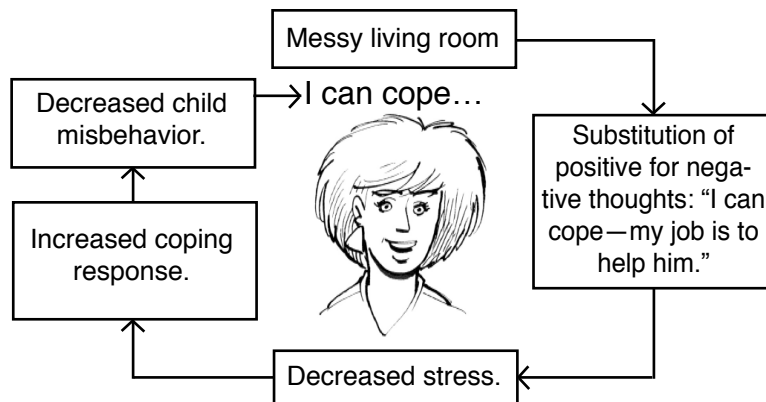
Anger Cycle



Depression Cycle



Positive Response



Brainstorm/Buzz – Self-Praise

Brainstorm possible self-praise you can use to encourage yourself as a parent.
Write these statements on your note pad.



Positive Self-Praise

I can stay calm...he's just frustrated

I did a good job helping him with his homework

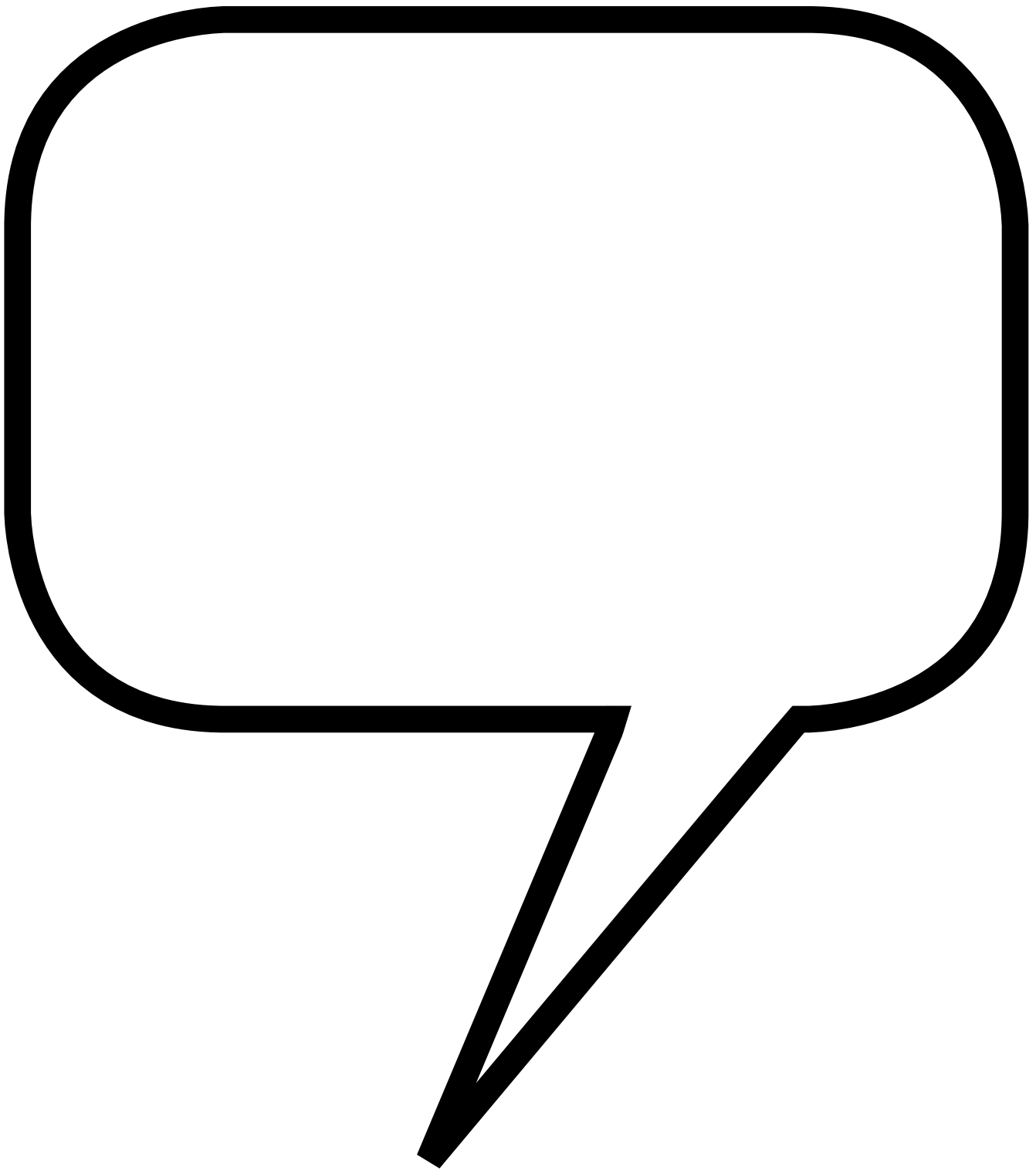
I was successful at paying my bills on time

I'm proud of how I helped...



Goal:

I will commit to stopping my self-criticism and looking at something I did well each day as a parent.



Write your own positive coping statements and practice them during the week.

Brainstorm/Buzz–Ways to Stay Calm



Remember, there is more than one way to think about something! A particular event can trigger some associated thoughts that lead to particular feelings and behavioral actions and resulting consequences. The same event could lead to different feelings in different people because of the thoughts associated with the event. While you can't control your feelings, you can control your thoughts and the behaviors you exhibit in response to those feelings. Think about ways you can stay calm in a stressful situation by controlling your thoughts, imagination and your pleasurable activities. Write down ways you can stay calm and cope with distressful situations.

Ways to Stay Calm

deep breaths

positive forecasting

relaxation techniques

doing one of my pleasurable activities _____

reading my positive journal

exercising

imagining my favorite person who is joyful

getting more sleep

think about a success rather than something unsuccessful

challenging my irrational thoughts

Goal: I will commit to practicing the following to stay calm _____



Brainstorm/Buzz Staying Calm & Managing Anger

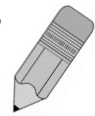


Rewrite the following negative self-talk with positive coping thoughts.



Negative Self-Talk	Positive Coping Thoughts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can't stand this—it's too hard!• I don't know what to do.• Ignoring will never work.• I am losing control and will explode soon.• I am going to hit her just like my mom did to me.• It's awful to let him disrespect me. It's not good to look weak in front of my child.• I hate being disrespected.• She will never change.• I can't let him challenge my authority.• He hurt me so I should hurt him.• I don't like him when he's like this.	

Brainstorm/Buzz Staying Calm & Managing Anger



Continued, from previous page.



Negative Self-Talk	Positive Coping Thoughts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The neighbors will complain if I don't get this stopped.• She will never stop whining.• A little more force on my part will stop her.• That brat knows how much this bugs me—he's doing it on purpose.• I'm an inept parent—should never have had children.• I can't let her get away with that.• It's all his dad's (or mom's) fault.	
<p><i>Goal: I will commit to stopping and challenging my negative self-talk and working on practicing using coping and positive self-talk as well as giving myself time to calm down.</i></p>	



Brainstorm/Buzz Staying Calm

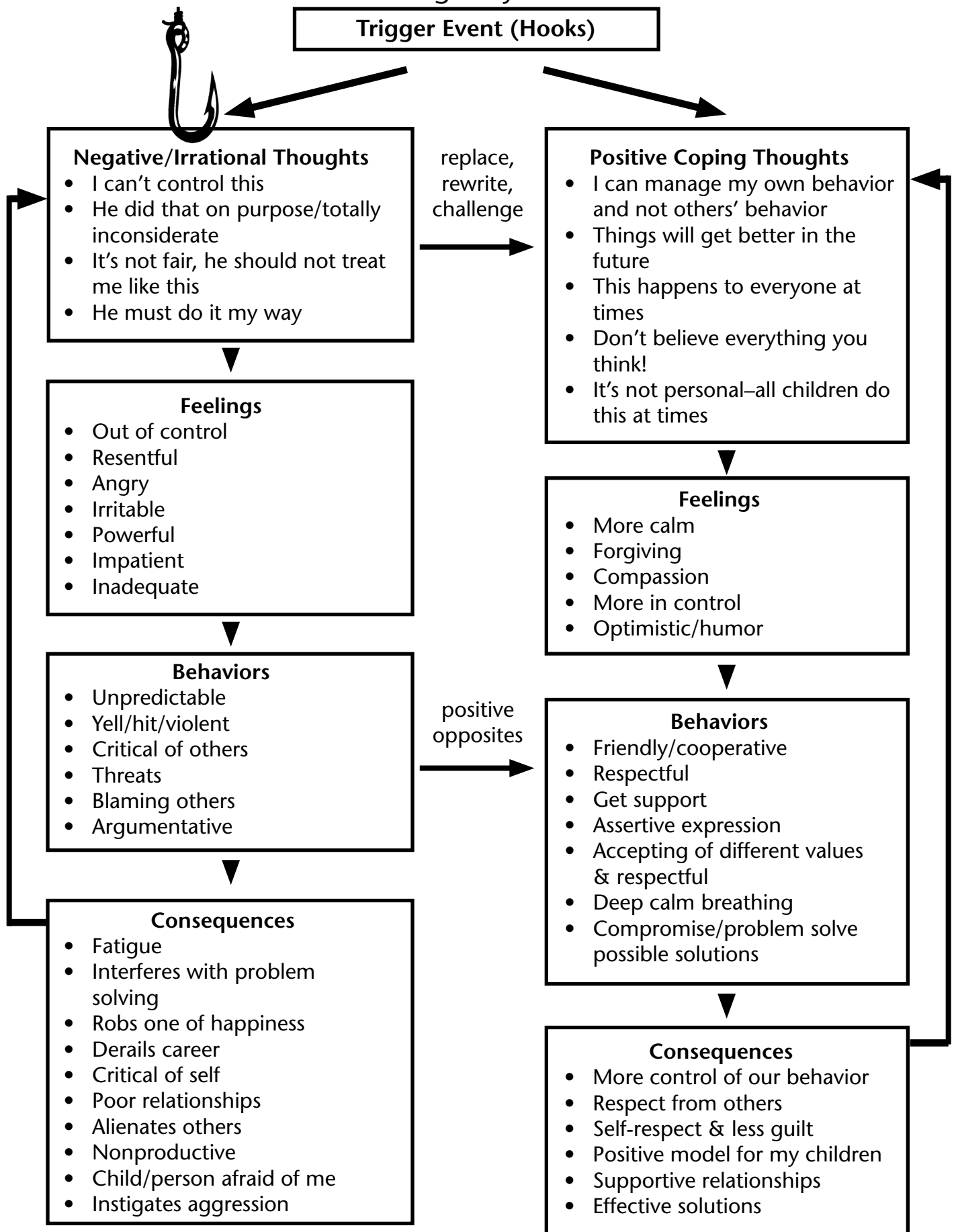
Write your irrational or negative thoughts down and rewrite them into coping thoughts.



Negative/Irrational Thoughts	Coping Thoughts

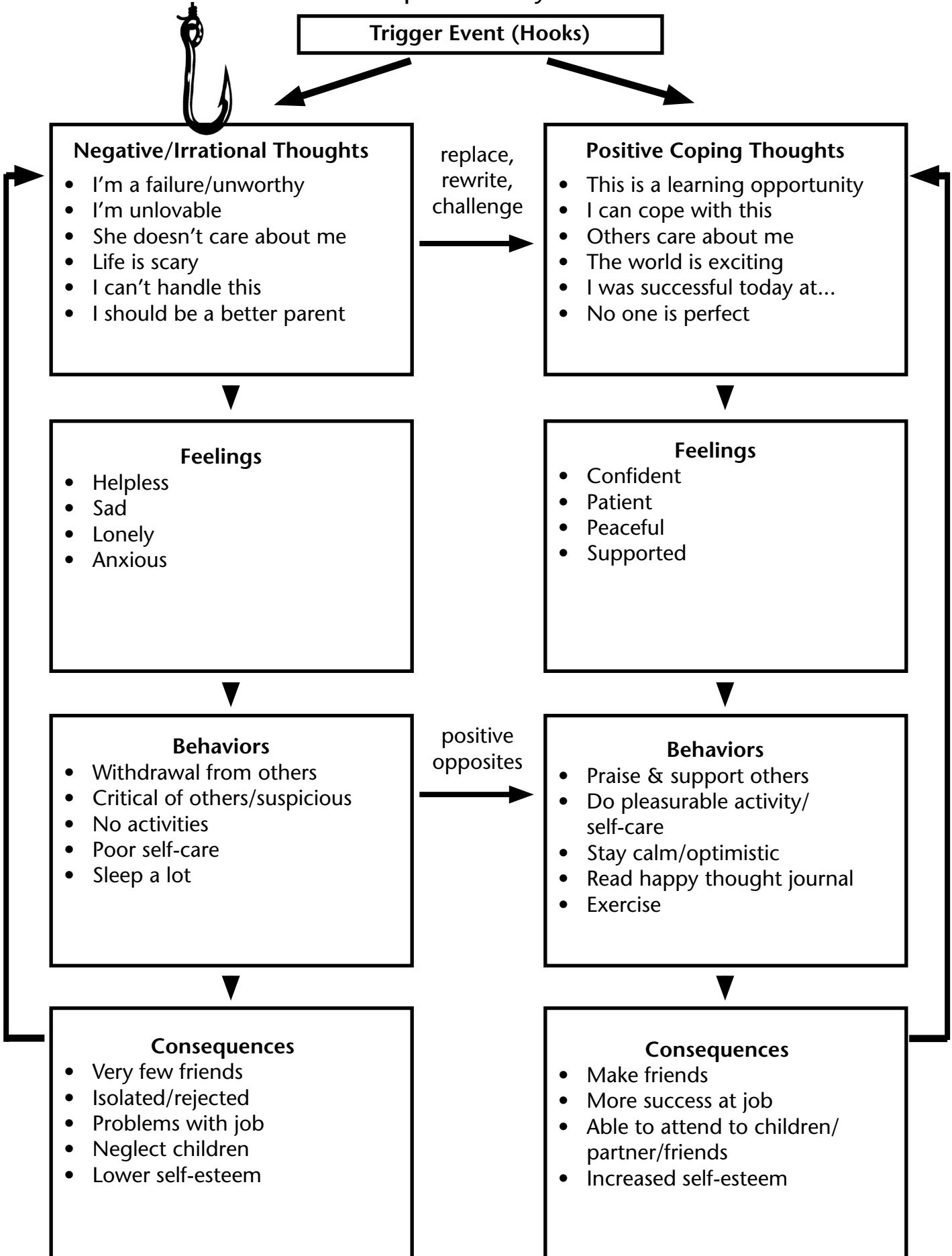


Anger Cycle



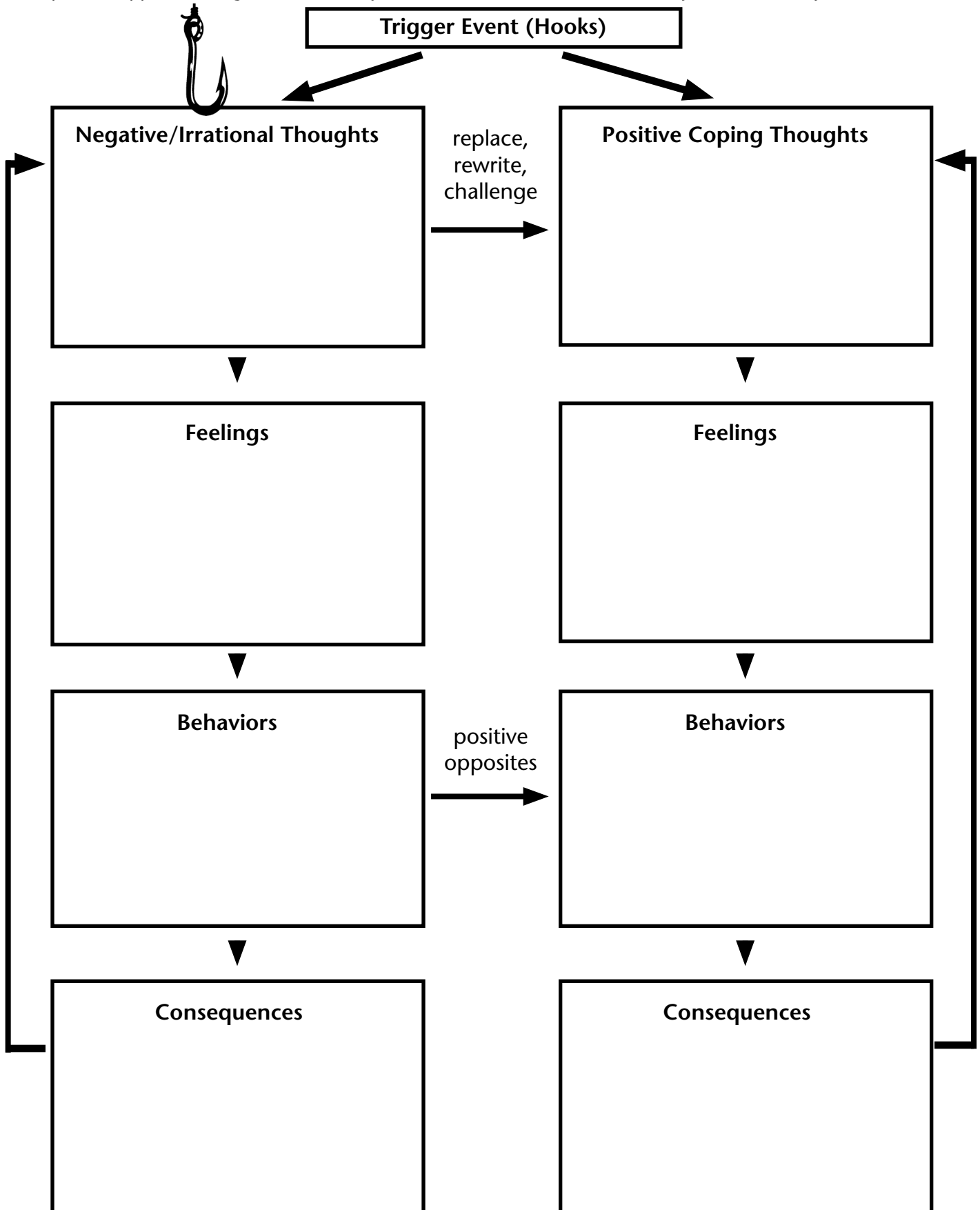
Depression Cycle

Trigger Event (Hooks)



Thought & Feeling Diary for Coping with a Difficult Situation

Identify situations or triggers that make your angry or depressed. Work on replacing irrational or negative thoughts with positive opposite thoughts. Remember you can't control what others do, but you can control your own behavior.



*“There is more than one way to think about something—
feelings don't have to determine actions.”*



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- PRACTICE expressing positive feedback or giving support to another adult during the next week.
OR
 - PRACTICE asking for feedback when you are feeling defensive or when unsure what the other person is saying or how they are reacting to what you have said or done.
 - PRACTICE making a request for help from another adult during the next week. Remember to be positive, specific, use "I" messages and to give clarification or feedback.
Keep track of the results of the first three exercises on Record Sheet Handout: Giving and Getting Support.
 - RECORD (on the Parent Record Sheet: Sources of Stress) your daily stressors and plan a strategy to give yourself more support for these stressful times. Then try out your strategy and record what happens.
- CALL your buddy this week. (You could do your practice with your buddy!)

READ



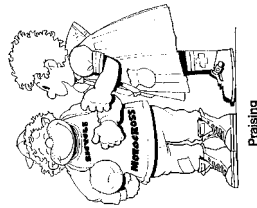
Handouts and Chapter Fifteen, *Time Out From Stress and Anger* in *The Incredible Years*.

Caution: Remember to continue special time!

REFRIGERATOR NOTES

ABOUT EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Use “active” listening and encourage others to express their ideas and feelings.
- Speak up clearly with “I” messages (avoid “you” messages which tend to blame or criticize).
- Express your feelings about issues rather than storing up grievances, but remember to be considerate about when and where you speak up.
- Think about the other person’s needs and then validate their feelings and point of view (try to put yourself in their shoes).
- Avoid criticisms, gripes and put downs. Focus on being polite and positive.
- Stop discussion or take a short Time Out when confused, angry or when communication is breaking down.
- Focus on fixing the problem, not fixing the blame.
- Recognize that another person’s problem or feeling is always legitimate. Avoid denials and defensiveness.
- Ask for feedback in order to be sure you understand correctly. (Recognize your own as well as other “mood filters” and how they may distort communication.)

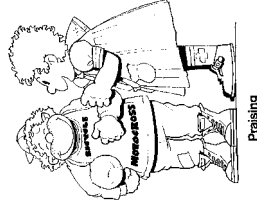


- Give clear and consistent verbal and nonverbal messages.
- Make positive requests and comply to other’s requests.
- Express positive feedback and feelings.

REFRIGERATOR NOTES

ABOUT EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Use “active” listening and encourage others to express their ideas and feelings.
- Speak up clearly with “I” messages (avoid “you” messages which tend to blame or criticize).
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- Give clear and consistent verbal and nonverbal messages.
- Make positive requests and comply to other’s requests.
- Express positive feedback and feelings.



PARENT RECORD SHEET: GIVING AND GETTING SUPPORT

Describe your responses and the listener's responses to the two exercises.

1. Making a Request

Example

2. Giving Support or Positive Feedback

Example

3. Getting Feedback or Clarification

Example



PARENT RECORD SHEET: SOURCES OF STRESS

Daily Stressors

Strategy

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

If you have a partner compare your lists to see if there is any way you can help each other with daily hassles.

WHAT HAPPENED?

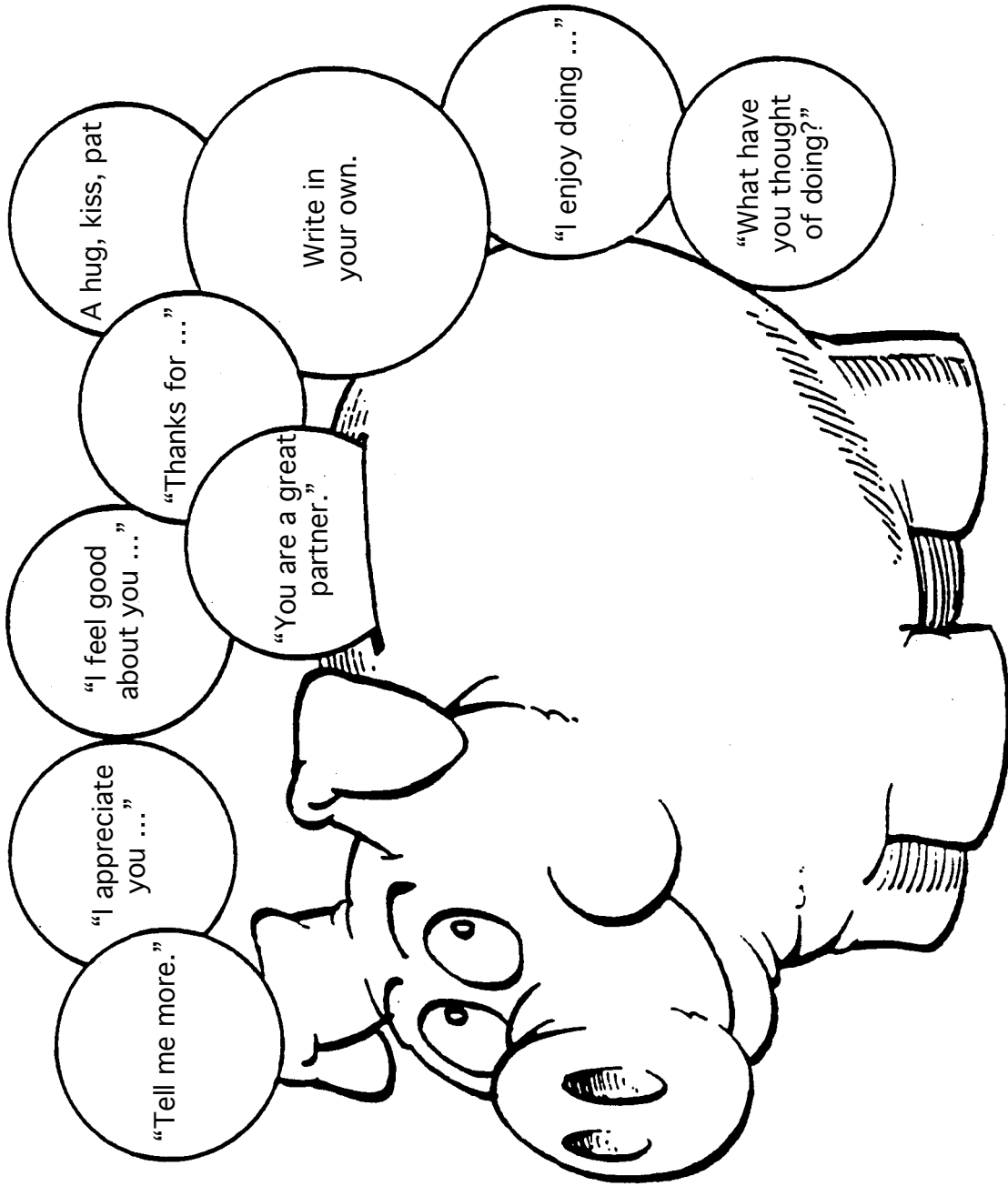
STRESSOR

STRATEGY

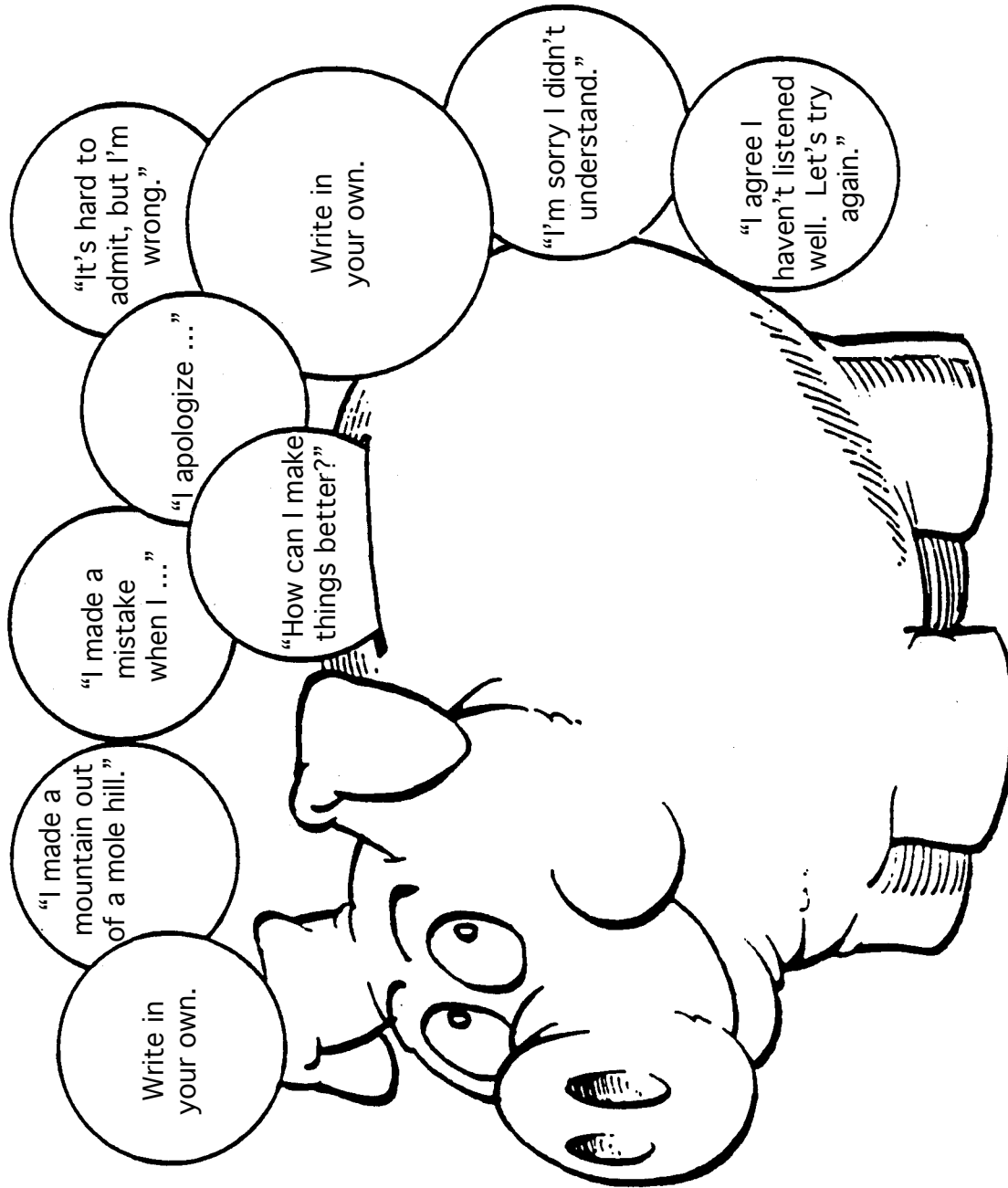
EFFECTIVENESS

OBSTACLES

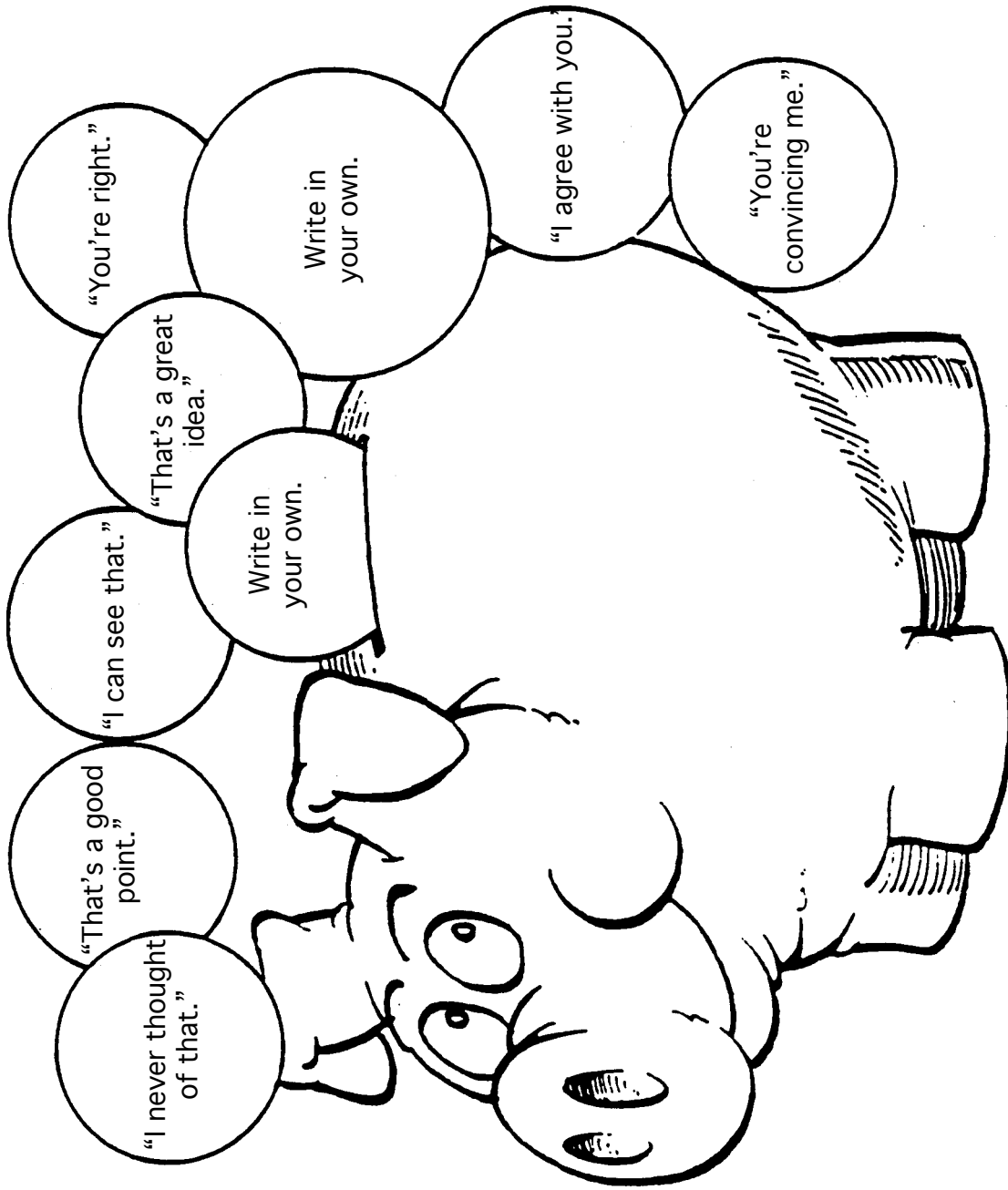
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



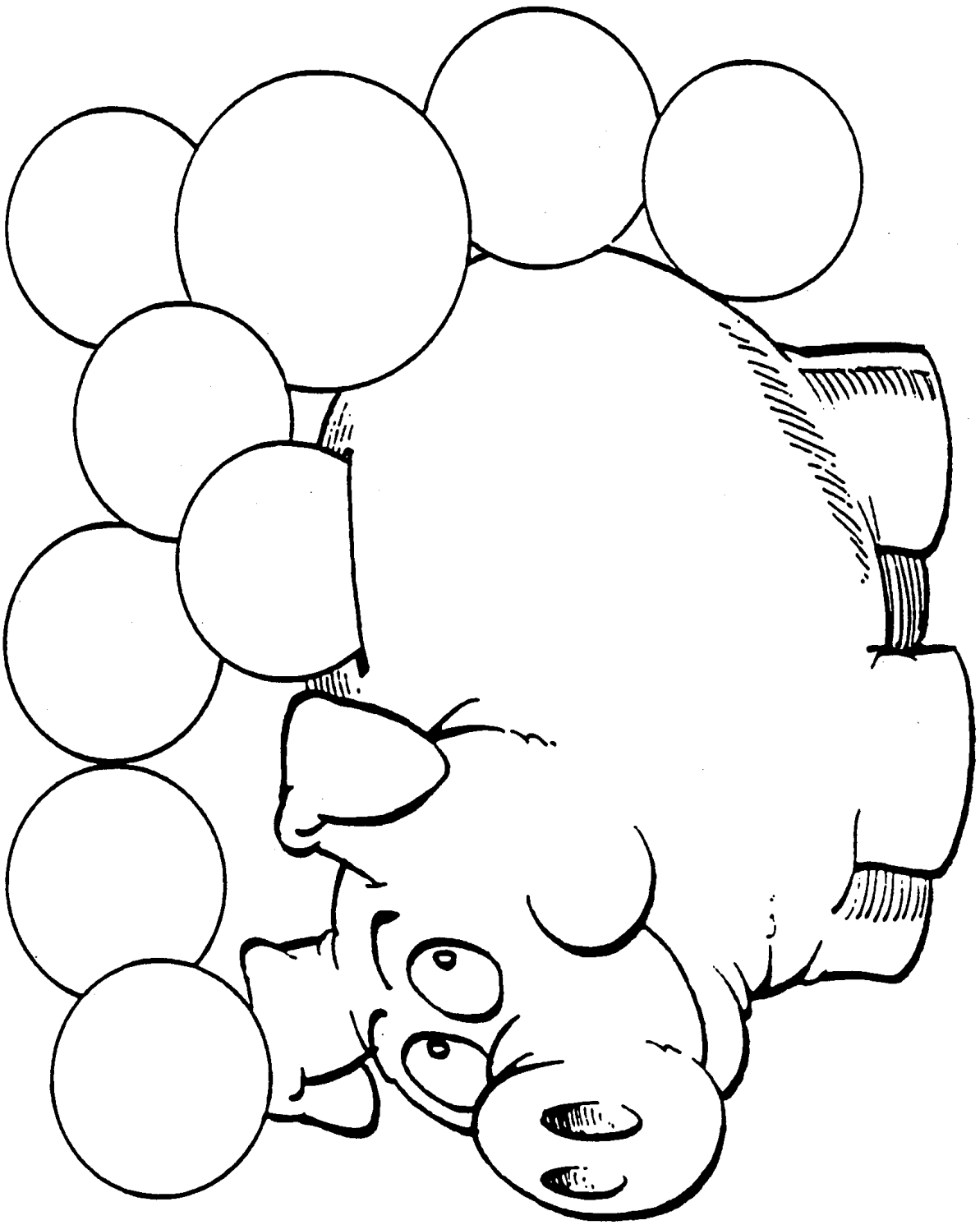
Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account
With Support and Encouragement



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account
With Repair Statements

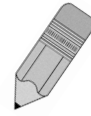


Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account
With Accepting and Respecting Statements



Brainstorm/Buzz

Reward yourself with some pleasurable times.



Think about 10 things you can do that bring you pleasure. These can include interactions with others that make you feel appreciated or understood, or activities that make you feel useful, strong, or valued. Write these activities down and give them one star*, two stars**, or three stars*** according to how much enjoyment they bring you. Make a plan to do at least one of these each day and write it down on your calendar.

My Pleasurable Activities – Add Your Own

Calling up someone I enjoy talking to

Being with optimistic people

Meeting a friend for lunch

Exercising

Writing a card or e-mail in my happy journal

Listening to relaxing music

Grooming myself (doing nails, haircut, showering)

Getting or giving a back rub

Reading

Yoga

Cooking

Watching a Movie

Goal:

I will commit to doing something pleasurable for myself this week. This will include:



Brainstorm/Buzz—Praising Family Members & Friends

Brainstorm statements you can use to praise, encourage and support other family members (partners, grandparents, friends) in their interactions with you or your children.



Interactions I will encourage in others

Helping put out garbage

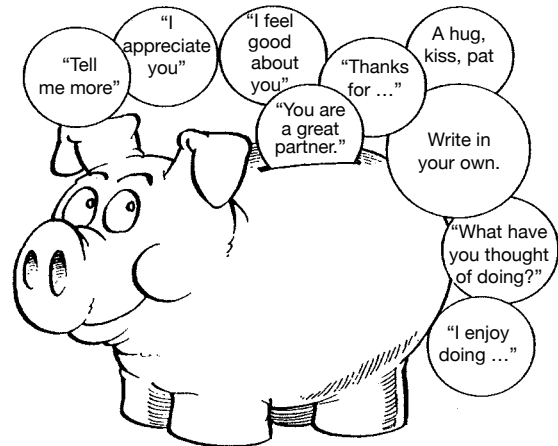
Making dinner

I will commit to increasing the number of encouraging statements I give others each day.

I like it when you...

Good for you! for...

Wow! What a wonderful job you've done cleaning the shower!



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account With Support and Encouragement

Goal:

I will commit to increasing the number of praises I give my partner, friend, family member to _____. The behaviors I will praise include: (e.g., helping with household chores) _____

Problem Solving for Adults

Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **WRITE DOWN** a situation you attempt to problem solve, either by yourself or with a partner.
- **KEEP TRACK** of the result on the Problem-Solving Checklist handout.

Note: Start with a relatively easy issue or a manageable problem (e.g., what movie to watch), before going into the more complex issues (e.g., dissatisfaction with life). After problem solving is completed, use the checklist to review your strengths and weaknesses.

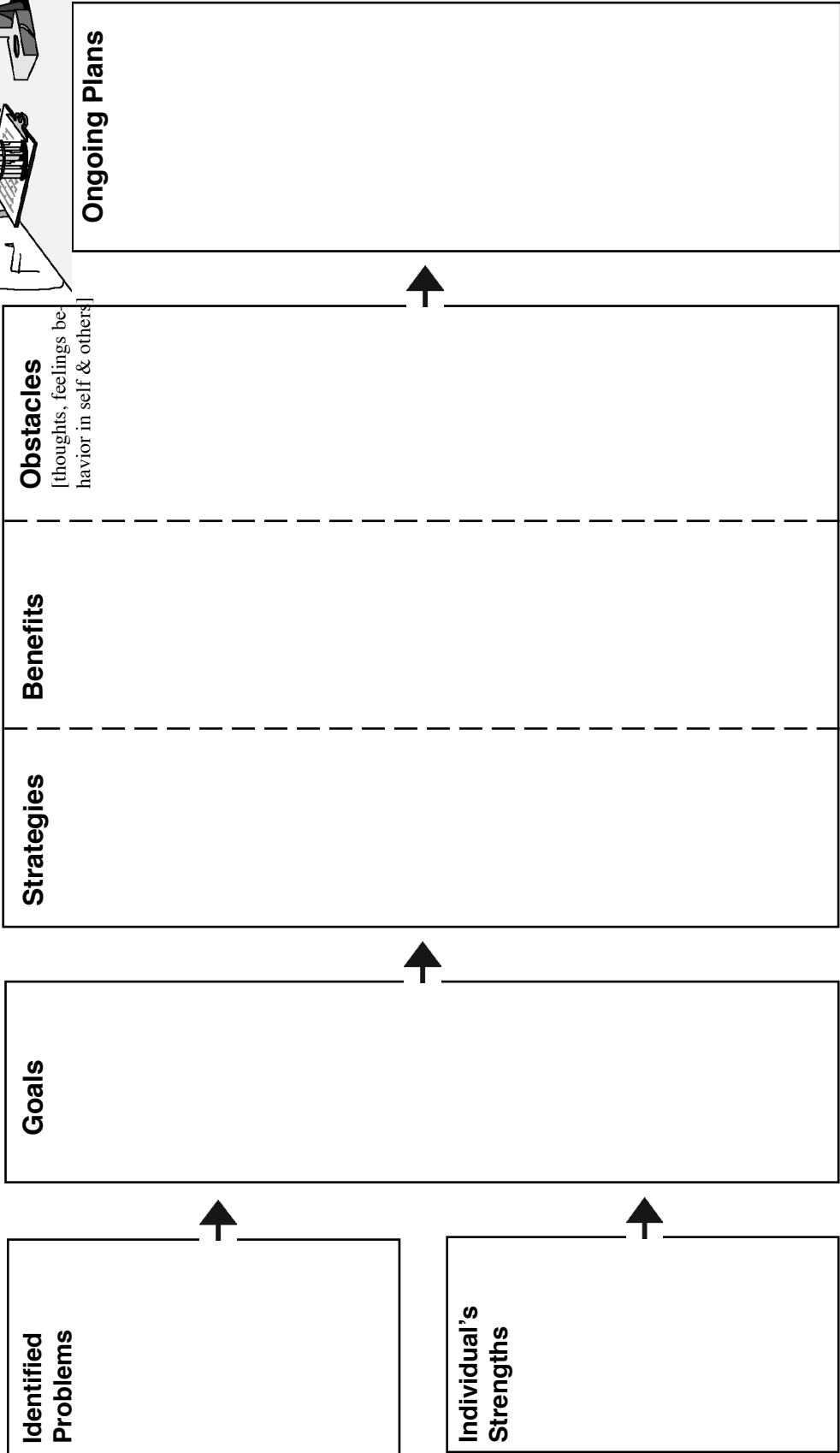


To Read:

Handouts and *Chapter Seventeen, "Problem Solving between Adults"* in *The Incredible Years* book

Caution: Remember to continue special time!

Parents Thinking Like Scientists



Parents Thinking Like Scientists



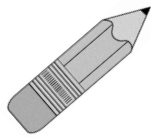
Goals

Identified
Problems



Individual's
Strengths





HANDOUT

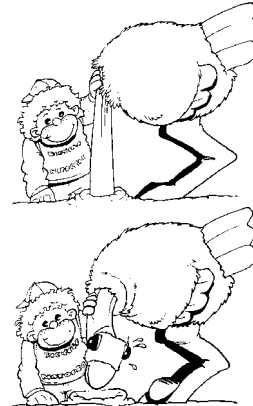
PROBLEM-SOLVING CHECKLIST

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Step 1: Schedule a meeting	___	___
Step 2: Define the problem	___	___
1. Focus on one problem at a time	___	___
2. Collaborate and be positive	___	___
3. State and be positive	___	___
4. Express feelings	___	___
5. Be future oriented	___	___
6. Make "I" statements	___	___
Step 3: Summarize the problem and goal in order to be sure everyone understands the problem Write down the problem.	___	___
<hr/> <hr/>		
Step 4: Brainstorm solutions	___	___
1. Remain open	___	___
2. Be wild, innovative, humorous	___	___
3. Increase quantity	___	___
4. Postpone details	___	___
Step 5: Evaluate solutions and make plans	___	___
1. Review the entire list	___	___
2. Evaluate each solution	___	___
3. Make realistic plans	___	___
4. Write down the plan	___	___
5. Schedule next meeting	___	___
6. Praise all efforts	___	___
Step 6: Schedule a follow up meeting	___	___
1. Reinforce progress	___	___
2. Refine problem solving plan	___	___

Evaluating your responses to the items on this checklist will highlight some of the ways you can improve your problem-solving meetings.

Use the Problem Solving Approach to Help Your Child

“Relapses” of misbehaviors are *normal*, so be prepared for them! Often a relapse is triggered by some type of crisis or change in family life (illness, death, vacation, new job, financial stress). This generally results in an increase in children’s inappropriate behaviors. The following are some ways to reinstate the program and get yourself on track again.



Problem sharing

1. Set up a time when you are not upset to talk about the problem with your partner, a friend, or to think quietly on your own.
2. Clarify what child behaviors you want and don’t want.
3. List the problems from most to least important. Concentrate on dealing with only the most pressing problem.
4. Brainstorm as many solutions as possible (review handouts):
 - Reinforcements (praise, tangible rewards, play sessions)
 - Discipline (ignore, Time-Out, loss of privileges, work chores, logical consequences, problem solving)
 - Techniques that help parents maintain self-control (self-talk, relaxation)
5. Evaluate 1–2 solutions you can implement, and make a plan.
6. Monitor weekly progress, and revise the program when necessary.
7. Reinforce your efforts.

Remember: There is a tendency for parents to use strategies with short-term benefits (for example, obtaining immediate compliance by yelling, hitting or criticizing the child) that have long-term negative consequences (the child learns to yell and hit instead of using nonviolent approaches to solving problems). Parents need to use skills such as praising and ignoring literally hundreds of times in order to change children’s behavior, and this takes a lot of work. Over the long run, however, this approach teaches children how to behave appropriately, builds essential skills for getting along with others, and fosters children’s positive self-image. This is a little like flossing your teeth — you need to keep doing it to realize the long-term benefits!



Incredible Years® Problem Solving Worksheet For Managing Family Problems

Problem Definition:

1. Problem defined: _____

2. Triggers of problem occurring: _____

3. How do I respond? (thoughts and feelings) _____

Goals:

4. What thoughts will I use? What positive outcome do I want to achieve? _____

Solutions:

5. What skills/strategies can I use to stay calm to solve this problem?
Special time with person to strengthen relationship _____

Pleasurable time strategy to fuel personal strength _____

Coping strategies I will use _____

Support I will give or get _____

6. Choose from the list below how you will reduce this problem occurring
Schedule: Do I have a predictable plan? _____

Distract/Redirection: How can I redirect or calm down or refuel myself so my response doesn't escalate? _____

What is the positive consequence if I complete my plan? _____

Carrying Out my Plan:

7. To whom should I communicate this plan? _____

8. Who can I call for support and check in with? _____

9. How will I take care of myself while this is going on? _____

Evaluating the Success of Solutions

10. How will I know I am making progress? What will be different? _____

11. How will I celebrate my success at achieving my goal? _____

Problem Solving for Adults

Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **WRITE DOWN** an interpersonal problem you attempt to problem solve, either by yourself or with a friend or spouse.
- **KEEP TRACK** of the result on the Problem-Solving Checklist handout.

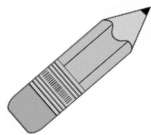
Note: Start with a relatively easy issue or a manageable problem (e.g., what movie to watch), before going into the more complex issues (e.g., dissatisfaction with life). After problem solving is completed, use the checklist to review your strengths and weaknesses.



To Read:

Handouts and *Chapter Seventeen, "Problem Solving between Adults"* in *The Incredible Years* book

Caution: Remember to continue special time!



HANDOUT

PROBLEM-SOLVING CHECKLIST

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Step 1: Schedule a meeting	___	___
Step 2: Define the problem	___	___
1. Focus on one problem at a time	___	___
2. Collaborate and be positive	___	___
3. State and be positive	___	___
4. Express feelings	___	___
5. Be future oriented	___	___
6. Make "I" statements	___	___
Step 3: Summarize the problem and goal in order to be sure everyone understands the problem Write down the problem.	___	___
<hr/> <hr/>		
Step 4: Brainstorm solutions	___	___
1. Remain open	___	___
2. Be wild, innovative, humorous	___	___
3. Increase quantity	___	___
4. Postpone details	___	___
Step 5: Evaluate solutions and make plans	___	___
1. Review the entire list	___	___
2. Evaluate each solution	___	___
3. Make realistic plans	___	___
4. Write down the plan	___	___
5. Schedule next meeting	___	___
6. Praise all efforts	___	___
Step 6: Schedule a follow up meeting	___	___
1. Reinforce progress	___	___
2. Refine problem solving plan	___	___

Evaluating your responses to the items on this checklist will highlight some of the ways you can improve your problem-solving meetings.



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

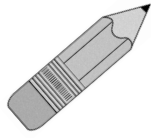
- **During the next week**, talk to your child's teacher about some aspect of his/her learning or behavior. Remember to be positive, specific, use "I" messages and to give clarification or feedback.
- **PRACTICE** expressing positive feedback or giving support to your child's teacher during the next week.
- **PRACTICE** asking for feedback when you are feeling defensive or when unsure what the other person is saying or how they are reacting to what you have said or done.



To Read:

Chapter Eighteen, *Working With Teachers to Prevent Problems in The Incredible Years*.

Caution: Remember to continue special time!



HANDOUT

PROBLEM-SOLVING CHECKLIST

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Step 1: Schedule a meeting	___	___
Step 2: Define the problem	___	___
1. Focus on one problem at a time	___	___
2. Collaborate and be positive	___	___
3. State and be positive	___	___
4. Express feelings	___	___
5. Be future oriented	___	___
6. Make "I" statements	___	___
Step 3: Summarize the problem and goal in order to be sure everyone understands the problem	___	___
Write down the problem.		

Step 4: Brainstorm solutions	___	___
1. Remain open	___	___
2. Be wild, innovative, humorous	___	___
3. Increase quantity	___	___
4. Postpone details	___	___
Step 5: Evaluate solutions and make plans	___	___
1. Review the entire list	___	___
2. Evaluate each solution	___	___
3. Make realistic plans	___	___
4. Write down the plan	___	___
5. Schedule next meeting	___	___
6. Praise all efforts	___	___
Step 6: Schedule a follow up meeting	___	___
1. Reinforce progress	___	___
2. Refine problem solving plan	___	___

Evaluating your responses to the items on this checklist will highlight some of the ways you can improve your problem-solving meetings.

REFRIGERATOR NOTES THINGS TO TALK ABOUT WITH TEACHERS

- Why is this objective important for my child?
- How can I help at home in order to support classroom goals and objectives?
- What can the school do to support my child since life is stressful at home? (Ask for support when experiencing family difficulties, e.g., divorce, death, a move, new sibling.)
- What other staff work with my child? (Involve all staff who work with your child.)
- How can I be sure I know what the homework is? How much time should he spend on homework each day?
- How can I help my child read more? Write? Do math? etc.
- How is my child getting along with other children? What are his areas of difficulty? Strengths? Who are his best friends?
- How can I be more involved supporting his education? Or be supportive to you?
- What books can be read at home that would support classroom goals?

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- How can I help at home in order to support classroom goals and objectives?
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- How is my child getting along with other children? What are his areas of difficulty? Strengths? Who are his best friends?
- How can I be more involved supporting his education? Or be supportive to you?
- What books can be read at home that would support classroom goals?

REFRIGERATOR NOTES POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS

- Don't interrupt, argue, give advice; listen attentively and validate.
- Don't store up grievances; speak up clearly with "I" messages.
- Express feelings (positive and negative).
- Stick to the point and avoid unloading multiple gripes.
- Edit: be polite and positive.
- Focus on fixing the problem and avoid blaming.
- Recognize the teacher's problem.
- Take one step at a time.
- Don't mind-read.
- Get and give feedback.
- Don't attack angrily.
- Make positive recommendations.
- Encourage conversation.
- Give consistent verbal and nonverbal messages.
- Give positive rather than negative commands.

Note: When was the last time you praised your child's teacher for his/her efforts?

REFRIGERATOR NOTES POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS

- Don't interrupt, argue, give advice; listen attentively and validate.
- Don't store up grievances; speak up clearly with "I" messages.
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- Don't mind-read.
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- Don't attack angrily.
- Make positive recommendations.
- Encourage conversation.
- Give consistent verbal and nonverbal messages.
- Give positive rather than negative commands.

Note: When was the last time you praised your child's teacher for his/her efforts?

REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT TALKING WITH TEACHERS WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS A PROBLEM



- Clarify the teacher's view of the problem.
- Listen attentively and validate her point of view. (Don't argue or interrupt.)
- Ask how the teacher is planning to address the problem.
- Brainstorm solutions—share strategies that work at home with your child.
- Share incentives and privileges that are motivating for your child.
- Express your support and appreciation for the teacher's efforts.
- Make a home/school plan that is coordinated (e.g., regular positive notes home from the teacher about your child's successes are reinforced by parents on a sticker chart).
- Give positive rather than negative comments and requests to teacher.
- Review with your child's teacher what you will do at home to support her efforts and clarify what she will do at school.
- Arrange a follow-up meeting to assess progress.
- Tell your teacher how and where it is easiest to contact you and ask when it is the optimal time to call your teacher.

Remember when talking with your child's teacher:

- Edit: be polite and positive.
- Stick to the point and avoid unloading multiple gripes.
- Focus on fixing the problem and not blaming.
- Take one step at a time—be realistic.
- Remain calm.
- Make positive recommendations.
- Express your confidence in your teacher's abilities.

Note: When was the last time you praised your child's teacher for his/her efforts?



EXAMPLES OF TEACHER BEHAVIORS TO PRAISE

- Being kind to my child
- Taking time to talk with me
- Helping my child catch up to the day's lesson when we're running late to school
- Sending a note home telling me something about my child's program and school
- Helping my child learn to problem solve
- Helping my child get along with other children
- Giving me suggestions about how to help my child learn
- Making the classroom a friendly place to come to
- Proudly putting my child's work on the wall
- Helping my child feel good about himself or herself
- Teaching my child social skills
- Setting up an incentive program for my child
- Calling me at home to tell me about my child's progress
- Inviting me to help with a field trip
- Keeping me informed about the curriculum
- Teaching and promoting anti-bullying
- Helping my child learn to take notes and how to manage multiple assignments

Teaching Your Child to Problem Solve



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- Choose a problem situation where your child seems distressed about something and try to use the problem-solving strategies discussed in this program. Keep track of your results on the Parent Record Sheet



To Read:

Chapter Eleven, *Teaching Children to Problem Solve*, in *The Incredible Years* book.

REMEMBER

One problem solving session will not teach your child all these skills; it will take hundreds of learning trials and much patience. There may even be times when the child is so upset or angry that he/she first needs to go to Time Out in order to cool down before a discussion can be helpful. Remember the first step is to get your children to generate solutions..

Caution: Remember to continue special time!

Parents Working Like Detectives: See What You've Learned!

Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

Make a list of what strategies you would use for the following misbehaviors. Add other misbehaviors you are wanting to manage.

Misbehavior

1. Hitting and shoving
2. Refusal to do what parent asks
3. Stealing
4. Lying
5. Refusing to do homework
6. Not being home after school on time
7. Smart talk/arguing
8. Resisting doing homework
9. Stomach aches and headaches
10. Inattentiveness and impulsivity
11. Leaving family room in a mess

Discipline Strategy

Parents Working Like Detectives: See What You've Learned!

Home Activities for the Week

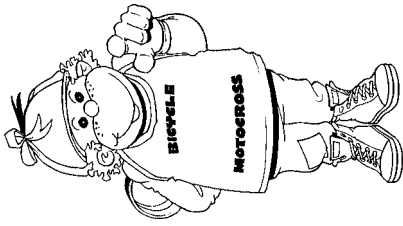


To Do:

Make a list of what strategies you would use for the following misbehaviors. Add other misbehaviors you are wanting to manage.

Misbehavior	Discipline Strategy
12. Criticizing / fighting with a sibling	_____
13. Chores not done	_____
14. Missing school bus	_____
15. Leaving bike, other toys, and other sports equipment outside	_____
16. Exploding in anger / screaming	_____
17. Watching too much TV or computer games	_____
18. Hiding notes from the teacher	_____
19. Acting like a younger child	_____
20. Refusing to go to bed at bedtime	_____
21. Phone calls to/from friends when homework/chores not finished	_____
22. Swearing	_____

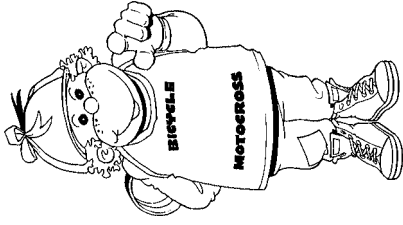
REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT PROBLEM SOLVING



- Talk about feelings.
- Help children define problem.
- Involve children in brainstorming possible solutions.
- Be positive and imaginative.
- Model creative solutions yourself.
- Encourage children to think through various consequences of different solutions.
- Remember it is the process of learning how to think about conflict that is critical, rather than getting correct answers.

What is the best solution?

REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT PROBLEM SOLVING



- Talk about feelings.
- Help children define problem.
- Involve children in brainstorming possible solutions.
- Be positive and imaginative.
- Model creative solutions yourself.
- Encourage children to think through various consequences of different solutions.
- Remember it is the process of learning how to think about conflict that is critical, rather than getting correct answers.

What is the best solution?

HANDOUT

PARENT RECORD SHEET: PROBLEM SOLVING

Write down where you attempted to problem solve with your child. To the best of your recollection, try to reconstruct the discussion: what was said and how you felt. Remember to do this problemsolving when you and your child are reasonably calm.

Step 1: Scheduling a Meeting (if you chose the family meeting assignment)

Step 2: Defining the Problem

Step 3: Problem Summarization and Goals

Step 4: Brainstorming Solutions

Step 5: Evaluating Solutions and Making a Plan

Step 6: Evaluation of Plan

HANDOUT
PROBLEM SOLVING CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
Step 1: Schedule a meeting	_____	_____
Step 2: Define the problem		
1. Focus on one problem at a time	_____	_____
2. Collaborate and be positive	_____	_____
3. State and be positive	_____	_____
4. Express feelings	_____	_____
5. Be future oriented	_____	_____
6. Make "I" statements	_____	_____
Step 3: Summarize the problem and goal in order to be sure everyone understands the problem	_____	_____
Step 4: Brainstorm solutions		
1. Remain open	_____	_____
2. Be wild, innovative, humorous	_____	_____
3. Increase quantity	_____	_____
4. Postpone details	_____	_____
Step 5: Evaluate solutions and make plans		
1. Review the entire list	_____	_____
2. Evaluate each solution	_____	_____
3. Make realistic plans	_____	_____
4. Write down the plan	_____	_____
5. Schedule next meeting	_____	_____
6. Praise all efforts	_____	_____
Step 6: Schedule a follow up meeting		
1. Reinforce progress	_____	_____
2. Refine problem solving plan	_____	_____

Evaluating your responses to the items on this checklist will highlight some of the ways you can improve your problem solving meetings.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR CHILDREN TO USE

Yell at him.*	Wait awhile.	Laugh at him.
Look sad or cry.	Ignore him; walk away.	Play somewhere else.
Take it.*	Hit him.*	Tell her not to be mad.
Ask him.	Say please.	Do something fun.
Trade something.	Apologize.	Get help from your parent or teacher.
Talk about your feelings.	Beg him.	Offer to share.
Get another one.	Take turns.	Flip a coin.
Admit mistake.	Calm down first.	Tell the truth.
Give compliment.	Be a good sport.	Say "no."
Stop your anger.	Be brave.	Forgive.

*These are inappropriate solutions. Encourage children to think of consequences and to make another choice with a better consequence.



HANDOUT
PARENT RECORD SHEET: PROBLEM SOLVING WITH YOUR CHILD

<u>Problem Situation</u>	<u>What is the problem?</u>	<u>What are some solutions?</u>	<u>What is a good choice?</u>
e.g. two children fighting over a bike	"I'm angry because Jessie won't share the bike."	Ask to ride the bike. Offer to take turns. Wait until he's finished.	Is it safe? fair? lead to good feelings?

Describe a problem you tried to problem solve with your child: what was said and how you felt.

(1)

(2)

Evaluating Solutions



Is my solution safe?



Is my solution fair?



Does my solution lead to good feelings?



Incredible Years® Problem Solving Worksheet For Managing Challenging Behaviors!

Problem Definition:

1. My child's challenging behavior: _____

2. What are the triggers/precipitants of my child's misbehavior? (developmental problem, not enough sleep, not getting what he wants, a family transition or stress, low frustration tolerance, etc.)

3. How do I usually respond to this misbehavior? (Do I give it attention? Do I get angry?)

Goals:

4. What is my goal? What positive opposite behavior do I want to see instead? _____

Solutions:

5. What skills/strategies can I use from the bottom of the Pyramid to support this positive behavior?

Play/Special Time: What kind of play or special time might best help my child here? (Remember, it is best if it is child-led.) (persistence, academic, social, or emotion coaching) _____

Praise: What behaviors can I praise and how? (Remember they should be the "positive opposites" of the behaviors you want to decrease.) _____

Stickers and Rewards: How can I reward this good behavior? What incentives will motivate my child? _____

6. Choose from the list below those responses from the top of the pyramid than can be used to reduce this misbehavior.

Routines: Do I have a predictable routine for this problem? _____

Distraction/Redirection: How can I distract or redirect my child before misbehavior escalates? _____

Ignore: What part of this behavior could I ignore? _____

What will I say to myself while I ignore it? _____

Consequence: What natural or logical consequence can I use to teach my child to change this behavior? _____

Calm Down Strategies: What calm down strategies can I teach my child? (use of turtle shell, deep breathing, positive self-talk "I can do it, I can calm down," use of the calm-down thermometer) _____

Carrying Out my Plan:

7. To whom should I communicate this plan? (teachers, grandparents, partners, etc.) _____

8. Who can I call for support and to check in? _____

9. How will I take care of myself while this is going on? _____

Evaluating the Success of Solutions

10. How will I know I am making progress? What will be different? _____

11. How will I celebrate my child's success? As well as my own? _____

Congratulations! You have a plan to change your child's behavior! Remember, it can take three weeks or more to see changes, so don't give up!



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **Have** a family meeting where you plan something fun to do as a family. Use the problem-solving steps. Keep track of the results in the Record Sheet Handout.



To Read:

Chapter Twelve, *Helping Children Learn to Regulate Their Emotions* in *The Incredible Years* book.

Review Chapter 16 *Effective Communication Skills* in *The Incredible Years* book.

Caution: Remember to continue special time!

HANDOUT

PARENT RECORD SHEET: PROBLEM-SOLVING

Write down a situation you attempt to problem solve either by yourself or with a partner (if possible audio tape).

Step 1: Scheduling a Meeting

Step 2: Defining the Problem

Step 3: Problem Summarization and Goals

Step 4: Brainstorming Solutions

Step 5: Evaluating Solutions and Making a Plan

Step 6: Evaluation of Plan

HANDOUT
PROBLEM-SOLVING CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
Step 1: Schedule a meeting	_____	_____
Step 2: Define the problem	_____	_____
1. Focus on one problem at a time	_____	_____
2. Collaborate and be positive	_____	_____
3. State and be positive	_____	_____
4. Express feelings	_____	_____
5. Be future oriented	_____	_____
6. Make "I" statements	_____	_____
Step 3: Summarize the problem and goal in order to be sure everyone understands the problem	_____	_____
Step 4: Brainstorm solutions	_____	_____
1. Remain open	_____	_____
2. Be wild, innovative, humorous	_____	_____
3. Increase quantity	_____	_____
4. Postpone details	_____	_____
Step 5: Evaluate solutions and make plans	_____	_____
1. Review the entire list	_____	_____
2. Evaluate each solution	_____	_____
3. Make realistic plans	_____	_____
4. Write down the plan	_____	_____
5. Schedule next meeting	_____	_____
6. Praise all efforts	_____	_____
Step 6: Schedule a follow up meeting	_____	_____
1. Reinforce progress	_____	_____
2. Refine problem solving plan	_____	_____

Evaluating your responses to the items on this checklist will highlight some of the ways you can improve your problem-solving meetings.

REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT FAMILY PROBLEM SOLVING

- Schedule a meeting to problem solve.
- Focus on one problem at a time.
- Collaborate, discussing problems mutually.
- State problem clearly.
- Express feelings but don't criticize or blame.
- Admit role in problem.
- Be future-oriented.
- Be brief.
- State desired behavior.
- Make "I" statements.

Stating the Goal

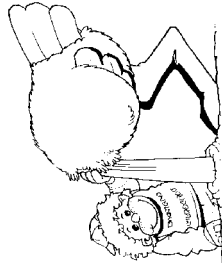
- Summarize the problem.
- State the goal in realistic terms.

Brainstorming

- Remain open—don't judge or criticize suggestions.
- Encourage imaginative suggestions—as many as possible.
- Be future-oriented.
- Postpone details.

Making Plans

- Review your list.
- Evaluate each solution realistically.
- Write down plan.
- Schedule next meeting.
- Praise your efforts.



Problem sharing

REFRIGERATOR NOTES ABOUT FAMILY PROBLEM SOLVING

- Schedule a meeting to problem solve.
- Focus on one problem at a time.
- Collaborate, discussing problems mutually.
- State problem clearly.
- Express feelings but don't criticize or blame.
- Admit role in problem.
- Be future-oriented.
- Be brief.
- State desired behavior.
- Make "I" statements.

Stating the Goal

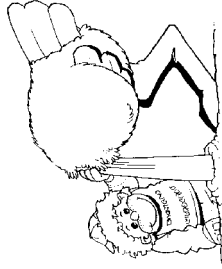
- Summarize the problem.
- State the goal in realistic terms.

Brainstorming

- Remain open—don't judge or criticize suggestions.
- Encourage imaginative suggestions—as many as possible.
- Be future-oriented.
- Postpone details.

Making Plans

- Review your list.
- Evaluate each solution realistically.
- Write down plan.
- Schedule next meeting.
- Praise your efforts.



Problem sharing