

You Decide Workbooks™

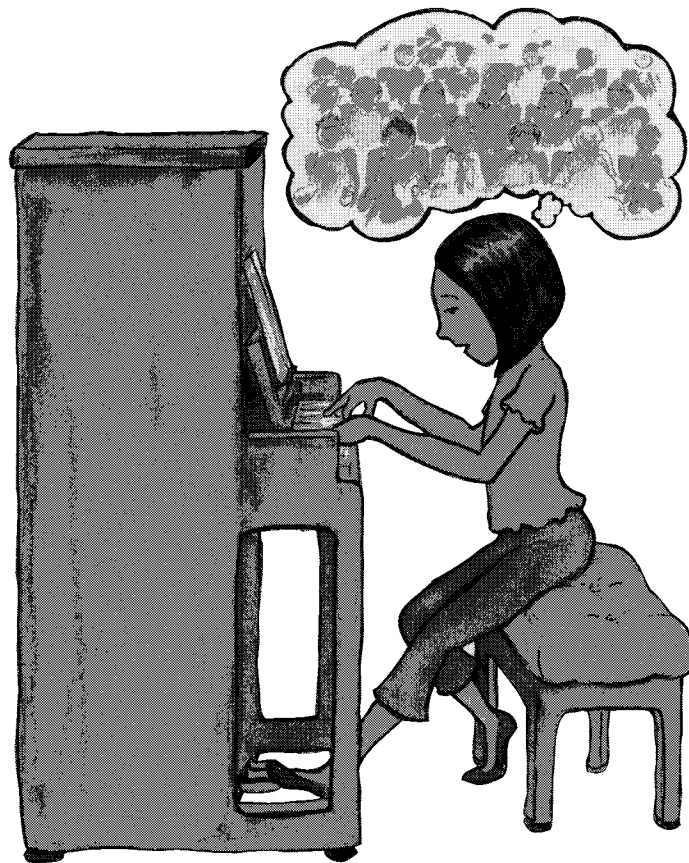
You Decide About
**Dealing
With Fears**



By Lawrence E. Shapiro Ph.D.

You Decide Workbooks™

You Decide About
Dealing
With Fears



By Lawrence E. Shapiro Ph.D.

You Decide Workbooks: You Decide About Dealing With Fears
By Lawrence E. Shapiro, Ph.D.

Childswork/Childsplay publishes products for mental health professionals, teachers, and parents who wish to help children with their developmental, social, and emotional growth. For questions and comments, call 1-800-962-1141.

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To the Adults Reading This Book

This workbook is designed to help children learn twelve techniques to deal with their fears and anxieties, with the support of a caring adult. These techniques are commonly used in treatment programs for fearful and anxious children.

Each activity consists of five parts:

- An explanation of the technique
- An opportunity to practice the technique
- A fill-in-the-blank story about the technique
- An activity to create positive thoughts
- An art activity that helps reinforce the technique by stimulating a child's imagination

While the activities are sequenced in a logical order that follows their typical presentation in treatment programs, you may wish to introduce them to a child in a different order. There is no right or wrong way to use this book, as long as you respect the right of children to understand and cope with their problems at their own pace.

Fears and anxieties are serious problems for many children, and the best way to help them is through a comprehensive treatment plan. Early intervention can make a lifelong difference.

Sincerely,

Lawrence E. Shapiro, Ph.D.



You Can Learn to Relax

The most important thing you can do to help you deal with your fears and worries is to relax. That sounds easy, doesn't it? Just kick back, chill out, take a deep breath, and let your worries go!

But even though it sounds easy, most children know that relaxing isn't easy at all when you are upset and scared. When you are afraid or worried, your body doesn't want to relax. Your heart beats faster, your blood pressure rises, you breathe quickly, and you may even sweat or shake.

You can learn to relax—even when you are really afraid or worried. Millions of people who have fears and worries have done it, and it really helps. All you have to do is practice.

You Can Learn to Relax

How to Relax

Here's what you need to do:

1. Find a quiet place to sit.
2. Breathe in and out deeply.
3. With each breath, relax your muscles a little more.
4. Pay attention to each muscle group as you relax. Relax your neck, your shoulders, your chest, your stomach, your arms, your hands, your hips, your legs, and your feet.
5. Create a picture in your mind of a quiet, relaxing place, like a beach or a field of flowers. Maybe you can think about yourself floating on a cloud.
6. If you like, you can also play quiet music while you relax.
7. Relax for about ten minutes, or until you feel very calm and peaceful.

You Can Learn to Relax

Finding Time to Relax: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Sarah was afraid of many things. The thing she was most afraid of was _____.

Whenever Sarah _____, she was afraid.

Whenever Sarah thought about _____, she was afraid.

When Sarah was afraid, her body went wild.

Her heart felt like _____.

Her head felt like _____.

Her whole body felt like _____.

But then Sarah learned how to calm herself and relax her body when she was afraid.

Her favorite place to relax was _____.

Her favorite time to practice relaxing was _____.

The thing that helped her relax most was _____.

After learning that relaxing could calm her body down, Sarah said to herself:

You Can Learn to Relax

Talking to Yourself About Remembering to Relax

Here are some things people say to themselves when they want to remind themselves to relax:

“If I relax, I’ll feel better.”

“When my body calms down, I’ll feel calmer.”

“I can control my fears and worries.”

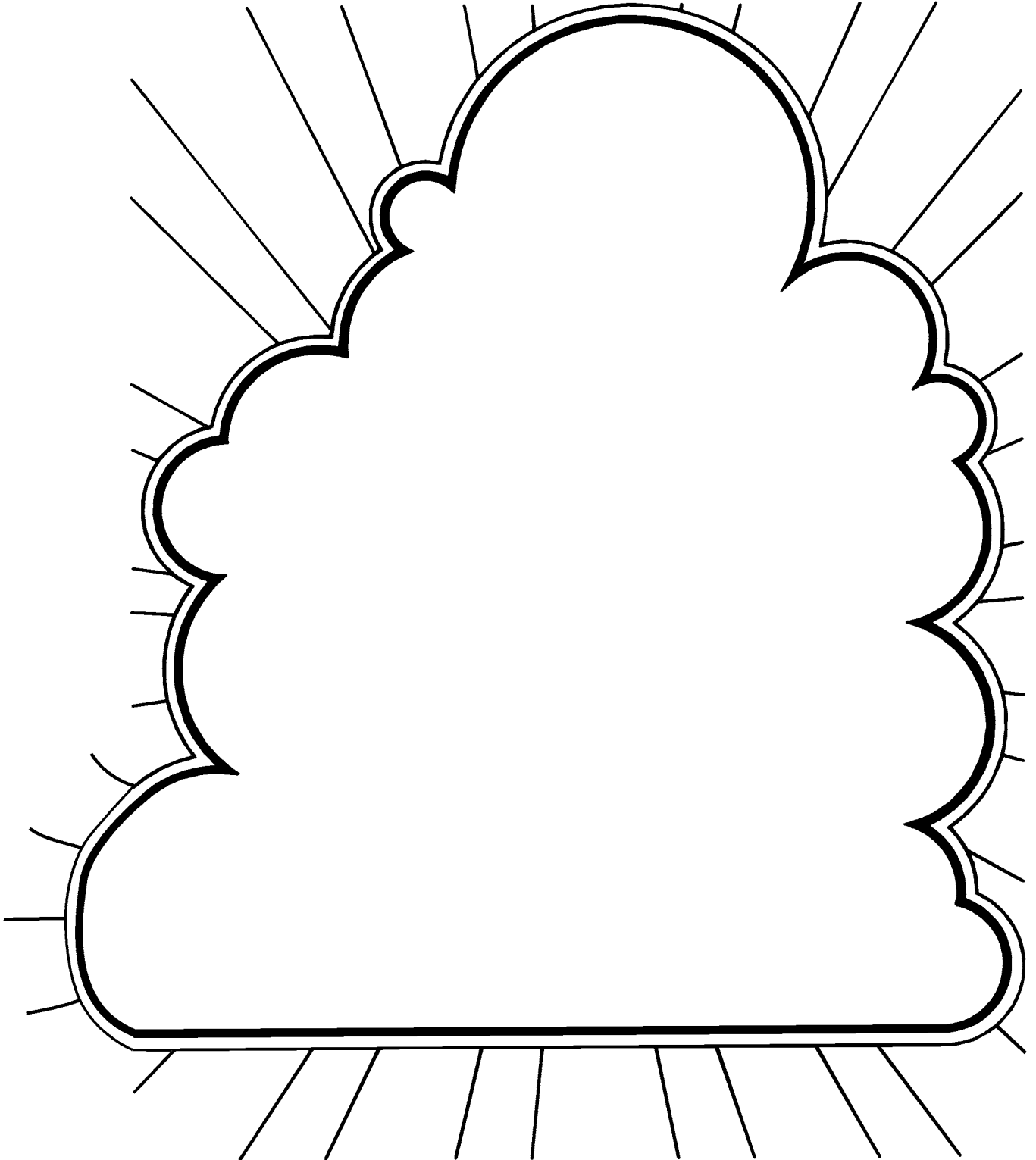
In the spaces below, write other things you can say to yourself when you want to relax.

The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is a simple outline with a small tail pointing downwards and to the right. The bubbles are intended for the user to write their own relaxation reminders in.

You Can Learn to Relax

Imagine Yourself Relaxed

Draw a picture of yourself lying on the cloud below. Try to make yourself look as relaxed as possible.



2

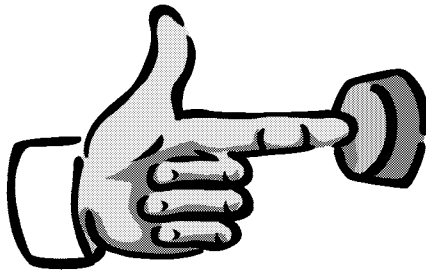
You Can Learn to Calm Yourself When You Are Afraid

After you have practiced relaxation for a while, your brain will learn to control your body instead of letting your fears and worries control your body, and you can learn to calm yourself when you are afraid.

Imagine you have a little button somewhere on your body. Where should it be? When you push your Relaxation Button, your body and mind remember how it feels to be calm and peaceful, and you are automatically relaxed.

You Can Learn to Calm Yourself When You Are Afraid

How to Push Your Relaxation Button



Just imagine that you are pushing a magic button that automatically makes you feel more relaxed. Practice pushing your Relaxation Button in different situations.

- ✓ Practice pushing your Relaxation Button when you get up in the morning.
- ✓ Practice pushing your Relaxation Button when you go to sleep at night.
- ✓ Practice pushing your Relaxation Button when you are taking a walk.
- ✓ Practice pushing your Relaxation Button when you are sitting at dinner.
- ✓ Practice pushing your Relaxation Button when you are sitting in your classroom.
- ✓ Practice pushing your Relaxation Button when you are running.
- ✓ Practice pushing your Relaxation Button when you are afraid or worried.

And remember, practice makes perfect.

You Can Learn to Calm Yourself When You Are Afraid

Pushing the Relaxation Button: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Brian was afraid of _____.

Whenever he thought about _____, he got very upset.

His body felt like _____.

Then Brian learned that he had an imaginary but magical Relaxation Button. He could just push it, and then he would feel relaxed.

Brian's Relaxation Button was on his _____.

One day, Brian was going to _____.

He saw that _____, and he was very upset.

He remembered that he had a Relaxation Button.

He pressed the button, and immediately he felt _____.

Brian's Relaxation Button worked so well that he said to himself: _____

You Can Learn to Calm Yourself When You Are Afraid

Talking to Yourself About Relaxing When You Are Afraid

Here are some things kids say to themselves about pushing their Relaxation Buttons when they are afraid.

“I can feel calm even when I’m afraid.”

“I can control my body.”

“I can ignore my fears and worries.”

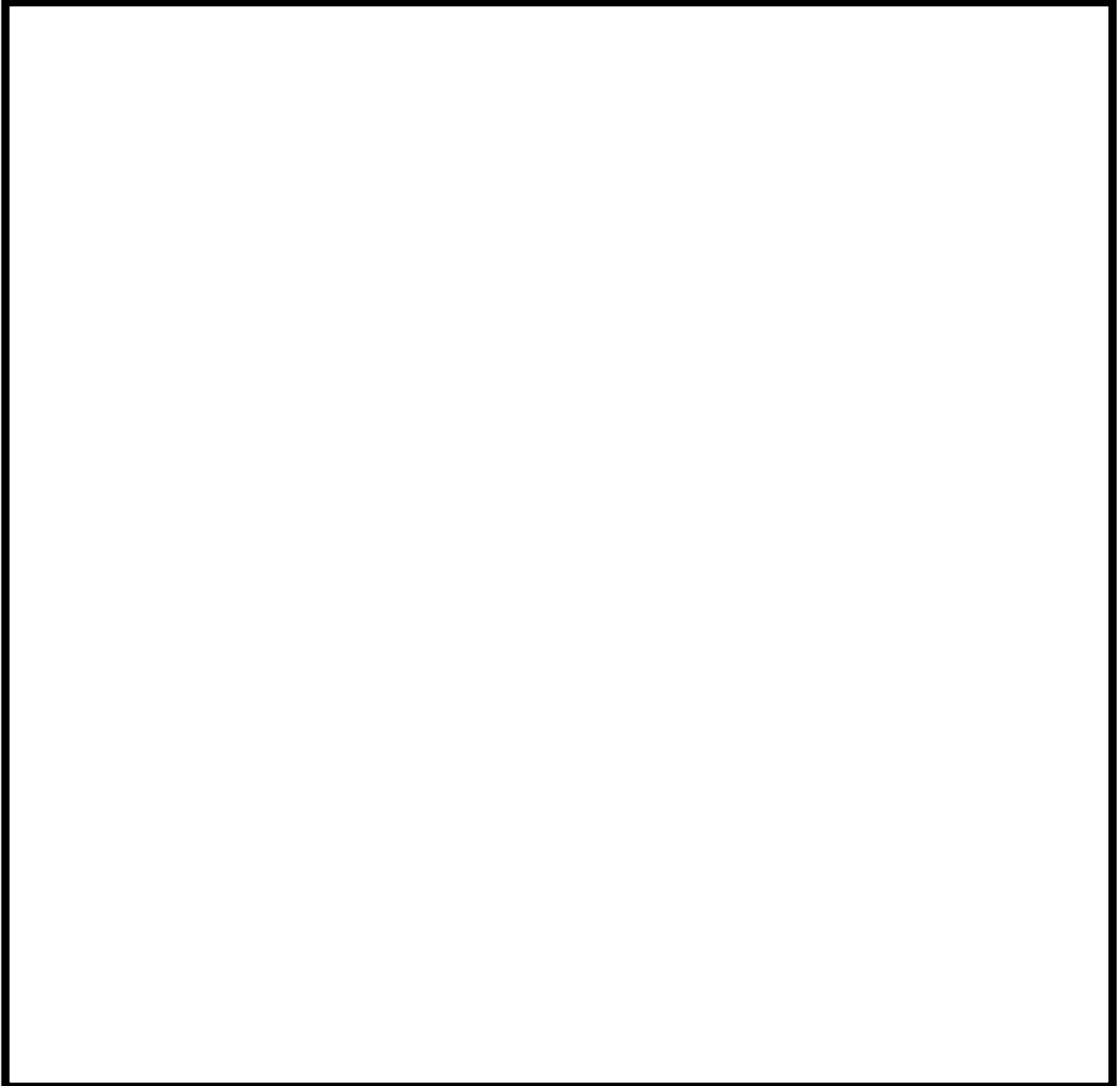
In the spaces below, write other things you can say to yourself to help you remember that you are in control of your body and can calm yourself if you want to.

The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is a simple outline with a small tail pointing downwards and to the right. The bubbles are intended for the student to write their own self-reminder phrases in.

You Can Learn to Calm Yourself When You Are Afraid

Imagine Yourself Calm

In the space below, draw a picture of the scariest monster you can think of. This monster represents all your fears and worries.



Now look at the monster and practice relaxing. Even though it used to make you afraid, you can feel calm if you relax when you look at that scary monster.

3

You Can Learn to Face Your Fears in Small Steps

Facing your fears and worries has to happen in small steps. It takes time, just like:

- learning to play the piano
- learning to play basketball
- learning a foreign language

When something is hard to do, you can break it into small steps to make it easier. If it is still hard, you can break it into even smaller steps!

Here's an example:

Kyle was really afraid of dogs. Whenever he saw a dog, he ran the other way. Kyle learned to deal with his fear of dogs in small steps.

First he looked at pictures of dogs (and he pushed his Relaxation Button to keep calm).

Then he looked out the window at the dog next door (and he pushed his Relaxation Button to keep calm).

Then he sat on the swing in front of his house and looked at the dog next door (and he pushed his Relaxation Button to keep calm).

Then he walked to the edge of his yard and looked at the dog next door (and he pushed his Relaxation Button to keep calm).

Then he went with his father and stood very near the dog (and he pushed his Relaxation Button to keep calm).

Then he held his father's hand while he petted the dog (and he pushed his Relaxation Button to keep calm).

Then his father walked back a few steps while Kyle still petted the dog (and he pushed his Relaxation Button to keep calm).

His neighbor's dog was very small. Kyle thought that he might try this with a little larger dog next time.

You Can Learn to Face Your Fears in Small Steps

How to Break Your Fears into Small Steps

Can you be like Kyle? Can you break your fears into small steps?

Think of something you are afraid of.

Now think of how you can take small steps to deal with that fear.

Write these steps below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____

You Can Learn to Face Your Fears in Small Steps

Making Fears Smaller: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Ellie was very afraid of _____.

She never ever wanted to _____.

But her mother said that Ellie would have to _____.

Ellie felt sick to her stomach when she thought about this.

Ellie's mother said that she didn't have to face her fears all at once. She could do it in small steps.

The first step was to _____.

The second step was to _____.

The third step was to _____.

Ellie's mother said, "If you have a problem with one of these steps, you can _____."

Ellie decided that she needed _____ steps to face her fear.

The last step was _____.

It took Ellie _____ (days/months) to get to the last step, but when she did, she was very very proud of herself.

You Can Learn to Face Your Fears in Small Steps

Talking to Yourself As You Take Each Step

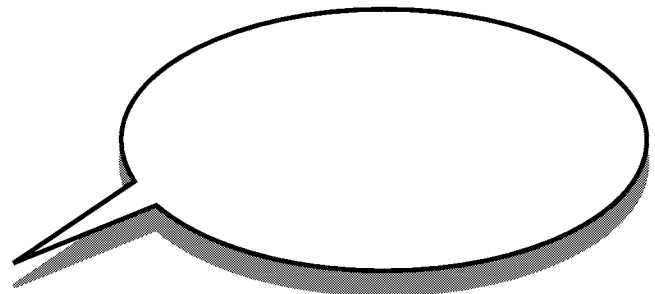
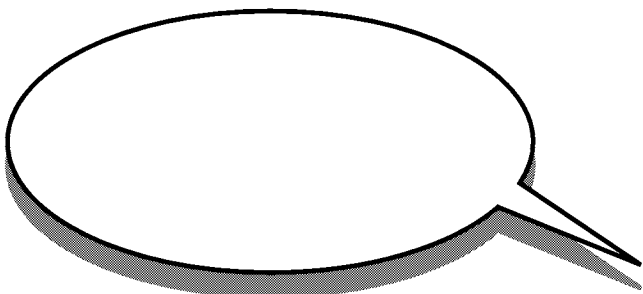
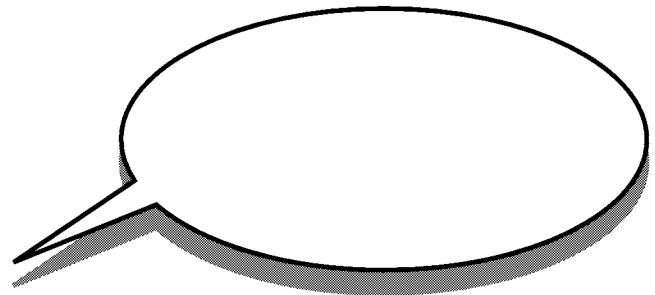
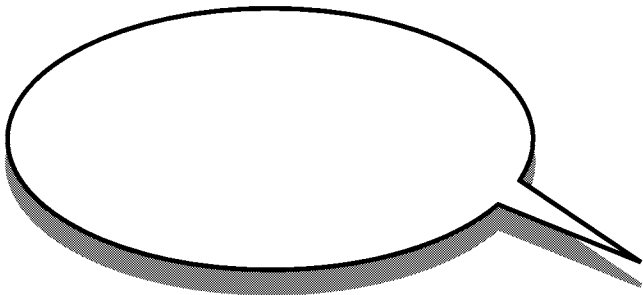
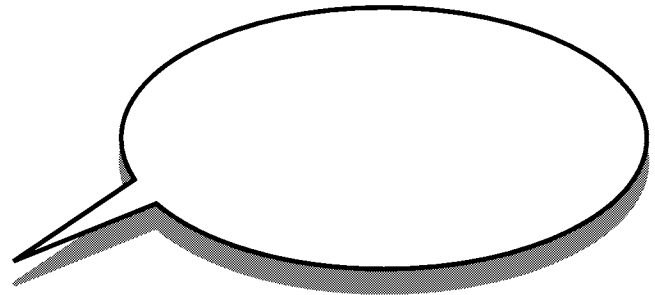
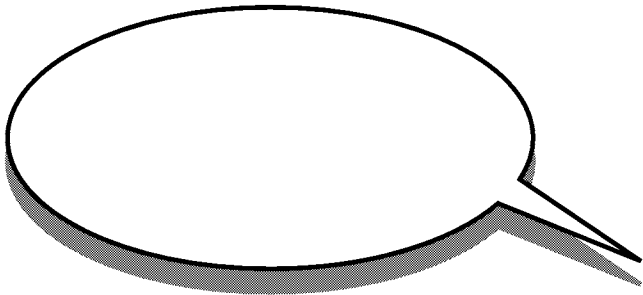
Many kids learn that it is easier to take a new step when facing a fear if they say encouraging things to themselves. Some of the things kids say to themselves are:

“I can do it.”

“Just keep trying.”

“I won’t quit.”

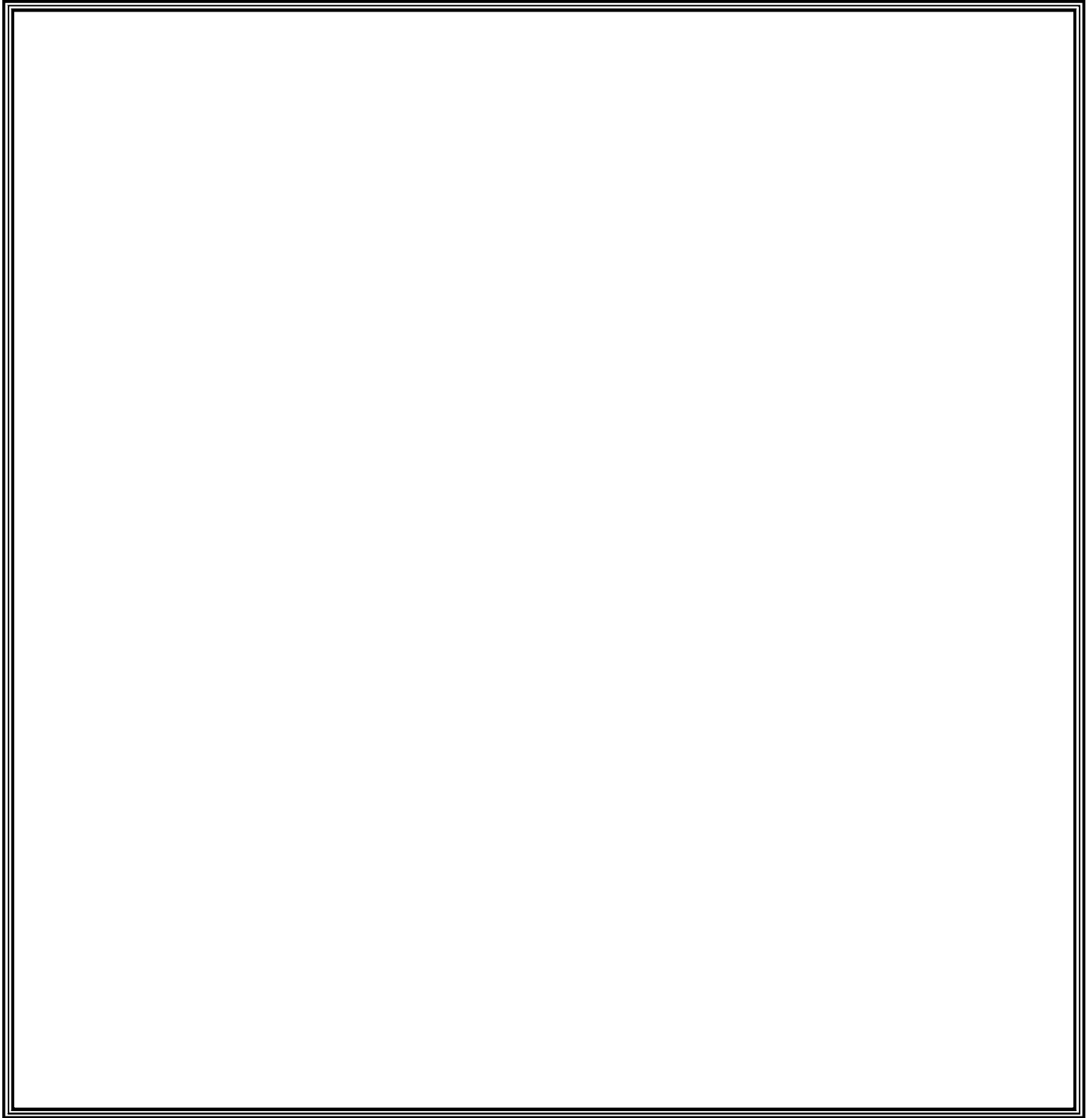
In the spaces below, write other things you can say to yourself to encourage you to face your fears.



You Can Learn to Face Your Fears in Small Steps

Imagine Yourself on a Road to Facing Your Fears

In the space below, draw a picture of yourself on a road to a place where you aren't afraid. What does that road look like? Are there obstacles on the road? Are there road signs? Can you see the place you want to get to?



4

You Can Learn Which Fears to Face First

Most people who are afraid or worried have several things that bother them.

For example:

Jessica was afraid of taking tests because she was worried she would fail.

Jessica was afraid of talking in front of her class because she thought she would sound stupid.

Jessica was afraid of riding her bike because she thought she might fall and break her arm.

Jessica was afraid of the dark, and she wouldn't let her parents turn out the lights at bedtime.

You may be like Jessica and have many things that bother you, but you can't learn to face all of them at once.

What is the first fear or worry you want to deal with? Most people start with the fear or worry that has the least power. When you start with the least of your fears or worries, it will be easier to succeed.

You Can Learn Which Fears to Face First

How to Decide Which Fears to Face First

Make a list of all your fears and worries below.

Then put a number next to each one, with 1 = This bothers me just a little and 10 = This bothers me a lot.

Choose one of the fears or worries you listed with the lowest numbers to be the one you will work on first.

You Can Learn Which Fears to Face First

Deciding Which Fears to Face First: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Tyrone had lots of things he was afraid of.

When he woke up, he thought about _____.

When he went to school, he thought about _____.

At night, he thought about _____.

But some of the things that Tyrone worried about were not as important as others.

The thing that really upset Tyrone was _____.

The thing that upset him just a little was _____.

And something that hardly upset him at all was _____.

Tyrone was learning how to handle his fears better, and he thought that the best fear to start with was _____.

It took Tyrone _____ (days/months), but he learned to deal with this fear, and then it hardly bothered him at all.

He said to himself: _____

You Can Learn Which Fears to Face First

Talking to Yourself When You Feel Overwhelmed

Many children with fears feel overwhelmed by all the things that upset them. But when they learn to concentrate on things they can do, they usually feel much better. Some of the things that kids say to help themselves when they feel overwhelmed are:

“I can be more positive about what I can do.”

“I don’t have to be perfect.”

“I can be proud of what I have accomplished.”

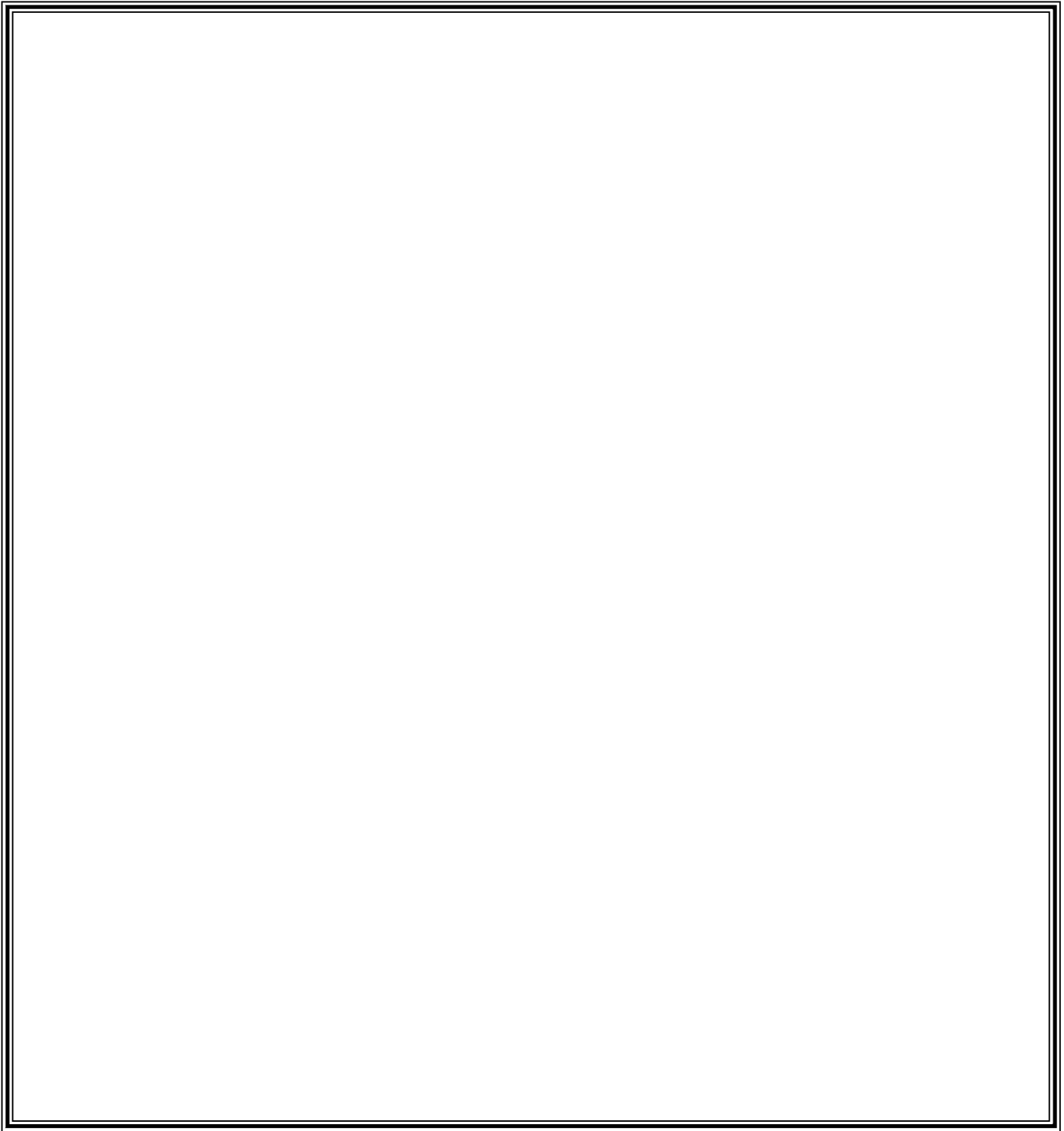
In the spaces below, write other things you can say to yourself when you feel overwhelmed.

The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is a simple outline with a small tail pointing downwards and to the right. The bubbles are intended for the user to write their own self-talk phrases in.

You Can Learn Which Fears to Face First

Imagine You Get a Trophy for Facing Your Fears

Draw a picture of a trophy or some other prize you might get for facing your fears. Make sure to put your name on the trophy in big, bold letters.



5

You Can Learn to Keep Track of Your Progress

When you are learning something new, it is important to keep track of how you are doing.

For example:

When you are learning to play baseball, you can keep track of how many hits you get.

When you are learning math, you can take tests to see how much you know.

When you learn a new computer game, you can keep track of the level you get to.

It is also important to keep track of your progress in facing your fears. It is easy to do with just a simple card.

You Can Learn to Keep Track of Your Progress

How to Keep Track of Your Progress in Facing Your Fears

Carry the card below with you. When you are doing something that you are afraid of or worried about, put a check mark by the number that indicates how calm or how fearful you feel. You can put in as many check marks as you like.

1 = very calm	_____
2 = somewhat calm	_____
3 = mostly calm	_____
4 = fearful or worried	_____
5 = very fearful or worried	_____

You Can Learn to Keep Track of Your Progress

Keeping Track of Your Fears: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Jack was learning how to face his fears.

The fear that he was working on was _____.

When he first thought about _____, he felt _____ (put a number from the scale on the previous page).

But when he _____, he could feel very calm again.

Jack found that the thing that made him very fearful was _____
_____.

But when he said _____ to himself, he could reduce that fear to a number _____.

The more Jack kept track of his progress, the better he felt about himself.

One day, he was so happy that he thought: _____

_____.

You Can Learn to Keep Track of Your Progress

Talking to Yourself to Help You Keep Calm

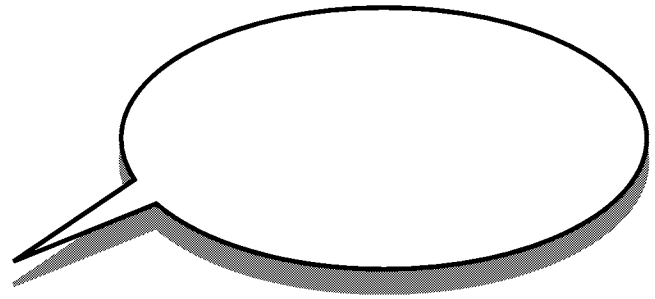
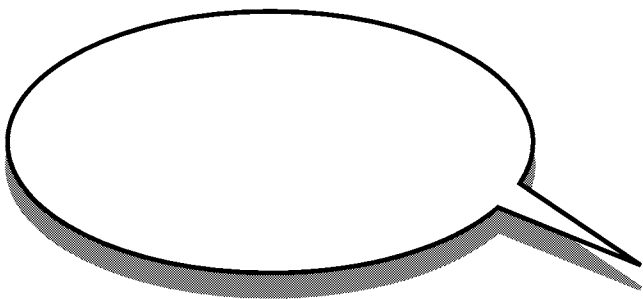
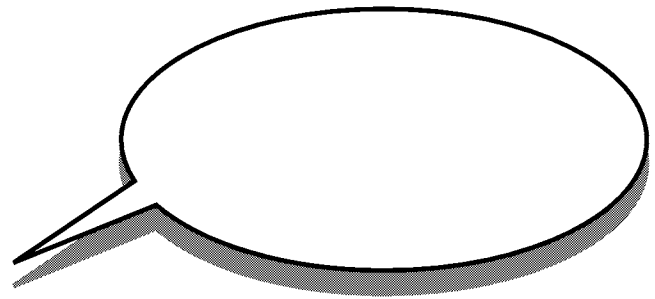
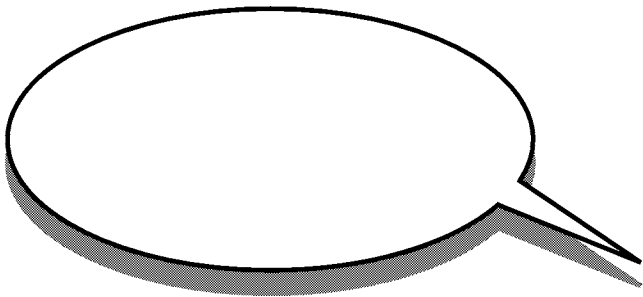
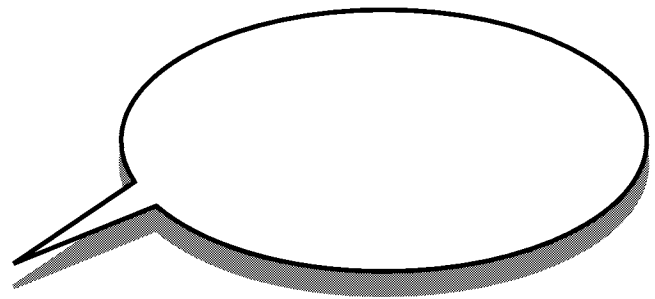
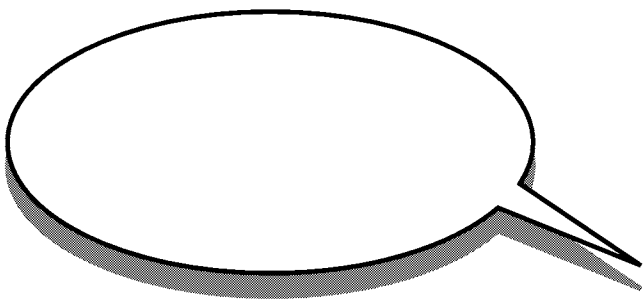
Many children find that they can reduce their fears by saying positive things to themselves. Some of the things they say are:

“I can get through this if I count to ten and take a deep breath.”

“This is really no big deal.”

“I can do this if I try.”

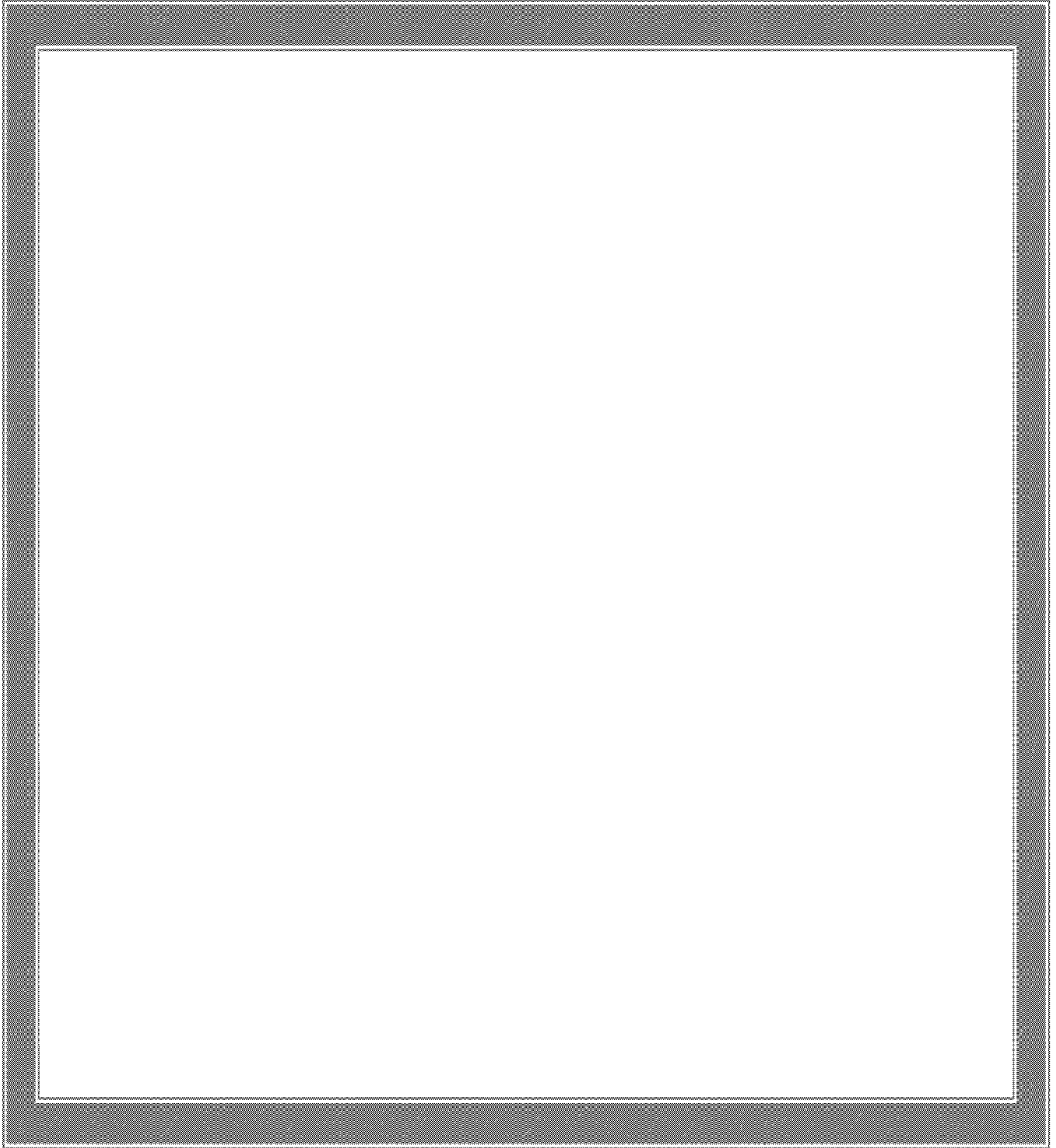
In the spaces below, write other things you can say to help calm yourself when you feel afraid.



You Can Learn to Keep Track of Your Progress

Imagine How You Look When You Are Totally Happy

In the frame below, draw a picture of yourself doing something that always makes you happy.



6

You Can Learn To Control Your Feelings

Learning to talk about your feelings will help you face your fears.

People have many different feelings, although sometimes it may seem like one or two feelings take up all the room in your mind.

You may feel that you are afraid and worried all the time, but you are probably also:

- happy
 - sad
 - angry
 - proud
 - concerned
 - surprised
- ... and so on.

Many people don't realize that they can control their feelings. The more you learn to control your feelings, the easier it will be to face new challenges and deal with your problems. You will always have many different feelings, but you don't have to let your feelings determine what you do.

You Can Learn to Control Your Feelings

How to Control Your Feelings

The best way to learn to control your feelings is to talk about them more. That sounds easy, doesn't it? But many children (and many adults, too) have a hard time thinking and talking about what is bothering them.

There are two parts to talking about feelings: telling your feelings to others and listening to what others have to say about their feelings.

Sit down with some friends or family members and have each person, including you, answer the questions below. Then make up ten new questions for each person to answer.

1. Talk about a time when you were really happy.
2. What is one thing that always makes you sad?
3. What is the funniest joke you ever heard?
4. What is something you worry about?
5. Describe a time when you were really surprised.
6. Describe a really bad day you recently had.
7. Talk about a time when you were brave.
8. Talk about a time when you felt sorry for someone.
9. What do you do to cheer yourself up when you are feeling down?
10. Talk about something you are really excited about.

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____
 6. _____
 7. _____
 8. _____
 9. _____
 10. _____
-

You Can Learn to Control Your Feelings

Talking About Feelings: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Veronica was very shy and found it hard to talk about her feelings.

She wished that she could tell her mother _____
_____.

She wished that she could tell her best friend _____
_____.

She wished that she could tell her teacher _____
_____.

When Veronica went to a party, all she could think was _____
_____.

One day, Veronica looked very sad and her mother said _____
_____.

Veronica didn't want her mother to know _____, but she decided to tell her anyway.

Veronica felt better when she talked to her mother.

She thought _____.

Slowly, Veronica started to tell more people about what she was feeling. With each conversation, she felt a little better about herself, and she learned about others, too. The best conversation she had was:

You Can Learn to Control Your Feelings

Talking to Yourself When You Have Feelings That Bother You

When you are feeling sad or upset, you may be able to talk yourself into feeling better. A lot of people do this by saying things like:

“I’m just having a bad day.”

“I’m going to find something to cheer myself up.”

“I don’t have to feel this way if I don’t want to.”

In the spaces below, write other things you could say to yourself if you were sad or upset.

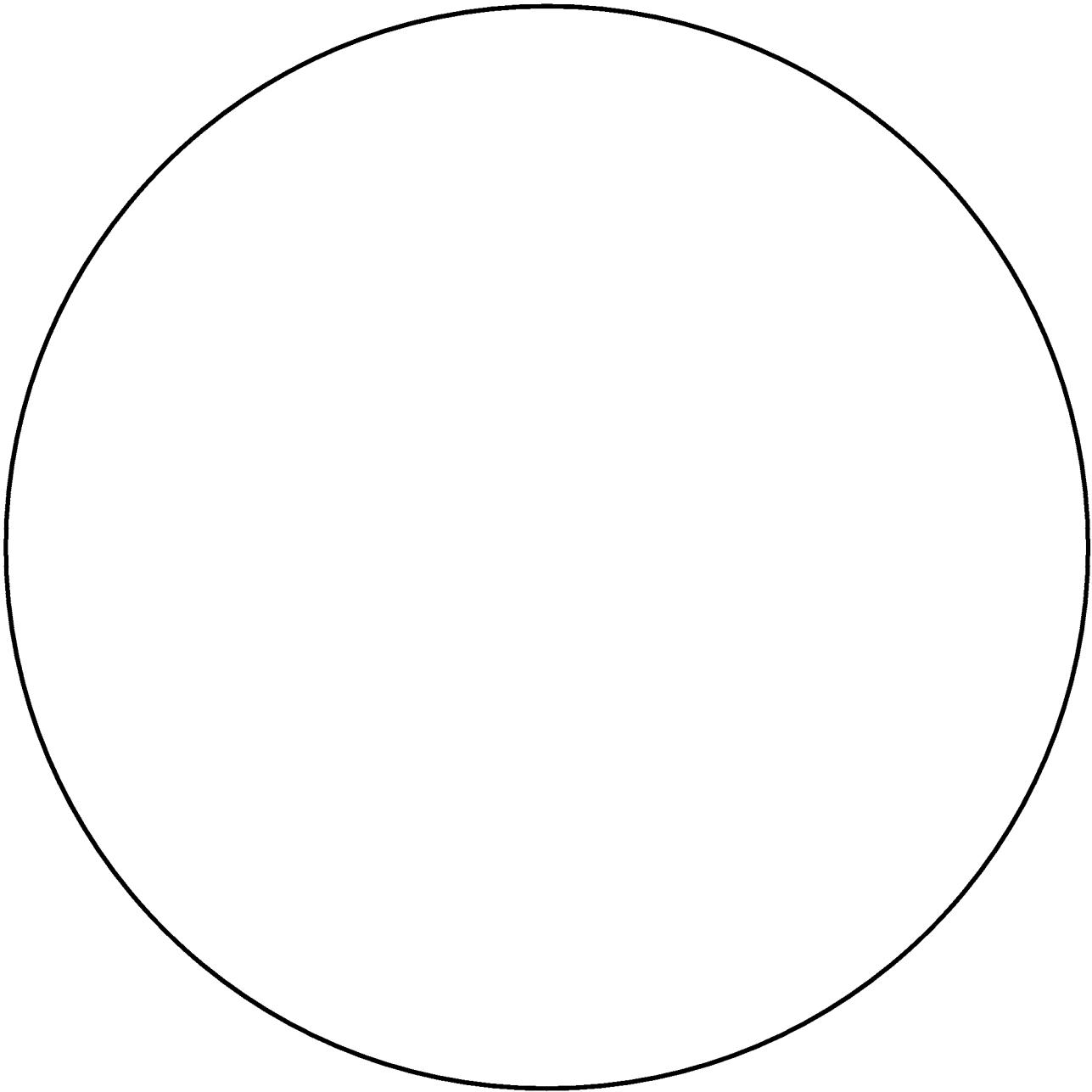
The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is a rounded rectangle with a small tail pointing to the right. The bubbles are intended for writing self-talk phrases.

You Can Learn to Control Your Feelings

Imagine You Are Made of Feelings

Some people think that different colors represent different feelings. Yellow might be happiness, red might be anger, and black might be sadness. Choose six crayons and decide what feeling each color represents.

Now pretend the circle below represents last week. Completely fill it with color to show how much of each feeling you had.



7

You Can Learn to Change Your Fearful Thoughts

When you are afraid or worried about something, you are probably thinking many things, but many of these things may not be true. Your imagination can work in funny ways when you are afraid. It can make you believe things might happen that are actually very unlikely or would not be really important if they did happen.

For example, Jennifer was afraid of speaking up in class. She didn't want to raise her hand even when she knew the answer to a question. She thought:

- I might say something really stupid.
- My teacher might make fun of me.
- The other kids might laugh at me.
- I might trip and fall down if I have to walk up to the blackboard.
- I might not be able to speak at all.

When Jennifer learned to overcome her fear and started to talk more in class, none of these things happened at all!

One of the ways Jennifer learned to overcome her fear of speaking up in class was by catching her negative thoughts about how things might go wrong. Then she would change them to positive thoughts based in reality, which means the way things really are.

You can do this, too!

You Can Learn to Change Your Fearful Thoughts

How to Change Your Negative Thinking

The best way to change your negative thinking about your fears is to understand which of your thoughts are not likely to happen or would be unimportant if they ever did happen. Write these negative thoughts in the chart below, and then turn them into positive thoughts based on what is more likely to happen.

Here is an example.

Negative Thought: *If I'm away from my mother, something might happen to her.*

Positive Thought: *My mother can take care of herself, and she will be fine.*

Negative Thought	Positive Thought

You Can Learn to Change Your Fearful Thoughts

Changing Negative Thoughts: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Nina was afraid of _____.

She thought many terrible things, such as _____

But Nina had a counselor who told her that negative thinking would keep her fearful and worried. He told her that she could change her negative thoughts into positive ones.

Instead of thinking _____,

Nina thought _____.

Instead of thinking _____,

Nina thought _____.

Instead of thinking _____,

Nina thought _____.

Nina's counselor told her that she had to catch her negative thoughts as soon as they came into her mind. He said she should pay attention to what she was thinking when she was afraid.

The most common thought that Nina had was _____.

She counted how many times she had this thought in one day, and she found that she had it _____ times. After that, every time she had this negative thought, she changed it to a positive one. Within a few weeks, Nina found that she only had the negative thought _____ times a day.

The more Nina learned to change her negative thoughts into positive ones, the better she felt.

Then one day she said to herself _____.

You Can Learn to Change Your Fearful Thoughts

Talking to Yourself About Positive Thoughts

The more positive thoughts you have the better. Here are some positive thoughts that can help children when they start to get worried.

“That won’t really happen.”

“That fear is just in my imagination.”

“Being worried won’t make things better.”

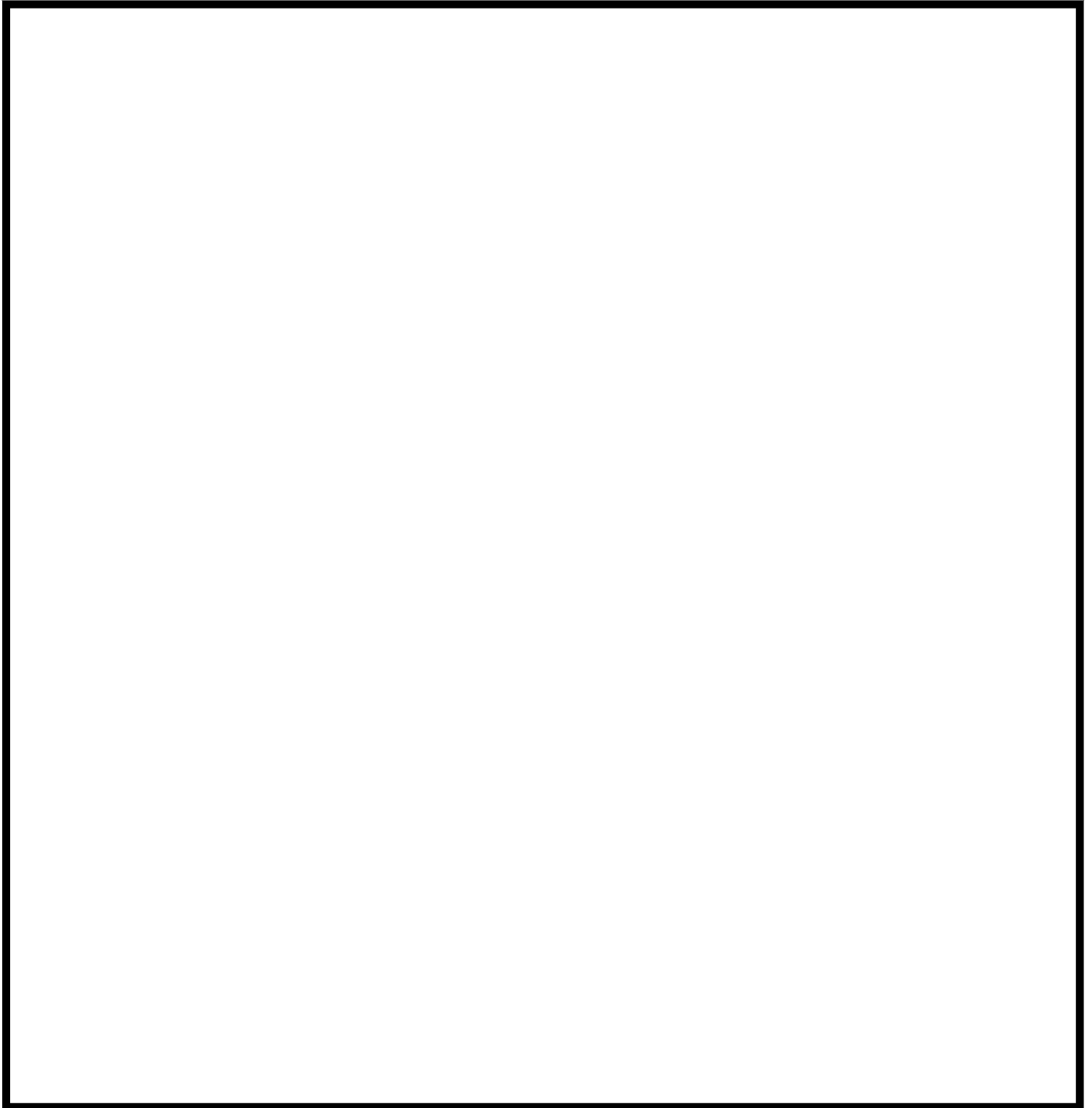
In the spaces below, write other positive thoughts you can have when you find yourself thinking about the worst thing that could happen.

The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is a simple outline with a small tail pointing downwards and to the right. The bubbles are intended for writing positive thoughts.

You Can Learn to Change Your Fearful Thoughts

Imagine Your Negative Thoughts Are in a Cage

In the space below, write your worst negative thought. Now draw a cage around this thought, and keep adding bars until you can't read it anymore.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for the user to write their worst negative thought and draw a cage around it.

8

You Can Learn New Ways To Solve Your Problems

When children are afraid of something, they may start acting in ways to avoid the thing that makes them afraid. But many times you can think of ways to overcome your fears and solve the problems that bother you.

For example, Keith was afraid of germs. He thought germs would make him sick and might even kill him. He didn't like to play outside and get dirty because he thought he would get too many germs on his hands and his clothes.

Keith's dad helped him find some ways to solve his problem so that he could play outside.

His dad said, "Here are some things you can do when you get dirty."

- You can wash up in the bathroom after you play.
- You can carry hand sanitizer to use if there is no bathroom around.
- You can do some things outside that that might not get you so dirty.
- You can learn more about germs and dirt and see if your fears really make any sense.

Keith thought about these ways to solve his problem. He liked having different ideas to choose from. He decided to try two of the ideas his dad suggested. He would play kickball with his friends, but he wouldn't play tag because the kids often pushed each other down and Keith didn't like that. He would also carry hand sanitizer with him to kill the germs on his hands.

You Can Learn New Ways to Solve Your Problems

How to Think of Ways to Solve Your Problems

The best way to solve problems is to make a list of as many solutions as you can think of. Think of a problem that bothers you, and use the space below to list possible solutions.

Then look at all of the solutions you wrote down, and choose the best one. Put a check mark next to it.

Now try this solution and see if it helps. If it doesn't help as much as you would like, you can change it a little bit or try a different one from your list.

Possible Solutions

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

You Can Learn New Ways to Solve Your Problems

Finding Solutions: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Tara had nightmares and hated to go to sleep.

The worst dream she had was _____
_____.

To keep from falling asleep, Tara would _____.

But in the morning, she was so tired that she could hardly get out of bed.

Tara's mother was really worried about her. Tara always looked tired and sad.

Her mother said, "I know some ways to help you get to sleep and not be afraid of bad dreams."

Her mother's ideas were: _____

_____.

Tara thought that _____ was the best idea.

Tara tried it that very night, and she found that _____.

The next morning, Tara said to her mother: _____

_____.

You Can Learn New Ways to Solve Your Problems

Talking to Yourself When You Are Faced with a Problem

Solving problems takes a lot of persistence. Many problems are stubborn, and they don't want to go away. If you say encouraging things to yourself, it will help you solve your problems.

Some things kids say are:

“I can keep trying.”

“I won't quit.”

”I believe in myself.”

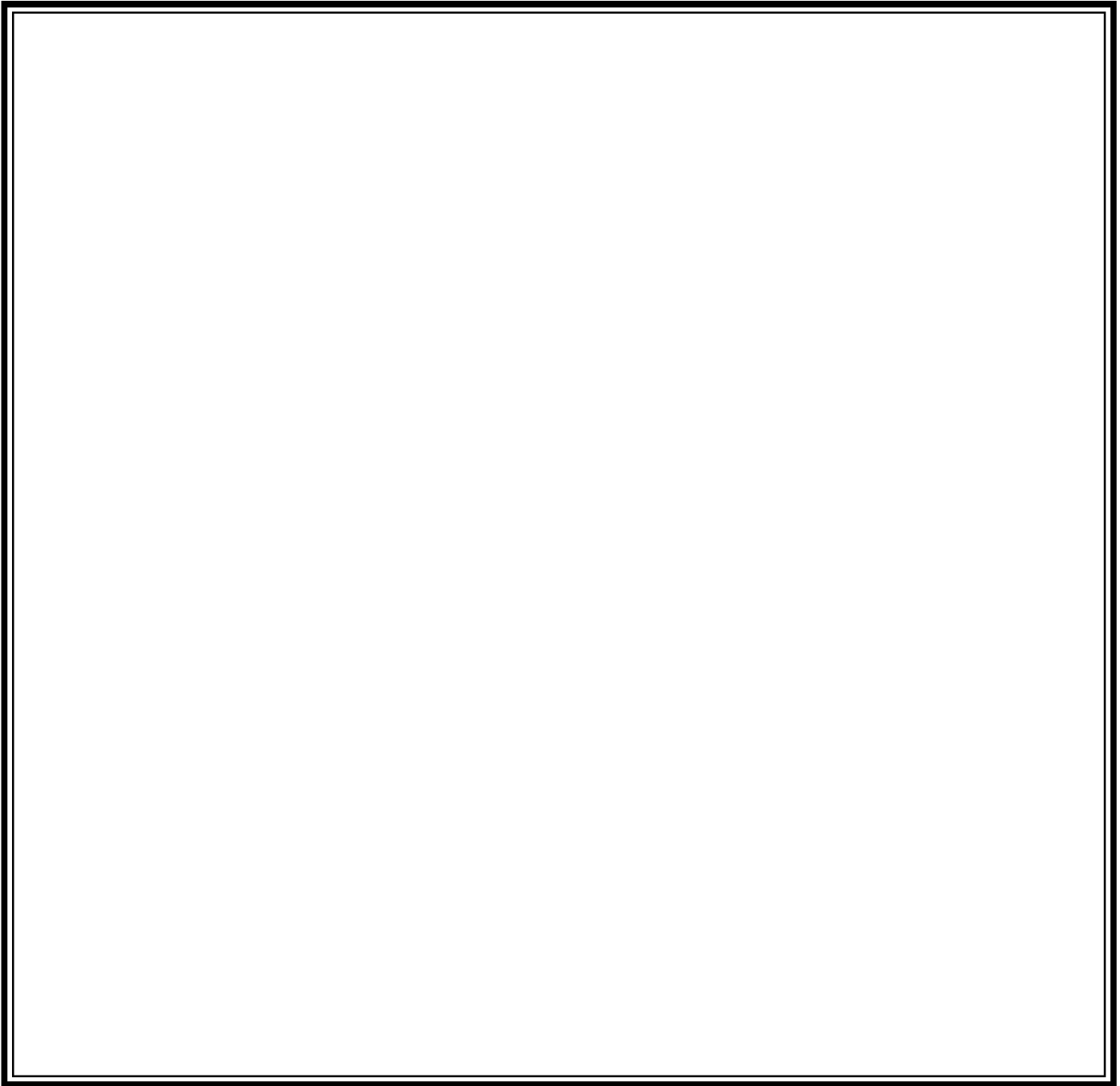
In the spaces below, write other things you can say to yourself to help you overcome your problems.

The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is oval-shaped with a small tail pointing downwards and to the right. The bubbles are intended for writing self-encouraging phrases to help overcome problems.

You Can Learn New Ways to Solve Your Problems

Imagine How Your Life Would Change If You Could Solve Your Worst Problem

In the space below, draw some things that would be different if you could solve a problem that is really bothering you. Draw as many things as you can think of.

A large, empty rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for drawing. The box is completely blank and occupies most of the page's width and height.



You Can Learn to Understand How Your Body Reacts to Fear

When you are afraid, your body acts in certain ways. Your heart beats faster, your muscles get tense, and your stomach may feel upset. Sometimes these changes make people with fears even more upset, and that makes their fears seem worse. When you learn to understand how your body works, it will be easier to deal with your fears.

How to Do a Healthy Body Scan

When you are feeling afraid, you can do a Healthy Body Scan. This is a way to check each part of your body to make sure that it is okay and working just the way it is supposed to.

You can do a Healthy Body Scan right now.

Start with your head.

- Do you have a headache?
- Do you feel dizzy?

Now go down to your chest.

- Is your heart beating okay?
- Do you have pains or tightness in your chest?

Now check your stomach.

- Do you have pains in your stomach?
- Do you feel sick to your stomach?

Now check the other muscles in your body.

- Do you have pains?
- Do you have tingling or funny feelings in your muscles?

If you feel bad in any part of your body, then you should tell an adult. Talking about how you feel will help an adult know if you are really sick, or if your body is telling you that you have to deal with your fears and worries. If this is the case, the relaxation activities on page 8 will probably help.

You Can Learn to Understand How Your Body Reacts to Fear

Making Yourself Feel Better: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Cara never really felt very good.

Her _____ would hurt her in the morning.

She complained about _____ when she went to school.

At night, she was usually tired and _____
sometimes bothered her.

Cara worried a lot about _____,
and when she worried her body would react by _____.

Cara went to her doctor, but her doctor couldn't find anything wrong with
Cara's body. She thought that maybe Cara's worries were making her feel bad.

Cara learned to think about how her worries made her body feel, and soon
_____.

She found that when she _____ it really helped.

Cara thought to herself: _____

You Can Learn to Understand How Your Body Reacts to Fear

Talking to Yourself About How Your Body Feels

When your body feels bad because you are worried or afraid, talking to yourself about feeling better can help.

Some of the things children with fears and worries say to themselves are:

“I know my heart beats fast when I’m scared. It’s not a problem.”

“I know my stomach gets upset when I’m nervous, but it will go away.”


In the spaces below, write other things you can say to yourself when you are feeling bad because of your fears or worries.

The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is a simple outline with a small tail pointing downwards and to the right. The bubbles are intended for the user to write their own self-talk phrases in response to the prompt above.

You Can Learn to Understand How Your Body Reacts to Fear

Imagine You Are a Superhero

Draw a picture of yourself as a superhero. What are your special powers?



10

You Can Learn to Lead A Healthy Lifestyle

Many people don't realize that leading an unhealthy lifestyle can make fears and anxieties much worse. When you lead a healthy lifestyle, it will be easier to control your fears and anxieties.

Paying attention to the basic things about the way you live can make a big difference in how you deal with fears.

Here are some examples:

Eating the right food is important. Soda, which has caffeine, or foods with a lot of sugar can affect your body in ways that make your fears seem worse.

Daily exercise is necessary for your body and your mind. When you exercise, you produce chemicals in your brain that make you feel self-confident.

Sleep is important to balance the chemicals in your brain that can cause you to be fearful and worried. Getting enough sleep helps you feel like you are in control.

Watching too much TV or spending too much time playing video games will also affect the way your brain works. Reading, being active, and spending time with other people is much better for you.

You Can Learn to Lead a Healthy Lifestyle

How to Lead a Healthy Lifestyle

You can lead a healthier lifestyle if you try, and it will help if you keep track of what you do.

Make copies of the chart below, and keep a record of what you do each day. Shade in the times that you do each activity, and also write down what you eat and how you exercise.

	Time You Get Up	Time You Go to Bed	Time You Eat and What You Eat	Time You Watch TV	Time You Exercise and What You Do
6 a.m.					
7 a.m.					
8 a.m.					
9 a.m.					
10 a.m.					
11 a.m.					
12 noon					
1 p.m.					
2 p.m.					
3 p.m.					
4 p.m.					
5 p.m.					
6 p.m.					
7 p.m.					
8 p.m.					

You Can Learn to Lead a Healthy Lifestyle

Living a Healthy Life: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Nadia knew that she had bad habits.

Her worst habit was _____.

She also _____.

Nadia's mother told her _____.

But Nadia said that it was hard to change her habits. She needed help.

Nadia's mother said that it would help if Nadia _____.

Nadia thought that might be a good idea but _____.

Nadia worked hard at _____, and after a while

she noticed _____.

Every day Nadia felt a little better. In a month, Nadia looked in a mirror and said

to herself: _____

You Can Learn to Lead a Healthy Lifestyle

Talking to Yourself About Resisting Temptation

It isn't easy to resist the temptations that can lead to an unhealthy lifestyle. You might not feel like eating the right kind of food or turning off the TV or going outside to ride your bike.

Some people talk to themselves to give themselves the motivation they need to be healthier. They say things like:

“I won't eat any more sweets. I'll eat a healthy snack instead.”

“I know I'm tired, but I'll feel better once I start exercising.”

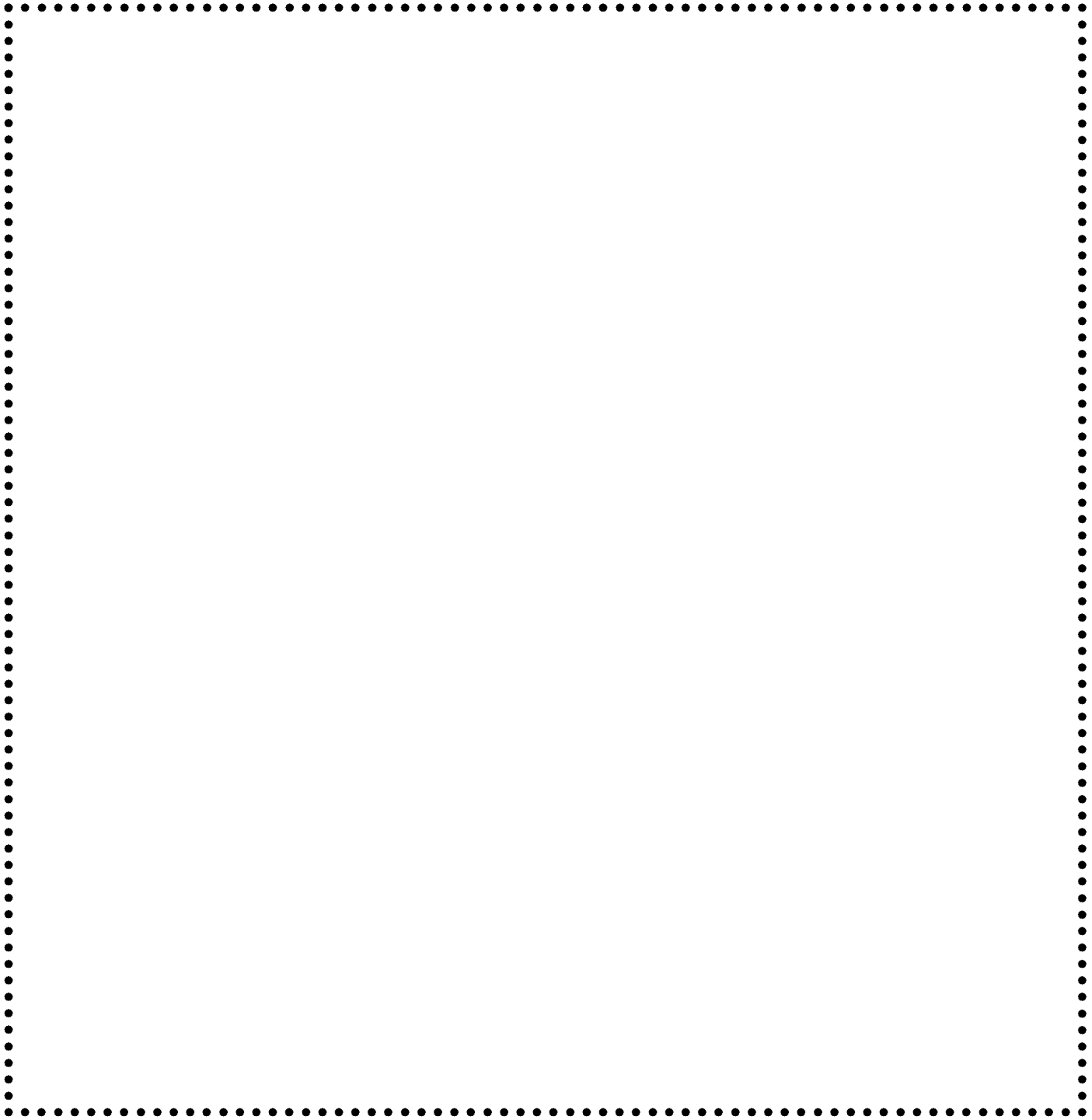
In the spaces below, write other things you could say to yourself to motivate you to lead a healthier lifestyle.

The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is a simple outline with a small tail pointing to the right, and a grey shadow underneath to give it a 3D effect. They are intended for the user to write their own motivational self-talk in.

You Can Learn to Lead a Healthy Lifestyle

Imagine You Have Won an Award For a Physical Achievement

Draw a picture of yourself getting an award for a physical achievement, like climbing a mountain or winning a race.





You Can Learn to Reduce Stress

Most people know that a lot of stress isn't good for you, but many people don't know that stress can actually make it harder to deal with your fears. When you are under stress, your brain and body have a harder time producing chemicals that make you feel calm and help you cope. Reducing the stress in your life will make it easier for you to cope with your problems and face your fears.

There are lots of things that cause people stress. Here are some of them:

- loud noises
- arguments at home
- being picked on or teased
- being rushed
- having work that is hard

Some kinds of stress you can change, and some kinds of stress you can't change. But even when you can't reduce the stress in your life, you can find better ways to cope with it.

You Can Learn to Reduce Stress

How to Reduce Stress in Your Life

Ask an adult to help you with this activity.

On the chart below, list all the things that could cause you stress. Then think of ways you can reduce this stress or cope with it better. Reducing your stress even a little can make a big difference in how you feel.

My Stress Chart

Things That Cause Me Stress	Ways I Can Reduce This Stress	Ways I Can Cope With This Stress Better

You Can Learn to Reduce Stress

Reducing Stress: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Emmanuel was the youngest of three brothers. He loved his brothers, but they were _____.

Emmanuel always felt that _____.

At night, Emmanuel often felt bad because _____.

Emmanuel started to feel stressed. He often had headaches, and he was always irritable.

Emmanuel's father noticed that Emmanuel was _____.

He gave him some ideas of how he could deal with his problems. Emmanuel's father said: _____

Emmanuel took his father's advice, and he started to feel much better. He thought that he might reduce some stress at school by _____

You Can Learn to Reduce Stress

Talking to Yourself to Help You Cope with Stress

Everyone has stress of some kind, but some people are better at coping it than others. Saying encouraging things to yourself can help you deal with things that might stress you, like teasing.

For example, if you were being teased, you could say to yourself:

“I’m just going to ignore this person.”

“I’m going to keep calm and not let this bother me.”

“I don’t care what mean people say to me.”

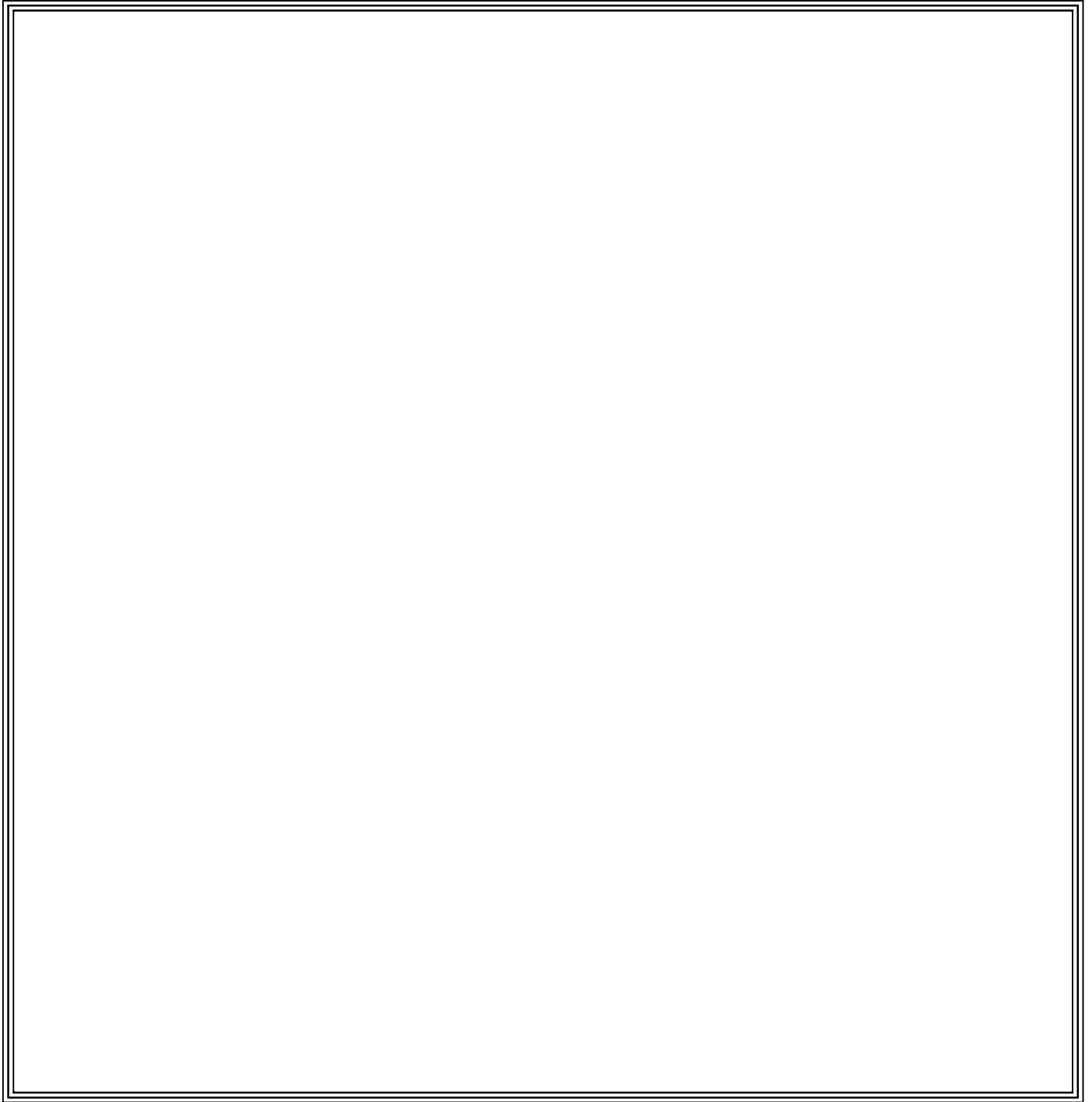
In the spaces below, write other things you could say to yourself if you were being teased or someone were bothering you in other ways.

The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is a simple outline with a small tail pointing to the right, and a grey shadow underneath to give it a 3D effect. They are intended for the user to write their own self-talk responses to stressors.

You Can Learn to Reduce Stress

Imagine You Can Easily Handle Stress

Draw a picture of yourself surrounded by different things that stress you. Now draw a magic circle around the picture of yourself. The magic circle keeps all of the stress in your life from getting to you.



12

You Can Learn to View Your Life Without Fears

Having a positive view of the future is an important part of overcoming your fears and worries. As you grow older, you will find many ways to cope with problems, and you will find it much easier to cope with your worries and fears.

Knowing that you can make your worries and fears less a part of your life will help motivate you to find ways to cope with them. In this activity, you will think about how your life will be once you have learned to cope with and overcome your fears and worries.

You Can Learn to View Your Life Without Fears

How to See a Positive Future

It is important to think about how your life will change once you have learned to cope with your fears and worries.

Make a list of five to ten ways that your life will change in the next year if you learn to cope with your fears and worries.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Now make a list of five to ten ways that your life will be different ten years from now if you learn to cope with or overcome your fears and worries.

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____
 6. _____
 7. _____
 8. _____
 9. _____
 10. _____
-

You Can Learn to View Your Life Without Fears

A Letter to Your Fears and Worries: A Fill-in-the-Blank Story

Think of your fears and worries as an annoying little monster that you want to get rid of for good. Tell that little monster exactly what you think.

Dear Little Fear Monster,

I want to tell you how much of a pest you have been.

You really need to stop _____.

It really annoys me when you make me feel worried and afraid, and I have to

_____.

I want you to pack your bags and go to _____.

I never want to see you again.

When I get rid of you, the first thing I will do is _____.

Then I will _____.

When you are gone, my life will be _____.

Sorry I have to say this, but **GO AWAY!**

Signed,

You Can Learn to View Your Life Without Fears

Talking to Yourself About the Future

Talking to yourself about how things will be when you learn to cope with your fears and worries can be a big help.

You might say things like:

“I’m going to do new things when I get rid of my fears.”

“I’m going to feel great when I don’t have to worry so much.”

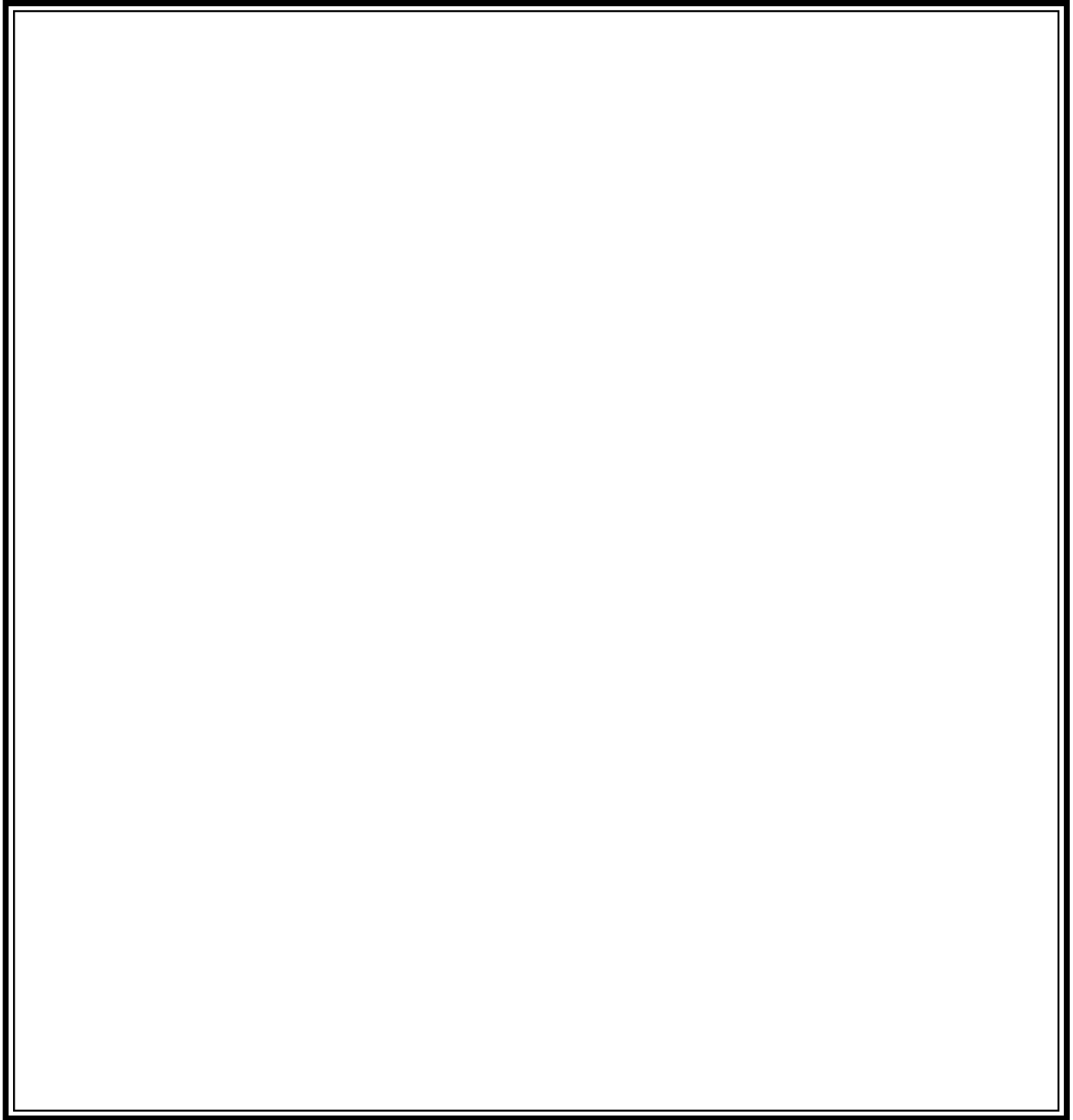
In the spaces below, write other things you might say to yourself that can motivate you to cope with and overcome your fears and worries.

The form consists of six empty speech bubble shapes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each bubble is a simple outline with a small tail pointing downwards and to the right. The bubbles are intended for the user to write their own motivational self-talk in response to the prompt above.

You Can Learn to View Your Life Without Fears

Imagine How Things Will Be Different

Draw a picture of yourself in the future when you are not fearful or worried.
Draw yourself doing something you probably would not do now.



You Decide Workbooks™

This workbook is designed to help children learn twelve techniques to deal with their fears and anxieties, with the support of a caring adult. These techniques are commonly used in treatment programs for fearful and anxious children.

Each activity consists of five parts:

- An explanation of the technique
- An opportunity to practice the technique
- A fill-in-the-blank story about the technique
- An activity to create positive thoughts
- An art activity that helps reinforce the technique by stimulating a child's imagination

There is no right or wrong way to use this book, as long as you respect the right of children to understand and cope with their problems at their own pace.

About the Series

The *You Decide* series combines choose-your-own-ending storybooks with workbooks of reproducible activities. Other topics include coping with loss, handling anger, coping with teasing and bullying, handling frustration, and coping with divorce.

About the Author

Lawrence E. Shapiro, Ph.D. is an internationally recognized author and parenting expert. He is the author of over one hundred therapeutic books, games, and counseling tools. His books have been translated into more than twenty-five languages.

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