

# YOUR VERY OWN TF-CBT WORKBOOK

**By Alison Hendricks, Judith A. Cohen, Anthony  
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# **YOUR VERY OWN TF-CBT WORKBOOK**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION	i-ii
WELCOME TO THERAPY!	1
ABOUT YOU	2
ABOUT YOUR FAMILY	3
LEARNING ABOUT UPSETTING/CONFUSING EVENTS	4
HOW DO KIDS FEEL AFTER AN UPSETTING/CONFUSING EVENT?	5
WHAT IS RELAXATION?	6
HOMEWORK: LET'S RELAX!	7
BELLY BREATHING	8
YOUR SAFE PLACE	9
ABOUT FEELINGS	10
HOW DO WE EXPERIENCE FEELINGS IN OUR BODIES?	11
HOW DO FEELINGS SHOW ON FACES?	12
HOW STRONG OR INTENSE ARE OUR FEELINGS?	13
COPING WITH UPSETTING FEELINGS	14
FEELINGS SURVIVAL KIT	15
STOP THAT THOUGHT!	16
THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ... ACTION!	17
THOUGHTS MATTER!	18
THOUGHT PROBLEMS	19
NOTICE YOUR THOUGHTS!	20
TELLING YOUR STORY	21
YOUR STORY	22
FEELINGS 1-10	23
YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT THE UPSETTING/CONFUSING EVENT(S)	24
BATTLING TRAUMA REMINDERS	25
SHARING YOUR STORY	26
BEING SAFE	27
YOUR CIRCLE OF SAFETY	28
YOUR FABULOUS FUTURE	29
LET'S REVIEW	30
<b>SAYING GOOD-BYE</b>	<b>31</b>

# Your Very Own TF-CBT Workbook

## Introduction

This workbook has been developed for use with children ages six to fourteen who have experienced one or more traumatic events. The activities in the workbook correspond to the treatment components of the Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) model, which was developed by Judith Cohen, Anthony Mannarino, and Esther Deblinger (Cohen, Mannarino, & Deblinger, 2006). The intended use of the workbook is by master's level mental health professionals who have also had training in TF-CBT and have read the manual on TF-CBT (cited above).

The workbook was created as a supplemental resource to assist therapists as they work through each component of the TF-CBT model with their child clients. This workbook is one of the many resources that therapists can use in implementing TF-CBT, and the manual cited above provides an extensive list of books, activities, and other therapeutic aids. The workbook intends to provide a helpful framework to cover each component of TF-CBT, but other resources and activities should also be utilized as clinically indicated (i.e. play therapy, role plays, movement therapy, audio relaxation exercises, therapeutic board games, etc). Get creative! As always, clinical judgment takes precedence. Some of the activities included in the workbook may not be appropriate for all children, and flexibility needs to be balanced with fidelity to the treatment model.

The workbook activities were developed for implementing the PRACTICE components of the TF-CBT model: Psycho-education, Relaxation, Affective regulation and modulation, Cognitive coping and processing, Trauma narrative and cognitive processing of the traumatic experience(s), *In vivo* mastery of trauma reminders, Conjoint sessions, and Enhancing future safety and development. The child and parent will initially need some orientation to TF-CBT, and issues of confidentiality and sharing of the child's work need to be discussed from the outset. The workbook can be completed over the course of 12-20 weeks, depending on the length of each session and the age/attention span of the child. Keep in mind that some traumatized children may require other types of treatment before, during, or after TF-CBT. The workbook activities correspond to the components of the TF-CBT model as follows:

Orientation to Therapy and TF-CBT, Engagement	Pages 1-3
Psycho-education on Trauma and Reactions to Trauma	Pages 4-5
Relaxation, Progressive Muscle Relaxation, Deep Breathing	Pages 6-8
Positive Imagery	Page 9
Feelings Identification	Pages 10-12
Feelings Ratings and Affect Modulation	Pages 13-15
Thought Stopping	Page 16
Cognitive Processing	Pages 17-20
Creating the Trauma Narrative	Pages 21-23
Processing the Traumatic Experience(s)	Page 24
<i>In Vivo</i> Mastery of Trauma Reminders	Page 25

Following the structure of the TF-CBT model, the therapist meets individually with child each week to complete the above (and other supplemental) treatment activities. Then the therapist meets with the parent individually to work with the caretaker on the same component, to teach him/her the skills to support the child at home and for the caretaker to process his/her own feelings about the trauma. Sharing the activities completed by the child in the workbook each week can be a helpful way to work with the parent on the treatment components, in addition to supplemental resources geared toward parents. Parents usually appreciate seeing their children’s artwork and writing, and sharing these provides the opportunity for the therapist to increase the parent’s empathy and understanding of the child’s experience. The children also generally like the fact that their parents will get to see their work. Again, use your clinical judgment if the child does not want you to share a particular page with a parent right away or if sharing is contra-indicated in any way. Some games or activities may be used during conjoint sessions in which the child and parent can practice and share together. For example, children may enjoy teaching their caretaker the Belly Breathing games (Page 8) or the Feelings Charades game (Page 12) and playing together in session. It is important to have caretakers involved in the safety component (Pages 27-28). Again, flexibility is important!

Homework activities can be assigned each week for the child, caretaker, or dyad at the discretion of the therapist. The workbook includes a relaxation activity that is labeled as homework (it can also be taught or practiced in session) and recommends daily practice of the deep breathing techniques. You may create games for the dyad to play as homework, assign thought logs, etc. Use your imagination, and tap into the individual child’s strengths and interests when planning your interventions.

For further information on TF-CBT and its components, please refer to the treatment manual:

Cohen, J.A., Mannarino, A.P., & Deblinger, E. (2006). *Treating trauma and traumatic grief in children and adolescents*. New York: Guilford Press.

An additional resource is the on-line TF-CBT training at: <http://tfcbt.musc.edu/> .

## WELCOME TO THERAPY!

Therapy is a safe place to help you feel better about upsetting or confusing events that you have experienced. You will get to draw, write, talk, and play! You will learn many important things about: upsetting/confusing events, feelings, relaxation, and how to stay safe. You will also learn a lot about yourself: your thoughts, feelings, actions, strengths, and dreams! Please draw a picture to show how you feel about being here today:

Do you have any questions about therapy?

## ABOUT YOU

You are a very special person! There are many special things about you and a lot of things you are good at. Please draw or write some of these things:

What are some things you like to do for fun?

## ABOUT YOUR FAMILY

What are some things you like about your family? What do you and your family like to do together? Please draw or write some of these things:

## LEARNING ABOUT UPSETTING/CONFUSING EVENTS

Upsetting/confusing events are also called traumas. These events don't happen often, but when they do, they can cause people to feel very afraid, upset, and helpless. There are different kinds of upsetting/confusing events. Let's learn about the upsetting/confusing event(s) that you experienced. Your therapist will help you find the answers to some common questions kids have about upsetting/confusing events. (If you have experienced more than one type of upsetting/confusing event, you can repeat the questions for each one).

What is it called?

What does that mean?

Who does this happen to?

Are there a lot of kids who experience this?

Why does this happen?

What can kids do if this happens to them?

**Create your own questions here:**

1.

2.

3.

4.



## HOW DO KIDS FEEL AFTER AN UPSETTING/CONFUSING EVENT?

Many kids have scary memories or dreams about the upsetting/confusing event. Some kids also feel jumpy or nervous or angry. After an upsetting/confusing event, a lot of kids watch out for danger and worry about bad things happening. Some kids also have trouble sleeping and paying attention in school. A lot of kids feel like they ***DON'T*** want to talk about or think about the upsetting/confusing thing that happened, but the memories pop into their minds anyway. When something reminds them of the upsetting/confusing event, kids may feel upset and may have strong reactions in their bodies (heart beating fast, stomach ache).

Please circle any of the things above that *you* have experienced since the upsetting/confusing event(s). Then draw or write below what kinds of feelings you think kids have after these kinds of events:

What can kids do about these feelings?

## WHAT IS RELAXATION?

Relaxation is about feeling calm and peaceful. After upsetting/confusing events happen, we often feel tense, jumpy, and worried. We feel better when we learn to relax our bodies and minds! This exercise teaches us how to relax using our muscles:

Sit comfortably in your chair with your arms at your sides and your feet planted on the floor. Close your eyes or look down at the ground while you do this exercise. Imagine that you have a ball of clay in your right hand. Squeeze that ball of clay as hard as you can! While you are squeezing, feel how tight the muscles of your hand and arm are. Count to five as you squeeze, then drop the ball of clay and let your hand hang loose. Feel the difference in the muscles of your hand and arm when they are relaxed. Repeat to yourself, "My hand is relaxed." Now do the same thing with your left hand. You can do this with all the parts of your body one at a time or all at the same time (your therapist will help you)! Which way would you like to do it? Don't forget to include all your muscle groups (arms, feet, legs, stomach, back, chest, shoulders, face).

**Please draw two pictures of yourself below:**

*Tense/Tight/Stressed*

*Relaxed*

What are some things you do that help you feel relaxed?

## HOMWORK: LET'S RELAX!

Many kids have trouble calming down or falling asleep at night. If this ever happens to you, practice this activity at home. Someone special can read it to you before bedtime or any other time when you want to relax.

Lie down or sit comfortably somewhere quiet and cozy (your bed, a couch). Breathe in slowly and out even more slowly. Close your eyes and imagine you are floating on a soft, fluffy cloud. You feel very safe on your cloud as it cradles your body like a hammock. Your whole body feels very relaxed and heavy. Notice your feet. Your feet feel very relaxed. Your feet feel so heavy that it would be hard to lift them if you tried. Now notice your legs. Your legs feel very relaxed. Your legs feel so comfortable all nestled into your cloud. That nice, warm, relaxed feeling is slowly traveling up your body, filling it with peace. Notice your stomach. It feels very calm and filled with a pleasant warmth. Now be aware of your chest. Your chest feels relaxed as it moves up and down slowly with each breath. Notice your neck and shoulders. They feel so tranquil and heavy. Feel the backs of your shoulders touching the cloud below you, sinking in gently. Feel how relaxed your head is right now. It feels very warm, pleasant, and heavy. Your head and face are very relaxed. Your mouth and eyes are free of stress. Allow your thoughts to come and go without worrying about anything. Everything is okay, and you are feeling very calm and good. Enjoy the warm, calming sensation as it travels all around your body, filling you with peace and relaxation.

## BELLY BREATHING

Sometimes when we are upset, we forget to breathe! Or we take short, shallow breaths (like a puppy dog panting) that don't give our bodies the oxygen we need. To help ourselves feel relaxed and calm, we can practice ***BELLY BREATHING***:

Belly breathing is when you breathe in slowly and deeply (counting to 5 in your head) as your belly and lungs fill up with air (you can watch your belly stick out as you breathe in!).

Then you let the air out, **EVEN SLOWER** (count to 6) and watch your belly go back in as the air is slowly pushed out. Pay attention to the air as it moves in and out of your body as you count.

### Fun games with belly breathing:

1. Use ***Belly Breathing Balloons*** to show how your belly fills up with air as you breathe in and goes down when you push the air out. Have your therapist blow up one of the balloons as you breathe in, then slowly let air out of the balloon as you breathe out. Watch the ***Belly Breathing Balloon*** as it gets bigger and smaller, just like your belly when you are doing belly breathing! Then switch! YOU make your own balloon get bigger and smaller as your therapist breathes in and out (slowly!).

2. Decorate your ***Belly Breathing Balloon*** any way you want. Then lie on your back on the floor or lean back in your chair and place the balloon on your belly. Watch your ***Belly Breathing Balloon*** rise up on your belly like a hot air balloon as you breathe in and land gently as you breathe out. Your therapist can do this with you if you want.

Teach these games to someone you care about and practice at home (at least once a day)!

## YOUR SAFE PLACE

Please close your eyes (or look down) and take a few minutes to think about a place (real or imaginary) where you feel very safe, calm, and happy. You can tell your therapist once you have your safe place in mind. Now draw a picture of your safe place below. Add as many details as you can to show what you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel when you are in your safe place.

Wonderful! You can close your eyes and imagine you are in your safe place when you feel scared or tense. When you think about your safe place, remember all the details that you drew in this picture!

## ABOUT FEELINGS

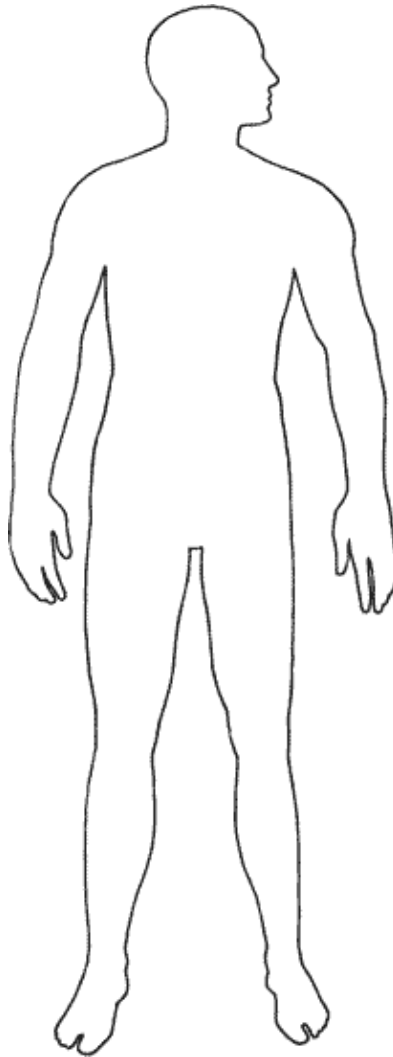
Feelings are what we feel in our bodies and hearts. There are many different feelings that we have, and our feelings may change from moment to moment. Sometimes we even feel two or more feelings at the same time!

Please write down as many feelings as you can think of below on the left side of this paper:

Great! Now put a color next to each feeling to describe the feeling.

## HOW DO WE EXPERIENCE FEELINGS IN OUR BODIES?

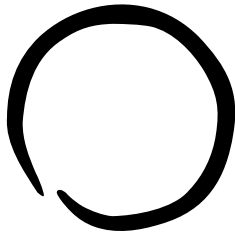
Remember the feelings and colors you listed on Page 6? We're going to use those colors now to show where in your body you experience each feeling. You don't have to do all the feelings you listed; you and your therapist can choose which feelings you want to include. For each feeling you choose, close your eyes and imagine having that feeling right now. Where do you experience that feeling in your body? **Please color in the places on your body where you experience each feeling and tell your therapist what it feels like.**



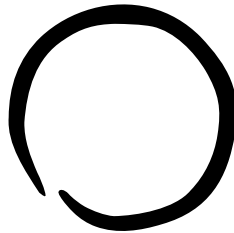
Our bodies tell us how we are feeling!

## HOW DO FEELINGS SHOW ON FACES?

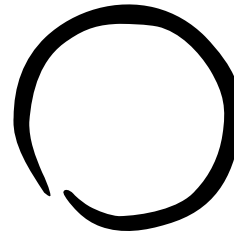
A good way to tell how we feel *and* how others feel is by noticing facial expressions. Please draw the feelings in the circles to show how we express our feelings on our faces (the last two are blank for you to draw any feelings you want!):



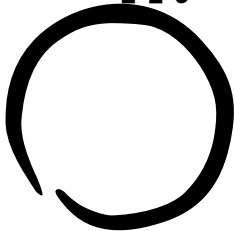
**happy**



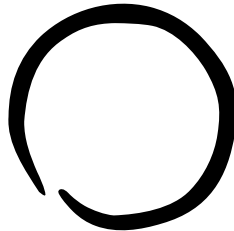
**sad**



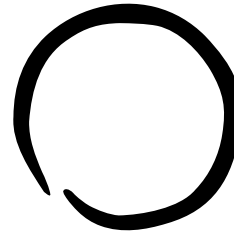
**mad**



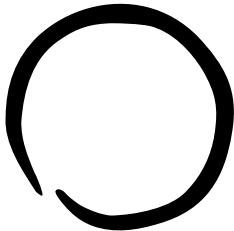
**scared**



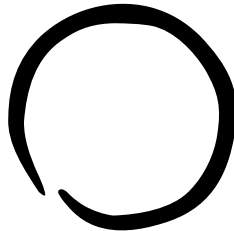
**nervous**



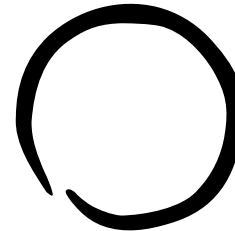
**excited**



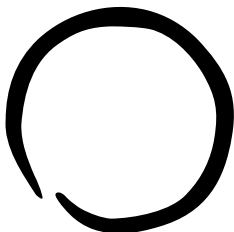
**confused**



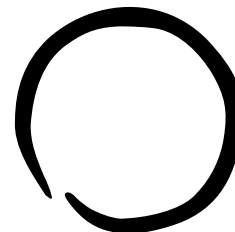
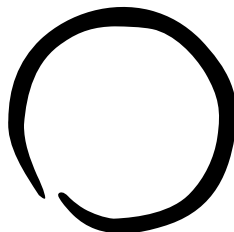
**shocked**



**brave**



**proud**

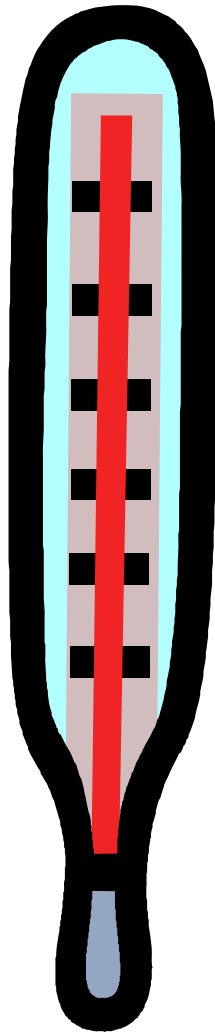


How do you feel right now? You can play a game with your therapist called "Feelings Charades." Take turns acting out the above feelings; the other person tries to guess which feeling you are acting out! Then you get to tell what makes you feel that way. You can also play this game at home.



## HOW STRONG OR INTENSE ARE OUR FEELINGS?

Sometimes we feel a feeling *just a little bit*, and other times we feel a feeling so strongly that we feel like we might **BURST** with that feeling! You can rate or measure your feelings, just like a thermometer measures temperature. The number tells how intense the feeling is.



10 VERY STRONG

9

8 A LOT

7

6

5 MEDIUM

4

3

2 A LITTLE

1

0 NOT AT ALL

What feelings are you having right now? How would you rate each of those feelings (on a scale of 1–10)?

## COPING WITH UPSETTING FEELINGS

When we experience an upsetting feeling very strongly, we can **DO THINGS** to lessen the intensity of the feeling. For example, if your anger is at a 10 (very strong), you can do things to bring it down to a 1 or 2. What are some of these things you can do? **Please draw a picture of you doing something that would help bring your anger down:**

***YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF YOUR FEELINGS!***

## FEELINGS SURVIVAL KIT

When you feel very sad, scared, mad, or worried, what are some things you can do to feel better? What are some things you can tell yourself that would make you feel better? Please make a list of things you can do and say to feel better:

Congratulations! You have just made your own personal *Feelings Survival Kit*. You can cut out the items from your list and place them in a special box, bag, or toolkit. Take it with you so that the next time you feel very upset you will remember what to do!



## STOP THAT THOUGHT!

Sometimes we think about bad things over and over (like a song you don't like that gets stuck in your head). We'll call this a *bad song*, because it can make us feel really bad! But guess what? You can stop that *bad song*! All you have to do is notice when that *bad song* plays in your head. As soon as you hear it, press **STOP**! You can also say, "Go away, *bad song*!" And then you can sing yourself a **happy song** (one that makes you feel good)!



How does your *bad song* go? You can write or draw your *bad song* here:

How does your **happy song** go? Write some of the words or draw a picture of your **happy song** here:

Let's practice! Sing your bad song right now in your head. When I say **STOP**, start singing your happy song instead. Now you can decide when to press **STOP** on your bad song and **PLAY** your happy song!

## THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND... ACTION!

What are **thoughts**? Thoughts are the ideas we have in our heads (what our brains tell us). Sometimes we say things to ourselves in our heads (not out loud), and these are also thoughts. For example, you might think, "I did a great job on my homework." Can you think of some other thoughts?

What are **feelings**? Feelings are the emotions and sensations we have in our bodies and hearts (you already know a lot about feelings!). What are some feelings you know about?

What are **actions**? Actions are the things we do with our bodies! For example, we walk, dance, talk, draw, laugh, cry, etc. Can you name some other actions?

### Thoughts, Feelings, and Actions Game

This is a game to help you learn the difference between thoughts, feelings, and actions. Put a blue X next to the items that are **thoughts**. Put a green X next to the items that are **feelings**. Put a red X next to items that are **actions**.

HAPPY

RUNNING

I'M SMART!

HITTING

THEY DON'T LIKE ME

SAD

PLAYING

MAD

I CAN DO IT!

IT'S MY FAULT

WORRIED

HIDING

CRYING

SINGING

LONELY

SHE'S MAD AT ME

EATING ICE CREAM

TAKING A WALK

EXCITED

I'LL BE OK

SCARED

TAKING A DEEP BREATH

HOPPING ON ONE FOOT

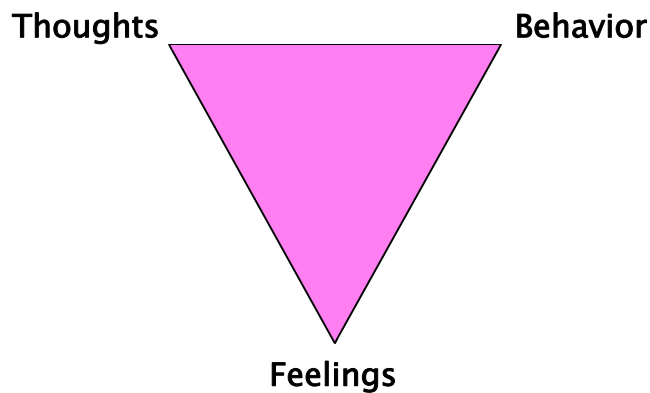
BRAVE

TALKING TO A FRIEND

SAFE

# THOUGHTS MATTER!

Our thoughts affect the way we feel and how we act. When something happens, we form thoughts about the event that lead to feelings and actions. The way we talk to ourselves in our heads also affects how we feel and what we do.

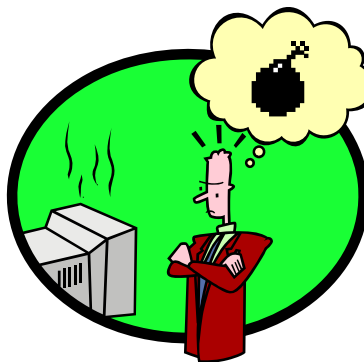


What are the characters below thinking? How do their thoughts make them feel?



Thought:

Feeling:



Thought:

Feeling:



Thought:

Feeling:

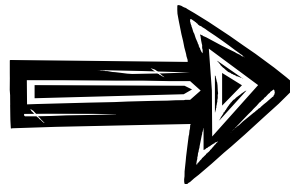
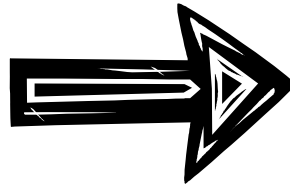
## THOUGHT PROBLEMS

Sometimes we all have thoughts that either aren't true or don't help us to feel better or solve problems. Some of these thought problems involve thinking that everything has to be **all or nothing** (i.e. "One person made fun of me, so that means everyone hates me"). Other thought problems focus on the **worst possible outcome** (i.e. "If my mom goes out, I'm sure something terrible is going to happen to her"). We sometimes get stuck in **negative thinking** (i.e. "Nothing ever works out for me" or "I'll never feel OK again"). **Please write or draw some problem thoughts that you've had recently.**

How did these thoughts make you feel?

## NOTICE YOUR THOUGHTS!

When you feel bad, what are you saying to yourself in your head? It's probably the thought that's making you feel bad. But guess what? If you practice, you can change your thoughts! Try doing this below. First write a thought that makes you feel bad and write down the feeling it causes. Then write a different thought that would make you feel better and write down the new feeling.



What actions might you take in the first situation? What about in the second situation? Do these actions lead to different results? Which results work out better for you?



## TELLING YOUR STORY

You've learned a lot so far about upsetting/confusing events, feelings, coping, relaxation, and thoughts. Congratulations! These are all important things that will help you as you begin to tell about the upsetting/confusing event(s) that happened to you. You get to decide where you want to start and how you would like to tell your story (you and your therapist can talk about all the different ways for kids to tell their stories). As you're telling about what happened to you, your therapist will help you check in on your feelings (using the "*Feelings 1-10*" worksheet on Page 23). If you start feeling strongly upset, you can stop, and your therapist will help remind you of ways to manage your feelings. You're in charge! **Please draw or write below to describe how you feel about starting your story.**

## YOUR STORY

Now it's time for you to decide how you would like to tell your story. Some kids like to make their own book, while other kids like to express what happened to them using poetry, songs, cartoon strips, puppet shows, radio/talk shows, etc. You and your therapist can talk about creative ways to tell about the upsetting/confusing thing(s) that happened to you. You get to decide what form you want your story to take. Don't forget to use the "*Feelings 1-10*" worksheet (on the next page) for each session!

The title of my story is:

This is how I will create my story:

# FEELINGS 1-10

Remember when you used the thermometer to measure your feelings back on Page 9? Each time you meet with your therapist to tell your story, you will name and rate your feelings at the beginning, middle, and end of the session on this paper (make 1 copy of this worksheet for every trauma story session). Please rate your feelings on a scale of 1-10 to describe the intensity of the feeling (1=a little bit, 5=medium, 10=very strong, etc.). You and your therapist will then come up with a plan to help you manage any difficult feelings that may come up between sessions (don't forget to use your *Feelings Survival Kit!*).



**Date:**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Feeling(s)</u>	<u>Rating</u>
---------------	-------------------	---------------

Beginning of Session		
----------------------	--	--

Middle of Session		
-------------------	--	--

End of Session		
----------------	--	--

**Self-Care Plan:**

## YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT THE UPSETTING/CONFUSING EVENT(S)

Remember how we learned that our thoughts are important? Your thoughts related to the trauma affect how you feel. These thoughts can help you feel better more quickly, or they can keep you feeling upset. Let's look at some of your thoughts related to the trauma. Below is a list of questions and thoughts that kids often have after an upsetting/confusing event. You and your therapist can choose which questions you will discuss, and you can add your own questions or thoughts at the end of the list. Then, for each question, you can write down the answer that is most helpful.

1. Why did this happen to me?
2. Who is responsible for the upsetting/confusing event(s)?
3. How will the upsetting/confusing event(s) affect me in the future?
4. How have the upsetting/confusing events affected my family?
5. Since the event(s), my view of the world has changed in these ways:
6. Since the event(s), my view of myself has changed in these ways:
7. Since coming to therapy, I have learned these things about myself:
8. Coming to therapy has changed me and my family in these ways:
7. If I had a friend that went through a similar upsetting/confusing event, I would give him or her this advice:
9. If my friend thought that talking about the upsetting/confusing event would be too hard, I would tell him or her:
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

## BATTLING TRAUMA REMINDERS

Now that you have bravely told your story and talked about your thoughts and feelings, let's talk about trauma reminders. Trauma reminders are things that remind you about the upsetting/confusing event(s). They can include certain places, people, words, sounds, smells, sensations, etc. When you experience these reminders, you may feel unsafe or as if you were living through the upsetting/confusing event(s) over again. But you can use your coping and relaxation skills to gain control over these pesky reminders! **Please draw or write a few of your trauma reminders below.**

Now you and your therapist will come up with a battle plan to conquer each trauma reminder, one by one. Then you can practice in session to gain control over these trauma reminders in your life!

## SHARING YOUR STORY

Great job! You did it! You have been very brave in telling your story and talking about your thoughts and feelings. It can help to share your story or to talk about the trauma(s) with someone you trust. How would you feel about sharing your story with a special someone? **Please draw a picture or write about sharing your story or talking about the upsetting/confusing event(s) with your special person.**

What are some questions you would like to ask your special person? These can be questions you have about the upsetting/confusing event(s) or a quiz to test how much your special person remembers (about your story, what you have learned in therapy, etc.).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

## BEING SAFE

We do a lot of things every day to keep ourselves safe. What are some new things you've learned about safety since coming to therapy? **Please draw a picture of you doing something to keep yourself safe.**

What are some things other people can do to help keep you safe?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## YOUR CIRCLE OF SAFETY

There are a lot of people who care about you and your safety. These are people you can go to if you need help or if you want someone to talk to. Please draw a picture of yourself on the middle of this page. Then create your *circle of safety* by drawing and/or writing the names of all the people who help keep you safe around you. You can include their phone numbers, too!



## YOUR FABULOUS FUTURE

What hopes, dreams, and goals do you have for your future?

Please draw or write some of them in the space below.

*You can achieve anything you set your mind to!*

## LET'S REVIEW

What have you learned in therapy? What was your favorite part? What was your least favorite part? Please write or draw a picture to show a special memory or lesson you want to take with you from therapy.

## SAYING GOOD-BYE

How do you feel about saying good-bye? How do you feel about graduating? You can use this final page to show all the feelings you're having right now, using words, art, etc., **OR** you can draw a picture of you and your therapist saying good-bye.

**Congratulations on all your hard work! You did it! You finished your book!**