



## **Lesson 4: Coping Self-Talk to Manage Strong Feelings**

### **Primary Goals:**

- 1. Teach students how to identify “feel good” and “feel bad” thoughts**
- 2. Discuss positive self-talk (feel good thoughts) as a way to manage strong feelings**
- 3. Practice positive “feel good” self-talk**
- 4. Identify situations where positive self-talk should be used**
- 5. Capitalize on *in vivo* opportunities to encourage and reinforce students using positive self-talk to manage strong feelings**

### **Materials for Main Lesson:**

- Trash can sheet
- Green brain sheet
- Positive, negative, and blank thought bubbles
- Self-talk think positive sheet
- Tape

### **Materials for Supplemental Activities:**

- Thought bubbles (optional)
- Positive self-talk shield handouts
- Positive self-talk coloring sheets



## Lesson 4: Thoughts and Self-Talk (20 minutes)

**Teacher:** "So far we have talked about two different ways we can calm down when we are feeling mad, sad, or excited."

Ask the students:

"Who can tell me one of the ways we have already learned to calm down?"

*Praise student responses about deep breathing and lead them in a quick practice.*

*Praise or prompt student responses related to taking a break and review the steps to taking a break.*

**Teacher:** "Today we are going to learn another way to calm down, called coping self-talk or feel good talk."

Facilitate student conversation by asking:

"What do you think coping self-talk or feel good talk is?"

*Allow students a chance to respond and facilitate conversation around 2 to 3 student answers.*

"Feel good talk is the things that we tell ourselves to feel better and calm down."

Continue the conversation by asking:

"What are some things that we could tell ourselves if we are angry? Sad? Frustrated?"

Use the "Self-Talk Think Positive" Sheet as a reference to guide students as needed.

**Facilitate student discussion with examples of situations that might make them feel mad or sad such as:**

"If you are angry because you didn't get to go to the center that you wanted (or didn't get a turn with your favorite toy) what might you think or tell yourself to feel better?"

"If you're sad because you didn't get a turn what might you think or tell yourself to feel better?"

Examples include: "It's okay, I can play there next time." "I can calm down and play somewhere else." "My teacher still loves me." "Next time I might get a turn." "It's okay, I'm still special." "As long as I try my best it's okay." "I'm still learning." "I can do it if I keep trying."

*Allow students a chance to respond and write down a list of helpful "feel good thoughts" that students generate.*

**Teacher:** "The thoughts we have and the things we tell ourselves when we are mad, sad, or excited can change the way we feel and the way we act."

"The more we think feel good thoughts, the more we feel good. The more we think bad thoughts, the more we feel bad. If you catch your brain thinking bad thoughts, you can say, Stop! I'm going to throw that bad thought away, and give your brain a new feel good thought instead."

Give an example by saying:

"So, if I'm feeling angry because I didn't get to go to the center that I want I might think I want to yell and cry. Instead I can say Stop! I'm going to throw that bad thought away, and tell myself, "It's okay, I can play there later." "I can calm down and play somewhere else." "There's always tomorrow, It's no big deal."

**Teacher:** "It's important to pay attention to our thoughts and think feel good thoughts to make ourselves feel better when things don't go our way."

"Now we're going to play a game to see if we can tell the difference between a feel good and a feel bad thought."

*The goal of this activity is for students to identify feel good thoughts associated with different feelings and situations.*

"I'm going to say a thought and I want you to tell me if it's a feel good thought or a feel bad thought. If it's a feel good thought, I'll stick it in the green brain. If it's a feel bad thought, I'll throw it away in the red trash can with the stop sign."

"Our feel good thoughts help us move forward by helping us feel better, just like a green light means go."

"Our feel bad thoughts keep us feeling mad or sad just like a red light means stop. Our feel bad thoughts keep us from moving on and feeling better. So, we want to make sure we stop and throw away our bad thoughts, and instead think more feel good thoughts so we can feel better and keep learning and having fun at school."

*Expand the game by revisiting the feel bad thoughts from the red trash can and asking them what they could think instead to feel better (referencing feel good thoughts from the green brain).*

## Supplemental Activities (OPTIONAL)



### Activity: Red Light, Green Light

- Play red light, green light with the students by having them take a step forward when you say a "green thought" (positive, coping self-talk/feel good thought) and having them stay in place when you say a "red thought" (negative self-talk/feel bad thought)
  - You can use the thoughts generated by students and the examples from the main lesson or make up some new ones



### Art: Positive Thoughts Shield

- Give each child a coloring sheet of positive thoughts/images and engage them in a discussion about what each image means as they color
- Assist the students in cutting out the images and gluing them to their positive self-talk shields
- Instruct the children to use the positive self-talk shields to remind them to use good thoughts to feel better when they feel bad



### Music and Movement: Don't Give Up Song

- Play the song: Sesame Street: Bruno Mars: Don't Give Up on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWp6kkz-pnQ>

- Encourage the students to watch the video and sing and dance along.
- Engage the students in a discussion about using coping self-talk/positive feel good thoughts to feel better when they are doing something new or hard. Remind students that they can use feel good thoughts when they are upset about a variety of different things

I have Friends



OK



I am  
Loved



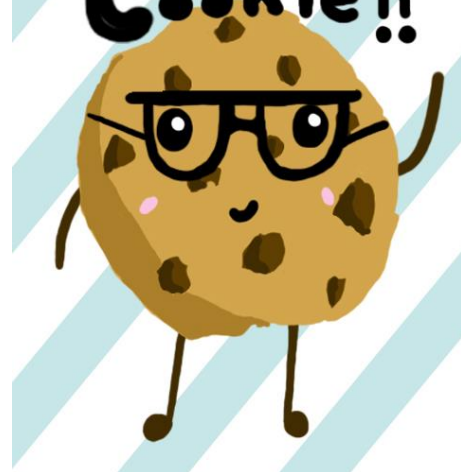
Smile and Be Happy

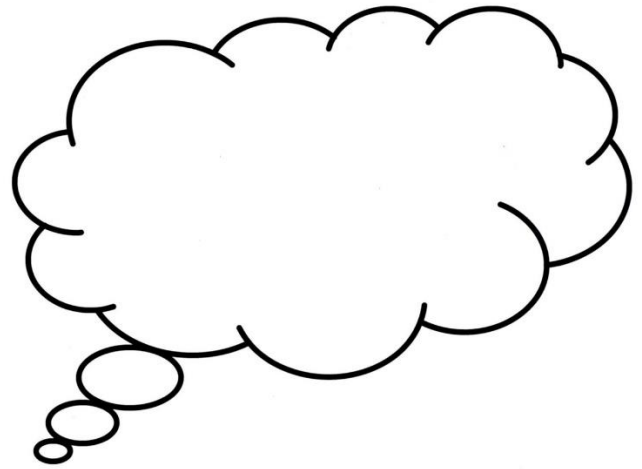
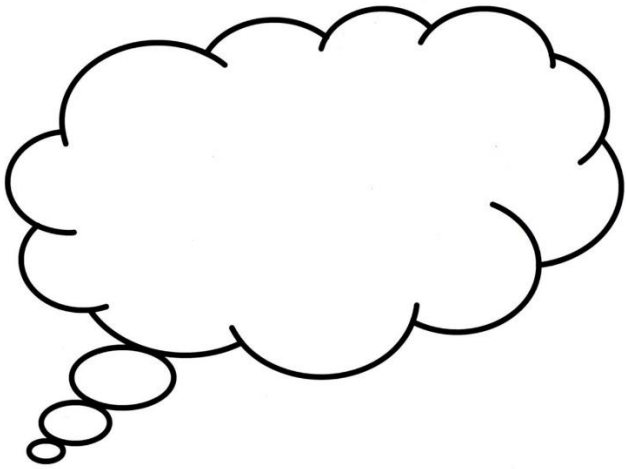
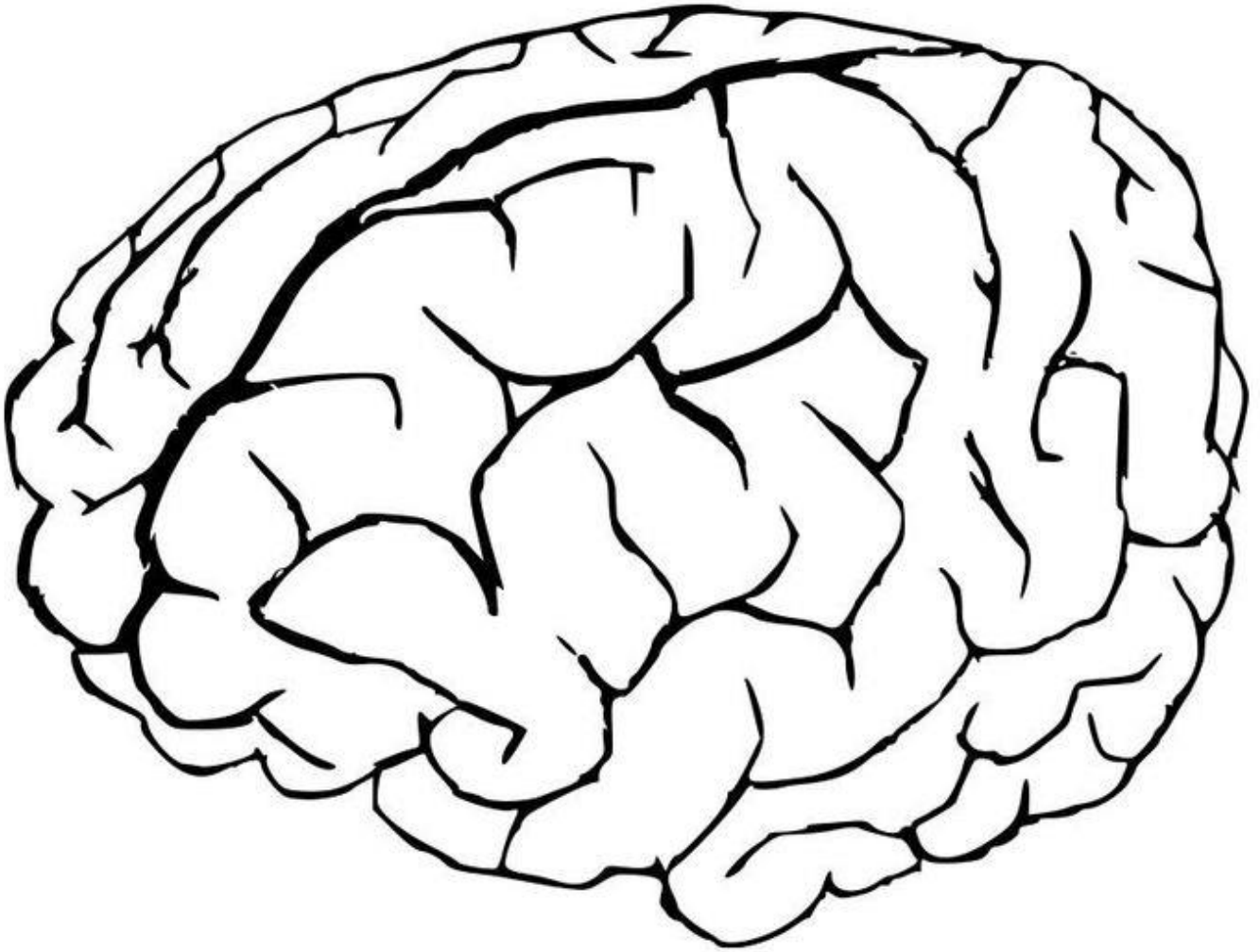


I CAN

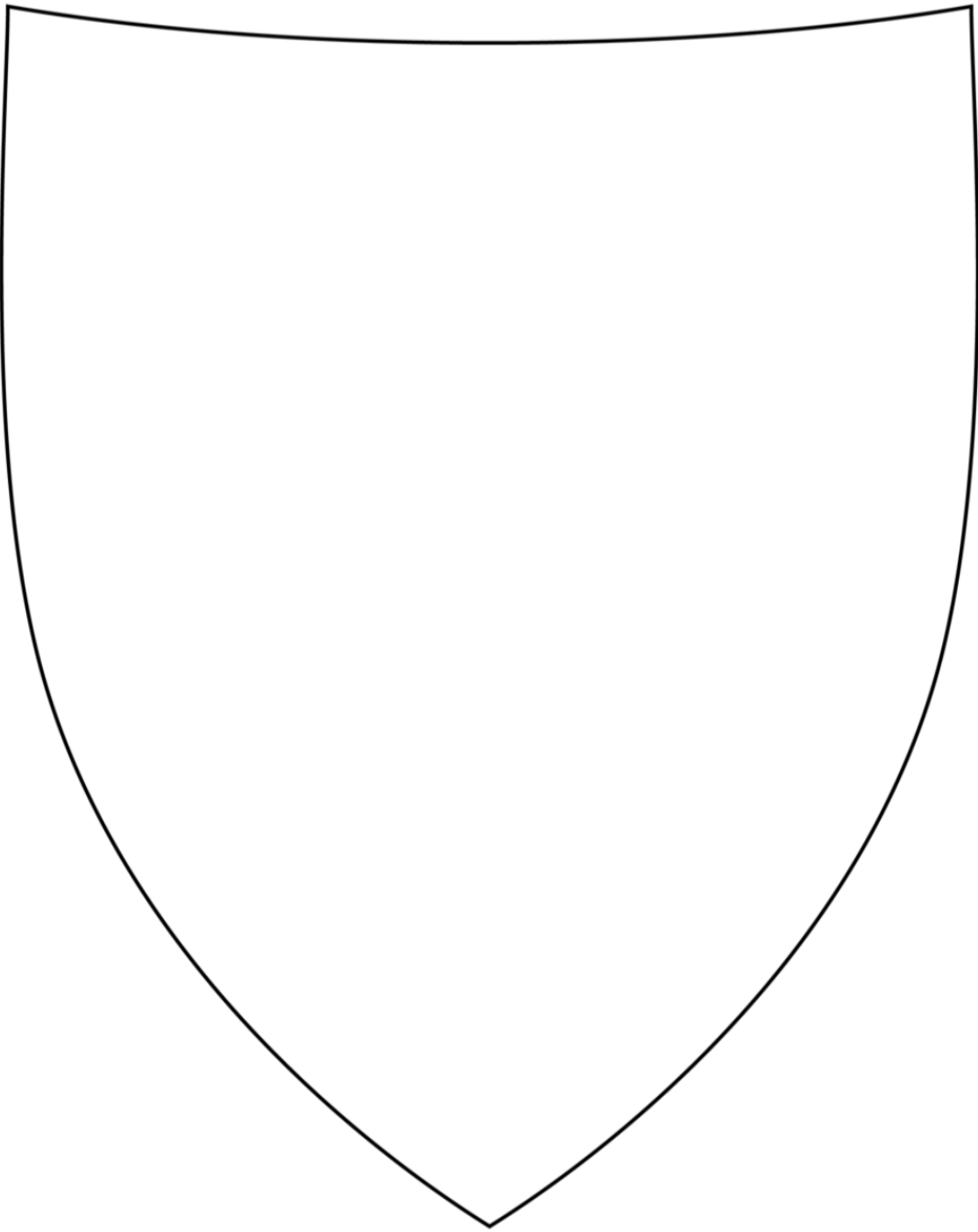


One Smart  
Cookie!!



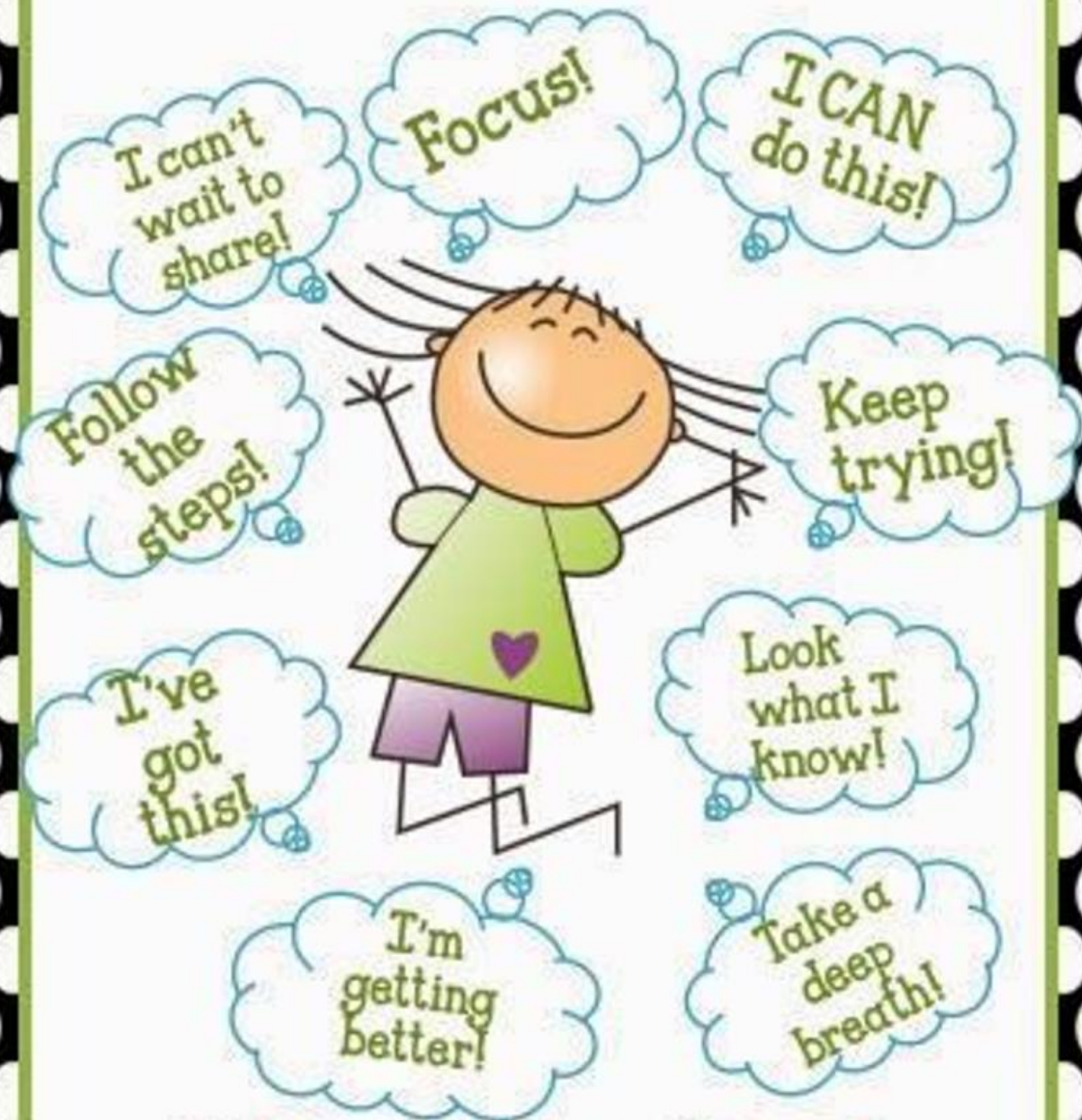









# Self-Talk



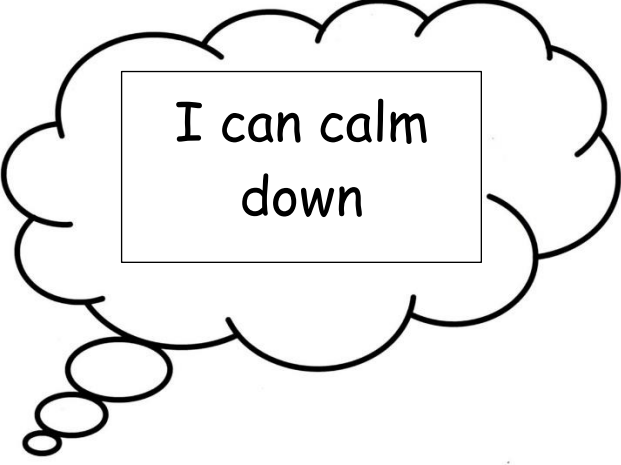
**Think Positive!**

Image Source:


<https://resigningasthegeneralmanageroftheuniverse.files.wordpress.com/2017/09/7600b92a3f31a53fce8622964eb3c320-student-behavior-writing-workshop.jpg>

A thought bubble with a scalloped border and three small circles at the bottom left. Inside is a rectangular box containing text.


It's okay, I can  
play there later

A thought bubble with a scalloped border and three small circles at the bottom left. Inside is a rectangular box containing text.

I can calm  
down

A thought bubble with a scalloped border and three small circles at the bottom left. Inside is a rectangular box containing text.


I can play with  
someone else

A thought bubble with a scalloped border and three small circles at the bottom left. Inside is a rectangular box containing text.

My teacher  
loves me

A thought bubble with a scalloped border and three small circles at the bottom left. Inside is a rectangular box containing text.

Next time I  
might get a  
turn

A thought bubble with a scalloped border and three small circles at the bottom left. Inside is a rectangular box containing text.

I'm still  
special

