



# **Stress Management Toolbox**

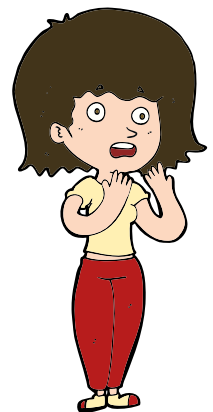
This toolbox is designed to help address worry and stress in the middle of COVID-19. You will learn more about stress and its effects on our bodies, brains, and feelings. You will also find activities and exercises to help reduce stress.

## What is Stress?

Stress is our brain and body's way of responding to change. Reactions are physical, mental, and emotional. When we are stressed, our bodies make chemicals (called hormones) that tell us to fight, run away, or freeze.

When these hormones are released in the body, many things happen. Our heart beats faster and the amount of sugar in our blood increases so we can have the energy to run if we need to. Our pupils dilate (get larger) so we can see better. Our immune system (which helps us fight germs) also gets turned off so our body can use all its energy to fight, freeze, or run away.

If our body does this all the time, it will eventually get tired.



## Is Stress Bad?

All stress is not bad. Sometimes we need stress to help us escape dangerous situations. A small amount of stress helps us be productive and get things done. There is no “right” amount of stress because it varies from person to person.



When stress stops you from doing the things you enjoy and begins to affect your mind, body, and emotions, it is a problem. Too much stress for too long is not good for our bodies and is bad for our health. Some common stress signs are:

- Worrying a lot
- Headaches and body aches
- Upset stomach
- Fast heart beat
- Feeling sad all the time
- Feeling angry all the time
- Trouble focusing
- Loss of sleep



## What Can I Do about Stress?

It is natural to feel stressed. If this stress is affecting your mind, body, or emotions, it may be time to find ways to decrease it. Remember, too much stress for too long, is bad for your health.

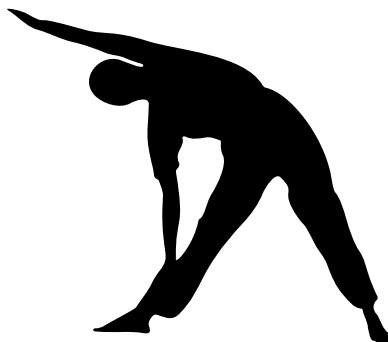
The way we choose to manage stress is called coping. Coping can be positive or negative. Some examples of coping include:

### Positive

- Reading a book
- Creating artwork
- Taking deep breaths
- Playing a game
- Going outside
- Stretching
- Watching a funny video
- Playing with a pet
- Talking to a friend

### Negative

- Eating too much/too little
- Yelling at others
- Doing drugs
- Drinking alcohol
- Biting your nails
- Spending too much time alone
- Hurting yourself
- Hurting someone else
- Sleeping too much



In this workbook you will find activities and exercises that can help you cope in a positive way. Try out as many as you like. Find positive activities that will help you deal with stress now and in the future. Enjoy!

# Activity & Coping Menu



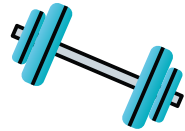
## Create

Paint a picture  
Color a picture  
Draw or doodle  
Take Photos



## Self Care

Take a shower/bath  
Smell a candle  
Take a nap  
Listen to music



## Move

Go for a walk/run  
Ride your bike  
Go for a swim  
Dance



## Watch

A favorite movie  
A favorite TV show  
YouTube Series  
Educational video



## Cook

Bake cookies  
Learn a new recipe  
Help cook dinner  
A healthy snack



## Kindness

Help with a chore  
Make someone a gift  
Offer help  
Compliment yourself



## Clean

Your room  
Your closet  
The living room  
Wash Clothes



## Something New

Watch a new movie  
Try new music  
Learn a new skill  
Learn a new dance



## Socialize

Call a family member  
Video chat a friend  
Go to a local park  
Talk to a parent

# Coping Skills Checklist

Check off the ones you do now. Circle the ones you want to try. Cross off the ones that don't work.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Painting  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taking a mindful walk                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing with clay                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Talking to a friend                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Say something you like about yourself | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a song                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taking a shower or bath               | <input type="checkbox"/> Crossword puzzles                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean your room                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Word searches                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing with a pet                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Color a picture                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing a board game                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Think of your favorite place                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading a book                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Write down what's bothering you and throw it away |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watch your favorite show              | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a letter to someone                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cook or bake                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Pop bubble wrap                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Run your hands under water                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dance                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Use a stress ball                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go swimming                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Play at the park                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jump rope                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ride your bike                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write in a journal                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing or doodling                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Squeeze a stress ball                             |

**List some skills you would like to try:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

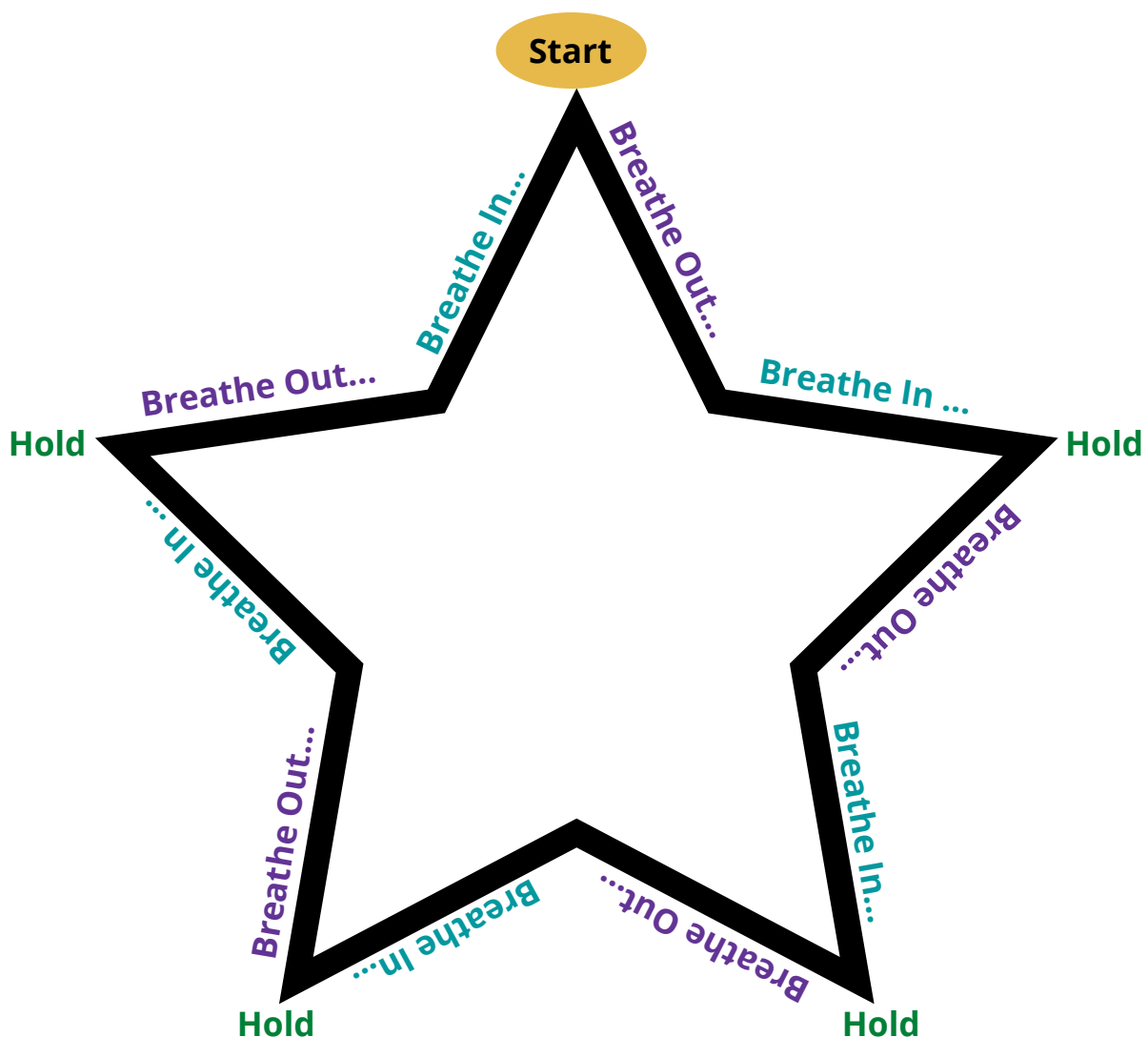


# Mindfulness

Mindfulness is putting all of your attention on what you are doing in the moment. Being mindful can help you focus, stay calm under stress, slow down, and even be more patient. In order to get good at mindfulness, you have to practice. Below you will find exercises and activities that will help you train your brain to be mindful.

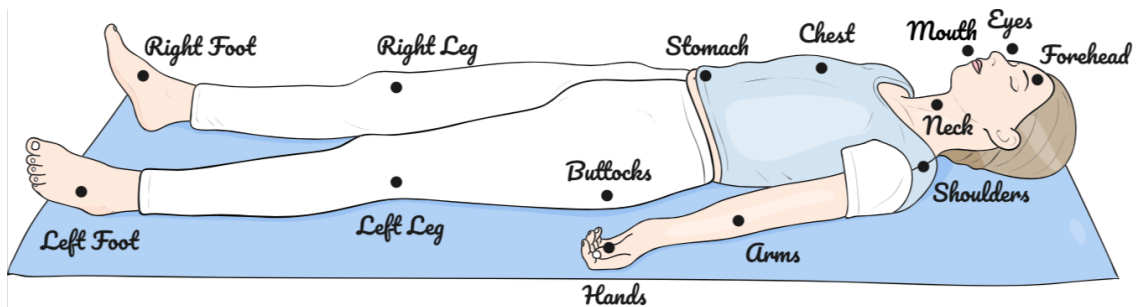
## Star Breathing -

Start at the top of the star, trace your finger down the "breathe out" side as you breathe out. Now breathe in as you trace over the "breath in" side. Once you get to a point on the star, hold your breath for 3 seconds. Do this until you finish where you started.



# Body Scan

A body scan is a mental check-in with your body to see where you have any tight muscles. Find a spot where you can comfortably lay on your back. Inhale and tense each muscle group (below) for 5 seconds. Exhale and relax the muscle group for 10 seconds. Now move on to the next group.



Courtesy of Uniformed Services University: Consortium for Health and Military Performance

## 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Exercise

Use all 5 of your senses to bring you back to the present moment. *LOOK* for 5 things around you and say them out loud. Pay attention to your body and say 4 things you can *FEEL*. *LISTEN* for 3 different sounds and say them out loud. Say 2 things you can *SMELL*. Bring your attention to your mouth and say out loud 1 thing you can *TASTE*.



*What do you see? A computer, a person, a color?...*



*What do you feel? Are your hands cold? Are you sitting in a chair?...*



*What do you hear? Is there traffic outside? Is the wind blowing?...*



*What do you smell? Fresh air, an air freshener, food?...*

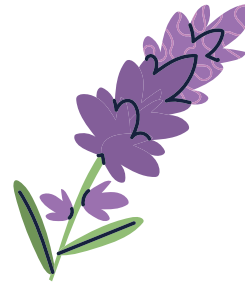
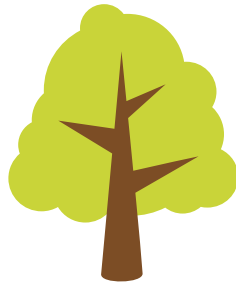
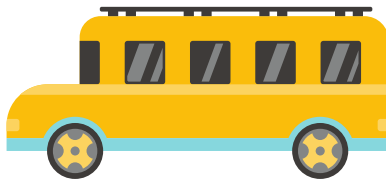
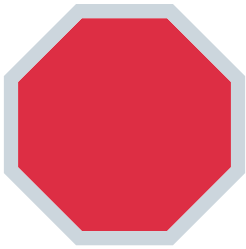


*What do you taste? If nothing, what is your favorite thing to taste?*

# Mindful Rainbow Walk

Go outside, or even in your home, and walk for at least 5 minutes. Use your eyes to find something red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Once you have found all 6 objects, take a deep breath and notice how your body feels. Is your heart beating fast or slow?

**Bonus:** After your walk, draw and color a picture of the objects you found!



Draw your objects here:

A large empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing the objects found during the walk.

# Gratitude List

For this activity, you will need something to write with. You are going to practice writing what you are grateful for. Take 5 minutes to make a list of the things that you are grateful for today. Use the space below. Here are some ideas you can use as a guide:



- Someone you appreciate  
\_\_\_\_\_
- An activity that makes you happy  
\_\_\_\_\_
- A positive quality about a friend  
\_\_\_\_\_
- An item you love  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Part of your body you're grateful for  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Something that made you laugh  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Something someone did for you  
\_\_\_\_\_
- A food that you like  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Bonus:** Come up with 3 more things you are grateful for!

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



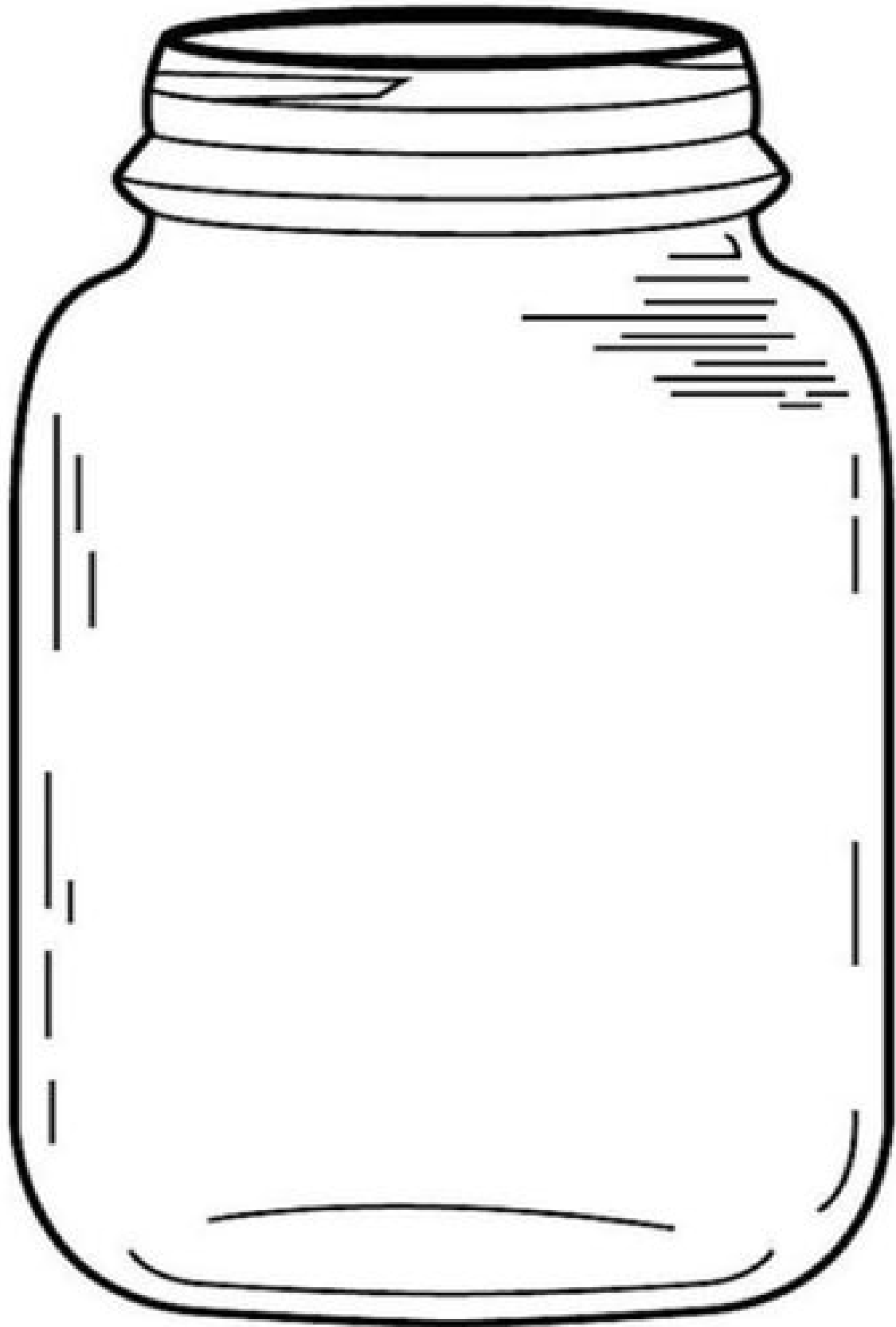
# Worry Jar

A blank worry jar is on the next page. In the jar, write down the things that you are worried about. Your worries are going to stay in the jar. Once you write them down you can let them leave your mind. Come back to look at your worry jar for 10 minutes a day. As time passes, you may see that some of your worries are gone. If they are, cross them out, take a deep breath and be thankful that you are here!



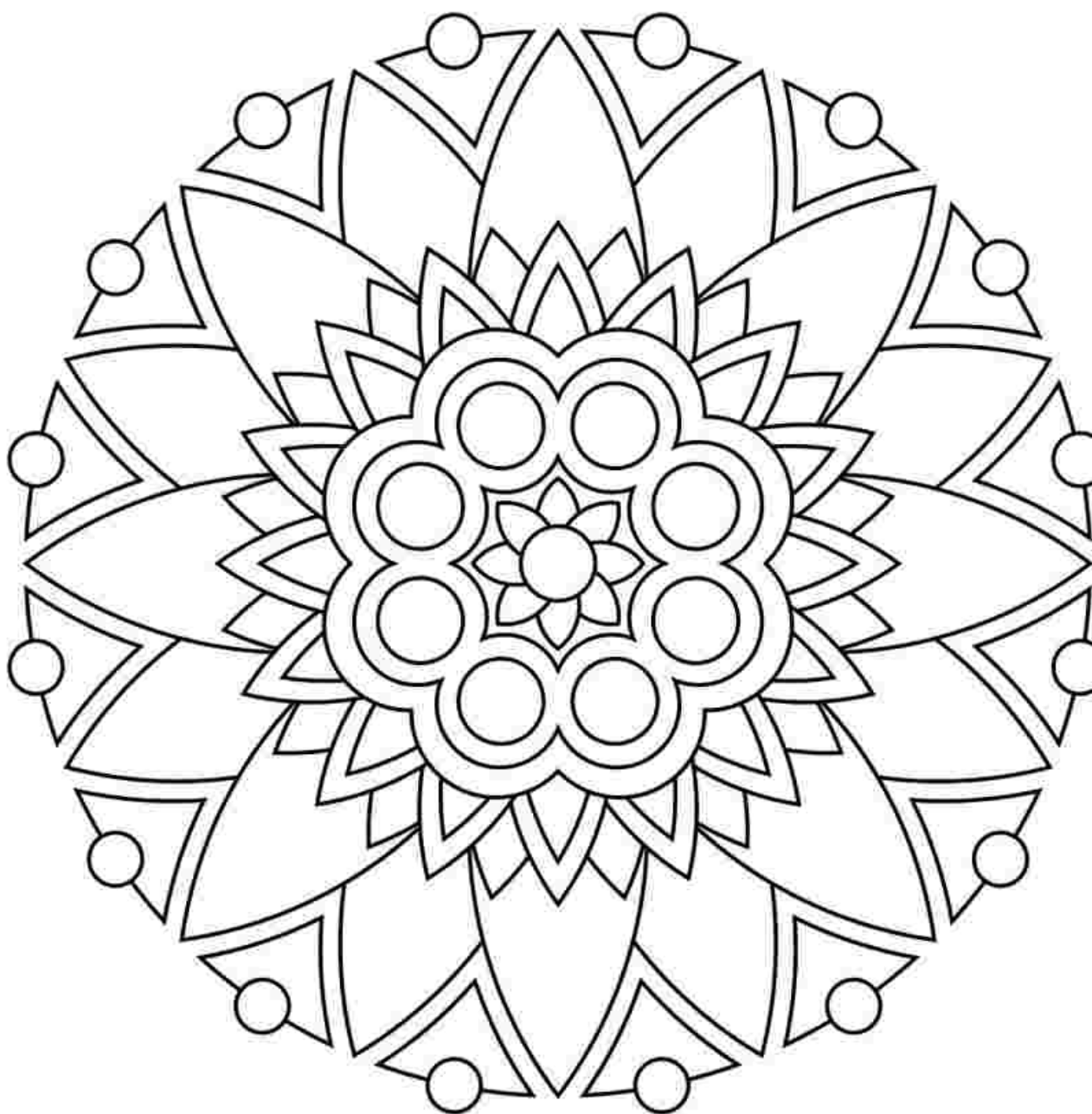
Courtesy of [Necessities.me](https://Necessities.me)

# My Worry Jar

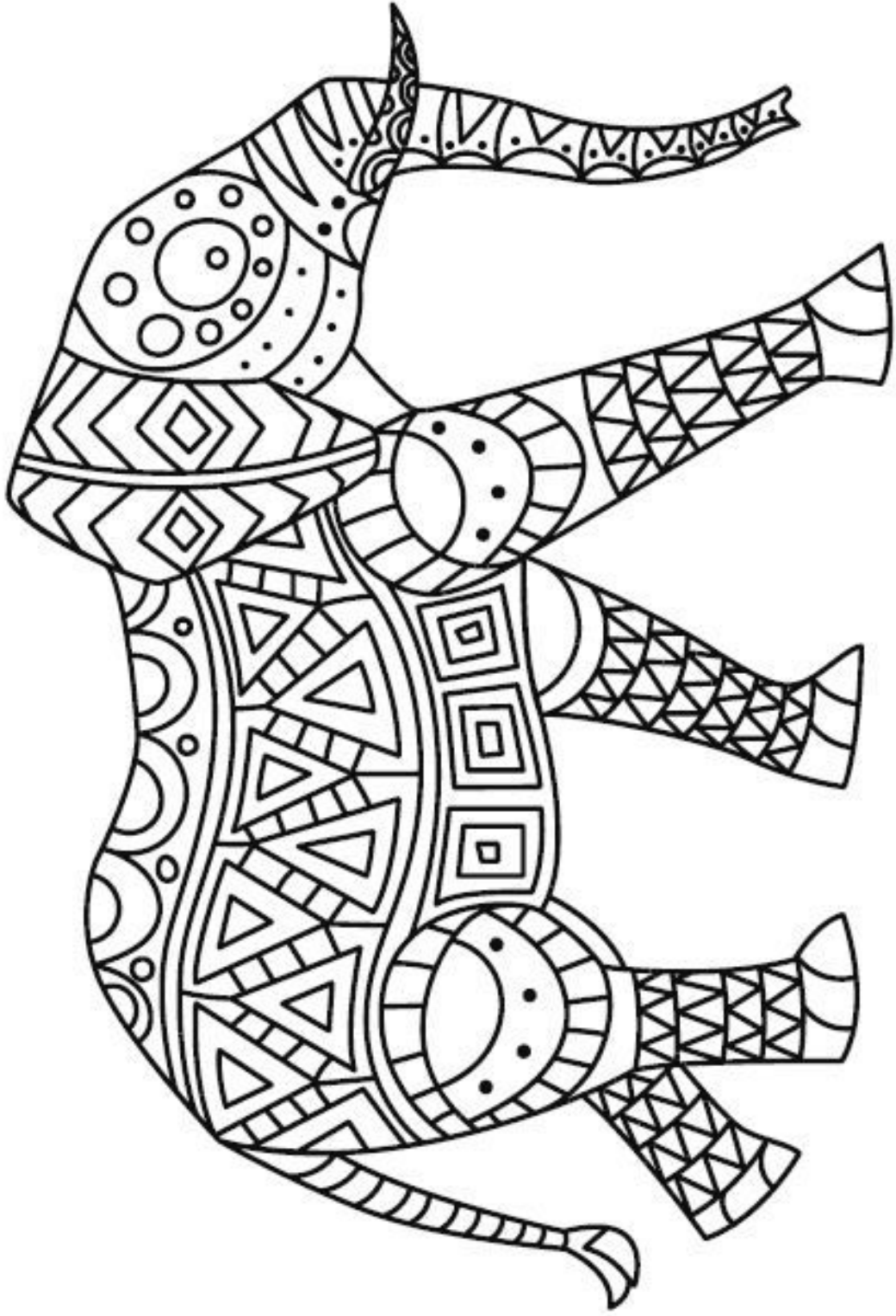


# **Mindful Coloring**

Coloring is a great way to be mindful of the present moment and clear your mind of worries. On the next 4 pages you will find blank mindful coloring sheets. While coloring, notice the colors you choose and take your time finishing each sheet. Don't forget to let your creativity shine!

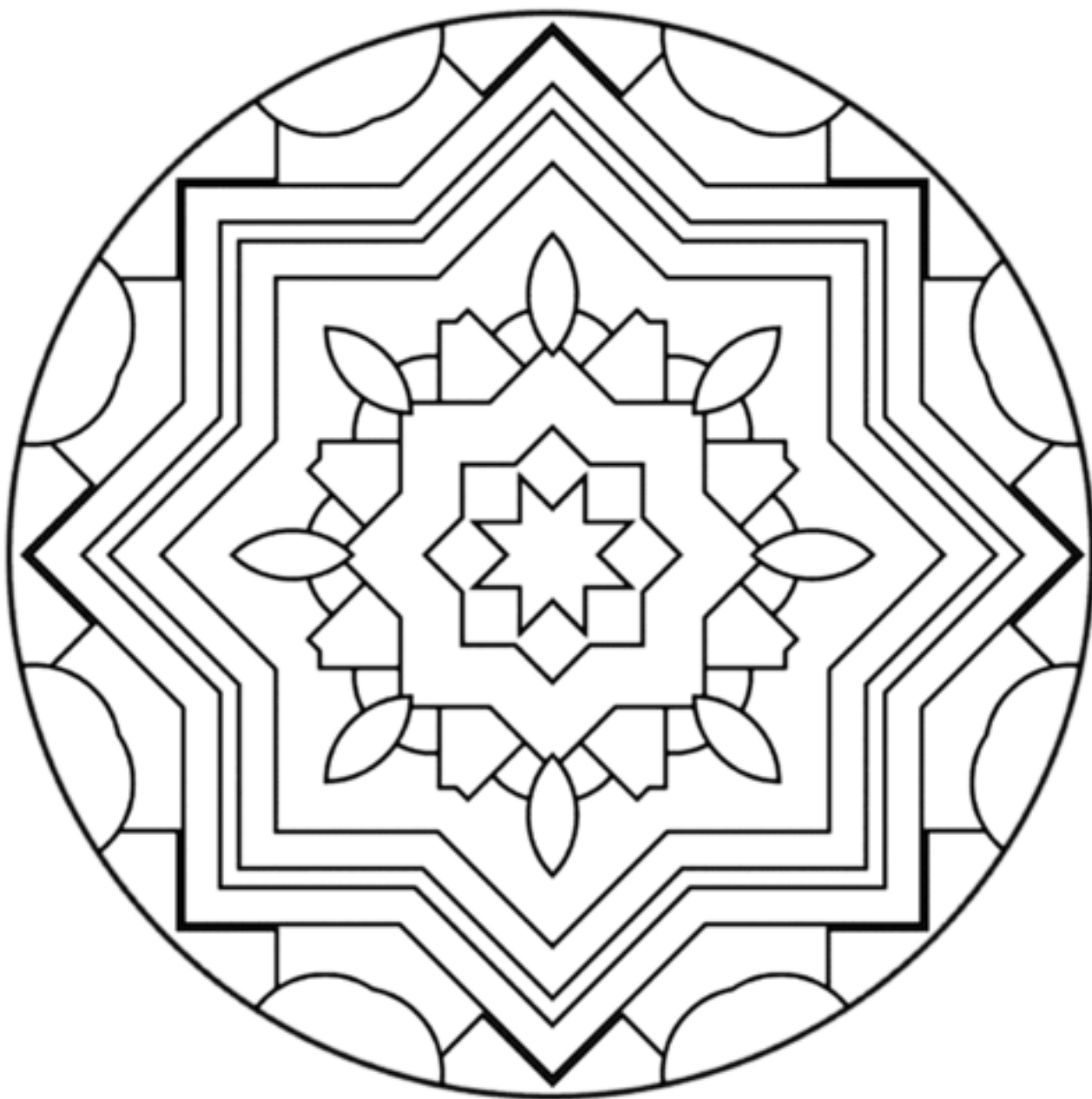


Courtesy of American Grassroots Coalition

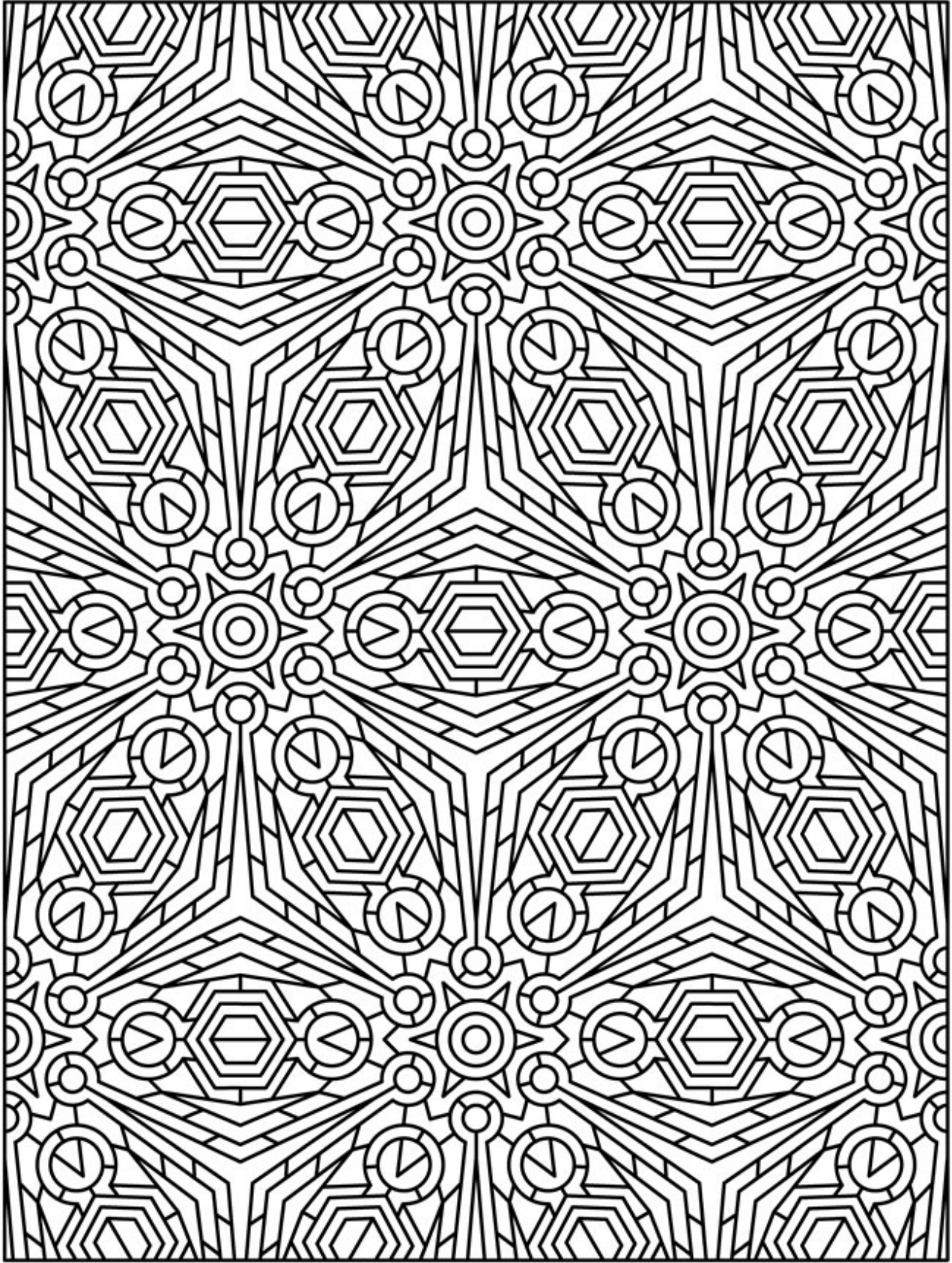


Courtesy of Pinterest





Courtesy of [supercoloring.com](http://supercoloring.com)



Courtesy of Miss Caly





## **Free Online Resources and Apps**

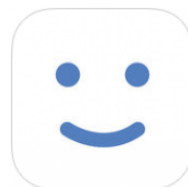
- **Smiling Mind** - This app offers body scans that kids and teens can use to become aware of their bodies. Suitable for ages 4+.



- **Calm** - This app can be used to help you relax at the end of the day by doing mindful exercises, playing relaxing music, or even reading a sleep story!



- **Three Good Things: A Happiness Journal** - This easy-to-use app can help children and teens focus on the positive by writing out what went good in the day. Suitable for ages 6+.



- **Yoga Ed.** - This free online tool teaches children and teens the basics of yoga and mindfulness through basic yoga poses, breathing exercises, games, and relaxation skills.



It is normal for everyone to get stressed at times. With practice, the coping skills you learned in this workbook can become good tools to help with worry and stress.

Sometimes we need extra support. If this workbook does not help, talk to an adult or get extra help here:

- Crisis Text Line: Text "START" to 741-741
- Teen Lifeline: 1-800-248-TEEN (1-800-273-8336)
- Trevor Lifeline for LGBTQ Youth: 1-866-488-7386
- Coping with Stress (WHO) - *www.who.int*
- Just for Teens: A Personal Plan for Managing Stress - *ppvkind.com*
- Tu Nidito: Tucson support groups for children 3.5-18 years old who are grieving the loss of a loved one (currently virtual); *tunidito.org* or call 520-322-9155

# EL RIO

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## HEALTH

