

Activity Sheet

The Helping Hand

An activity to support children cope with uncertainty and worry caused by the conflict in Ukraine

Using the activity sheet below or a sheet of paper, support children in writing or drawing a Helping Hand.

In this activity, we will practice recognizing thoughts and separating thoughts into unhelpful thoughts that create unnecessary anxiety and worry and helpful thoughts that support us when we feel difficult emotions. We will do this by dividing our thoughts into two colours: **red** and **green**. This is part of a tool called Psychological First Aid by Solfrid Raknes.

It is important to remind children that there are no good and bad feelings, but that feelings can affect our thoughts in a negative or positive way.

Red thoughts are thoughts that often come quickly and automatically, and can help reinforce negative emotions. Red thoughts are completely normal and something everyone has so it is important to learn about how they affect us.

Green thoughts are useful to us. They are caring and supportive. They can help us think differently, so that we can tolerate situations we are afraid of or think we cannot handle. They do not always come automatically, as red thoughts do. We often have to look harder for green thoughts.

Index finger – EMOTIONS

Children should think about how they feel about the situation and write down how strong the feeling is on a scale from 0 - 10, where 0 is "they feel nothing" and 10 is "this is a very strong feeling". E.g. angry or scared. Remind children that emotions are just information and not something you can control.

Middle finger – RED THOUGHTS

Here you fill in thoughts (you think) create the negative feeling(s). Look for words and pictures that explain the way that you feel. E.g. the war is going to happen here too.

Ring finger – GREEN THOUGHTS

Which thoughts can help you in this situation? If it is hard to come up with green thoughts, think about what you would say to a good friend in this situation e.g. we are safe here or many countries are helping Ukraine.

Little finger – WHAT CAN I DO?

Write down what you can do to help. Think about what has helped you in other situations where you have been scared or angry. Is it helpful to think about what someone you look up to would do or what a good friend would do? E.g. I can tell someone how I feel.

Wrist – WHO CAN HELP ME?

Name someone who can help you with this situation in some way. Perhaps there is someone in your family that you can talk to who can support you, or a friend or teacher?



The Helping Hand

Emotions

What happens?

Red thoughts



Green thoughts



Who can help me?

What can I do?