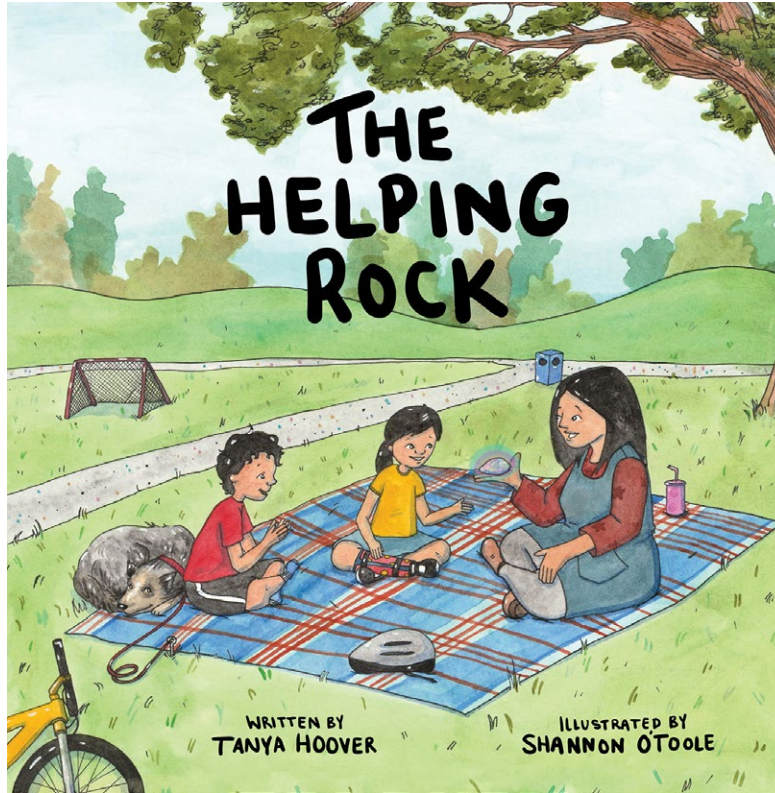


GUIDEBOOK



The Helping Rock is a story to celebrate the ways we help each other! As a community, our gifts and struggles fit together like a puzzle – I share my gifts and strengths with you, and you share your gifts and strengths with me.

We created this guidebook for adults to share with children. The instructions at the beginning of each activity are written for adults as they support children who are trying the activities. The curious questions and the activities in this guidebook can:

- Show children how the concepts in *The Helping Rock* apply in their own lives
- Help children identify their own gifts to share with their community and their world
- Help children accept that we all have struggles, but we can learn to ask for help and grow in these areas
- Demonstrate how these concepts fit together to serve our communities as we share and celebrate the ways we help each other

A PROJECT OF:



This guidebook was developed by Tanya Hoover, MSW, RSW, CPT, author of *The Helping Rock*

TO THE ADULT . . . BEFORE YOU BEGIN

As adults, our own experiences of giving and receiving help influence the way we feel and talk about these topics with children. Reflecting on your own thoughts, emotions, and experiences can help you be more prepared for the feelings that may come up for you or a child as you discuss these topics. Use the following questions to help you self-reflect:

- What do you know you do well? How do you share these gifts with others?
- What skills do you find more challenging?
- When you were a child, how did the adults in your life respond to your gifts and to the skills you needed to work harder at? Were your gifts recognized? Were your challenges accepted with the knowledge that you could grow? How did this feel?
- Are you aware of the strengths of the child you are doing these activities with? What are they? Is the child aware of these strengths?
- What skills does the child you are doing these activities with have to work harder at? Are you able to start from a place of full acceptance of this child's struggles? Why or why not? If not, what is getting in the way?
- What environment supports learning and growing?

QUESTIONS AND WRITING PROMPTS

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Use the following questions and activities to start a conversation, or use them as writing prompts to help children think about the story and how some of the same concepts apply in their own lives. Thinking through the experiences of the characters in the story can help children make connections about their own feelings and experiences. Having a conversation with a supportive adult may help a child understand confusing feelings or challenging interactions.

ACCEPTING HELP

At the beginning of the story, Lani says that she doesn't want anybody's help to learn how to ride a bike. However, at the end of the story, we can see that Tai is teaching her how to ride.



- Why do you think Lani doesn't want anybody's help at the beginning of the story?
- What changes for Lani throughout her day at the park?
- What makes her decide to ask Tai for help?
- How do you think it feels for her?
- Have you ever felt like you didn't want help?
- Have you ever accepted help and found it went better than you thought?

CHANGING FEELINGS

Our feelings can change a lot, even in one day. In the story, Ali’s feelings change. Below are some questions to explore about changing feelings.



- When we first meet Ali in the story, how is he feeling? Read the text and look at the illustrations for clues.
- What does Lani do to help Ali? How does he feel after that? How do you know?
- Soon after this, Ali helps River and Charlie by lending them his soccer ball. How do you think Ali feels when he hears his friends arguing? How do you think Ali feels when he helps his friends?
- How do you feel when something is hard?
- How do you feel when someone helps you?
- How do you feel when you help someone else?



Here is a list of feelings you may choose from to answer the questions above, or you can name feelings that aren’t on the list:

Happy	Sad	Worried
Frustrated	Angry	Scared
Helpful	Hopeful	Strong
Capable	Ashamed	Satisfied
Discouraged	Relieved	Grateful

SOLVING CONFLICTS

In the story, River and Charlie are having an argument. Each thinks the other put the soccer ball in the bag.



- How do you think River and Charlie are feeling while they have this argument?
- How do you think Lani and Ali feel when they hear their friends arguing?
- Have you ever had an argument with someone? How did you solve that conflict? Did anybody help you?

STANDING UP FOR SOMEONE

River, Charlie, Lani, and Ali hear kids on the soccer field shouting at Jade: “You’re too small! And too slow!”



- How does this make Jade feel? How do you know?
- What do River and Charlie do to speak out and stand up for Jade? How does this make Jade feel?
- Have you ever seen someone leaving one child out or treating someone in a hurtful way? Did you tell someone or speak up? Why or why not? Sometimes this can feel hard and scary. Other times it can feel easier.
- Have you ever been left out? How did that make you feel? What did you do? Did someone speak out and stand up for you?

THE KINDNESS OF NOTICING A NEED

Being kind is a way of helping and a way of giving within our communities. In the illustrations, we see that Jade brings something to Tai.



- What does Jade bring?
- How did Jade know Tai might be thirsty?
- Do you think Tai asked, or did Jade notice on her own?
- How do you think Tai showed Jade that he was grateful?
- Describe a time when you noticed that someone needed something and you helped them. How did helping someone make you feel?
- When has someone noticed something you might need and offered you help? How did that make you feel?

WHAT COMES NEXT?

At the end of the story, Lani says she knows what she wants to do. On the last page, the illustration shows her asking Tai to teach her how to ride a bike.



- What do you think happens next?
- Is it easy or hard for Lani to learn how to ride a bike? Does she learn on the first try, or does it take many tries?
- How does she feel? Is she excited? Nervous? Frustrated? Discouraged? Hopeful?

Write your own version of what comes next in the story.

ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to help children apply concepts from *The Helping Rock* in their own lives. Different children learn in different ways. Doing a variety of activities that include writing, drawing, creating art, and/or movement provides opportunities for children to explore which activities they most connect with.

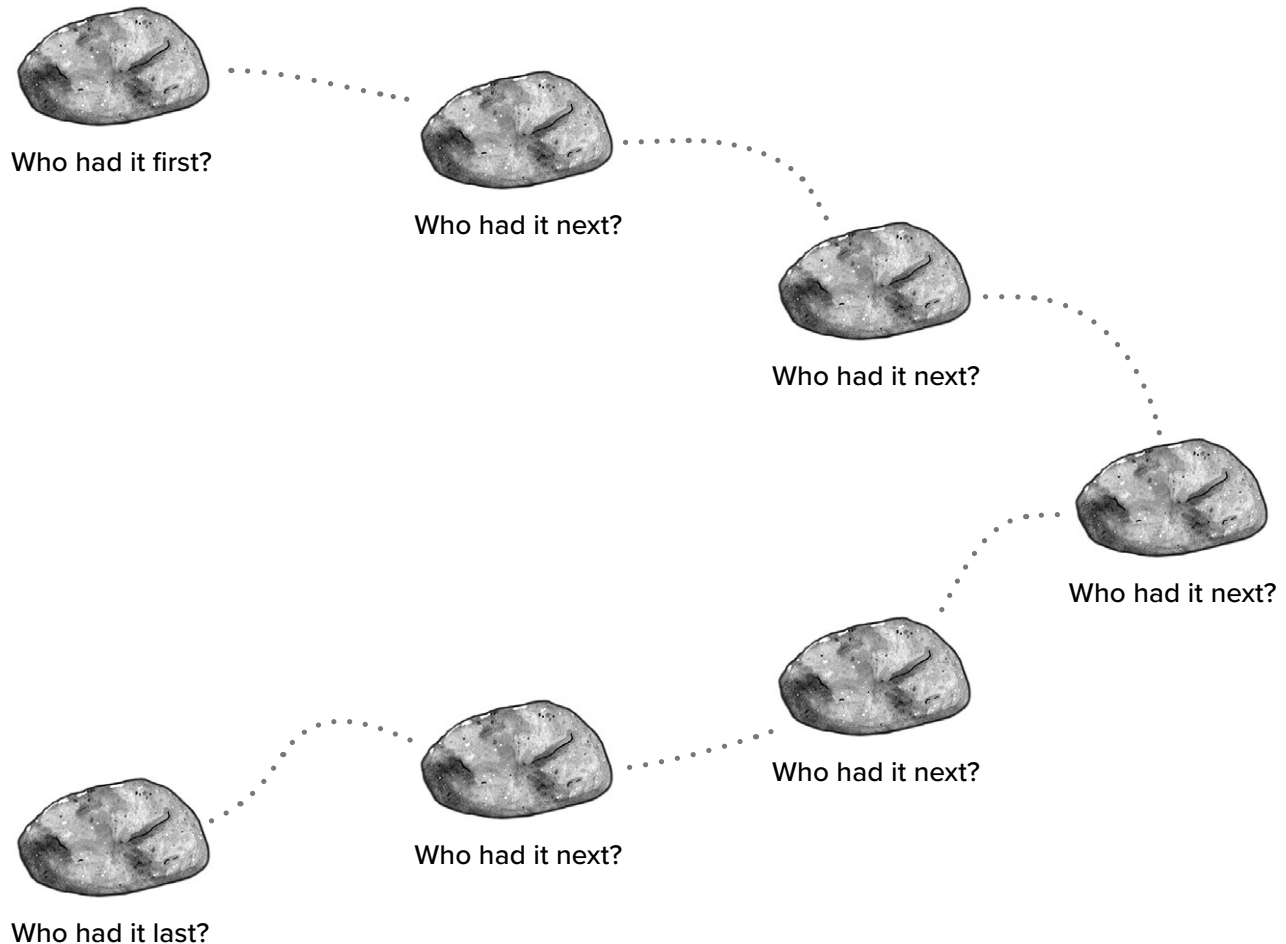
MAP OUT THE STORY

This activity helps children place the events of the story in sequence, in order to solidify their understanding that each of the main characters both offers and receives help. It also encourages children to think about how this happens in their own lives.



Draw a map of the path the rock takes in the story. Who has it first? Who has it next? Keep drawing the map of the rock's path until you reach the end of the story. Who has the helping rock at the end?

Lani and her friends each help a friend, and they each get help from a friend. Can you think of how your family and friends help each other? Try passing a rock around as you help each other.



ALL OUR GIFTS

This activity normalizes the concept that we all have personal strengths and inner gifts that come more easily for us, and we all have skills we need to work harder at. It helps children identify their own strengths, as well as areas where they could benefit from help. The list below includes a wide range of skills to highlight the many kinds of gifts we can offer our communities. When children identify their strengths, we can celebrate these and help them find ways to share their gifts. When children identify skills that are more challenging, they can help us create goals for growth.

Skills and gifts come in many forms. Draw a star beside each gift from the list below that feels easier to you or that you know you do well. These are gifts that can help you contribute to your community! Next, draw a circle beside each gift that feels challenging for you or that takes hard work. You may choose some of these as goals you want to work on.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Giving hugs | Making people laugh |
| Telling jokes | Respecting others who are different than me |
| Being kind | Waiting patiently for things |
| Solving problems | Comforting others who are sad |
| Doing math | Helping with chores |
| Including kids who are left out | Eating healthy food |
| Telling the truth | Reading |
| Dancing | Imagining stories |
| Telling people when I disagree | Sharing how I feel |
| Going with the flow | Listening to what others have to say |
| Asking for help when I need it | Being still |
| Speaking up | Biking |
| Creating art | Being creative |
| Singing | Caring for animals |
| Playing sports | Standing up for my beliefs |
| Making friends | Managing big feelings |
| Cleaning my room | Saying sorry when I hurt someone |
| Growing plants | Add your own: |

CREATE YOUR OWN HELPING ROCK

By creating their own rock, children are able to personalize it and make it their own. They can then use it to practice giving help to someone else, passing their rock on when they do.

Find a rock and decorate it however you want. You may use permanent markers, paint, or any other art supplies you choose. When you help someone, pass the rock to them. Tell them about *The Helping Rock* and invite them to pass it on to someone they help.

FINGER PUPPETS

Role play helps children solidify their understanding of what happened in the story, and it also helps them gain mastery by practicing new skills in a safe setting.

Go to CTRI's website to print out the finger puppets of characters from the story (www.ctrinstitute.com/resources/free-resources-books). Follow the provided instructions to place them on your fingers. On your own or with the adult helping you, act out what happens in the story. Now make up your own story. Who needs help and how do they get it? How do the characters share their gifts in your story?

COLORING PAGES

Many children find coloring relaxing. Sometimes they like to color while they listen to a story, and sometimes they like to color just for fun.

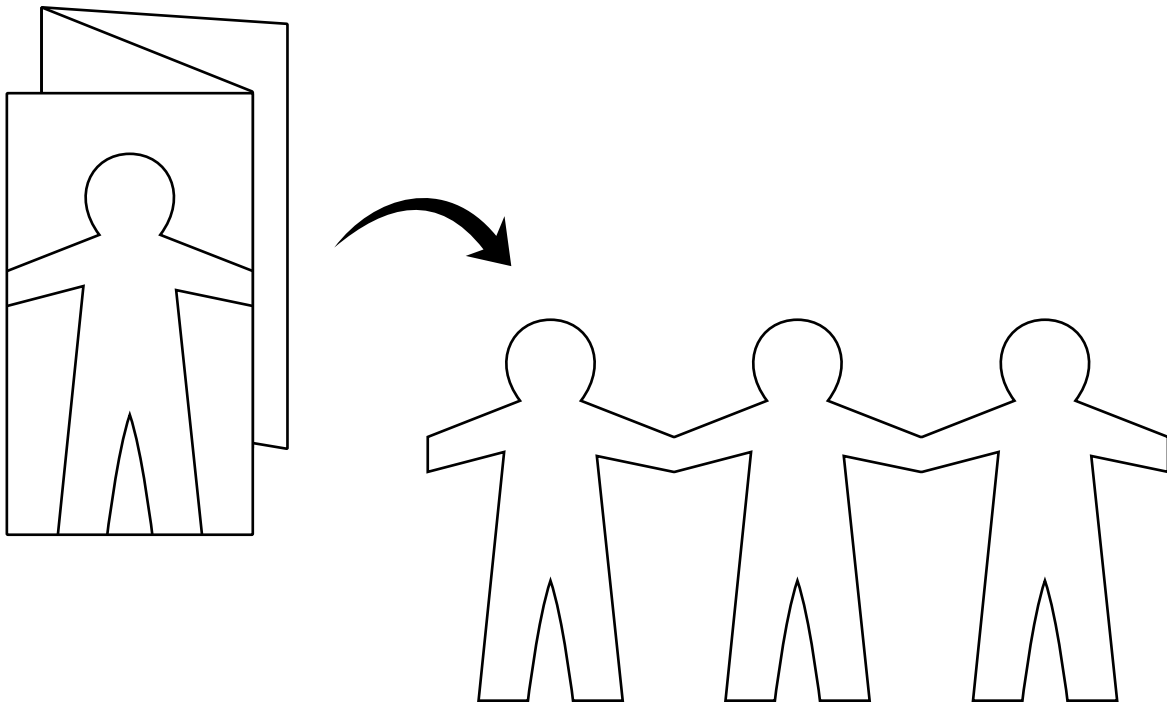
Print out the coloring pages of illustrations from *The Helping Rock* (www.ctrinstitute.com/resources/free-resources-books). Do you notice any new details as you color?

PAPER DOLLS

Having a concrete object like paper dolls helps children think about and remember the concept that different people have different gifts. This activity also helps them consider what types of gifts people have and how those gifts interact with one another.

Fold a letter-sized paper into three sections, accordion style. On the front, draw the figure of a person, making sure the arms go all the way to the edge of the paper.

Now cut out the person, cutting through all three layers of paper together. Make sure you do not cut along the fold. Once the cutting is complete, unfold the figure to find three paper dolls in a row, holding hands. Now imagine what gifts or talents each doll might have. Write a word or draw a picture on each doll to represent their gift. How are these three dolls' gifts going to work together as you play with them?



TELL YOUR STORY OF HELPING AND SHARING YOUR GIFTS

This activity helps children apply the concept of sharing gifts from The Helping Rock to their own lives.

Write or tell your story of helping someone else and/or sharing your gifts with others. You can share about one particular time in detail, or you can share about many times you've helped others.

SHARE YOUR STORY OF SOMEONE ELSE HELPING YOU

This activity helps children apply the concept of receiving help from The Helping Rock to their own lives.

Write or tell your story of someone else helping you. What did they help you with? How did it feel? Did it help you learn something new?

SHARE YOUR STORY OF A NOT YET THAT BECAME AN I CAN DO IT!

A growth mindset is the idea that we can keep growing and learning new things. This activity helps children learn this concept by noticing something that they couldn't do in the past, and then learned how to do.

Write or tell your story of something that you couldn't do, but then you worked at it, and now you can do it!

ANIMALS AND PETS AS HELPERS

Animals are meaningful companions to children in part because they offer unconditional acceptance. Many animals provide comfort when they notice people are distressed. Helping children notice this gift fosters gratitude and care for animals.



In the story, Paco helps Lani by staying close to her when she's frustrated. How have you seen animals and pets helping others? How does it make you feel to have a pet stay close to you when you experience something difficult?

Write a story about an animal who helped someone else.

GRATITUDE

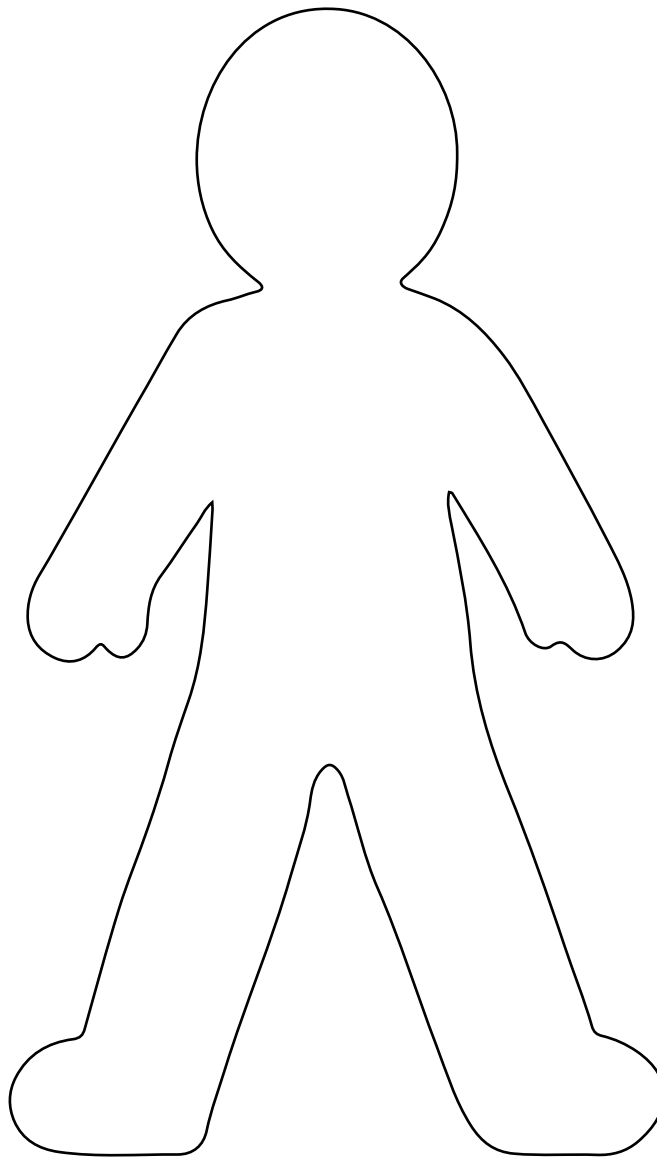
Practicing gratitude has been shown to improve overall well-being and happiness. This doesn't mean ignoring the hard parts in our lives, it just means paying attention to the things, people, and experiences around us that we are grateful for. Taking the time to notice these things helps children recognize them.

When others share their gifts with us and help us, we often feel grateful. How can you show your gratitude to others?

FEELINGS IN OUR BODIES

Our minds and bodies are connected in many ways. Helping children identify where they feel emotions in their body helps them recognize when they are feeling a certain way. It's important to notice not only uncomfortable emotions, but also when we are feeling confident, express ourselves, and share our gifts. Helping children recognize this within themselves is an important part of encouraging them to build up their confidence and share their gifts.

In the story, Mama says that when we share our gifts, a light shines inside of us. What do you think this means? When you find ways to express yourself, use your voice, and share your gifts, how do you feel? Where do you notice that feeling in your body? Draw or write on the person below to show this.



HOW DOES IT FEEL?

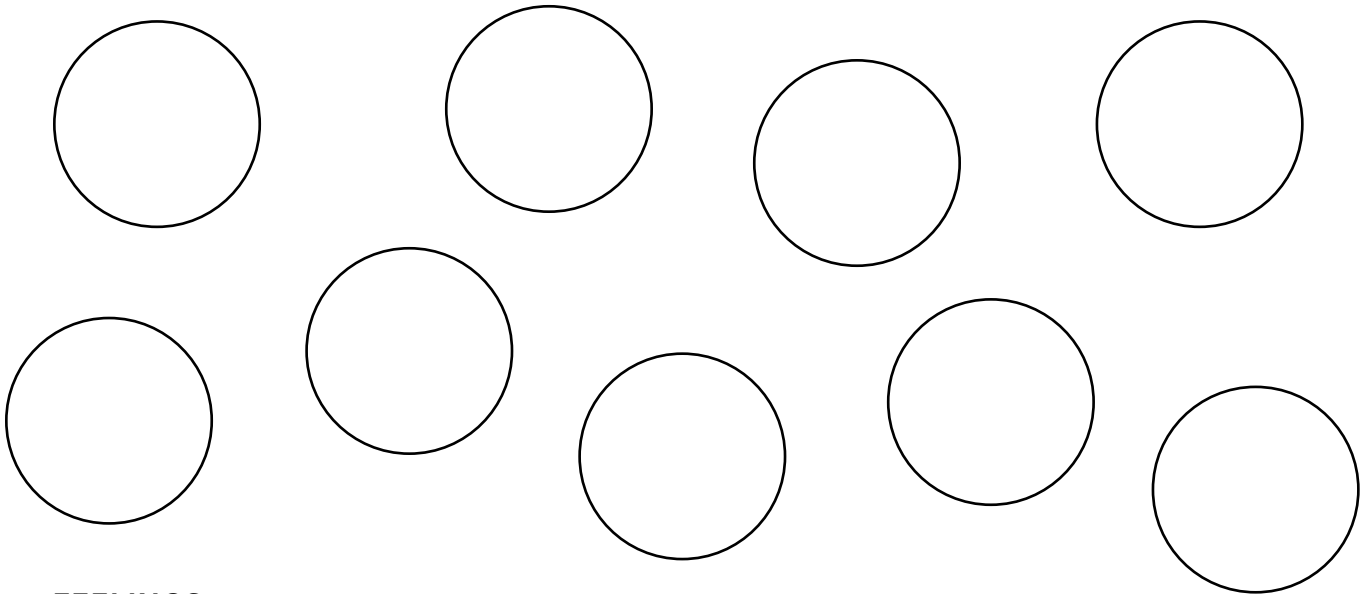
Our feelings are complex, and we often have more than one feeling at a time. When children have a lot of feelings at once, they can feel mixed-up and confused. Helping them identify the variety of feelings they have can help the feelings become more organized and, in turn, make them easier to manage. You can spend time talking about the feelings the child identifies and talk about how to manage those feelings.

Needing help and helping others can bring up lots of feelings, and it often causes more than one feeling at the same time.

Choose one (or more) of the following scenarios to do this activity:

- Think about a time when you found something difficult
- Think about a time you needed help
- Think about a time you shared your gifts
- Think about a time you helped others

How did you feel when that happened? Did you have more than one feeling at the same time? Look at the list of feelings below. Choose a color to represent each feeling, and color in a circle for each one. Fill the circle all the way up if you have a lot of that feeling; only fill in part of the circle if you just have some of that feeling.



FEELINGS

Afraid	Curious	Guilty	Joyful	Stubborn
Anxious	Comfortable	Happy	Mad	Supportive
Annoyed	Confident	Helpful	Relaxed	Tearful
Angry	Daring	Helpless	Relieved	Tender
Ashamed	Empty	Hopeful	Sad	Unsure
Belonging	Frustrated	Hopeless	Safe	Vibrant
Bored	Furious	Horrorified	Shy	Wonderful
Calm	Gloomy	Impatient	Silly	Worried
Capable	Grateful	Jealous	Strong	Zany

IF YOU WERE A TREE

This activity encourages children to use their imagination and awareness to consider how, all throughout nature, humans, animals, and plants interact with and benefit from one another.

Imagine that you are a tree and draw what you might look like. If you were a tree, how would you help others? For example, one thing you would naturally do is help the environment by taking in carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. How else would you help others? How could others take care of you or help you?

DANCE YOUR GIFTS

Moving our bodies keeps energy flowing and it shifts our thoughts and feelings. Children benefit from body movements to help them learn new skills. Creating a movement or dance encourages children to be creative, and the body movement helps them remember concepts from The Helping Rock.

Create a movement or dance to show what your gifts are.

ECO ART INSTALLATION

Creating eco art fosters creativity, observational skills, and respect for nature. Encouraging children to create art from nature to represent themselves or their gifts builds their confidence by encouraging them to express themselves.

Find a place outside where others won't mind if you leave a small art installation made of nature items. Collect items from the outdoors (sticks, rocks, feathers, etc.), but be sure to choose things that won't hurt any plants or animals. Create something that represents you, your gifts, and how you choose to share them.

WAYS WE GIVE AND WAYS OTHERS SHARE WITH US

This activity helps children think about how their gifts make an impact in the world and how the gifts of others make an impact within each of us.

Draw or paint a spiral, or use the small version below. Another idea is to collect items from nature and make a spiral outside with leaves, pinecones, rocks, etc. Once you have created your spiral, place your finger in the center and trace it outward. As your finger moves, think or talk about the ways sharing your gifts helps those around you. Now place your finger at the outside edge of the spiral and trace it inward. As your finger moves toward the center, think or talk about the ways that other people's help makes you feel good.

