



Better relationships

We're going to tap into executive functions to establish healthier connections in our life. Get ready to boost your relationship skills as we face challenges head-on.



Learning objectives

Ever feel like your arguments with friends are stuck on repeat? We're here to help you break that cycle. Want to keep your cool better in heated moments or **foster deeper connections** with others? Our goal is to equip you with the skills and insights to **thrive in your interactions**, whether that means saying no when you need to or breaking down walls to get closer to people.

SESSION REVIEW

TOPIC

Your Social Web

TOPIC

Inter & Intrapersonal Awareness

TOPIC

EFs in relationships

TOPIC

Create Your Social Web

TOPIC

Social Scenarios Workbook

TOPIC

Chill out!

TOPIC

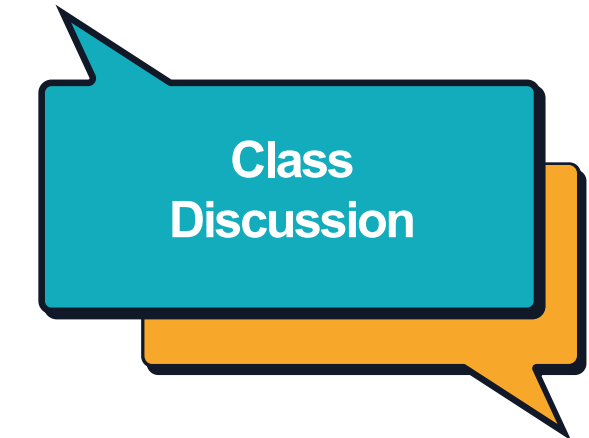
Social Action Plan

Navigating the lesson

Look out for these **symbols** throughout the lesson and use it as your trusty learning guide to ensure that you have enough time to learn, discuss, practice, and reflect on your newfound knowledge.



An estimate of how long the activity may take.



Time to pause and have a discussion with the class.

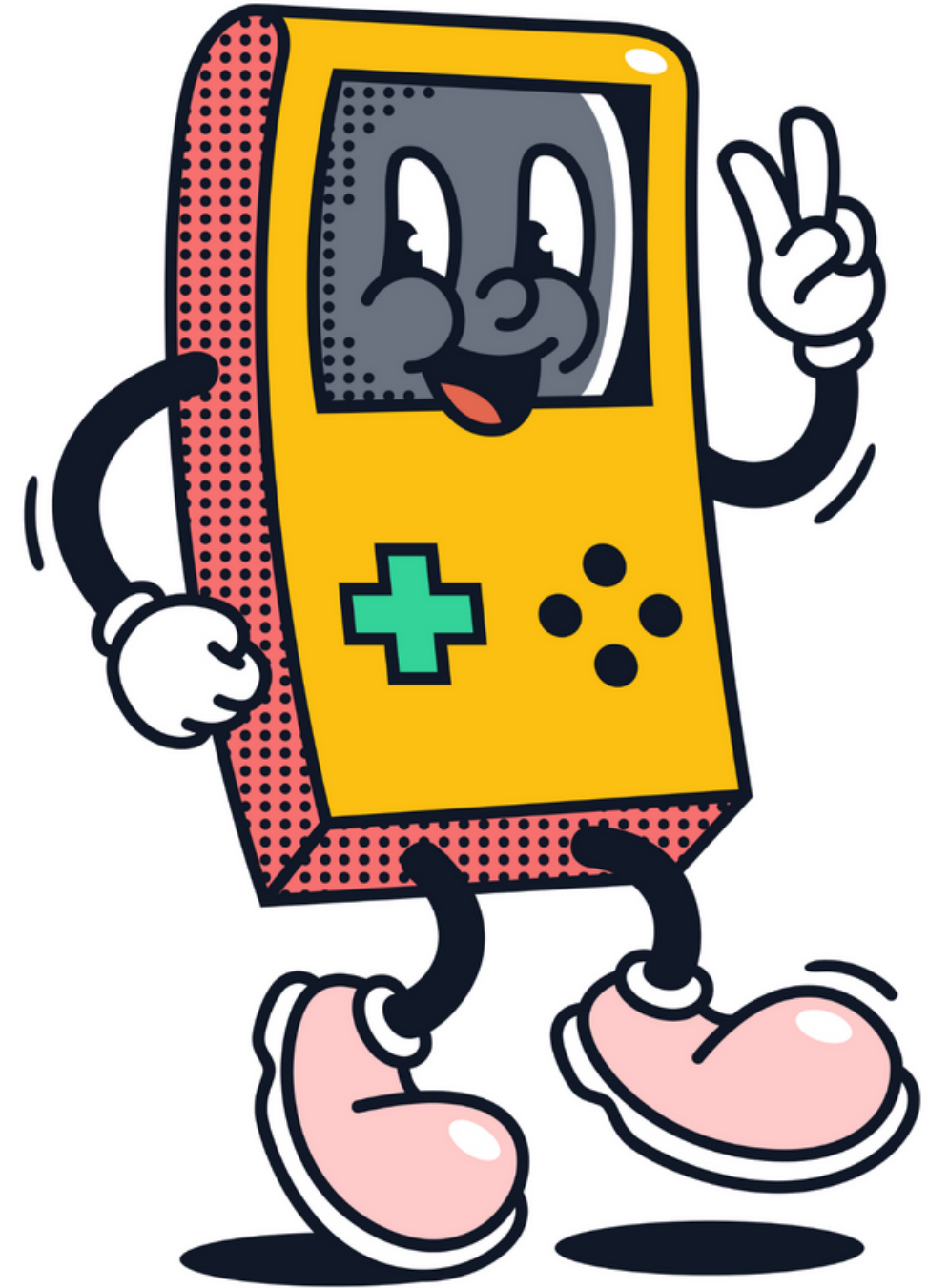


Put your newfound knowledge into practice in the real world.



Take a moment to think things through.

Let's start
the lesson!





Did you know that we are all just six or fewer social connections away from each other? Our relationships don't stand alone; they are interconnected and build upon one another.

Think about it: Who do you turn to when facing a challenge? Who is by your side, helping you get through those tough math problem sets? Having a strong social network is not just about numbers; it's about the quality of support and companionship those connections provide.

ACTIVITY

10
Minutes

Create your social web

Let's map out the important people in your life, like drawing a social treasure map. This way, we'll know exactly where to turn when you need a friend's support or a listening ear. Plus, understanding these connections can help you learn more about yourself too.

10
Minutes



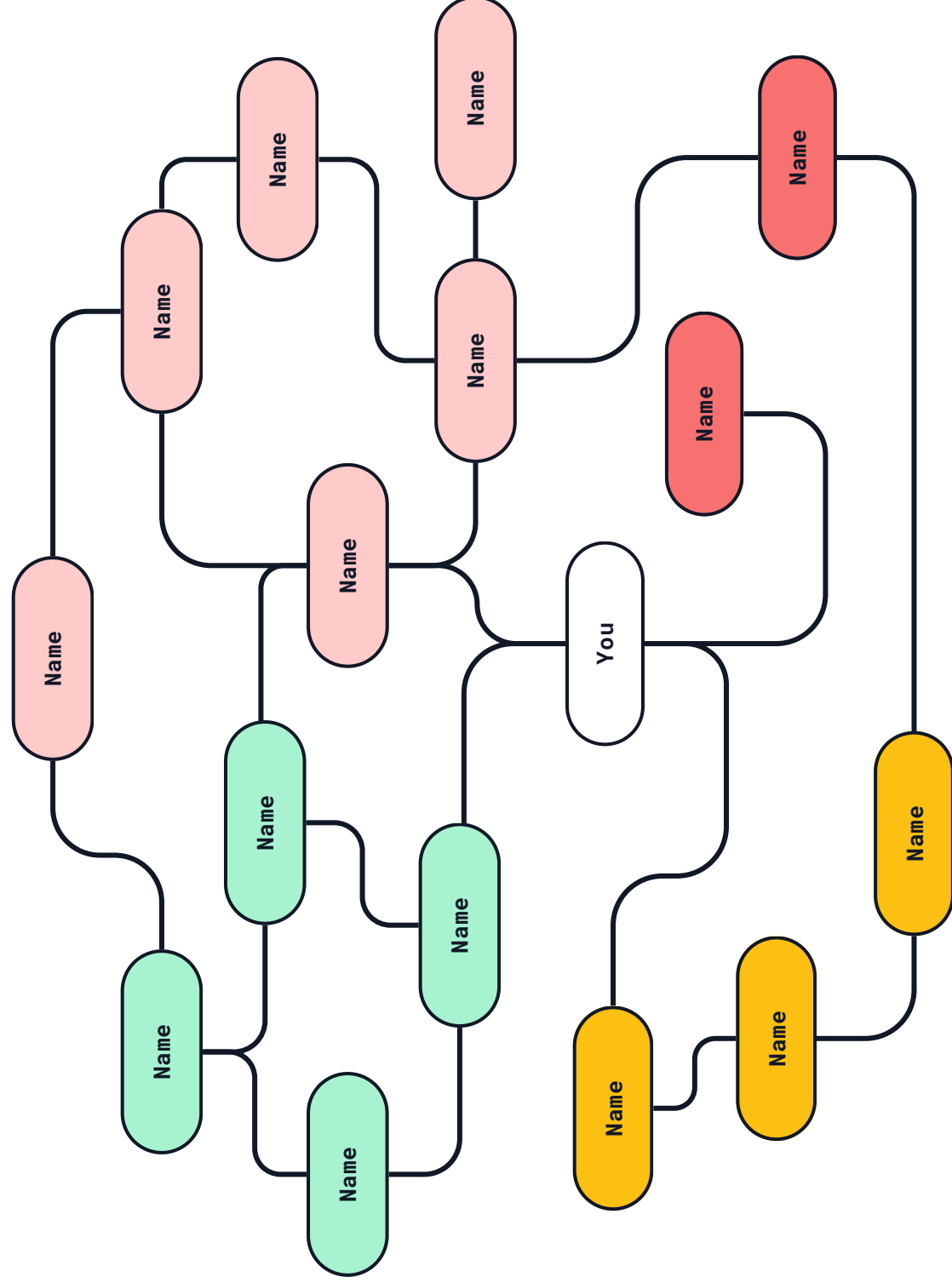
My social network

We're going to connect the dots!

Or rather, the people in your life!
Use different colors to represent different types of relationships.

The distance between you and the other person should reflect how close you feel to them.

- Family Members
- Friends
- Romantic Partners or Exes
- Teachers, Counselors, Mentors, Colleagues



10
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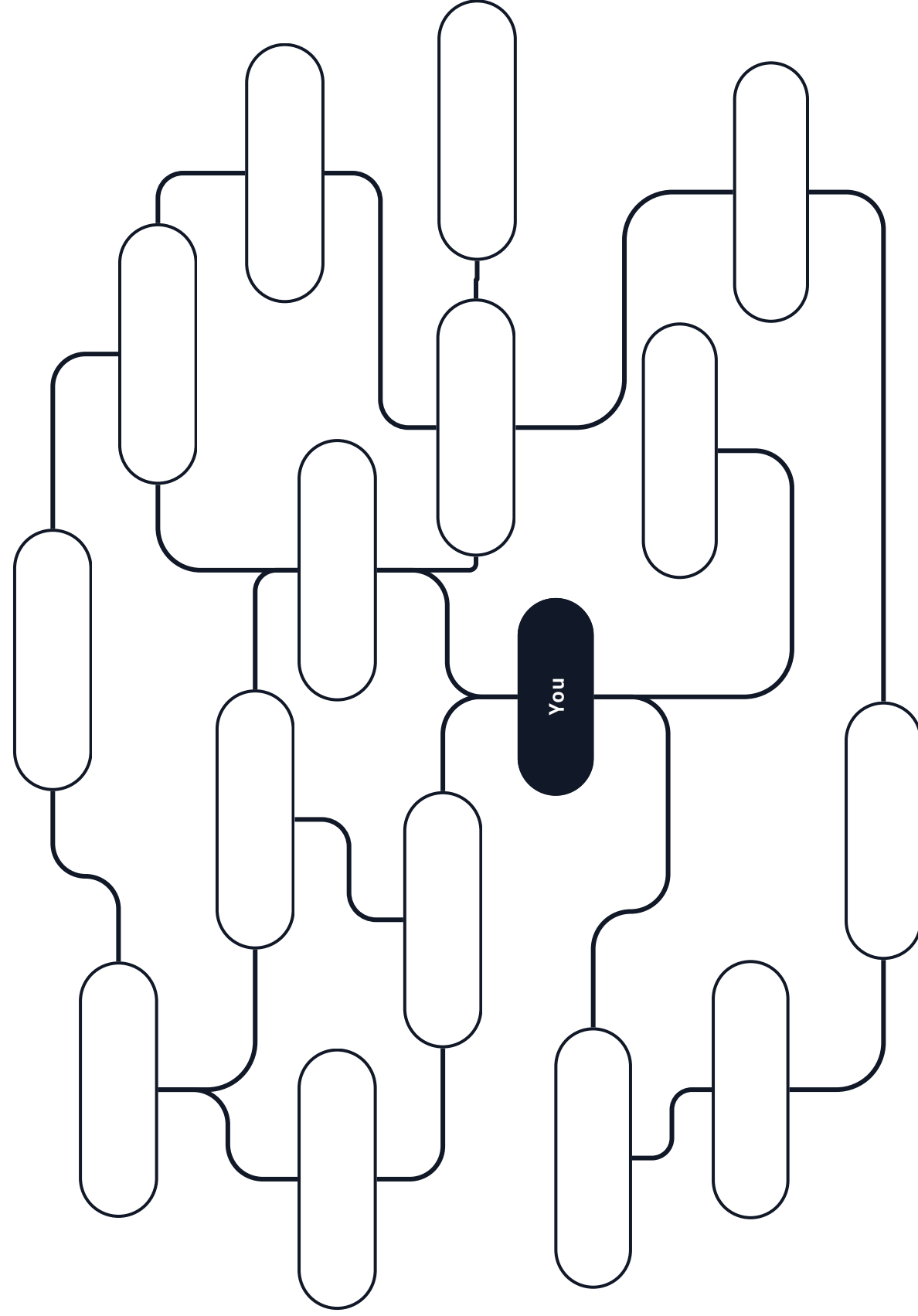
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Family Members

Friends

Romantic Partners
or Exes

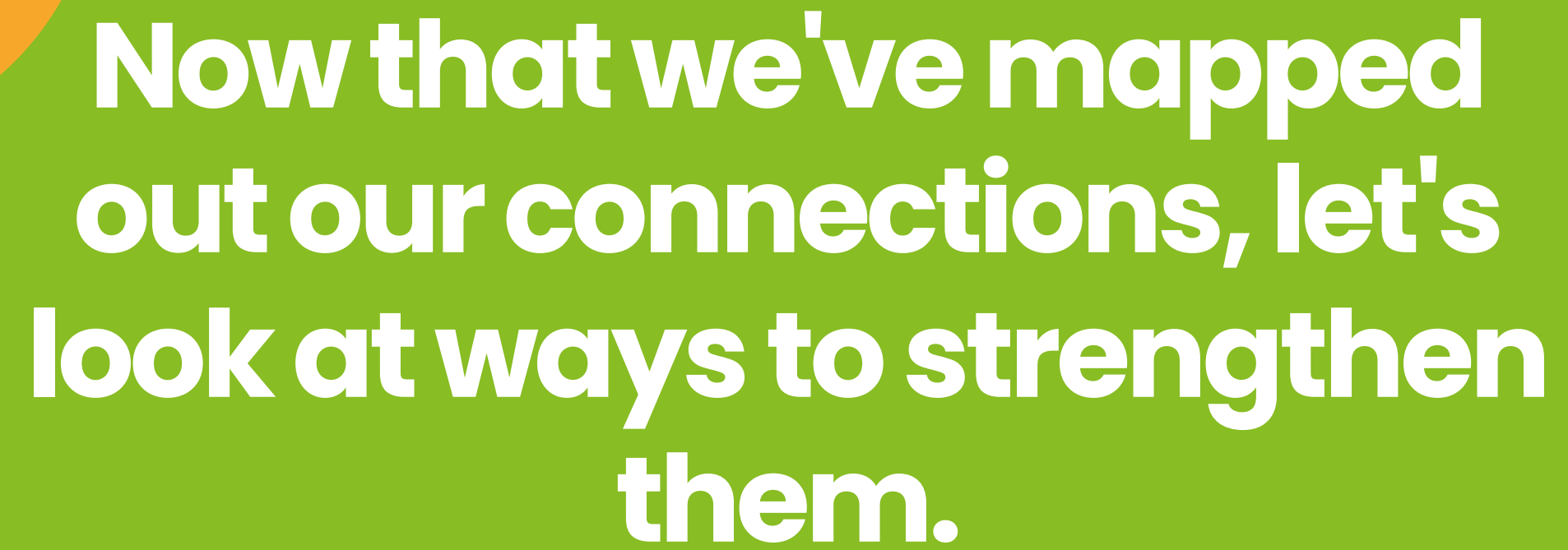

Teachers, Counselors
Mentors, Colleagues





As that social web likely showed you, your life is full of different types of people and relationships. Each person plays a unique role, and you probably reach out to different people depending on the situation.

For example, you might not ask your mentor for advice on which apps are trending, but they might be your go-to for career advice or secret cooking tips. It's all about knowing who to turn to for what!



**Now that we've mapped
out our connections, let's
look at ways to strengthen
them.**

**Think of core executive function skills
like the tools in a relationship toolkit**

By getting better at these skills, it makes our social life feel less like navigating a minefield.



ACTIVATION

Think of activation as giving yourself a little nudge to get started on a task. It's like convincing yourself to put on your running shoes and step out the door for a jog, even when the couch is calling your name.

Example: If we keep putting off calling back a friend, they might think we're not interested in the friendship.

To practice:

1. Block a specific time in your calendar to call or meet a friend, making it a set plan.
2. Begin with a simple text or quick hello call, instead of a long catch-up.

FOCUS

Think of focus as shining a spotlight on one thing at a time. It's like fully watching a movie, not scrolling through your phone at the same time.

Example: Giving more time and heart to conversations with your partner than just waving to your neighbor.

To practice:

1. Really listen when someone talks to you—put your phone down.
2. Pick specific times to catch up with close friends or family, and stick to them.

FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is about adjusting to each other's steps, and not insisting on leading all the time. When we're too rigid, like refusing to compromise on plans, it can and make our partner or friend feel unheard.

Example: If your partner wants to see a comedy movie but you're set on a drama, refusing to bend might lead to an unnecessary argument.

To practice:

1. Decide what's truly important and what you can let slide. Not every disagreement needs to be a standoff.
2. Deliberately choose to go with your partner's or friend's preference sometimes, just to show you're willing to meet them halfway.

PERSPECTIVE TAKING

Perspective-taking in relationships is like wearing someone else's shoes, seeing the world through their eyes. When we skip this, like dismissing a friend's worries, they can feel alone and misunderstood.

Example: If your friend is stressed about a job interview and you brush it off, they might feel like you're not really listening.

Two Steps to Practice:

1. When someone shares, ask how they feel and truly listen.
2. Pause to consider how the other person might be feeling before you respond.

ACTIVITY

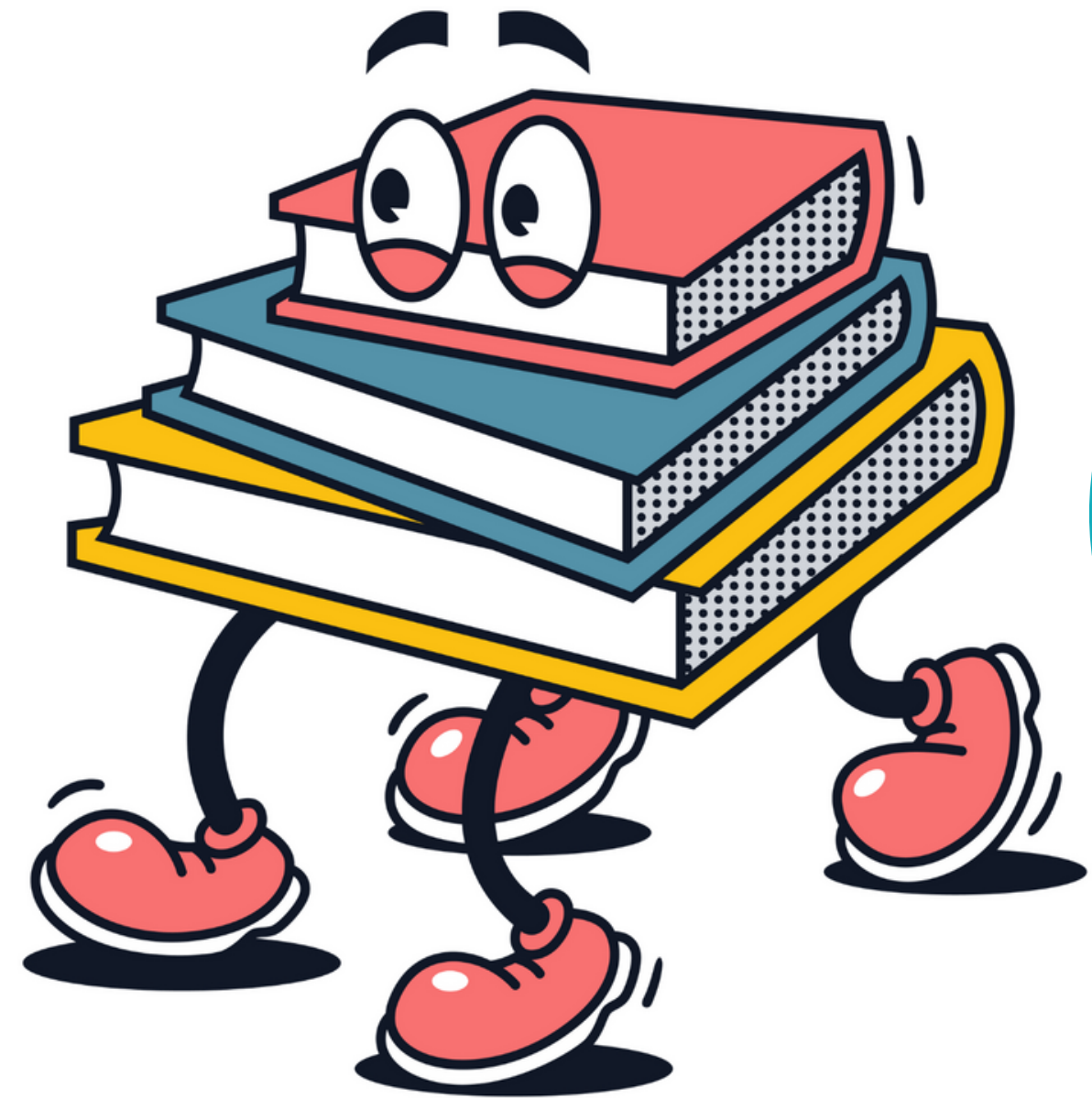
25
Minutes

Social Scenarios Workbook

The workbook in the next activity is designed to help you apply those skills to navigate your relationships with confidence. Use it to reflect on how you might improve your interactions with others by putting the executive function skills we discussed in this lesson into action.



Inter-personal awareness



An illustration of a pink brain with a smiling face, held gently in two pink hands. The brain has small eyes and a curved mouth. The hands are positioned as if supporting the brain. There are green leafy branches on either side of the hands, and a teal banner at the bottom. The background includes a large orange circle in the top left, a teal circle on the right, and a dark blue circle in the bottom left.

INTER-PERSONAL AWARENESS

Intrapersonal awareness is about tuning in to others' mental states and paying attention to their thoughts and feelings.

By developing both types of awareness – being mindful of ourselves and others – we can gain a deeper understanding of not only ourselves but also the people around us.

INTERPERSONAL AWARENESS EXAMPLES:

- **Reading a Friend's Emotion:** You notice your friend is quieter than usual and her smile doesn't reach her eyes, so you gently ask if she's okay, rather than assuming she's tired.
- **Listening Actively:** In a group discussion, you notice that someone is trying to say something but keeps getting talked over. You make a point to ask them for their thoughts, showing that you are aware of and value their perspective.
- **Apologizing:** After a heated discussion with your sibling, you realize your words were harsh. You decide to apologize and talk it through, recognizing the impact of your actions on your relationship.

**Sometimes,
we just need
to chill.**



SELF-SOOTHING

Imagine a soothing scene.

For instance, picture yourself settling into a cozy chair by the fire on a cold night or laying on the warm sand with the sun warming your body.

It's important to imagine the scene using all 5 of your senses.

What can you see, what can you smell, what can you touch, what can you hear, and what can you taste? If you can't realistically use all your senses in the moment, imagine something for each sense.



HAVE A ROUTINE

Consistent routines reduce stress and provide stability by establishing predictable environments.

For example, consider having regular meal times, setting a consistent bedtime, reading before sleep, attending scheduled activities like soccer practice, or taking a daily walk at the same time. These routines can help establish structure in your day.



REMEMBER THE GROWTH MINDSET?

A growth mindset can significantly benefit your relationships, especially when facing challenges such as struggling to make friends, going through breakups, or dealing with rejection.

ACTIVITY

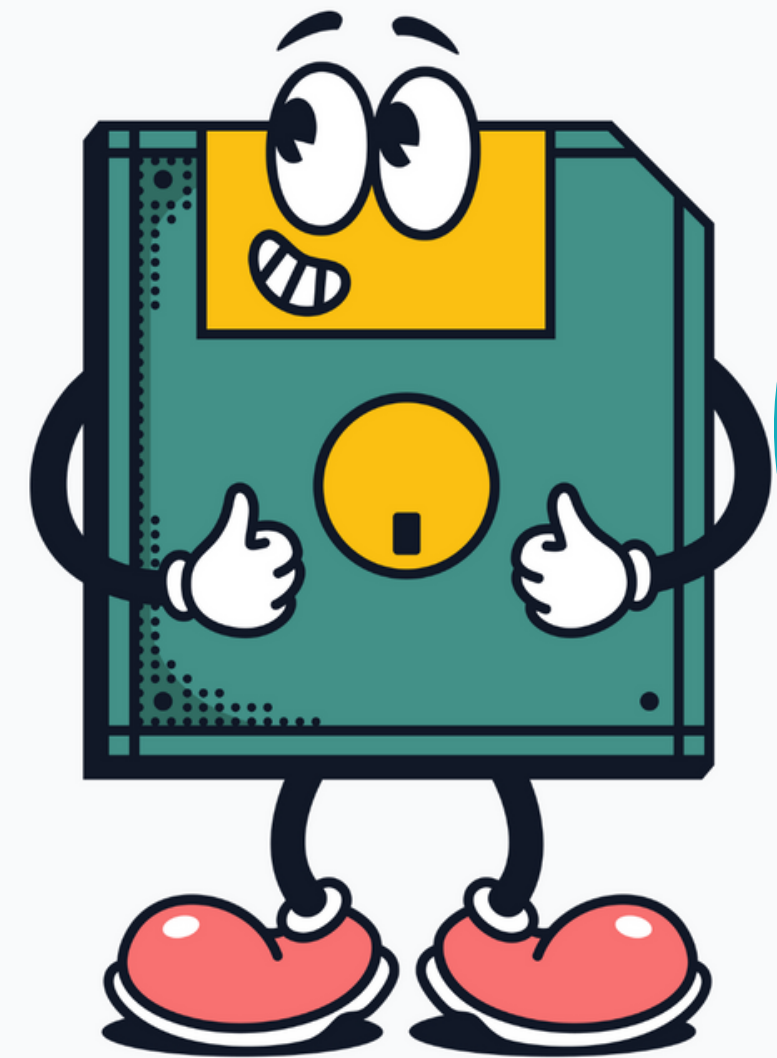
Put this Skill
into Practice

Our Social Action Plan

By embracing a growth mindset, we believe that challenges and setbacks can be opportunities for learning and growth. When we apply this mindset to our relationships and combine it with a well-thought-out plan, we set ourselves up for success.

Well done on getting through this lesson!

Let's take a look at some key takeaways.



Key takeaways

Let's take a look at our **key takeaways** from today.

1 Prioritise your tasks

Use executive functions such as self-awareness and self-control to navigate relationship challenges effectively.

2 Use self-soothing techniques

Develop personal strategies to manage emotions, allowing for calmer and more balanced relationships.

3 Prioritise self-care

Allocate time for self-care. This will positively impact your relationships.

See you next time!