

GETTING UNSTUCK:

# BLACK & WHITE THINKING IN KIDS

Finding the Gray



When you catch your brain using an always or a never, that's your clue to go looking for the gray.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Black and white thinking means seeing things in extremes—always or never, all good or all bad. Most things live in the middle.

### LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

- Can you think of a time you or a friend said "always" or "never"? \_\_\_\_\_
- What happened before that made it feel that way? \_\_\_\_\_
- What might be a more realistic or in-between way to think about it? \_\_\_\_\_

BLACK & WHITE THINKING

LOOKING FOR THE GRAY

### SPOT THE EXTREMES

Read each thought. Is it black & white thinking? Rewrite it to find the gray.

I ALWAYS fail.

A more balanced thought: \_\_\_\_\_

This is the WORST day ever.

A more balanced thought: \_\_\_\_\_

You NEVER listen to me.

A more balanced thought: \_\_\_\_\_

Nobody likes me.

A more balanced thought: \_\_\_\_\_

### FIND THE GRAY

Look at the situation below. What are some "gray" ideas between the extremes?

It's a total disaster!

It's perfect!

### BOTH THINGS CAN BE TRUE

List one hard part AND one good part from your day or a recent situation.

A HARD PART

A GOOD PART

### TRY IT TOGETHER

- Catch the "always" or "never."
- Pause. Take a breath.
- Look for one exception.
- Reframe with a more helpful thought.
- Give yourself (or your child) credit for trying!

### DRAW IT!

Draw a time you moved from black & white thinking to finding the gray.

### ROLE-PLAY CORNER

Practice a new way to think and say it out loud.

Child: "I'm the worst!"

Parent/Child together: "What is one thing that wasn't true?"

Try a new, more balanced thought together!

### REFLECTION

How confident do you feel about finding the gray instead of thinking in extremes?



Not yet

Feeling confident

What's one small step you can try this week?

### FAMILY CHALLENGE

This week, challenge each family member to "find the gray" at least once a day. Share your wins at dinner!

