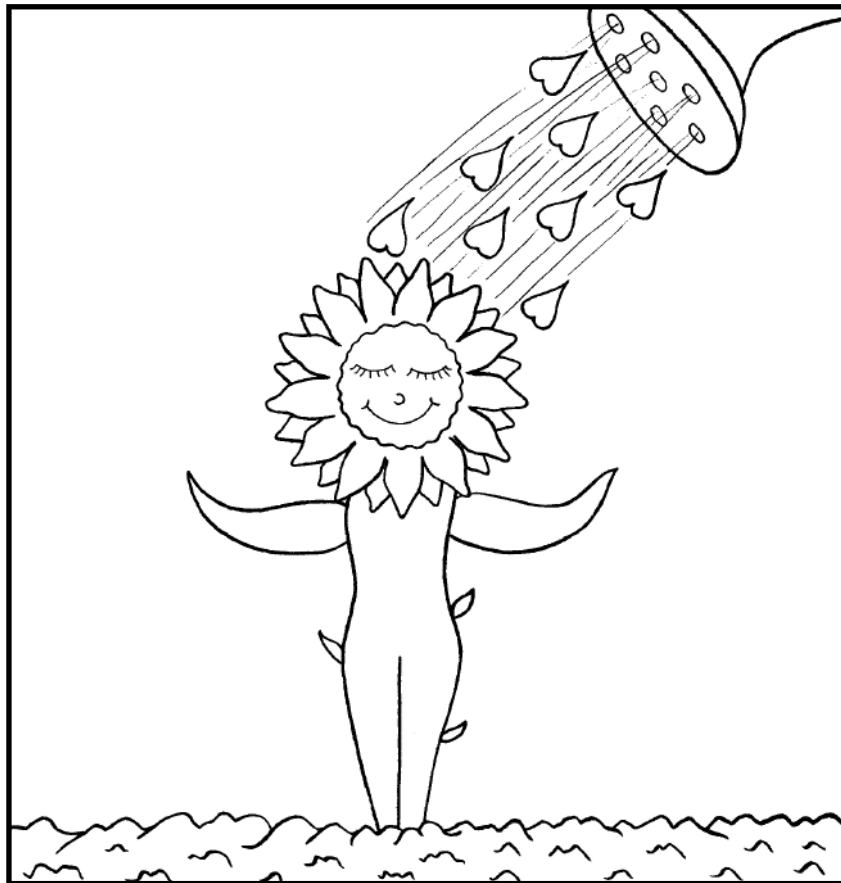
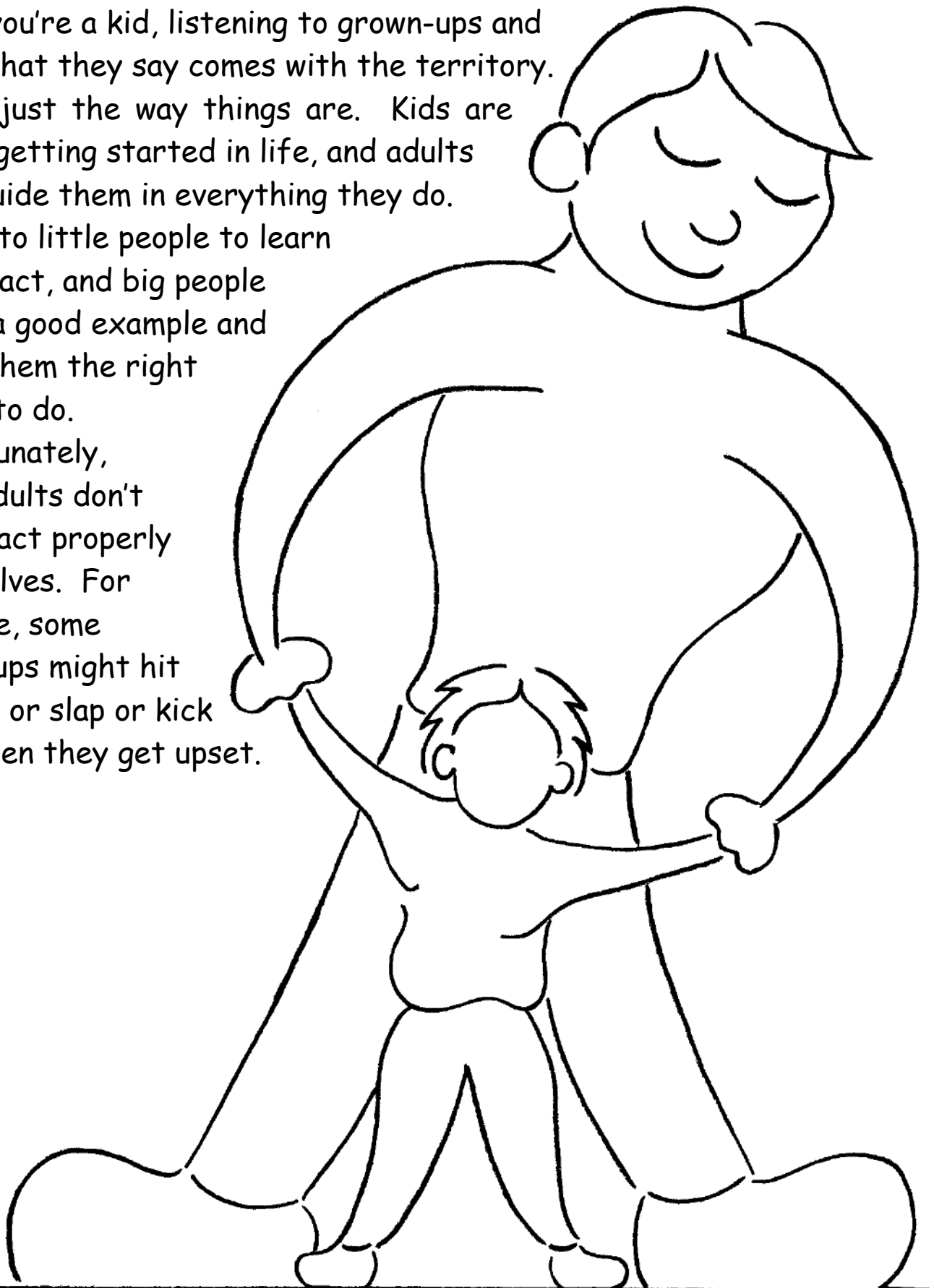


# People Who Hit

## Coloring Book

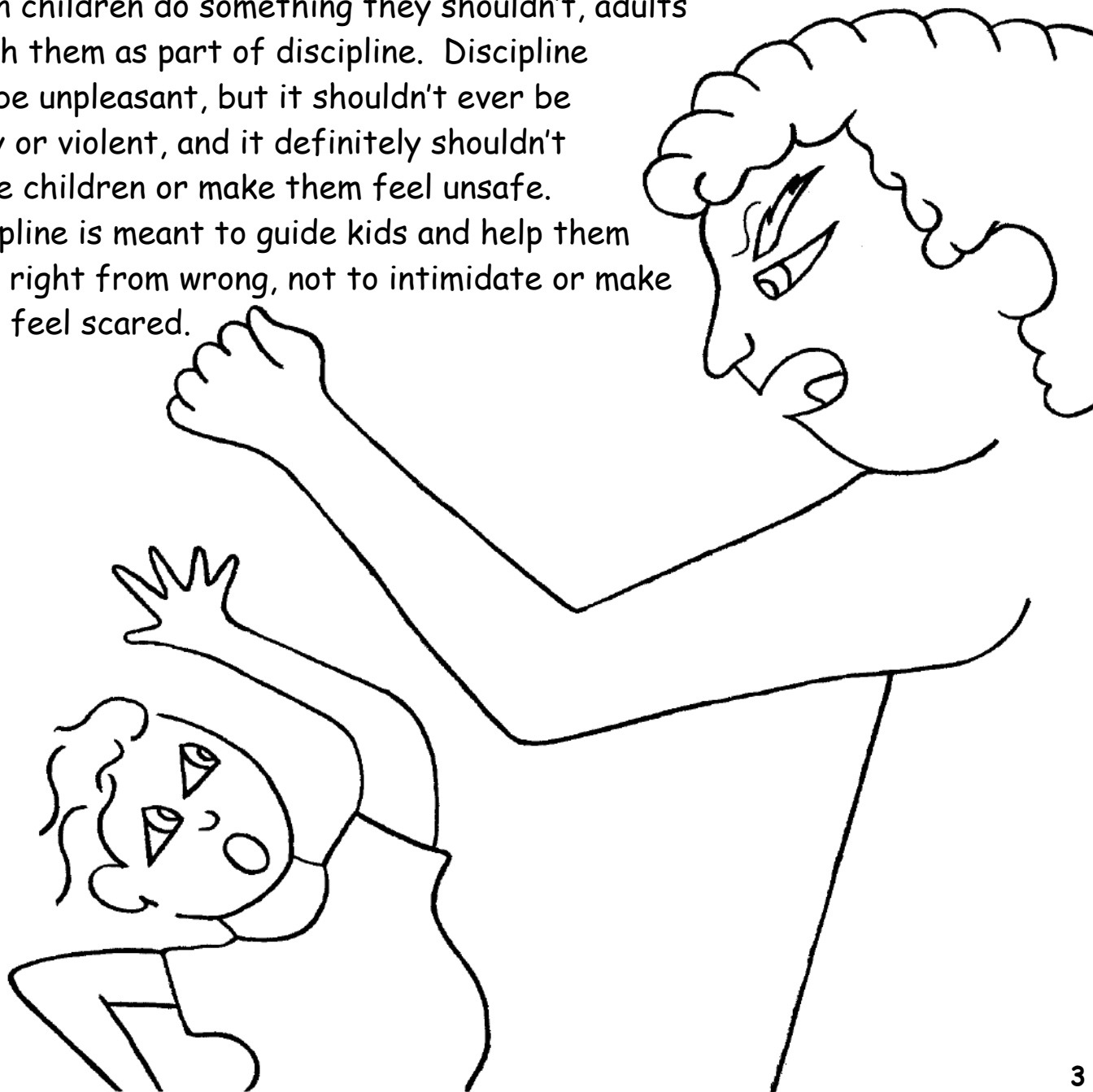


When you're a kid, listening to grown-ups and doing what they say comes with the territory. That's just the way things are. Kids are barely getting started in life, and adults must guide them in everything they do. It's up to little people to learn how to act, and big people to set a good example and teach them the right things to do. Unfortunately, some adults don't always act properly themselves. For example, some grown-ups might hit or push or slap or kick kids when they get upset.



Adults usually hit or do aggressive things like this when they're upset about something a child did. This can make kids think that they deserve to be hit, or that hitting is punishment for being bad. But this isn't a true thing to believe. The truth is that all kids do bad things from time to time, but this doesn't mean that they're bad children. All kids test limits. All kids talk back or argue on occasion. All kids have accidents or make mistakes that cause big problems. These aren't good things to do, and it may mean some negative consequences. But most adults never hit when kids do these things.

When children do something they shouldn't, adults punish them as part of discipline. Discipline may be unpleasant, but it shouldn't ever be scary or violent, and it definitely shouldn't injure children or make them feel unsafe. Discipline is meant to guide kids and help them learn right from wrong, not to intimidate or make them feel scared.

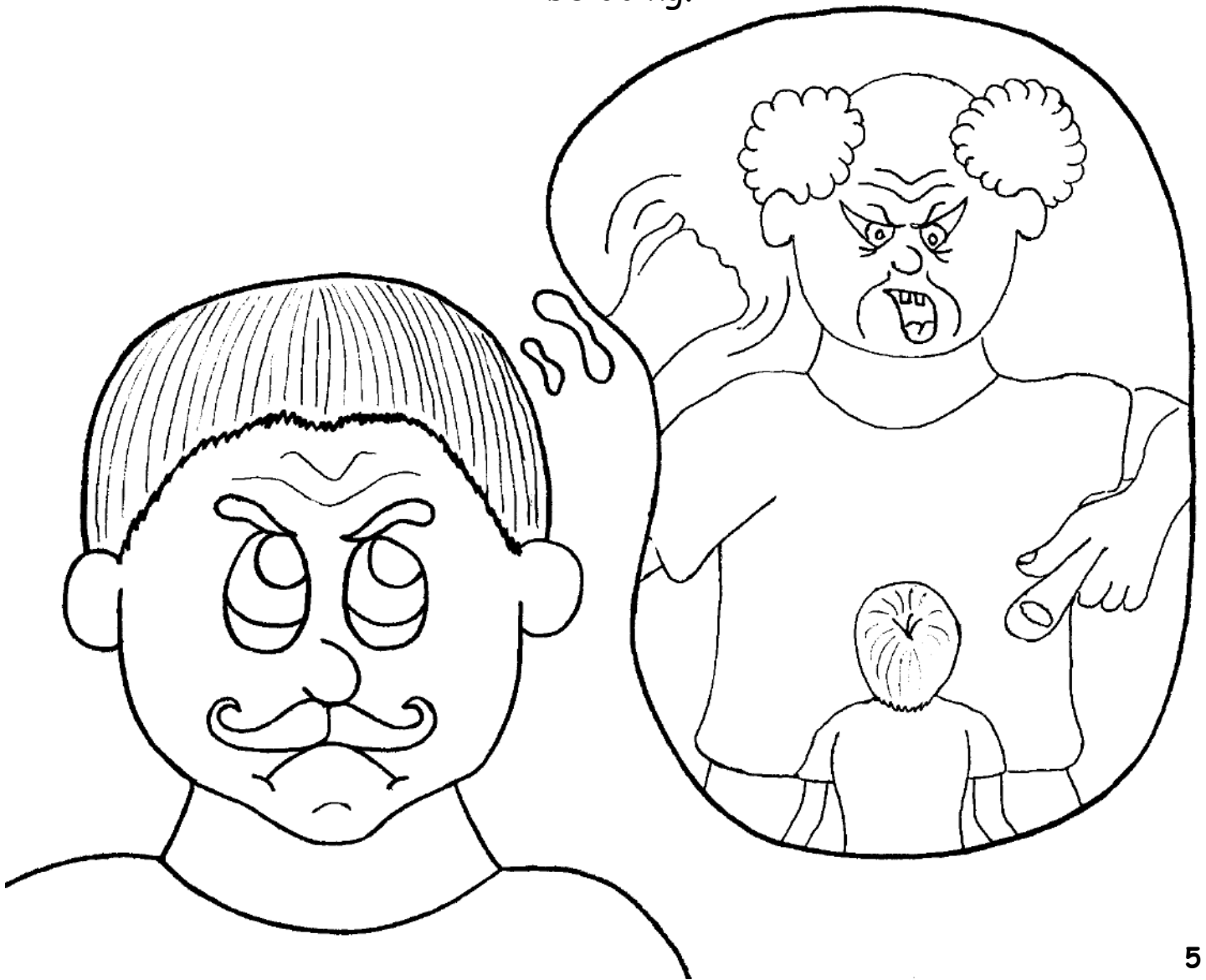


Adults hit because they lose control of their temper, not because children deserve to be hit or treated roughly. No child deserves to be hit or treated roughly, even when they do something wrong. It's the job of grown-ups to teach kids the proper way to behave, and acting aggressive or hitting isn't the proper way to behave.

Just like teachers tell you to use your words and not your fists when you're upset, adults need to rely on their words when they correct and guide you. They should use rewards or restrictions and consequences when they discipline, not get angry or resort to violence.



When adults act like this, it's usually because they haven't learned better ways of handling things. It might be that others treated them the same way when they were little. They assume that such behavior is normal, and learned to do the same thing to you. Maybe they grew up around others who couldn't control their emotions, and so they learned to act aggressively when they get angry. Other adults may not be very good at discipline. When they can't get kids to listen to them, they become frustrated, and so they try to get kids to listen by doing aggressive thing that they shouldn't be doing.



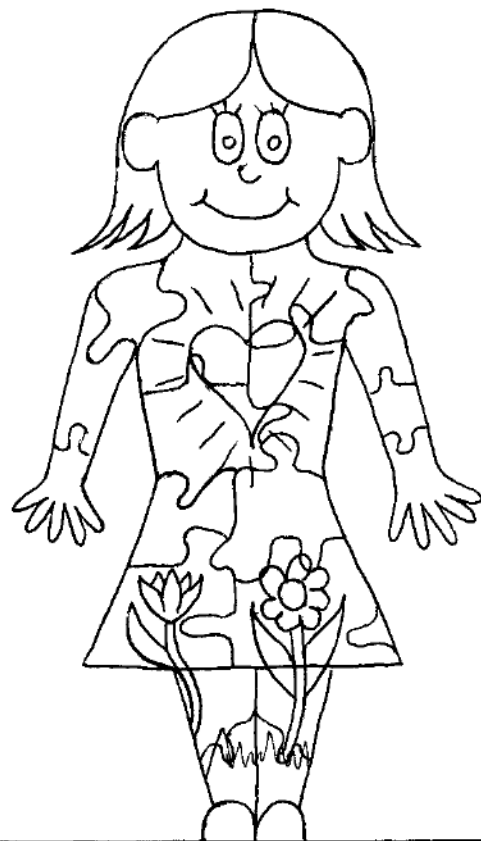
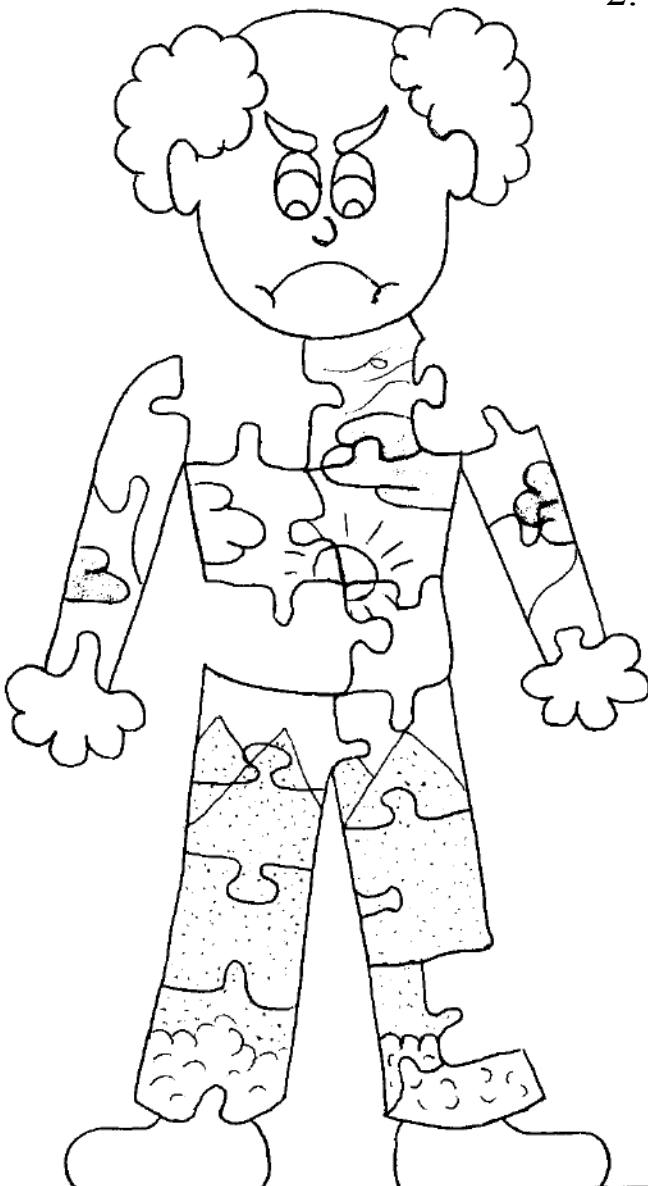
Parents hit or kick or yell because they're frustrated, not because children are bad. Often times, what they're frustrated about might not even have anything to do with you. They might get frustrated because they had a bad day at work, or because they're stressed out about other things in their lives. They may be dealing with people who treat *them* badly, or perhaps they're worried about grown-ups things like paying the bills. Or maybe they just woke up on the wrong side of the bed. There are many things that can make adults stressed out and irritable which have nothing to do with kids.



No matter what the reason that adults act like this,  
two things are for certain:

1. There's never an excuse for it. Adults are much bigger and stronger than kids, and so there's no reason at all for them to use force or aggression in discipline. Kids are still growing, and their bodies are fragile. It's easy for adults to get carried away and accidentally injure a child when they don't intend to. Kids need to be guided through love, not aggression.

2. When adults act this way, it's not about you or the things you do wrong. It's about **PROBLEMS IN THEM** and the struggles they have controlling their temper.



When adults act aggressively, kids can get angry too. We feel anger when we don't like something that is going on. Anger is a *signal* that something hurts our feeling and doesn't seem right. When someone his or mistreats you, it's only natural to feel some anger.

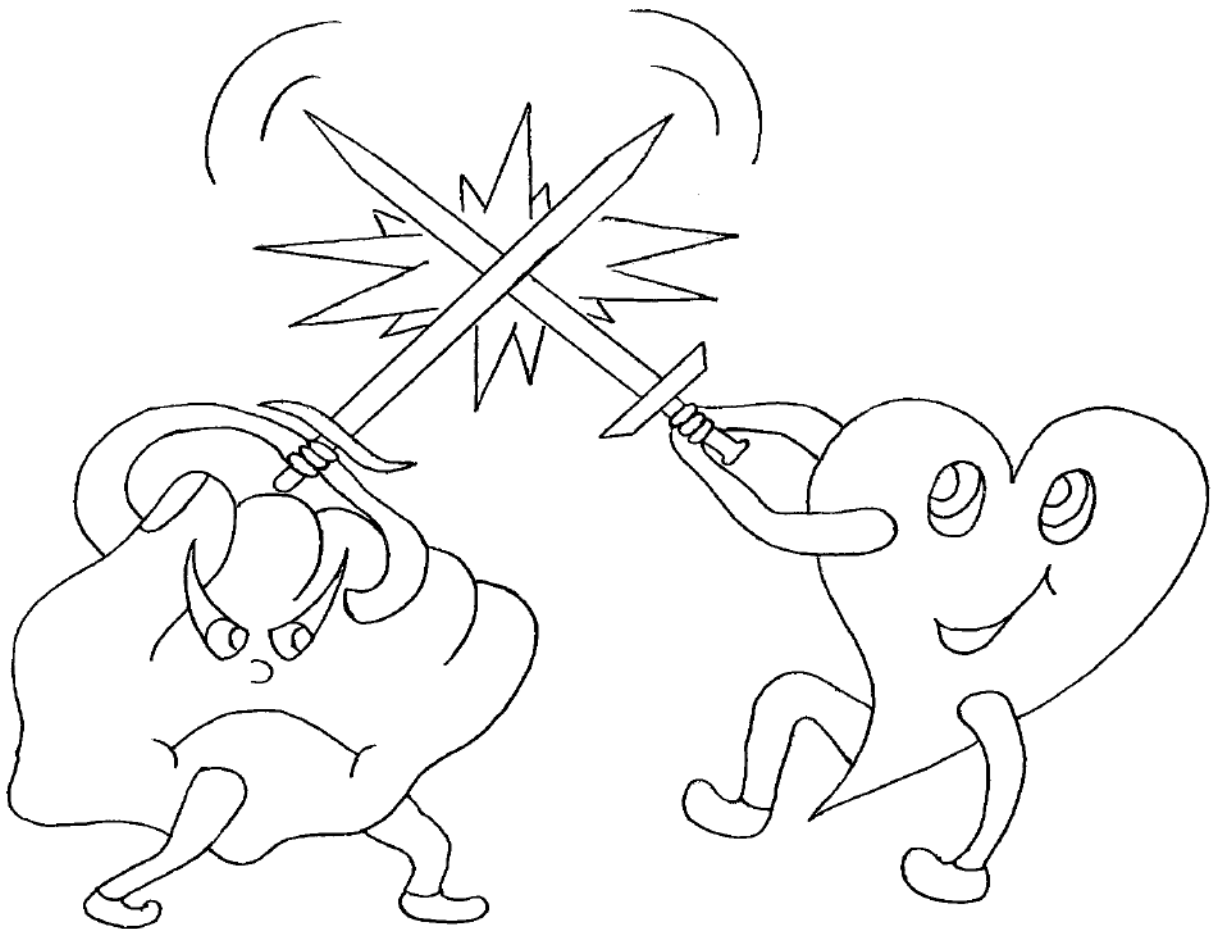
Feeling angry does not mean you're bad. There's nothing wrong with feeling angry. But it's important to know how to handle our anger. Anger is a *signal* that we should pay attention to, but it doesn't help us solve problems or make us feel better. In fact, anger is what causes people to act ugly to begin with. So tell yourself: "my anger is letting me know this feels bad and I should protest such treatment," but don't hold on to these feelings. Let your anger go as if it were a bird that landed on your shoulder but must now fly away.





It's important to remember that even when adults do things that make us feel bad, it's not that they *want to upset us*. That's more an unintended side effect. Usually they want to do the right thing, they just don't know how. Or they might get confused about what's best for you. So when actions make you feel bad, remember that what someone intends to happen and what actually happens are often two different things.

No grown-up is perfect. Some are more perfect than others, and each are better or worse in their own different ways, but everyone makes mistakes. If you're like a lot of kids, you probably still love this person, you just want them to stop mistreating you. It's perfectly natural to have mixed feeling like this. You can love the good in them while hating the bad. You can reject the hurtful things they do without rejecting them. People are a mixed bag like this. They're never all of one thing or all of another. We tolerate their imperfections because we love them, but we should also demand that they treat us with dignity and respect and work to fix their hurtful behavior.



It's important for kids to feel safe and protected. If one adult is doing something hurtful that makes you feel unsafe, you need to let others know so that they can help protect you. ALL KIDS need someone to stand up for them. Maybe they keep you safe by watching over you when a parent is upset. Or maybe they protect you by standing up to this person and helping them control their temper. Often times just having another adult who knows about what is going on and is watching the situation is enough to get the hitting to stop. Maybe that someone is the person reading you this book. Or maybe there are other people who can help you feel loved and protected. Whatever the case may be, know that there are all kinds of people who know you deserve to be treated better. Together we can help make sure there's a happy ending to your story!

