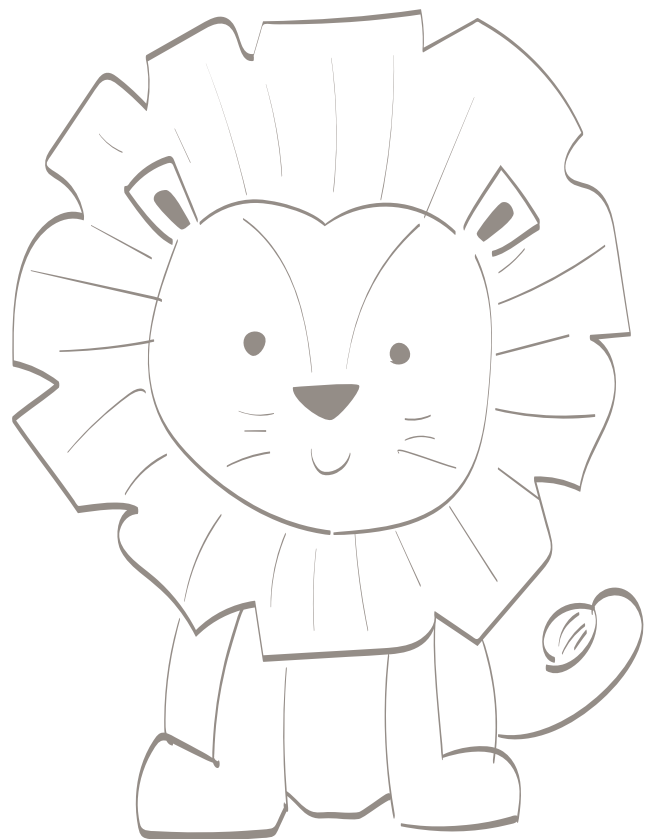


When the Lions Roar

Loud thoughts. Brave faith.
Finding God's peace when the
lions are loud.



BIBLE STORY

Daniel was a man who loved God with all of his heart. Although he didn't deserve it, His king made a terrible decision to throw Daniel into a cave filled with lions.

How do you think Daniel might have been feeling? What thoughts do you think may have been swirling around in his mind? I wonder if his heart was racing, tummy squirming, muscles were floppy or tense.

Amazingly, when morning came, and the stone was rolled away, Daniel stepped out - alive, strengthened, and ready to praise God.

Of course, the King was both relieved (phew!) and amazed - "Hang on a minute, Daniel, how come the lions didn't eat you for dinner?" Daniel told the King, "God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths..." (You can read the whole story in the Bible - Daniel 6)

Sometimes, our thoughts and feelings can be a bit like lions inside of us that roar and growl.

Our lion thoughts can sound like:

"I'm not good enough."

"Something bad will happen."

"I can't do this."

Just like lions, they feel powerful and scary. But, the same God who sent an angel into the cave to close the lions' mouths is the God who loves you and is with you to keep you safe too.

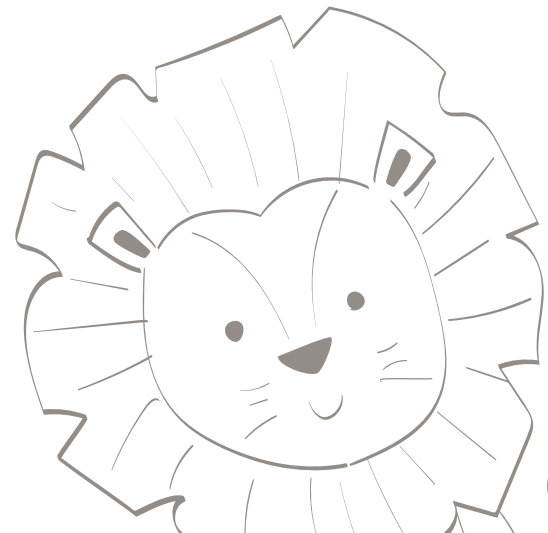
Science says that we don't need to listen to or believe everything our brain tells us and often, the lion thoughts in our brain aren't even true. Lion thoughts are our brains way of trying to keep us safe...even when we're not really in danger.

That's a bit like Daniel. There was probably a moment when his brain was telling him he was done for, there was no way out. But God had another plan. Daniel was safe even though he was surrounded by lions. He didn't have to fight the lions or try to hide from them.

He sat with his lions - grounded, faithful, knowing just how powerful his God is.

We can do that too.

We can sit with hard thoughts and feelings, without letting them be the boss because Jesus is our Prince of Peace.



HELPFUL HINT

When children have big feelings we can help them to notice the lions and to give them names: disappointment, sad, angry, self-doubt, worry... Science tells us that noticing and naming our thoughts helps us to understand what we are feeling.

Understanding what is happening in our body and brain often helps children to develop a sense of control over their thoughts and feelings. Noticing our thoughts, giving them a name and pointing to where we feel them in our bodies (tight chest, headache, upset stomach etc) empowers children to start paying attention to the messages their nervous system is sending them when they are having a hard time.

Instead of trying to fix, change or shut down our lions, science tells us that we can focus our thoughts onto things that are important to us, things that matter to us most. This helps us to regulate our nervous system and to decide what to do next.

We can encourage and support children to talk to God about their lions and ask Him to send His peace and to shut the lions' mouths for us, just like He did with Daniel.

God teaches us through Paul's letter to the church in Philippians that we can give all of our worries to God. We are safe because we have God on our side. Paul reminds us to notice our anxious thoughts and tell God about them. Then, just like science, he reminds us to focus on what is important to us, what matters most - God! You can read about this in Philippians 4:

*Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!
Be of the same mind in the Lord...
Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!
Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.
Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.
Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

So, let's do a little exercise together... (on the next page)



When the Lions Roar, We Focus on God.

(Philippians 4)

Take a slow breath in... and out. Put one hand on your heart and the other on your belly. Try to breathe deep and slow 5 times.

Now, let's practice what Paul said to do and choose thoughts that help us to trust God and to grow strong inside.

True Thoughts

Notice:

Is this thought real? Is it kind and honest?

Choose:

"I will focus on what is true — not worries or stories my brain makes up."

One true thing about today is: _____

Respectful Thoughts

Notice:

Does this thought show respect for myself or others?

Choose:

"I will think about things that are worthy and respectful."

Someone or something I respect is: _____

Fair & Right Choices

Notice:

Does this thought help me do the right thing?

Choose:

"I will choose thoughts that help me act fairly and kindly."

A fair choice I can make today is: _____

Peaceful Thoughts

Notice:

Does this thought help my heart feel calm and safe?

Choose:

"I will let peaceful, good thoughts stay in my mind."

A peaceful thought for me is: _____

Lovely Things

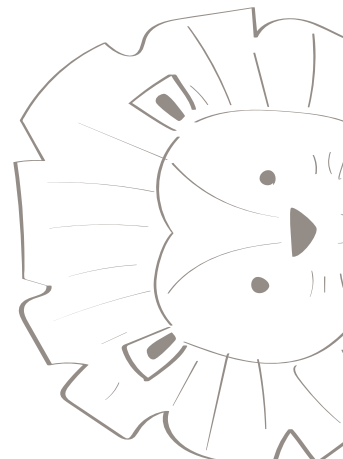
Notice:

What feels beautiful, gentle, or kind right now?

Choose:

"I will notice the good and lovely things around me."

One lovely thing I see or remember is: _____



When the Lions Roar, We Focus on God.

(Philippians 4)

Good Things About Me & Others

Notice:

What is good or helpful here?

Choose:

"I will look for the good in myself and others."

One good thing about me or someone else is: _____

Doing My Best

Notice:

What would it look like to try my best today?

Choose:

"I will act in ways that show kindness, courage, and care."

One way I can do my best today is: _____

Thankful Thoughts

Notice:

What can I say thank you for?

Choose:

"I will look for things to be thankful for."

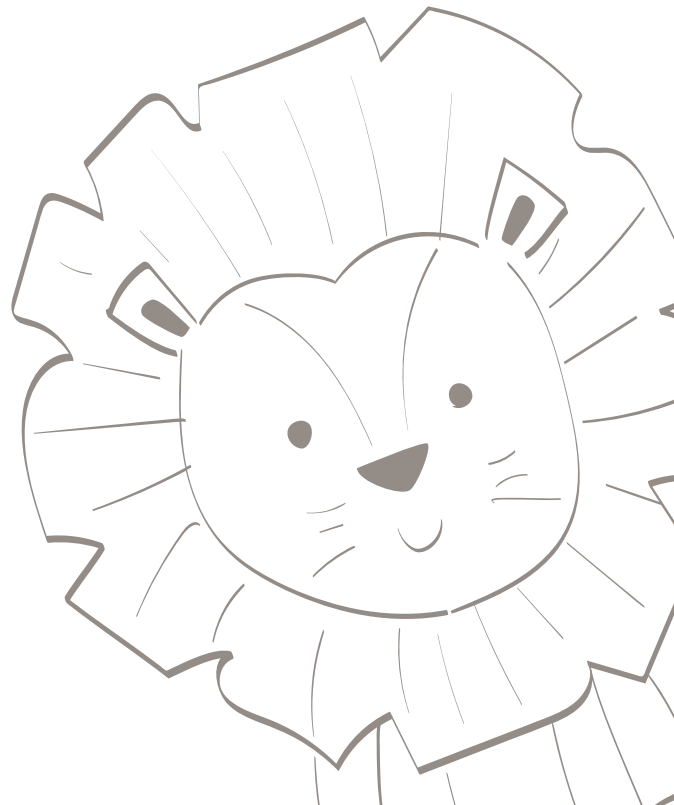
One thing I'm thankful for today is: _____

Finish with a breath:

Breathe in calm...

Breathe out worry.

Remember: I can't control all my thoughts — but I can choose which ones I follow.



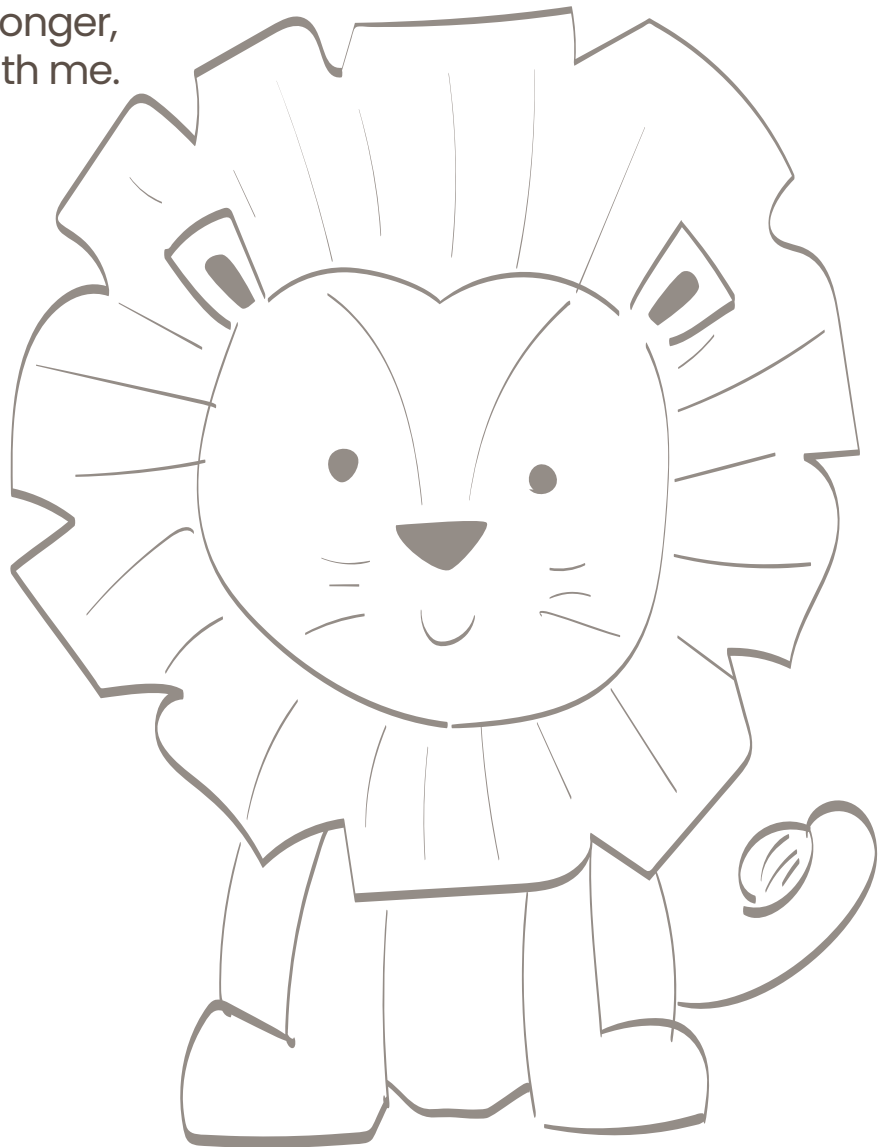
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PRAYER

God,
thank You for loving me.
Thank You for making the stars, the oceans, the trees and the mountains.
Thank You for knowing my name.
Thank You for Daniel
and for helping me with my lions too.
When they feel loud, help me to remember
to talk to you about them.
Please sit with me
and help me to feel calm and safe.
Remind me not to listen to the lions,
but to listen to You.
You are bigger and stronger,
and You are always with me.
Amen.



Hi there,
We're so glad you found us.

If this resource was helpful, we'd love you to join us on Instagram @mustardkids, where we share more of the same practical, hope-filled support.

We love nothing more than sharing what God is teaching us — His unique design for each person, and the way science reflects God's Word to guide Christians toward growth, transformation, and wellbeing.

If you're looking for counselling support for yourself (as a parent or carer) or for your child or teenager, you can find us at www.mustardkids.com.au. We are registered with The Australian Counselling Association and offer both face-to-face sessions in Adelaide and online support Australia-wide (NDIS and private clients are welcome.)

We also love mentoring and equipping adults who are raising or working alongside children and young people — through 1:1 support, small groups, or whole-team workshops — including professionals (Allied Health, Community Services, Educators, Teachers) and church communities. If this sounds like something you'd like to explore, we'd love to hear from you at hello@mustardkids.com.au.

Take care, and we hope to connect with you soon,
Sarah and the Mustard Kids Team

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