

Welcome to the Ring Tail Raffi Calm & Brave Activity Guide



Companion Activities for Parents, Teachers, Counselors & Caregivers

Ring Tail Raffi: Mindfulness in Madagascar is a story designed to help children understand their feelings in a safe and gentle way.

Many children experience worries, especially around new situations, nighttime, separation from caregivers, danger, unfamiliar environments and social fears. Stories allow children to explore these emotions from a comfortable distance. When a child sees a character feel unsure, face challenges, and then find calm again, they begin to understand that their own feelings are manageable too.

The goal of this guide is to help children:

- notice what they feel
- recognize body signals
- learn calming strategies
- identify safe helpers
- practice small brave steps

Children benefit most when adults stay curious, patient, and reassuring while discussing emotions.

You may notice that children relate their own experiences to Raffi's journey. This is a positive sign - they are using the story to process feelings and organize their thoughts.

This guide can be used by parents, teachers, counselors, therapists, and caregivers as a conversation tool to support emotional awareness and build confidence. Use the activities in any order or choose the ones that best fit your child's or students' needs.



Warmly,

— Shari LaRosa, LCSW

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Your Role in Reading Raffi

You do not need to teach a lesson while reading this book.

Your role is simply to guide a conversation.

Try these reading strategies:

Pause and Notice

Slow down at emotional moments.

You might say:

“Raffi looks unsure here. What do you think he’s feeling?”

Name, Don’t Correct Feelings

If a child says something unexpected, avoid correcting them.

Instead respond:

“That makes sense.”

“I can see why you’d think that.”

Connect to the Child’s Experience

Invite, but never force sharing:

“Have you ever felt like that?”

“Does anything help you when you feel worried?”

Validate Before Reassuring

Rather than immediately saying “You’re okay,” try:

“That feeling can be uncomfortable.”

“I’m right here with you.”

Keep It Light

Some children process through drawing instead of talking.

You can offer:

“Would you like to draw what Raffi might be thinking?”

Discussion Questions

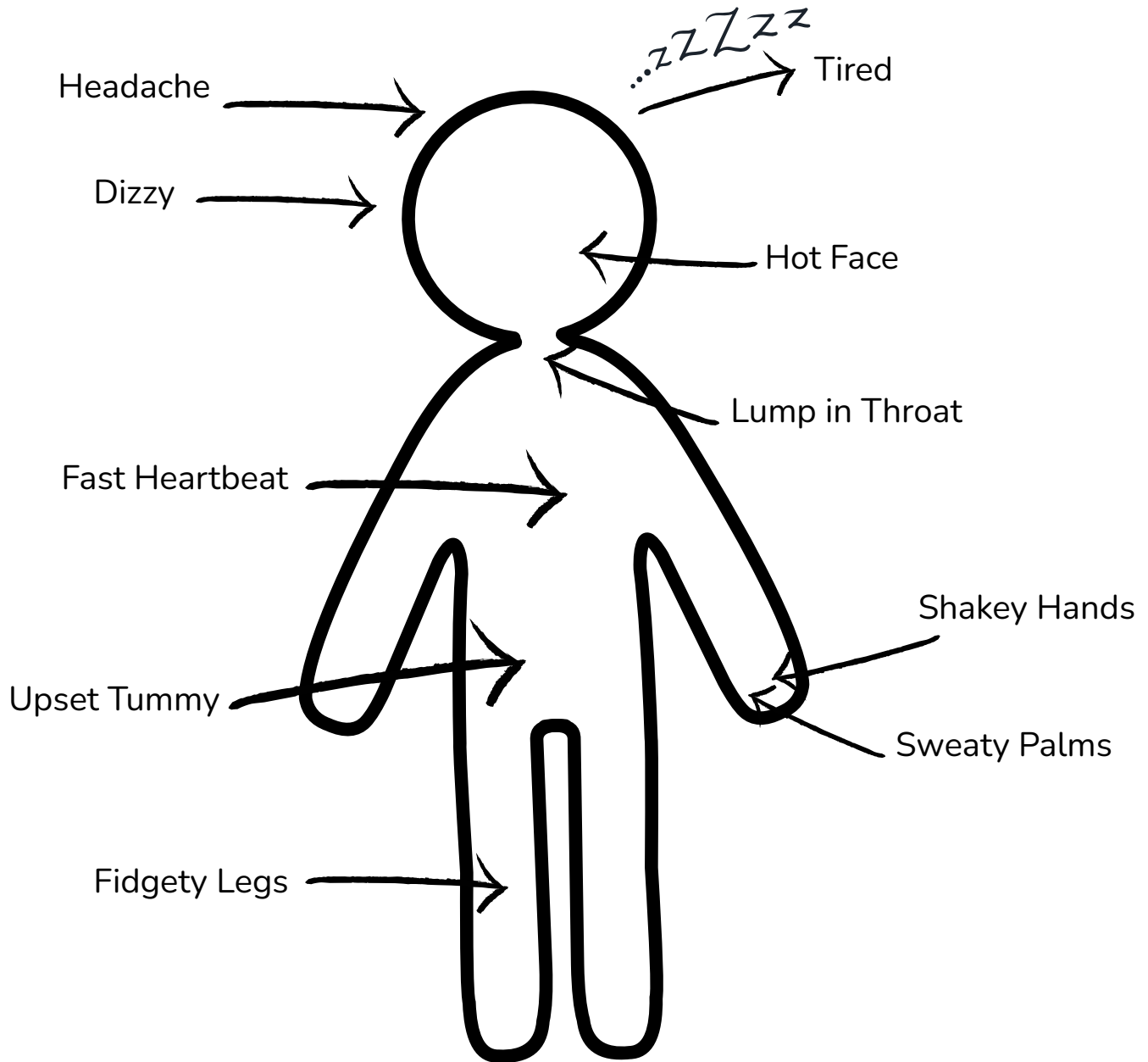
Additional discussion questions located at the end of the story.

There are no wrong responses. The goal is connection, not perfect answers.

When children feel heard, their confidence grows naturally.

Where do I Feel Worry?

Circle the places where your body feels different when you worry



My body is trying to tell me

I can tell a grown-up when I notice these feelings.

The Red Owl Breathing Page

Breathe with the Red Owl :

When Raffi felt unsure, the owl helped him slow his breathing.

Trace each feather slowly with your finger as you breathe.



Smell the night air above Owl's Cave (breathe in)

Hold....1....2....3...

Blow the breeze out (breathe out)

(Let's take 5 calm breaths)



After I breathe, my body feels:

Raffi learned that calming his body helped his thoughts feel safer.

Raffi's Brave Jungle Climb



Raffi didn't leap through the forest all at once.
He took one small brave step at a time.
You can climb your brave path too.

5. I did it!

4: A big brave try:

3. A stronger brave try:

2. A small brave try:

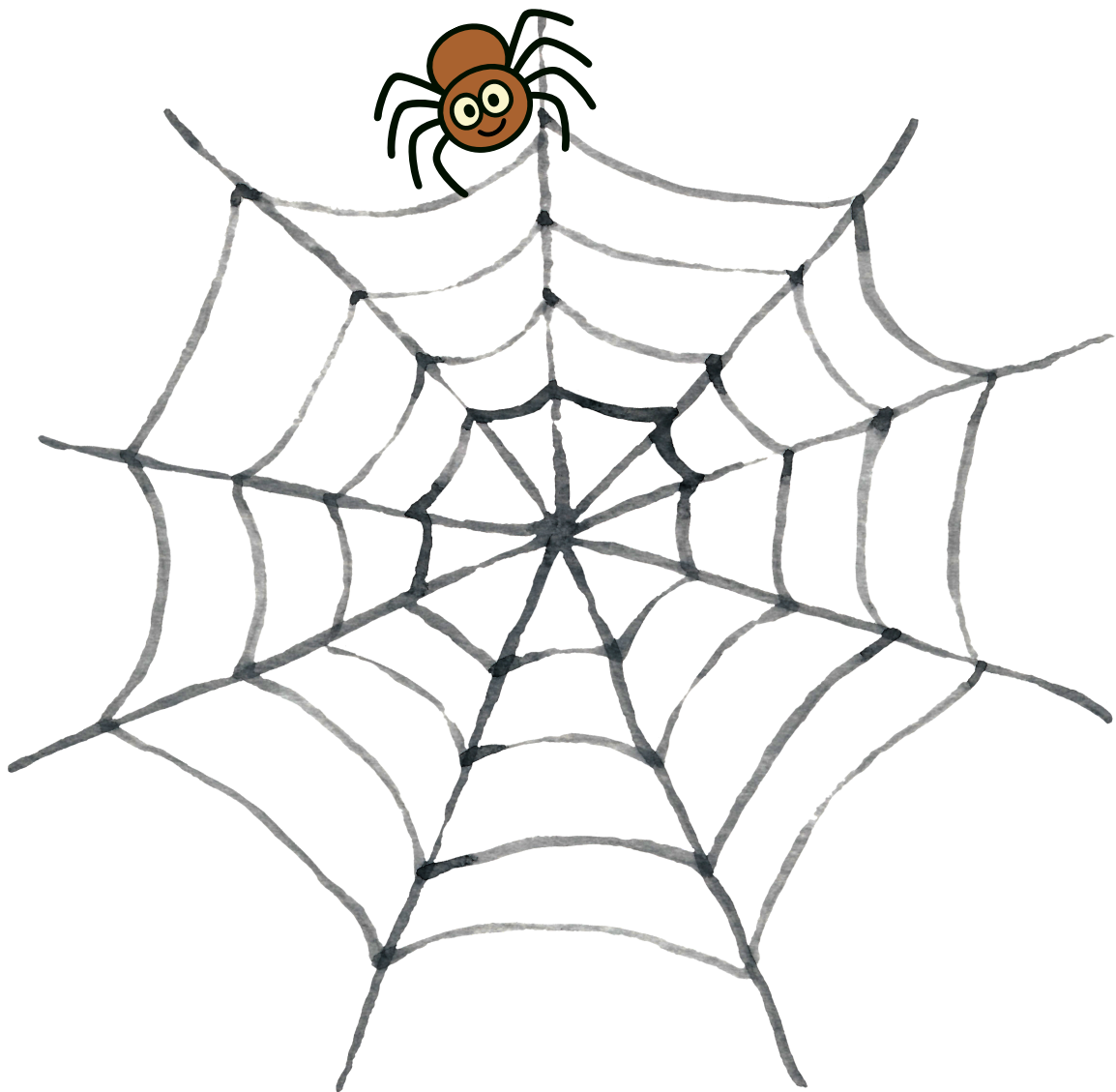
1. My tiny brave try:

Who can help me
on my climb?

My Safety Web

Not all webs are for lemurs to eat.
We can have a safety web too – the people who help us when feelings feel big.

**Write the names of people
you can go to for help on some strands of the spider web.**

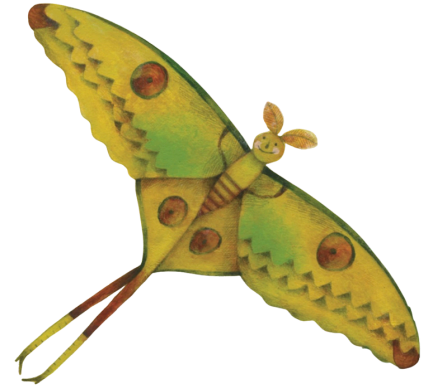


Comet's Calm Corner

When feelings flutter, we can pause, breathe, and feel safe again.

Breathe with Comet's Wings

Hold your hands in front of you.
Slowly open them like Comet's wings - Breathe in
Slowly close them - Breathe out
Repeat 4 times.



Your breathing helps your body feel safe.

Look Around the Forest

When Raffi felt unsure, he noticed what was around him.
He used his eyes, ears and nose to help his body calm down.

Find:

5 things you can see 
(look for small details)

4 things you can touch 
(what feels soft, rough, cold, bumpy?)

3 things you can hear 
(listen very carefully)

2 things you can smell 
(or take two slow breaths)

1 thing inside your body? 
(Is your breathing slow or fast?)

Calm Your Body

Stretch like a Tall Tree
(reach your arms high, then relax)
Hug yourself gently
(Squeeze then let go)
Squeeze your hands tight
(Count 1..2..3..then relax)

Be Still like the Sleeping Tree Boa

Curl your body and rest quietly for 10 seconds

Little Frog Wiggle

Roll your shoulders slowly

The Worry Waterfall

You can leave your worries here for now.

In your imagination,
the waterfall carries your worries
away while you rest.

Identifying Feelings

How was Raffi feeling?

Match the facial expression to the word:

WORRIED

BRAVE

CALM

PROUD

TIRED



Feelings can change and they don't define us

Where I Feel Calm

Draw a favorite place where your body feels calm and comfortable.

Raffi's Calm Bedtime Path

Before sleep, Ring Tail Raffi learned to slow his mind and body.
You can follow the same calm path each night.

Sometimes you may feel worried.
Sometimes you will feel brave.
Some days you may feel a little of both.

Just like Raffi, you can pause, breathe, and
ask for help when you need it.

Your feelings may visit,
but they do not stay forever.

You are growing, learning,
and becoming stronger
each day.

zzzzzz...



- Turn down the lights

- Share one good thing from the day.

- Share one worry and then imagine the waterfall
gently carrying it away for the night.

The worry can rest while your body sleeps.

Breathe with Comet - Hold your hands in front of you.

Slowly open them like Comet's wings – Breathe in

Slowly close them – Breathe out

Repeat 4 times.

Your breathing helps your body feel safe.

Some Owl affirmations - I am calm and brave, I do my very best
I am loved, I will get plenty of rest

-Say goodnight to someone you care about.

-Time to lie down and rest like a sleepy lemur in a tree.

Let your eyes close when they are ready.

-Morning will bring new brave energy.

**Children relax when the grown-ups around them feel steady.
The goal is to help your child feel safe enough to rest.

Imagine with Raffi

Options:

- Draw your favorite part of Raffi's adventure.
- Draw yourself meeting the Red Owl and write a few things he would he tell you?
- Draw a time you were brave.



Mindful Coloring



Raffi's Word Search

AAQNWIBSBWPCNUR
 DXMINDFULNESSJT
 FINJWEOMSHFYZKI
 WJYHPSHRBCUXFQN
 WPD AFFIRMATIONE
 LEXDLOJVZLBWSQN
 ODTT DATYXMRLSVD
 CCHLPINKWQAOABA
 XWONERTXEVVUPKN
 CBUOAPIRINEYUNG
 ITGNCRYFOEDCTME
 UCHFEEYFYOTERAR
 XCTEFYCAEYPYMGE
 VLSRUERJTBXNAID
 IAUMLAPULEMURBC

mindfulness
 thoughts
 lemur
 fossa

affirmation
 endemic
 troop
 peaceful

endangered
 anxiety
 brave

prey
 calm



Raffi's Word Search Solution

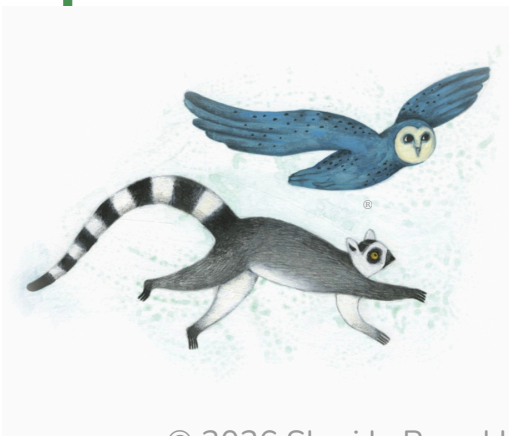
AAQNWIBSBWPCNUR
 D X M I N D F U L N E S S J T
 F I N J W E O M S H F Y Z K I
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 L E X D L O J V Z L B W S Q N
 O D T T D A T Y X M R L S V D
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 X W O N E R T X E V V U P K N
 C B U O A P I R I N E Y U N G
 I T G N C R Y F O E D C T M E
 U C H F E E Y F Y O T E R A R
 X C T E F Y C A E Y P Y M G E
 V L S R U E R I T B X N A I D
 I A U M L A P U L E M U R B C

mindfulness
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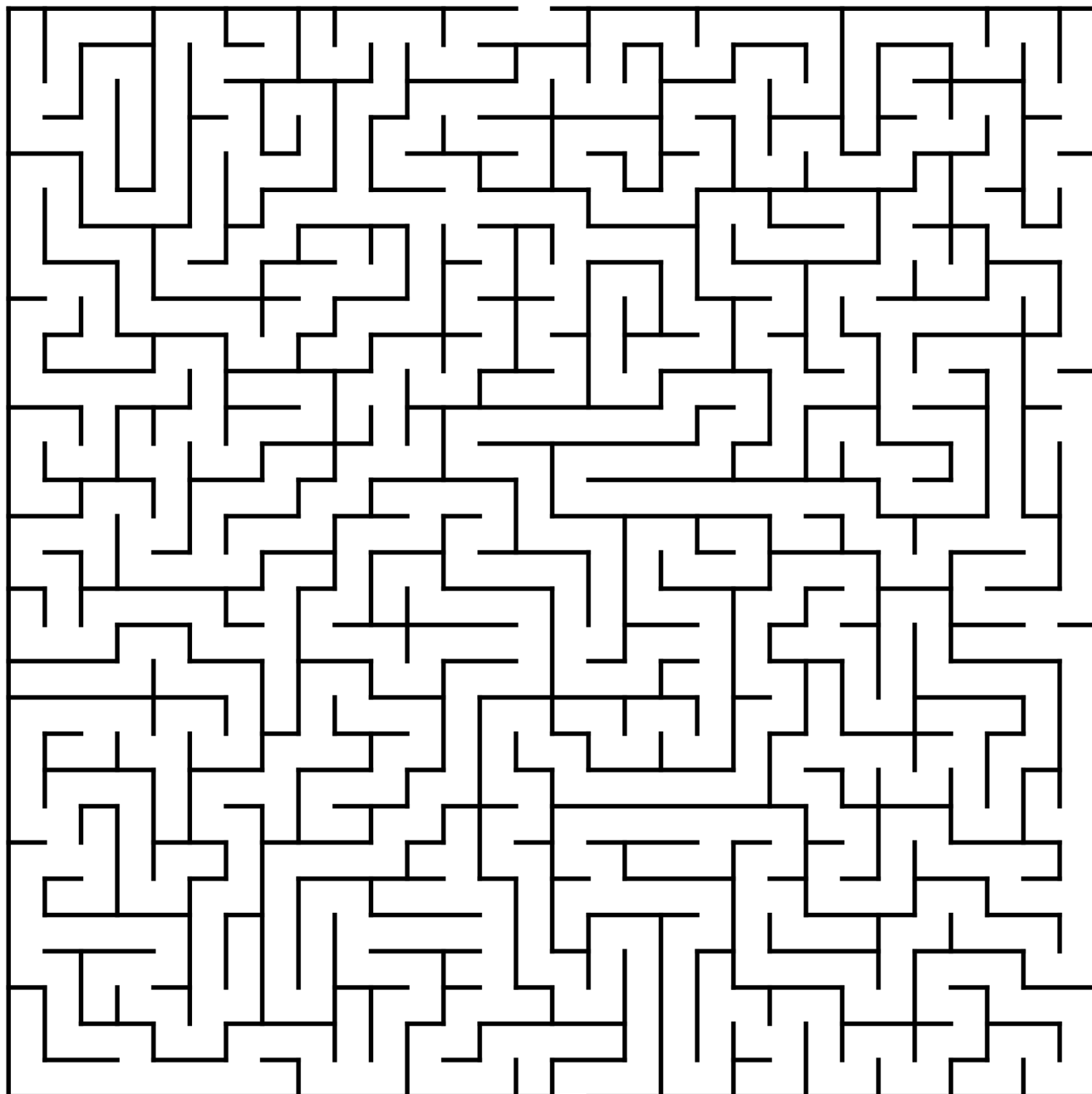
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Help Raffi Find His Way Home



Raffi's Way Home - Solution

