

## COPING KIT SKILLS: **Pay it Forward**

**Helps with:** Sadness, Loneliness, Boredom

**What is it?** Being kind to another person or animal that could use a helping hand. Volunteering.

**What do I need?** You really don't need any tools but yourself to make this work, but some things that may help are:

- Paper and a pen or pencil
- A journal or notebook
- Markers, stickers, scrapbook supplies

See the Tips section to see how these items can help!

### **When do I use it?**

- Do this any time you want to feel better and happier about yourself. You can do it when you are feeling sad and lonely, or even angry.
- You can also use these activities when you notice someone else around you needs help or is feeling down.

### **How do I do it?**

1. Look around your neighborhood and find someone that could use a helping hand.
2. Choose to do them a favor even though they are not expecting it and you will not get any payment or reward for it.
3. Examples of things you could do include:
  - a. Cooking a meal for someone who is sick
  - b. Offering to babysit for a parent who needs to work late
  - c. Doing yard work for an elderly neighbor
  - d. Donating blood
  - e. Volunteering to walk your neighbors' dogs
  - f. Volunteer at a local community organization
  - g. Putting change in someone else's parking meter



**Tips:**

- If you want a little extra inspiration, try watching the movie “Pay it Forward” (PG-13) with Kevin Spacey, Helen Hunt, and Haley Joel Osment.
- Some acts of kindness have motivated other people to pay it forward too. For instance, there was a news story about a person who paid for the next person in line’s coffee at a coffee shop. That person then chose to keep the sharing going and paid for the person behind her who paid for the person behind him and so on.

**How can this help me?** Doing an unexpected act of kindness for another person not only helps the other person but makes you feel better by decreasing feelings of sadness and anger, and by increasing feelings of happiness, connection, and love. It also helps you learn about other people and become more sensitive to their thoughts and feelings.

