

Getting In Touch With Emotions

Background Information: We all experience a wide range of emotions. It is important for us to learn how we experience different emotions, where they occur in our body as well as in our mind, and how to respond to the emotions we are experiencing. Emotions are biological, they are a natural phenomenon. How we react (acting without thinking) or respond (by choosing what we will do), is a choice we make each time we experience an emotion.

Below is a graphic which shares different strategies we might use to deal with the emotions we are experiencing, and perhaps giving ourselves time to determine what our response will be.

Squeeze a stress ball	Pet an animal	Exercise	Take deep breaths
Play a game	Talk about your feelings	Get or give a big hug	Make a list of happy things
Create an art project	Tell or listen to jokes	Listen to music	Dance to a silly song

If you would like to make copies of these strategies for youth, please do. Or you could make a poster and have youth make their own charts, selecting those which work best for them.



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Background Information: Everyone feels happiness which is a great emotion. When we are happy, our bodies feel different. Sometimes, we feel energized. Happiness is often described as a warm, fussy feeling inside. When we are happy, we are healthier. We get along better with our friends and family. Happiness can be contagious! If we are happy and full of laughter, we can help spread that happiness to others who may not be feeling so happy.

What you will need:

- Chart paper
- Marking pen
- Drawing paper
- Crayons, colored pencils

What you will do:

1. Bring youth together and talk about the emotion of happiness.
2. Invite them to share a time when they felt happy (record on the chart)
3. Invite them to remember a time when they felt very happy. Ask them where they felt that happiness in their body. Ask them to think about how they responded to the feeling of happiness.
4. Invite them to think about how long the happiness lasted and how they moved out of being happy.
5. Invite them to think about which way they shared happiness with others.
6. When you have had this discussion, distribute the drawing paper and crayons or colored pencils to each youth
7. Ask them to fold the drawing paper into 4 quadrants
8. Invite them to create in drawing and/or writing the following items in each of the quadrants

What were you doing before you became happy?	What occurred that made you happy?
Where did you feel your happiness? How did you respond to your happiness?	What caused you stop feeling happy?

9. Invite youth to share their poster with a partner



Debrief:

- What was your key learning about happiness today?
- What is your “go to” when you feel happy?
- What are things which generally cause you to stop feeling happy?



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Background Information: Behavior—the things we choose to do—can lead to happiness. Those choices can also lead to sadness. Sometimes we make choices, and realize the results of those choices make us very happy, and then we find a way to take what we’ve learned and make choices which can change our lives or the lives of others so we can feel and be happy more often. Today you will share a video with the children. It is a video of kids talking about being happy and happiness.

What you will need:

- Access to share the video, 100 Kids Tell Us What Makes Them Happy, with youth. Here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Y5R8K7OKSo> Be sure to view this video first so you will be aware of what the kids say.
- Paper and pencils
- Put questions on chart paper so all can see them. Show the questions only after watching the video

What you will do:

1. Prior to sharing the video with youth, divide them into groups of three.
2. Bring youth together to view the video, 100 Kids Tell Us What Makes Them Happy. Before viewing, ask them to share some of the things which make them happy. Record the responses on a piece of chart paper
3. Show the video
4. When the video is over, show youth the chart of questions, invite them to discuss each of the questions within their group, making notes of their responses.
5. Question for the chart:
 - a. What are some of the things that the kids said make them happy?
 - b. Some of the kids said they are not always happy. What were some of the things they said made them not happy?
 - c. When you think about the things which make you happy, how many of those things were mentioned by the kids in the video?
 - d. In what ways did listening to the video make you more aware of what makes you happy?
6. When finished with the discussion, have youth draw a picture of something which makes them very happy.
7. After the pictures have been drawn, ask youth to share their thoughts and drawings with their peers.



Debrief:

- What was your key learning about happiness today?
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- What are things which generally cause you to stop feeling happy?



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What is happiness? Part #1

Background Information: Emma loves to play tennis. It runs in her family as both her mother and grandmother play tennis. Emma also like to win which is why she likes to be a partner with Stephanie. She notices a new tennis player whose name is Martha. Emma wonders about asking Martha to be her partner, but she wonders if Martha can be a good player since she moves around in a wheelchair. What should Emma do?

What you will need:

- Chart of questions for Choice 1 and Choice 2
- Scenario (copy for every group of 2-3 youth)

What you will do:

1. Divide the youth into groups of 3-4
2. Distribute copies of the scenario Sharing Joy and invite the youth to volunteer to read parts of the scenario aloud. If they do not volunteer, you will read it to them. If you have no volunteers at first, start reading yourself and then invite them to read.
3. When finished, share the chart of questions for Choice 1 and Choice 2
4. Invite the groups to determine which Choice would be the best and why they would make that choice
5. Have the small groups share with their peers.

Debrief

- What is your take-away from this scenario?
- How might you be happy in a similar situation?
- How can happiness help you to make a choice that will support your happiness?



What do you think?

Choice 1

Why did Emma choose to ask Martha to play?

How do you think Martha felt to be chosen by Emma?

What did Emma learn about happiness?

Do you think Emma and Martha will be tennis partners again?

Choice 2

Why do you think Stephanie asked Martha to be her partner?

How do you think Emma felt when she had to sit on the bench?

What did Emma learn about happiness?

Do you think Emma will ask Martha to be her partner next time? Why or why not?



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What is happiness? Part #2

Background Information: After considering what you learned about happiness, the choices Emma made, and the video with kids sharing what makes them happy, reflect on the What Would You Do questions attached to this lesson plan.

What you will need:

- What You Would Do handout (attached)
- Pencils
- Crayons or colored pencils

What you will do:

1. Have youth return to the group or 3-4 they were in during the last session
2. Invite them to review the three opportunities they have had to explore the emotion of happiness
3. Distribute the What Would You Do handout and ask the groups to discuss the questions. Ask them to write or draw a response to each question.
4. When finished, ask youth to share with the entire group

Debrief

- What have you learned about happiness?
- What is something you might do if you are feeling happy to share your joy?
- What might you do for or with a friend or family member who is not feeling happy?



What Would You Do?

Have you ever done something to make someone else happy? How did it make you feel?

Have your parents or family members taught you a sport or a skill that you could do together? Or did a friend ever teach you? How did it feel?

List five things that help you happy.
