

EXPRESSING EMOTIONS AND NEEDS

OBJECTIVE: Students will learn to have a deeper awareness of their own emotions and other people's, so they can guide their thinking and actions and avoid acting rashly.

WARM UP

Write two columns on the board, *Express* and *Hide*. Invite some volunteers to come to the front and ask them what they usually do with their needs and emotions. Ask: *Do you express them, or do you hide them? Do you know what you need when you experience a difficult emotion?* Invite volunteers to check the corresponding column. Ask the rest of the group which option they consider the best and why. Write some of their reasons on the board, under the columns.

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Make sure all students have a printed copy of the handout.
- 2 Get students into groups of four and take a look at the word box. Invite each student to choose three words from it.
- 3 Still in groups, invite them to role-play the emotions they chose using just one facial expression. The rest of the group should try to identify each emotion. Give them three chances to guess.
- 4 The previous activity has helped students review some common emotions that can be useful when completing the table in the handout. Ask them to carefully read the "I need..." column in the handout. Then invite them to write on each line of the "When I feel..." column the word that completes the sentence. Walk around the class and help students with words they might need to express how they feel. Explain that the purpose of completing the sentences is to identify their needs in particular moments.

WRAP IT UP

- 5 *Did you find it easy to represent and identify an emotion using only one facial expression? How important is it to clearly express your emotions and needs with words? Was it easy to identify what you need for every emotion? How does it help to know what you need?*

Ask students to share with the class if it was easy for them to role-play their emotions. Invite some volunteers to say if they found it easy or not to identify their classmates' emotions and why. Encourage them to mention if they think it is useful to express their needs and emotions at school and home in a clear way. Elicit some examples of expressing their needs in the classroom.

TEACHING TIP Make sure students understand it's okay to feel upset, confused, overwhelmed, sad, ashamed, etc., but that these emotions need an outlet. If they express them in a proper way it will make them feel better, and the people who care for them will get a chance to know what is going on. Encourage students to express their needs and emotions not only at home, but also with their classmates and with you. Point out the fact that it is not easy to know what someone feels if they restrain their emotions.

EXPRESSING VS. REPRESSING EMOTIONS

OBJECTIVE: Students will realize that repressing their emotions is a bad habit that could harm them, and that learning how to express their emotions in a positive way is the best option.

WARM UP

Share a fictional situation in which Alejandro got angry with his bestie because he didn't show up at a party, and then present two possible scenarios: in the first one, Alejandro didn't say anything to his bestie, he ignored the feeling and acted as if nothing had happened. In the second one, he talked to his bestie and explained why he felt angry with him. Encourage students to mention the advantages and / or disadvantages in each case. Ask: *Do you think their friendship could end if Alejandro expressed his feelings? Do you think it is wise to try to ignore what he felt? Why? Why not?*

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Make sure all students have a printed copy of the handout.
- 2 Give them some minutes to write on each balloon the words or sentences that describe what they did the last time they felt those emotions.
- 3 Get students into pairs and ask them to share the answers in their handouts and to tell each other which reactions helped them feel better and which actions made things worse.
- 4 Ask them to read out loud the sentences from the box and check (✓) the ones that best describe them. Explain that the purpose of this activity is to find out whether they usually repress their emotions or not. Have students notice that the more sentences they check, the more difficult it is for them to express their emotions.

WRAP IT UP

- 5 *According to the information you put together during the activities, do you think expressing emotions is a problem for you? What can you do to modify this behavior? Suggest possible ways of expressing your emotions appropriately.*

Get students into groups, read out loud the sentences one at a time, and ask them to share their thoughts with their classmates. Try to elicit as many answers as possible. Have students notice the negative effects that repressing our emotions have in our minds and bodies. Explain that our bodies react at a physical level to every negative emotion we feel; this might cause pain or affect our immune system, making it vulnerable. Help them recognize that anxiety, stress, low energy levels, and similar states can be a reflection of bottled up emotions they haven't managed.

TEACHING TIP Class environment is important when students share their thoughts concerning emotions. Try to make them feel comfortable and point out that there are no right or wrong answers. Stress the fact that we are all different and so are our ways to deal with different emotions. Encourage students to express their emotions at home and at school (even with you). Explain that expressing how we feel is a healthy practice that has many benefits.

HANDLING DIFFICULT EMOTIONS

OBJECTIVE: Students will learn how to handle negative emotions in a positive way, instead of denying or repressing them.

WARM UP

Tell students about the last time something or someone made you feel angry (it can be a fictional situation). Then ask them to put themselves in your shoes and say how they would have reacted to that situation. Invite them to be totally honest. Finally, write all their reactions on the board.

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Make sure all students have a printed copy of the handout.
- 2 Invite them to read the tips. Get them into pairs and ask them to discuss if they ever practice these tips to handle unpleasant or difficult emotions. If they do, have them write the most recent situation in which they applied any of these tips in their notebooks.
- 3 Invite students to individually check the activities in the handout that could help them feel better when dealing with unpleasant emotions. Get them into pairs to compare the activities they checked and to discuss three other possible ways in which they could respond to unpleasant emotions. They must write them on the space provided at the end of the checklist.

WRAP IT UP

- 4 *Emotions are not good or bad, but some are unpleasant. Is it easy for you to recognize and accept your unpleasant emotions? Do you think you manage your unpleasant emotions in a positive way? Or do you think your reactions hurt yourself and others? What new things to deal with emotions did you learn?*

Invite students to get into groups to exchange ideas and discuss the options they checked in the handout. Ask who wrote the most recent situation in which they applied any of the tips mentioned in Activity 2. Encourage them to mention if they proved to be effective or not. Bring the class together by asking students to share the things they discussed in their groups. Write on the board any new idea they come up with to handle unpleasant emotions.

TEACHING TIP Explain to students the importance of acknowledging and identifying the unpleasant emotions they feel. Remember this is the first step to handle them successfully. You could incorporate some breathing exercises as a regular practice five minutes before starting the lesson. For example, ask students to close their eyes and guide their breathing. This will help them feel relaxed before the lesson.