



OUR BEST SELVES

Lessons on Social-Emotional Learning With ELA

IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING EMOTIONS

GOAL: Students will identify and apply appropriate strategies to manage emotions.

TIME: One 40-minute class period

MATERIALS: Strategy Activity Sheet, whiteboard or chart paper

LESSON STEPS:

1. Review as a class: What makes us feel angry? How do we know we are feeling this way? (What thoughts do we have? How do our bodies react?) Repeat for feeling sad, happy, and calm.
2. Explain that everyone experiences these emotions, and these emotions can sometimes be very strong and affect how we act. We may think of sadness or anger as bad, but these are normal emotions that are part of life. Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever had trouble handling one of these emotions.
3. Write the term *emotion management* on the board or chart paper. Ask students to predict what this term means. Define this term as: the thoughts and actions we use to feel more, less, or the same amount of an emotion. Explain that it is helpful to have strategies for dealing with strong emotions, and that the class is going to work together to learn some of these strategies.
4. Introduce one of the following strategies to the class:
 - **Mindful Breathing:** Ask students to sit comfortably with their left hand on their heart and their right hand on their stomach. Invite them to close their eyes if they wish to do so. Have students breathe normally and pay attention to their breath, for example, by saying “in, out...” as they breathe. Ask students to focus on their breaths and notice any changes in their body as they breathe. (Learn more about mindful breathing at inspired.fb.com/activities/mindful-breathing.)
 - **Body Scan:** Ask students to sit comfortably, and invite them to close their eyes if they wish to do so. Have them notice how each body part feels, starting with their toes and moving upward to their head. Cue them to notice how heavy each body part feels and how it moves. Ask them to notice each sensation without judging or labeling it. (Learn more about the body scan at inspired.fb.com/activities/body-scan.)
5. Have students break into pairs and discuss strategies to manage emotions:
 - Feeling scared ■ Feeling angry
 - Feeling sad ■ Feeling happy/energetic (hyper)
6. Invite pairs to share some of their strategies with the group. Create an anchor chart of students' suggestions. If they haven't already been suggested, add research-informed strategies, such as: take a walk, talk to a friend, use positive self-talk, and write in your journal.
7. Open a conversation about self-talk by sharing a personal example of negative self-talk, e.g., *I felt upset when I made a mistake during a presentation. I thought that other people wouldn't want to work with me in the future.* Ask students to think about a time when they felt sad or angry within the past month. What did they think about? What type of negative self-talk did they engage in? Then ask students to come up with a positive phrase they can say to themselves when they are feeling this way in the future. Model with your own phrase, e.g., *I can say to myself, “Just do your best. You can learn from this.”*
8. Distribute the **Strategy Activity Sheet** and have students complete it. Discuss students' responses as a class.



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MY NAME

MY MOOD TODAY (CIRCLE)



STRATEGY
ACTIVITY
SHEET

MANAGING EMOTIONS



We all feel many different emotions each day. Some of these feelings can be very strong. It helps to have **strategies**—things we can think about or do—so we can use our emotions wisely. This will help us to stay healthy and be kind to ourselves and others.

DIRECTIONS: Read the situation below. Then, answer the questions in the boxes about the strategies that Makayla can use.



Makayla decides to try out for the basketball team at her school. She loves to play basketball, but she has never played on a team before. She doesn't sleep well the night before tryouts because she is so nervous. At tryouts, she has trouble keeping up with the instructions that the coach is giving to the players. At one point, when she misses a pass, two of the other players roll their eyes at her. After the tryouts are over, Makayla finds out that she did not make the team. She feels like she is going to cry, and she sits alone to wait for her dad to pick her up from the school.

<p>What feelings do you think Makayla is having?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>What could Makayla say to herself to manage these feelings?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>What could Makayla do to help her with her feelings?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>If you knew Makayla was feeling this way, what could you do to support her?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>