

NAVIGATING EMOTIONS



In this learning plan, students will learn about navigating emotions through games, role-play, and writing activities. They will understand that emotions come and go and all are okay. Students will also practice accepting and managing uncomfortable emotions with tools that work best for them.



CASEL STANDARD

Self-Awareness

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Students will be able to learn the importance of accepting and managing uncomfortable emotions.
- ✓ Students will be able to understand that emotions change, give information, and are normal.
- ✓ Students will be able to learn which tools help them manage uncomfortable emotions.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Why is it important to accept and manage uncomfortable emotions?

What do I know about emotions that will help me accept them?

What helps me manage uncomfortable emotions?

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Chart paper or a whiteboard
- Uncomfortable Emotions worksheet
- Emotions wheel or list of emotions (optional)
- Emotion Toolkits worksheet
- Small whiteboards or paper
- Managing Emotions worksheet
- Opaque container or bag
- Improv Emotions worksheet
- Navigating Emotions Assessment





ASSESSMENTS

Formative assessments and checks for understanding occur throughout the lesson:

- Ensure that students have tools to manage their emotions that work for them through the Emotion Toolkits worksheet.
- Ensure that students understand that emotions are constantly changing, giving important information, and are normal.
- Ensure that students understand that accepting and managing emotions is healthy.

**Summative Assessment:
Navigating Emotions
Assesment**

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

- Provide small group support (reading aloud, modeling, defining vocabulary, etc.) on worksheets for students who need it.
- Provide a feelings wheel or list of emotions to help students fill out the Uncomfortable Emotions worksheet.
- Support students in Activity 4 by helping them identify why their character feels the way they do.
- Challenge students to create their own characters and scenarios in Activity 4.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- If iPads or computers are available, have students find GIFs that represent how uncomfortable emotions make their bodies and minds feel. Ask students to write or explain why they chose the GIFs they did.
- Facilitate students in creating their own skits that show what it looks like to accept and manage an uncomfortable emotion. Give them the option to choose their own emotion.
- Suggested books for read-aloud or book groups:
 - Guts by Raina Telgameier
 - Quintessence by Jess Redman
 - Honestly Elliott by Gillian McDunn
 - Simon B. Rhymin' by Dwayne Reed
 - A Soft Place to Land by Janae Marks



ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Activity 1

Uncomfortable Emotions

Students will have a “snowball” fight using their uncomfortable emotions and discuss the importance of emotions in their lives.

Activity 2

Emotion Toolkits

Students will learn the importance of managing and accepting emotions and find tools to manage their own emotions.

Activity 3

Managing Emotions

Students will play a scenario-based game to help others learn to accept and manage their emotions.

Activity 4

Improv Emotions

Students will practice managing emotions by acting as different characters on a bus.

Activity 5

Navigating Emotions Assessment

Students will review the importance of emotions and complete an assessment to check their understanding.

ACTIVITY 1: UNCOMFORTABLE EMOTIONS

- Provide students with paper and have them write an emotion they don't like and how it makes their body feel (e.g., Their stomach hurts, they get a headache, their muscles tighten). They should not put their name on their paper.
- Ask students to crumple up their paper into a ball when they finish.
- Invite students to have a “snowball” fight with their crumpled papers.
- After a minute or two, have students pick up a paper closest to them, open it, and read it.
- Encourage students to read the papers out loud to the group.
- Discuss students' observations. Guide the discussion by asking:
 - What were the most common emotions that people don't like?
 - Why do you think that is?
 - What are some ways people's bodies feel when having an uncomfortable emotion?
 - Why do you think that is?
- Remind students that we all have emotions and that all emotions are normal. Explain that emotions give us information about what is going on in our lives. Emotions are constantly changing. You won't feel angry or happy all the time.
- Communicate that it is important to accept our emotions, even the uncomfortable ones, and manage them in a way that is helpful to us. Ignoring emotions or not managing them appropriately can lead to pain in our bodies and unexpected or hurtful reactions.
- Give students the Uncomfortable Emotions worksheet and explain that they will list different emotions that they don't like or feel uncomfortable with. Then they will write how their body feels with this emotion.
- Explain that this activity will help them be more aware of their uncomfortable emotions, so they can better accept and manage them.



ACTIVITY 2: EMOTION TOOLKITS

- Ask students, “What do you do to calm down when you are angry?” Give them time to think and share with a partner. Invite them to share with the group.
- Write down students’ ideas on chart paper or a whiteboard. Ideas may include taking a walk, being by myself, listening to music, or counting to ten.
- Ask students, “What do you do to help you when you’re sad? Is it the same thing you do when you’re angry?” Give them time to think and share with a partner. Invite them to share with the group. Write down any new ideas.
- Invite students to think about other uncomfortable emotions, such as shame, frustration, anxiety, and jealousy. Ask, “Would you do anything different to manage these emotions?”
- Give them time to think and encourage students to share with the group. Write down any new ideas.
 - Add meditation, doodling, taking deep breaths, and journaling to the list if they are not mentioned.
- Remind students that the goal is not to do something to ignore the uncomfortable emotion but to help their minds and body settle. Then they can better manage their reaction or handle the situation.
- Read through some of the ideas on the paper or whiteboard. Explain that these are tools to use to help accept and manage uncomfortable emotions, but they don’t all work for everyone. You need to find the things that work for you and practice them so that they will be easier to use when you’re in the middle of an uncomfortable emotion.
- Show students the Emotion Toolkits worksheet and the example. Explain that they will list the tools that work for them to calm down, focus, and manage their uncomfortable emotions. They will also design a symbol for each tool as a helpful reminder of what to do and explain how each tool helps them.

ACTIVITY 3: MANAGING EMOTIONS

- Ask students to discuss with a partner what can happen when we don’t manage or accept our emotions. (Ideas may include hurting someone else, body pain, or constantly feeling stressed.)
- Invite students to share their thoughts with the group. Discuss how we can’t control how we feel, but we can control how we react to our emotions. We want to accept and manage them healthily, but this takes practice.



CONTINUED -- ACTIVITY 3: MANAGING EMOTIONS

- Divide students into groups of four and provide paper or small whiteboards. Explain that they will listen to a scenario and then answer a question about it. Each group should discuss possible answers and collaborate on one final answer.
- Give the groups two minutes to discuss and come up with their answer. Invite each group to share their final answer.
- Discuss each answer to determine if it would be an appropriate way to manage emotions. Ask students to consider if any answers need revising.
- Use the following scenarios and questions:
 - Shay was so angry at their mom for not letting them hang out with their friends because they didn't do their chores. How can Shay manage their strong emotion? (E.g., Shay can listen to music to calm down and then calmly talk to their mom.)
 - Jonah was worried that people would tease him for wearing glasses. He decided to act tough and push anyone who teased him. Is this the best choice? Why or why not? (E.g., No, because that could hurt others and doesn't help him accept his emotion.)
 - Marion was ashamed that she copied her friend's answers, but she ignored that feeling and pretended it never happened. Now she's having trouble sleeping. What should Marion do? (E.g., She should accept her feeling of shame and admit what she did.)
 - Leo felt disappointed about losing in the first round of the chess tournament. He wanted to knock all of the tables and chess pieces over. What should he do instead? (E.g., He should take deep breaths or walk around. He should use positive self-talk.)
- Give students the Managing Emotions worksheet. Explain that they will read each situation and help each character accept and manage their emotions.
- Invite students to discuss their completed worksheets with a partner. Ask them to explain their answers to their partner.





ACTIVITY 4: IMPROV EMOTIONS

Prior to this activity, cut out the character cards from the Improv Emotions worksheet and place them in an opaque container or bag. Place two chairs next to each other in front of the group.

- Explain that students will practice expressing and managing emotions by acting out different scenarios in a game called Riding the Bus. Practicing how you might feel or react will help you manage uncomfortable emotions when they occur in real life.
- Show students the container or bag of character cards. Explain that the cards each have information on a character, including how they are feeling and if they will manage their emotions or not. Encourage students to get into character by thinking about why their characters might feel the way they do.
- Communicate that two students at a time will come up and each pick a character card. They will have a minute to read the card and think about their character.
- Explain that they will sit at the two chairs up front, which acts as the bus seat. Once they are seated, they become their characters, and the scene begins.
- Model how this works with one student volunteer.
- Invite two student volunteers to start the game.
- Indicate when the scene is done. Invite the students who were watching to guess each emotion that the characters were given and to discuss which characters managed their emotions and how they did so.
- Invite two more students to pick character cards, continuing the game until all students who wanted have had a chance to participate.
- Afterward, reflect with students on the game. Ask:
 - Was it easy or hard for you to act out the emotion you were given? Why?
 - Would you have rather been the character who managed their emotions or the one who didn't? Why?
 - Why is it important to practice managing uncomfortable or strong emotions?



ACTIVITY 5: NAVIGATING EMOTIONS ASSESSMENT

- Invite students to pair up and face each other. Explain that you will call out an emotion. Partners will take turns either sharing about a time they felt that way or talking about what they do to accept and manage that emotion.
- Use the following emotions:
 - Overwhelmed
 - Offended
 - Uncertain
 - Bored
 - Joyful
- Guide students to listen to their partners respectfully and remind them that all emotions are okay to have.
- Encourage students to share some of their answers with the group. Ask students to think about how they will accept and manage an uncomfortable emotion now that they are aware of tools that help them.
- Give students the Navigating Emotions Assessment. Explain that they will answer each question as best they can using what they know about emotions and themselves.



NAME _____

DATE _____



UNCOMFORTABLE EMOTIONS

List any emotion that you don't like or that makes you feel uncomfortable. Then write how your body feels when you are having or thinking about that emotion.

Uncomfortable Emotions	How Your Body Feels When Having This Emotion
<i>Example: Embarrassed</i>	<i>My heart beats fast. I sweat a lot. My face turns red.</i>


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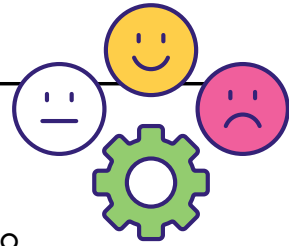
EMOTION TOOLKITS

Make a list of the tools or things that help you manage uncomfortable emotions. Draw a symbol for each tool as a reminder of what works best for you. Make sure that your symbols clearly represent each tool. Then explain how each tool helps you.

What tools help you manage your emotions?	Here is a symbol representing this tool.	How does this tool help me?
<i>Example: Taking a walk</i>		<i>Walking helps me by giving me time alone to calm down. Moving my body also helps.</i>

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MANAGING EMOTIONS

Read each scenario. Write what you think the character should do to help them accept and manage their emotions.

Jacob couldn't figure out how to draw the perfect cube and felt frustrated. He wanted to rip up all his papers. What could he do instead?



Kinra's friends quickly climbed up the tree, but she stood at the bottom. She was scared of heights, but she didn't want to admit that to her friends. What would they think of her? She ignored their pleas to join them, which made her friends mad. What could she do instead?



Ada agreed to helping her grown-ups make dinner, but she still needed to do homework and had promised her sister she would play a game with her. She didn't want to disappoint anyone. She felt overwhelmed and began talking rudely to her family. What could she do instead?

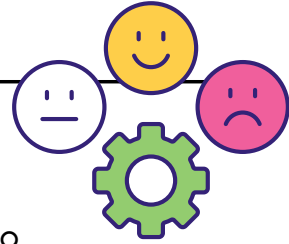


Leon's best friend got the coolest shoes for his birthday. Leon couldn't take his mind off of those shoes. He would never be able to get a pair like that. He felt jealous. He started making comments to his friend like, "You think you're so awesome in those shoes, don't you?" What could Leon do instead?



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MANAGING EMOTIONS

Read each scenario. Write what you think the character should do to help them accept and manage their emotions.

Jacob couldn't figure out how to draw the perfect cube and felt frustrated. He wanted to rip up all his papers. What could he do instead?

Possible answers include:

He could take a break and go read a book or listen to music.

He could accept that he was frustrated and take some deep breaths.



Kinra's friends quickly climbed up the tree, but she stood at the bottom. She was scared of heights, but she didn't want to admit that to her friends. What would they think of her? She ignored their pleas to join them, which made her friends mad. What could she do instead?

Possible answers include:

She could tell her friends she was scared of heights. I don't think they would be mad at her.

She could tell her friends she didn't want to climb the tree and would stay on the ground until they came down.



Ada agreed to helping her grown-ups make dinner, but she still needed to do homework and had promised her sister she would play a game with her. She didn't want to disappoint anyone. She felt overwhelmed and began talking rudely to her family. What could she do instead?

Possible answers include:

She could accept that she was overwhelmed and talk to her grown-ups about it.

She could admit she was overwhelmed and tell her grown-ups or sister that she couldn't do something with them.



Leon's best friend got the coolest shoes for his birthday. Leon couldn't take his mind off of those shoes. He would never be able to get a pair like that. He felt jealous. He started making comments to his friend like, "You think you're so awesome in those shoes, don't you?" What could Leon do instead?

Possible answers include:

He could accept that he was jealous and journal about it. He could apologize to his friend, too.

He could tell his friend he was jealous of his shoes and apologize. He could also remind himself that his friend is more



important than a pair of shoes.

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IMPROV EMOTIONS

Cut out each character card, and put the cards in an opaque container or bag. Work with a small group or partner. Take turns pulling out one card at a time and acting it out.



You feel miserable. You cannot manage your emotions and are rude to everyone.

You feel nervous. You manage your emotions by listening to music on your phone.

You feel guilty. You cannot manage your emotions and feel sick.

You feel annoyed. You manage your emotions by taking deep breaths and telling yourself it will be okay.

You feel angry. You cannot manage your emotions and take it out on everyone around you.

You feel worried. You cannot manage your emotions and have a headache.

You feel scared. You cannot manage your emotions and jump whenever anyone talks to you.

You feel frustrated. You manage your emotions by writing in your journal.

You feel surprised. You cannot manage your emotions and sit with your eyes wide open, unable to talk.

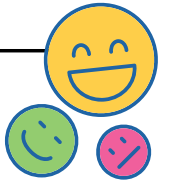
You feel anxious. You manage your emotions by drawing in a sketchbook.

You feel overwhelmed. You manage your emotions by counting to twenty in your head.

You feel lonely. You manage your emotions by accepting that you want company and talking with the person who sat down next to you.

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NAVIGATING EMOTIONS ASSESSMENT

Answer each question as best you can, using what you know about emotions and yourself.

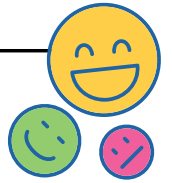
1. Write about a time that you felt an uncomfortable emotion. What did you do about it? How did your body feel? How would you change what you did for next time?

2. You can feel happy all the time. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?



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NAVIGATING EMOTIONS ASSESSMENT

Answer each question as best you can, using what you know about emotions and yourself.

1. Write about a time that you felt an uncomfortable emotion. What did you do about it? How did your body feel? How would you change what you did for next time?

Answers will vary.

Sample answer: Last week I was really worried about my grandma because she's been sick. I tried to pretend like I wasn't so I could have fun with my friends, but I couldn't focus and didn't have fun. Next time I feel worried, I am going to let myself feel worried. I'll probably write about it or talk to my mom about it.

2. You can feel happy all the time. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.

Sample answer: I disagree with this statement because you can't feel one feeling all the time. Emotions change depending on what is happening in your life. I think if someone is happy all the time, they are ignoring how they really feel.

