

Feelings are Funny Things

Stories and Activities for Thinking about Feelings



School In-Reach Service

This booklet is a development on the 6 session manual developed by the Resilience Project. It has an updated session format, and a range of activities, stories and resources that can be used when running the Feelings are Funny Things intervention. For further information on see ‘Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit’ authored by [Dr Steve Killick](#) (Clinical Psychologist and Storyteller) and [Phil Okwedy](#) (Storyteller and Teacher).

For more detail on running groups see the chapter ‘Feelings are Funny Things: Using Storytelling with Children Looked After and their Carers’ by Steve Killick in ‘*Storytelling, special needs and disabilities: Practical approaches for children and adults*’ edited by Nicola Grove (2021)



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Session format

Each session follows the same format:

Joining & Warm-Up Exercise/s

Participants welcomed and reminded of aims and boundaries of the group. This is nice time for a check in (examples later in the resource). Warm-up games and activities are used to help build attention and focus to being in the group. Games are an important way of helping young people regulate themselves ready to learn and engage in storytelling activities. They can be fun and help children relax and feel safe in the group environment. Warm ups included use physical, interpersonal and non-verbal communication skills such as eye-contact. A list of possible games is given later in the manual

Stories

Each session will be based around a different story that the leader will tell or that young people can learn and tell, usually in pairs. The story is usually followed by an activity to elicit and discuss emotions evoked in the story (see below). Suggested stories and exercises are included in this manual. Both stories and exercises help develop the four areas of emotional intelligence.

Types of Stories

As well as, or in place of, the stories suggested, other stories can be used – with the proviso they are told rather than read. Local, or Welsh stories can be used and have extra resonance as they help pupils understand more of their culture. Equally, stories of cultures that may reflect pupils background are of value. It can also be useful of tell personal or true stories. For instance, the facilitator may share a story about someone they know who may have done something remarkable or dealt with adversity wisely. Equally, stories of real-life characters such as Nelson Mandela or Helen Keller may be shared.

Main Activity

After the story, the leader will usually ask some questions about the story / the learners' responses to the story e.g. "What emotions did you notice in the story?". After some discussion there will usually be an activity to elicit further discussion or exploration. The activities can vary e.g. around emotions broadly, focusing on one key emotion in more detail e.g. sadness, or where pupils learn the story and tell it in pairs. There are examples of activities later in the manual.

It is suggested that stories and exercises used follow the interests in the group rather than follow a pre-determined linear sequence. Groups will develop at different rates and as trust and confidence develops in the group they can manage more demanding ad more personal exercises.

Wind-Down Activities

In the same way that it is important for students to feel settled when starting a group it is also important that they finish and leave feeling calm and regulated, hence the importance of the closing regulating activity. These activities also help students learn skills they can use in future to deal with strong emotions and find a calm and peaceful state ready for learning. These exercises may focus on reflecting on the activities in the group (what was and was not enjoyed) and also introduce relaxation and mindfulness activities that young people may be encouraged to repeat at home. Activities are given in Section 2.

Session 1 – example plan

Below is an example of how the first session may look. The aim is to get an idea of where the group is at in terms of emotional literacy, whilst building a safe and fun group.

You will need - Large flip chart paper and marker pens

Introduction to session

'We are going to explore and hopefully understand more about our emotions, thoughts and beliefs and how these influence the choices we make. We will talk about feelings and how they are funny things.'

For the first session you may want to spend more time on games to make sure the group feels relaxed. Particularly if you've got some more time than 50 minutes.

<p>Warm up</p> <p>(5-10 minutes)</p>	<p>Eye contact clap with name</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange students in a standing circle. 2. The objective is to send a 'clap' around the circle. 3. The leader starts by turning to the right, making eye contact with the student next to them, and then claps and says their own name. The student then turns to the student on their right and repeats the stages of making eye contact, clapping and saying their name. 4. The clap should pass round the circle until it returns to the leader. <p>Development - When two students make eye contact, they try to both clap at the same time</p> <p>Additional Activity - 1,2,3 clap (see activities section)</p>
<p>Story</p> <p>(5-10 minutes)</p>	<p>Stone Soup</p> <p>Question prompts - <i>What emotions did you notice? What did you like or not like? Do you think the Traveller was helping the village or just tricking a meal out of them?</i></p>
<p>Main Activity</p> <p>(15-20 minutes)</p>	<p>Feelings List</p> <p>Using flip chart paper and pens, begin to develop a list of feelings or emotions words that the group brings, this can be started during the discussion of the story. Include ones that may not exactly be emotions e.g. "hungry" or "over the moon". The purpose here is not to identify student responses as right or wrong but that what constitutes a feeling or emotion is not always straight forward. Keep this list as you will continue to add and use it throughout the sessions.</p>
<p>Wind down</p> <p>(5 minutes)</p>	<p>Finger breathing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notice how you are breathing in and breathing out 2. Hold your hand in front of you with your fingers spread apart. 3. Run your first finger along the thumb and fingers of your outstretched hand 4. Breathe in as you go up the finger and thumb, breathe out as you come down. Maintain a slow unhurried pace. 5. When you have done all the digits return to the first and start again and repeat

ACTIVITIES

This section has a menu of different activities that can be used. Activities are divided up into:

- 1 Warm-up exercises
- 2 Stories
- 3 Main activities
- 4 Wind down exercises

Warm-Up Exercises

Each session begins with a couple of warm-up exercises. These are emotional regulation exercises designed to heighten and lower the energy level of the group and will tend to involve physical, social or psychological awareness. The primary focus of the warm-up exercises are to help the group members focus attention on being in the group, explore feelings and activate energy for engagement. Ideas for games can also be taken from group members. It is useful to repeat some of the exercises over several weeks and help develop the skill levels and give a sense of familiarity to being part of the group.

Exercises included in the 'Wind-Downs' section may also be used as warm-ups especially if the group needs help in calming down to be able to focus. Activities included:

- Raindance
- Eye contact clap
- 1,2,3 clap
- Sentence completion
- Splat
- Checking in - with feeling
- Two truths and a lie
- Ghost
- Mirrors
- Visualisation
- Riddles

Other games like Wink Murder, Simon Says and other favourites can be used. See the Resilience Project Relational Games and Creative Tools resource for more ideas.

Raindance

Aim- focus and concentration, awareness of physical sensations

1. The group stands in a circle. Facilitator instructs pupils to copy the actions of the person on their right.
2. Facilitator rubs palms together. The person on their left copies and so it continues, one by one, until the whole group are rubbing their palms together.
3. Facilitator then gently claps hands and, one by one, the group copies.
4. The facilitator then claps harder together like applauding someone – when the whole circle is doing this, then Facilitator slaps thighs. When the whole group is doing this then facilitators steps on the floor with both feet
5. 5 then the facilitator woks back through sequence; slapping thighs, clapping hands loud then soft, then rubbing palm.
6. The facilitator then stops and, one by one, the group should stop leaving one person rubbing their hands.

The sound should be like that of a rain shower working through different stages of rain from light drops to heavy rain and back again. The group has also worked through a very active sequence of movements from calming to very active. Pupils could be asked to be aware of their heartbeat and breathing after this exertion. This exercise aims to develop an awareness of how are bodies change physically. This is interoception and more can be found out about that in the link below.

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2021/aug/15/the-hidden-sense-shaping-your-wellbeing-interoception>

Eye contact clap with name

Aim: to encourage eye-contact (promotes relationships building) and focus. It can help to settle the group

1. Arrange students in a standing circle.
2. The objective is to send a 'clap' around the circle.
3. The leader starts by turning to the right, making eye contact with the student next to them, and then claps and says their name. The student then turns to the student on their right and repeats the stages of making eye contact, clapping and saying their name.
4. The clap should pass round the circle until it returns to the leader.

Development

When two students make eye contact, they try to both clap at the same time. Note – some students will clap in front of another students face. This is an opportunity to ask students to be more considerate and talk about what it feels like to be on the receiving end of such a clap.

1,2,3 clap

Aim: to encourage concentration, connection and playfulness.

It is useful to model the exercise and to get students who have grasped it to model it for the rest of the class.

1. Put students into pairs
2. One student says '1', the second says, '2' and the first says, '3'. The second student starts the sequence again by saying '1' and so it continues for a few moments
3. Then instead of saying '3' the student replaces the number with a clap.
4. Then '1' can also be replaced with a foot stamp.

Adaptation: Have the CYP's suggest the movement/action that will replace the number

Sentence Completion

In a circle each learner finishes of the sentence

- My favourite TV programme is....
- If I was an animal I would be.....because.....
- If I could click my fingers and go anywhere in the world, I'd go to.....'
- My favourite colour/chocolate bar/food is.....
- If I was a sweet right now I would bebecause

Splat

1. Everyone should stand in a distanced circle with the person leading the activity in the middle.
2. The person who is leading should spin round and, at random, point to one person and shout 'splat!'.
3. This person should duck down. The people on either side of them should to point at each other and shout 'splat!'.
4. The last person to shout 'splat!' should sit down.
(If a different person also shouts 'splat!', they're out and have to sit down. Keep the game moving along quickly to test reflexes.)
5. The game continues until there are two players. They should stand 2m apart, back to back, and when the person leading the activity signals, they should walk away from each other.
6. When the person leading shouts 'splat!' the last two players have to turn and shout 'splat!' at each other. The first to shout is the winner.

Checking-In – with feeling

What feelings are about

Ask 'What feelings are about for you right now/today/ in the last week? (Rather than 'how are you feeling?') - This helps to develop the idea we can feel a number a things at any one time rather than be dominated by one feeling.

Another game might invite participants, again going round the circle, to say whether they are feeling today more like a cat or a dog. Over time the range of animals can be extended or they can express themselves through movement and gesture, or in relational to another metaphor e.g. weather.

Two Truths and a Lie

Aims: Storytelling practice, communication

Put pupils into groups of three. Each person has to think of something they did that they could tell a short story about- something that happened to them, what they did in school holidays etc. One of the three must make something up that is credible, that might have happened but didn't.

They then find another group and each person tells their story. The other group have to decide who is not telling the truth. Continue until all groups have had a chance to tell their stories.

Ghost

1. One person is chosen as the ghost. The rest of the group spread out and each person finds somewhere to stand within the room.
2. The group close their eyes under the leader tells them they can open them. The ghost must, as quietly as possible, go and stand behind somebody, with the aim of not being caught.
3. If someone from the group thinks the ghost is behind them, they raise their hand. The leader will then ask everyone to open their eyes, to see if the person got it right or not.

Mirrors

Aims: focus, observation

1. In pairs, each learner is labelled A or B.
2. They face each other. A moves arms and head slowly whilst B has to follow movements like a mirror.
3. They swap over and A follows B
4. Then they try and move together so it is not evident who is leader

This exercise needs concentration and trust and best attempted when the group is able to work well together. It can be developed by having pairs mirror each other.

Visualisation

Aim- to increase imagination and visualization- useful in preparation for storytelling

Ask participants to close their eyes and then ask them to imagine they are standing in front of their front door – look at it closely, notice the colour of the door, then the surround. Open the door, walk to the kitchen, what can they see? Walk out of the kitchen up their bedroom again, notice colours, objects. And so on.

Give instructions slowly in a relaxed tone of voice allowing pupils time to visualize and give time for discussion at the end of this exercise to hear about different experiences. This can also be done as a wind-down exercise and can be done lying on the floor or sitting down to encourage relaxation.

Riddles

Riddles are a powerful way of engaging minds to think flexibly and creatively. Here's a small selection of riddles. Other riddles can easily be found on the internet or often pupils will know some and can tell them to the group. It is more important to encourage imaginative answers than get the 'right' answer.

- I'm always wet and I never rust. Go on and wag me if you must. What am I? **A tongue**
- What do people make that no one can ever see? - **Noise (but there are many great answers to this question)**
- What can you break with just one word? **Silence**
- What is it that you own that other people use much more than you? **Your name**
- It is lighter than a feather yet no one can hold it for more than two minutes. What is it? **Your breath (an equally good answer 'a snowflake')**
- Thirty white horses on a red hill, First they champ, Then they stand still. **Teeth**
- What can you catch but never throw? **A cold**
- If you have it, you want to share it. If you share it, you no longer have it- **A secret**
- A wizard had seven daughters and each daughter had a brother – how many children did the wizard have? **Eight – each daughter has the same brother**
- Two mothers and two daughters went into a shop and bought three ice creams. They all had one each? But how did they do this? **It was a grandmother, her daughter and granddaughter**
- What loses its head in the morning and gets it again in the evening? **A pillow**
- What has many holes but can hold water? **A sponge**
- I have keys but no key holes, I have space but no room. You can enter but you can't come in. **A computer keyboard**
- No legs have I to dance, No lungs have I to breathe, No life have I to live or die And yet I do all three. What am I? **A fire!**

Stories

Tell a story that explores a particular emotion family for instance, *'The Fearsome Giant'* for 'fear' or *'Beddgelert'* for 'sadness' or 'anger'. Use that as springboard for discussion about that emotion, its function, what sort of things might trigger it, what helps with dealing with it and so on.

Here are a list of stories that are included in the appendix of the manual. You can use your own, and look for other stories that may fit your group better. Each story has some ideas of themes that may emerge, however the group will likely have their own interpretations and feelings.

- 1 **Stone Soup** – being part of a group, contributing, sadness and loss, isolation & connection, fear
- 2 **The Seasons of Life** – anger, the changing nature of things, being non-judgemental
- 3 **The Cracked Pot** – sadness, bullying, perfection, discrimination (suitable for Story Swap)
- 4 **The Talking Tortoise** – using gestures, sadness, loneliness, jealousy, isolation (suitable for Story Swap)
- 5 **The Fearsome Giant - fear**, courage (suitable for Story Swap).
- 6 **Beddgelert** – anger, grief, regret
- 7 **Two Travellers** – being judgemental, positive and negative attitudes, friendliness
- 8 **The Star the Boy and the Box** – isolation, infatuation, curiosity, trust (suitable for Story Swap)
- 9 **The Clever Wish** - riddles, ingenuity (suitable for Story Swap)
- 10 **The Merchant of Baghdad** – Searching for dreams
- 11 **King March**
- 12 **The Legend of the Two Dragons**

Story question prompts

Following each story, you should put the group into pairs/small groups/whole group, and facilitate discussion. In the story section of the appendix, there are some additional question prompts, however, general questions you may ask can be:

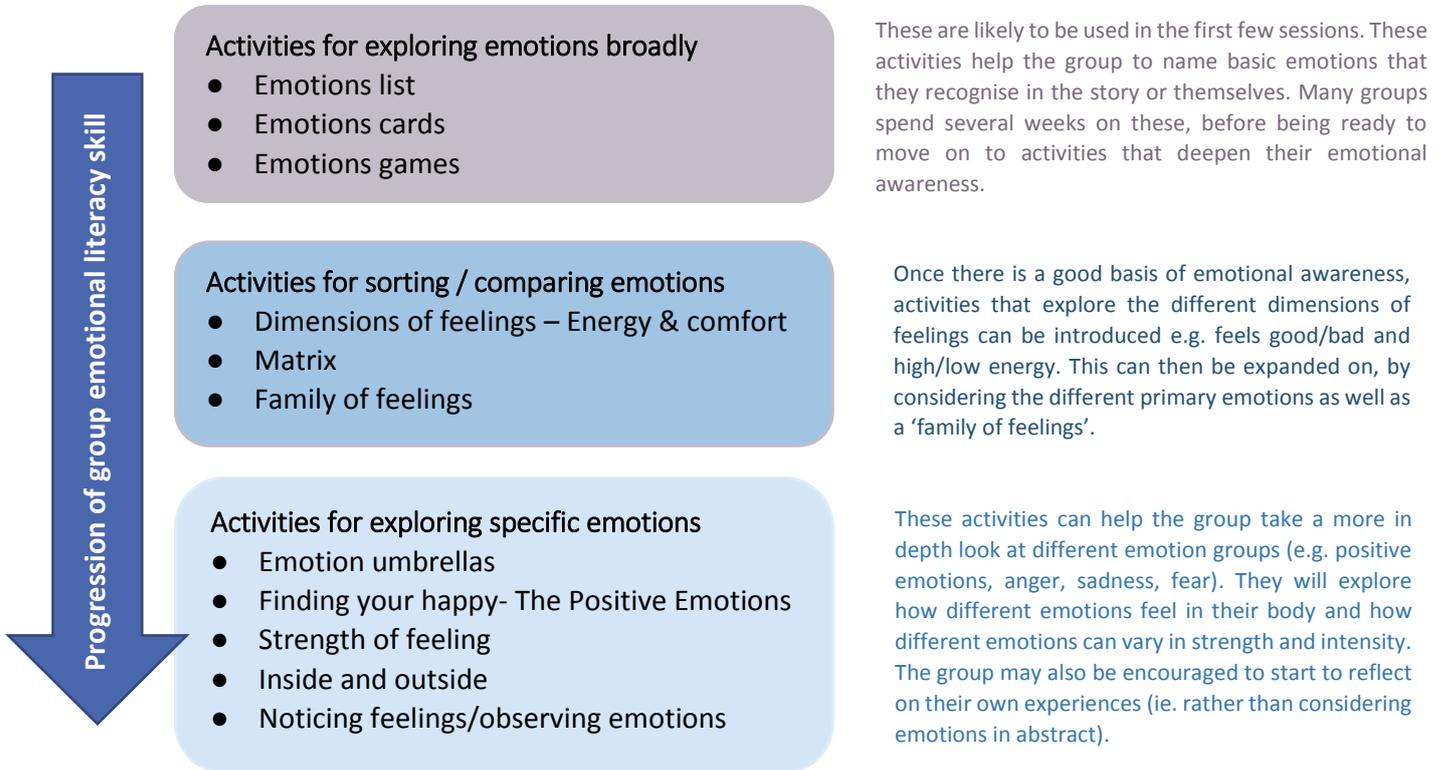
- What feelings did you notice in the story?
- What did the story make you feel?
- What do you feel about the characters?
- What do you think the message of the story was?

If the group don't know each other well, or they always form the same pairs or small groups use Name Cards

- To give everyone a chance to speak if asked a question
- To randomly assign them to groups
- If asking the group to help with the activities at the beginning e.g. to choose randomly

Main activities

These exercises will tend to revolve around a storytelling or story making exercise and then considering thoughts and feelings, choices, dilemma, values and so on within the story. It may involve getting pupils to learn a story or storytelling skills. Finally, it may involve some other exercise to develop personal expression and understanding. This section has divided up into sub categories to make it easier to follow. The needs of the group will vary, and groups progress at different speeds.



Other activities you can bring in at various times:

Storytelling Activities

- Storytelling skills
- Story Swap
- Story making

These activities can help build confidence, and encourage social and literacy skills. These can be a helpful way to add some novelty to the group, and increase engagement by changing the activity if the group becomes less engaged.

Friendship skills activities

- A bad day
- What makes a good friend?
- Listening

Some emotions (e.g. jealousy) offer the opportunity to explore social and friendship skills. These exercises can explore ways of developing friendship skills.

Additional activities

- Alternative thinking
- Tree of life

There are additional activities you may explore once the group has formed, especially if the group would like to continue beyond the suggested initial 12 weeks.

Final session – Endings and Goodbye

These activities can be a positive way to bring the group to an end and reflect on the process.

Activities for exploring emotions broadly

Below are the list of activities in this section, which can be used when exploring emotions broadly. These are likely to be used in the first few sessions. These activities help the group to name basic emotions that they recognise in the story or themselves. Many groups spend several weeks on these, before being ready to move on to activities that deepen their emotional awareness.

1. Emotions list
2. Emotions cards
3. Emotions games

The Emotions List

Either at a point during a story or after telling it, put the group into pairs and ask them what emotions they noticed in the characters, the story or in their own reactions. You can also ask them to discuss what they thought and felt about the story; what bits they liked or didn't like.

After a few minutes return to the whole group and elicit a list of emotions. If appropriate take a moment to discuss what point in the story they think the emotion occurred. Remember all emotions can be accepted and explored with curiosity rather than setting an atmosphere of right and wrong. Discussing emotions and their comprehension of the story gives an opportunity to assess the level of the group.

FEELINGS / EMOTIONS		
Annoyed	Grateful	Frustrated
Confused	Scared	Amazed
Jealous	Worried	
Friendly		

Writes a list of emotions up on a whiteboard or flipchart. This list can be developed over the weeks.

These questions can be useful

- *What feelings/emotions did you notice in that story? Where was that?*
- *What kind of happy/sad was that?. (if general terms like happy or sad are offered explore if there are more specific words)*
- *Can you think of any other feelings that are a bit like that? (again, exploring for words that extend emotional vocabulary)*
- *Can you give me an example of what might make someone feel like that? (exploring comprehension of the function of that emotion i.e something unfair might make someone feel angry)*
- *What could make someone feel like that? (again, exploring function and comprehension).*

This exercise helps assess and develop group's level of emotional recognition and vocabulary. The emotion list will be added to every week, adding new emotions the group identifies. This may start basic e.g. happy/sad, with the aim that they will develop their emotional vocabulary through the sessions e.g. excited/joyful, or lonely/miserable.

Emotion cards

Once the group have developed a comprehensive list of emotion words, it can be helpful to make some emotion cards. This can become a group activity where each learner makes a few cards with the emotion written on it and perhaps with a drawing of facial expression or posture or other image relating to the emotion. There are also pre made emotion cards easily available.

These cards can be used for the other exercises such as emotion games, the matrix or for sorting into Families of Feelings (see next section).

Emotion games

Games can be devised from the list of emotions – especially after a number of weeks when a good list has been developed. Emotion cards can be randomly shuffled and handed out to pairs – Each pair has to say a little about the feeling; what’s it like, what sort of things can make a person feel it, is it pleasant or unpleasant, demonstrate facial expressions or postures and so on.

Alternatively, they can do a mime or act out a scene which demonstrates the emotion and other pupils have to guess.

Again, emotions can be explored through questions – and pupils have to ask questions of the pair to try and guess the emotion for instance ‘Can you tell what the feeling is by someone’s face?’ ‘Would you feel it if you went on holiday?’ and so on.

Pupils can make up their own games in using the cards.

Activities for sorting / comparing emotions

Once there is a good basis of emotional awareness, activities that explore the different dimensions of feelings can be introduced e.g. feels good/bad and high/low energy. This can then be expanded on, by considering the different primary emotions as well as a 'family of feelings'.

These activities will need to be explored over multiple sessions, with some groups needing longer.

1. Dimensions of feelings – energy & comfort
2. The matrix
3. Family of feelings

Dimensions of feelings – Energy & comfort

After discussing feelings in the previous activities, it can then be useful to explore features of emotions such as; where they can be felt in the body, can feel pleasant or uncomfortable, and can vary in energy / strength.

This activity uses the emotions cards made by the group.

Talk about how you can think of feelings in terms of the amount of energy they give you – some will make you feel very active, that you must do something, others will give you little energy or motivation to do anything. Most exist in the middle along this continuum. (This links to the idea of 'Windows of Tolerance').

Also, feelings exist along a continuum of comfort or discomfort (or feel good or bad, pleasant to unpleasant). This links to motivation; we can be attracted to pleasant (or positive emotions) and want to move away from unpleasant emotions. If appropriate it can be useful to talk about how some feelings, even though don't feel nice, are normal and important to us.

Exercise:

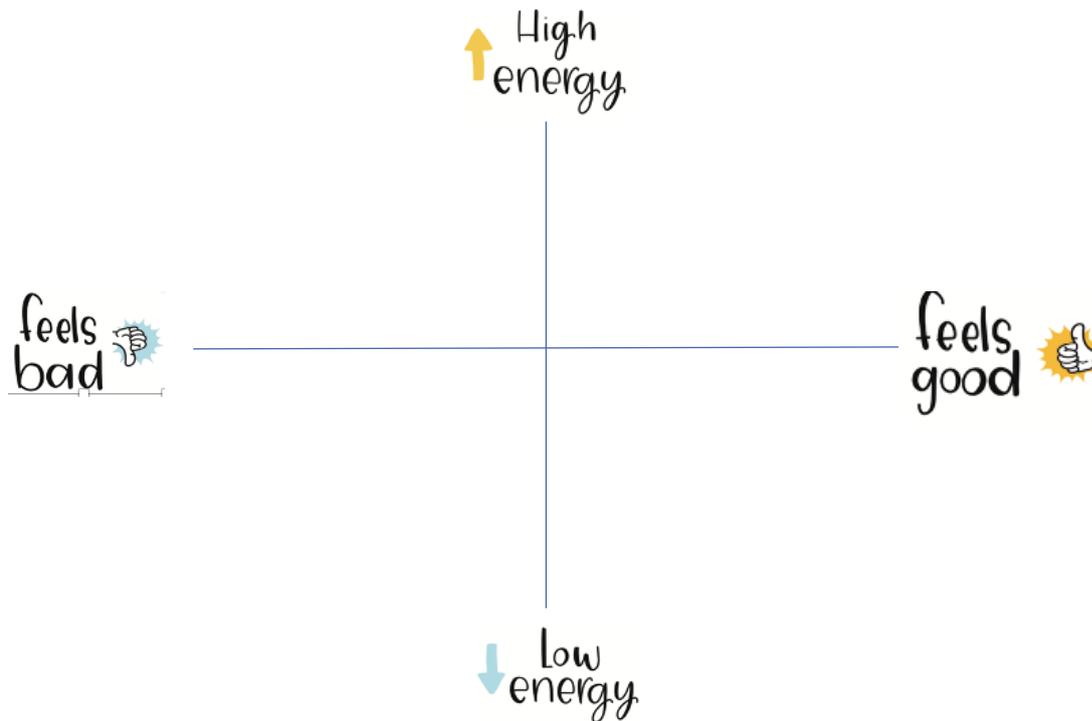
- Using a piece of string or masking tape make a line across the floor. Use the card provided to put 'High Energy' at one end and 'Low Energy' at the other.
- Deal out the cards to give pupils 1 to 3 cards each.
- Ask pupils to put their emotion cards as to where they think they should be placed on the continuum between high and low energy. Then discuss as a group. Does the group agree with the placing? Remember, of course, there are no right answers. The aim is to help increase awareness of how feelings influence our actions.
- Repeat the exercise with the comfort/discomfort continuum using the cards 'Feels Good' and 'Feels Bad'.

feels
good 

feels
bad 

Matrix

This activity can build upon or be an alternative to the previous activity. Make a matrix or cross with both dimensions and ask pupils to place emotion cards within the dimensions (see below). This can be a really engaging activity. It can also be a check in activity e.g. asking pupils to stand on matrix, where they feel today.



The Primary Emotions – The Families of Feelings

The key emotion groups of happiness (the positive emotions), fear, anger and sadness can be all explored in separate sessions using stories, poems and exercises.

These are, arguably, the key emotions that need to be understood and each 'family' can be explored in a future weekly session.

There are a number of different metaphors for these primary emotions including families of feelings, primary colours or 'umbrella' terms. It is possible to explore whether feelings belong to one emotion group or maybe contain elements of two or more groups. Emotion cards can be used to explore the different groups as well as some of the illustrations given on the following pages & appendix. Certain stories emphasise certain emotions and the function, intensity and triggering conditions of each emotion can be explored.

Exercise:

1. Place cards on the floor for each of the emotion groups, 'sadness', 'fear', 'anger' and 'happiness'. Also have one card marked 'other'.
2. Give participants a number of emotion cards at least 3 cards each.
3. One at a time they place each emotion under the 'umbrella term' that most fits until all the cards are allocated
4. Then discuss any emotions that stand out- are there emotions that could go in different families? Are some easier than others? Which ones don't fit? And so on...

Development

Further development in exploring these and other emotions to extend thinking about coping with emotions can be found in 'Understanding your Seven Emotions' by Lawrence Howells (2021).



Activities for exploring specific emotions

Once you're confident that the group have a wide emotion vocabulary and recognise that emotions can feel pleasant or uncomfortable, and can vary in energy / strength, and there are different groups of emotions, you can further deepen their understanding.

These activities can help the group take a more in depth look at different emotion groups (e.g. positive emotions, anger, sadness, fear). They will explore how different emotions feel in their body and how different emotions can vary in strength and intensity. The group may also be encouraged to start to reflect on their own experiences (ie. rather than considering emotions in abstract).

Creating safe boundaries: exploring emotions (particularly those that feel unpleasant such as anger or sadness) may be triggering for some young people. It is important to explore these still, but introducing the topic and creating safe boundaries at the start may be needed. E.g. *'Some emotions can be difficult to talk about, so we encourage you to only share what you feel comfortable sharing. If you feel you need some space away from the group, that's okay, let us know and one of us will come with you. If there's something you'd prefer to talk about privately, we can do that too'* If a child does need to leave the room, it is important that an adult supports them to feel regulated and comfortable (for example; sitting with them, empathising, being curious and possibly using breathing exercises previously practiced in group), so they are able to return to the group if they wish. For this reason, the group should always be facilitated by two staff members, and you should agree between you the roles you will play ie. who will lead the session, and who will support learners if they need to leave.

Safeguarding protocols: Some topics may elicit responses that may cause concern. It is important to be prepared in case something comes up that you need to act upon, and follow the schools safeguarding protocols. It may be helpful to check in 1:1 after the group, if something is shared that has worried you or if the pupil has found a session particularly challenging or triggering.

Taking care of yourself: It can be hard to hear the challenges that young people are facing, especially if you are concerned for their safety. It can be helpful to set time aside after each group session to reflect with your co-facilitator on anything that was difficult, agree together what action will be taken by whom and consider if you require any additional support. You may also like to support one another to implement some of the strategies you are sharing with the young people and consider how you will nurture yourselves that evening. Always remember to reflect on the encouragements and positives shared too! [This resource on the Resilience Project website has more information on staff self-care.](#)

Activities

1. Emotion umbrellas
2. Finding your happy- The Positive Emotions
3. Inside and outside
4. Strength of Feeling
5. Noticing feelings/observing emotions

Emotion Umbrellas

Following on from telling stories the 'Umbrella worksheets' (see appendix) can be worked on as a group. This gives the chance to discuss the different emotions that belong in the group. The first sheet on 'anger' gives examples of feelings.

The Umbrella Worksheets also explore the intensity or strength and helpful metaphors with some questions prompts:

What kind of anger? E.g. Furious or annoyed

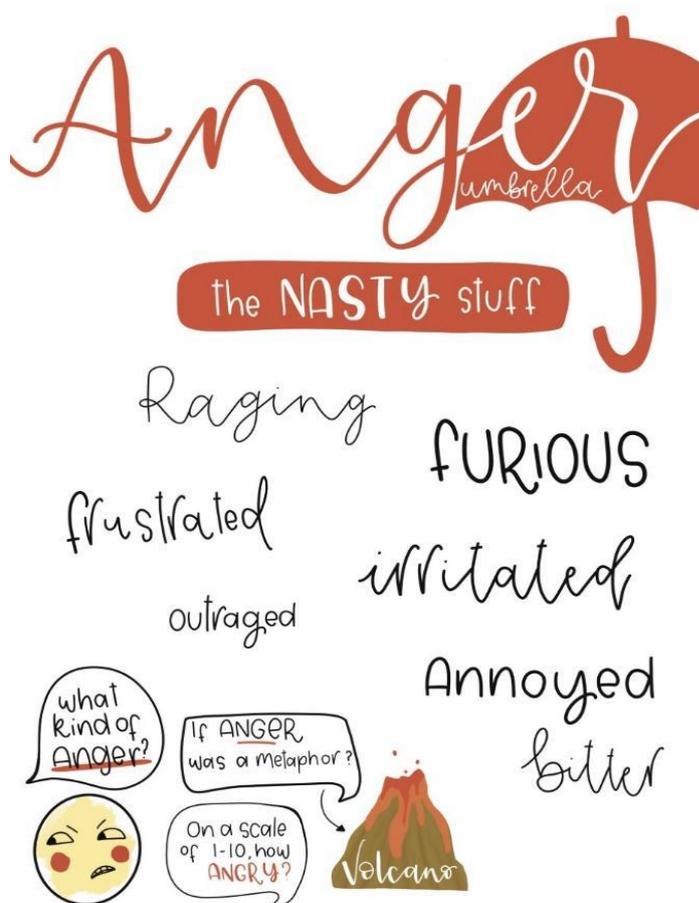
If your anger was a metaphor, what would it be?
E.g. a volcano, a bottle of pop, a firework

On a scale of 1-10, how angry? E.g. an 8

See page 22 for a more detailed ideas of how to explore the above questions through activities.

Creative activities can emerge from this exercise e.g. drawing your anger/fear/sadness/happiness as an object. The Resilience Project has a resource on using creative tools that can be helpful.

With all these exercises they can be developed into conversations about ways of coping with these feelings that people use. Be careful not to suggest that these feelings are bad and should not be experienced rather they are explored. Ideas for developing conversation for coping strategies especially for secondary school children can be found in 'Managing your Seven Emotions' by Lawrence Howells.



Finding your happy- The Positive Emotions

Happiness is often considered an emotion but it is a broad concept including thoughts, judgements and achievements as well as a wide range of positive emotions. The work of Barbara Frederickson has identified how important knowing and being able to create positive emotions are to our wellbeing and resilience. The key positive emotions she identified are illustrated below although there are many other ones as well.

Positive Emotions are a good place to start in exploring the Families of Feelings as these are emotions that are usually desired and can be explored with more easily than some of the more difficult emotions.

Many stories will feature positive emotions at some point but 'The Meat of the Tongue' may be useful

Exercise-

- Display 'Positive Emotions- what feels good?' (see appendix) on whiteboard or printed out
- Put group into pairs- each pair selects one of the emotions
- Describe it a little- how does it make you feel?
- What causes the emotion? – 'What makes someone feel like that?'
- What's it for? What benefit does it give us? (What's the function?)
- Where do you find it in your life? This is important if you have a lot of stress/difficulty in your life- but important for resilience)
- How could you make some in the next week? Can you commit to do that? (Next week – Tell us how you've done)
- Finding ways of connecting with nature and the environment to build positive skills

Development - Gratitude Journal

A gratitude journal is an exercise to help make people more aware of how gratitude can impact on our wellbeing and happiness levels. You can encourage the group to write down 3 things they are grateful for each day, until the following session. They can be big like sports or football, or small like the smell of coffee in the morning. There is a blank resource and example in the appendix, and it can be revisited in the next session.



The Inside and The Outside

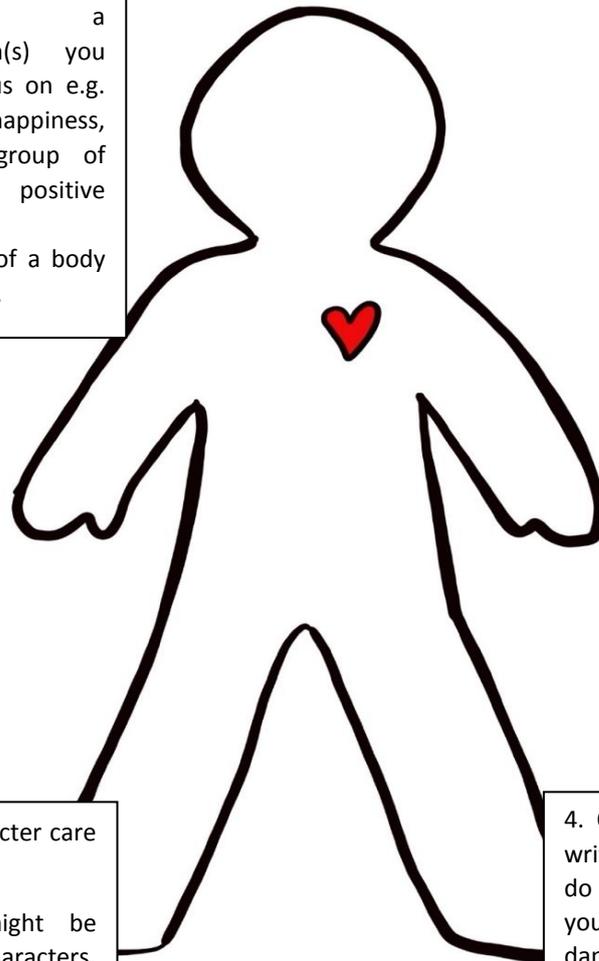
A part of emotional intelligence is being able to identify physical reactions to emotions, including physical sensations: (how they feel in our body) and reactions (how we behave)

This activity can be done with a range of emotions, for example:

- Happiness: Joyful (smiling, laughing) / Excited (butterflies in the stomach, heart racing)
- Fear: racing heart, tension in the neck, hot and sweaty, hands trembling
- Anger: knots in the stomach, red face, breathing heavy
- Sadness: crying, looking down, lump in the throat

Draw a body outline - On the inside write/ draw feelings and where you feel it in the body. On the outside, write/draw the behaviours that other people see.

1. Think of a feeling(s)/emotion(s) you are going to focus on e.g. anger, sadness, happiness, or possibly a group of feelings e.g. positive emotions.
2. Draw an outline of a body on flipchart paper.



3. On the inside of the body write what physiological sensations/responses you may feel when you experience the emotion(s) you are discussing e.g. butterflies, beating heart, red cheeks, smile etc. You may want to draw these ideas on the body e.g. draw a heart, butterflies in the stomach etc.

5. What does the character care about?

Write down what might be important for the characters, what are his/her values and strengths?

4. On the outside of the body write what behaviours you might do when feeling the emotion(s) you are discussing e.g. run away, dance, sing, wrap yourself in a blanket etc.

Strength of feelings

It is helpful to understand the intensity of feelings. Sometimes responses echo very broad emotion categories such as 'happy' or 'sad' and these can vary considerably in the strength of feeling.

1

A useful way of exploring the strength of emotion is by asking pupils "What kind of anger?" or "on a scale of 1-10, how angry?" This can help reinforce the idea that emotions can fluctuate in strength. For happy, here is an example; 'On a scale of one to ten, where would you put each emotion linked to happiness (e.g. calm, joyful, excited hopeful'.

It's important to note that each person will have a different idea of what 10 is and 1 is. Questions like: 'what does feeling 10 mean to you? What makes you feel 10 in terms of happiness? If you felt like a 6, what things would help you to feel like a 7?' It's less about the rating they give, but the conversation that this activity can generate.

You can explore strength through a variety of ways e.g. going through each emotion out loud, drawing a scale of 1-10 and writing emotions along the line, have a rope going along the floor and labelling one end 1 and the other 10 or creating a straight line of coloured Lego blocks, each block meaning a different number between 1 and 10.

10

Draw your feeling

One way to explore strength and intensity of a feeling is through drawing. Some students will have difficulty with expressing different emotions. It can be helpful by using a visual metaphor to help rate the intensity of the emotion.

Ask students to think about what their feeling looks like. We're going to use anger as an example. It may be a an erupting volcano, a firework being lit, a tidal wave, red mist, a cartoon like The Hulk or Anger from Inside Out, etc.

You can ask questions about the object like;

Can you give the 'anger' a name?

If the 'anger' had a voice, what would it say?

The 'anger' gets bigger when...

The anger' gets smaller when...

The 'anger' has been around since...

When the 'anger' gets bigger it like...

You can use the metaphor and draw it and label it with feeling words in the different stages / intensity. For example:

1. Calm or Relaxed – a nice day in the park with a green tree.
2. Irritated – someone starts to light the end of the firework.
3. Frustrated – the firework is starting to now spark
4. Furious – The firework is fully light and soaring through the sky
5. Rage – The firework has now exploded and you can see it lighting up the sky
6. Tired and guilty - (What happens after) Black smoky sky



Observing/Noticing Your Emotions

It can be useful to try this simple experiment that can be practiced with any difficult emotion, to see if changes how an feeling is experienced.

1. Choose an emotion that can be unpleasant i.e 'anger'
2. Get pupils to repeatedly say to themselves, 'I'm angry' about 5-10 times
3. Then ask pupils to repeatedly say, 'I'm feeling angry' again 5-10 times
4. Finally to say to themselves for 5-10 repetitions, 'I notice I'm feeling angry'
5. Then ask what was the difference between the different ways of notice what they are feeling.

This exercise is adapted from Susan David.

Storytelling Activities

These activities can help build confidence, and encourage social and literacy skills. These can be a helpful way to add some novelty to the group, and increase engagement by changing the activity if the group becomes less engaged.

- Storytelling skills
- Story Swap
- Story making

Storytelling Skills

This series of exercises helps learners practice the skills of storytelling. They are encouraged to learn this in pairs rather than to put an emphasis on performance. The process can be done quickly – divide the group into two- Each group is told a different story – This is briefly recapped and the main points discussed and ‘re-remembered’ – Each learner then finds a partner from the other group, they both tell their stories. They then feedback what they liked about each other’s stories and how they told them followed by a group discussion.

Alternatively, the exercise can be done over two weeks with various exercises brought in to develop both memory, visualization and communication skills which are part of storytelling.

Whichever way it is done the emphasis is on the process of relating information to another person, that emphasises emotional aspects, key information and non-verbal communication such as eye-contact and gesture.

Aims: key objective of teaching storytelling skills is to help learner develop confidence in their own ability to communicate. The exercise is not about remembering the story perfectly but rather to be able to relate a story to another person.

Key Storytelling Skills

Ask the group what skills they think a storyteller needs to be able to tell a story well. Refer to what they have seen in the group and elsewhere. Write answers down on a flip chart/whiteboard and prompt to make pupils think about what they have observed. These are some of the skills that will emerge:

(adapted from ‘Feelings are Funny Things: A Storytelling Toolkit - Killick & Okweddy)

Storytelling skills

- Listening – understanding
- Imagination- visualisation
- Emotion
- Words/phrases/language
- Tone of Voice- sound effects, volume
- Actions and Gestures
- Facial expressions
- Memory- key events in the story
- Eye Contact

The Story Swap

Divide the Group into two with a facilitator with each group. The facilitators tell each group a (different story). Short and simply structured stories such as 'Cracked Pot' or 'The Star girl and the Box' are both good stories to begin with. Having told the story ask the group to remember what are the key points (or 'Barebones') of the story that they need to remember. This can be done with a **story timeline** (see image).

The following exercises can help develop storytelling skills; Do a **story map**: a drawing of the key events/characters of the story, look at the emotions in the story - how can they be conveyed verbally or non-verbally, practicing eye contact, practice in pairs putting the story back together and telling, build images and points of detail – encourage partners to ask questions like 'what was the box made of?... etc'. Exercises can reflect the needs or ideas of the group.

The Star, The Boy and the Box

Draw a timeline like the one below:

Task 1: Write above the line the events of the story in chronological order

Questions to think about:

- What do you think was in the box? (maybe trust?)
- Why did he open the box? Explore curiosity being positive and negative.
- What other things may be important but can't be seen?



Task 2: Write below the line the:

- feelings the characters could be experiencing
- what you are feeling (underline) at each stage of the story.

[How to make a story map = YouTube video](#) by Tamar Williams

When the story has been practiced pupils find a partner from the other group. They then find a comfortable place that they can share their stories with each other. If any pupils are particularly anxious, they may need additional support and encouragement. After group members have shared stories they then give positive feedback to each other about what they liked about the partner's telling of the story.

Finish with a group discussion about what happened, what worked well, what could be better next time and so on.

Development

Some pupils may have problems telling stories because they do not have 'connectives' these are parts of vocabulary that start, connect parts of the story, move plots lines along or end the story. They might be such things as 'Once there was...'. 'But one day...'. 'However' 'And that's the end of the story' and so on. If this is the case it can be possible to give emphasis to these useful bits of vocabulary and ensuring they are used if needed.

The Story-Swap exercise can be repeated with different stories as the group develop to encourage communication and storytelling skills. Longer stories can be used. They can also tell stories as a group with individuals and pairs telling a part of the story. They can also then tell the stories to the other group encouraging skills in being able to talk to a whole group.

Sometimes pupils will want to 'act out' the stories rather than tell them however it useful to encourage 'telling' rather than 'acting' skills.

Story-Making

In this exercise learners are told a story but it is stopped at an appropriate point. The task for learners is to make-up and tell the rest of the story.

1. A story is told to the whole group- Several stories are suitable for this task but The Golden Box (see page 27) is particularly suitable. The bare-bones of this story are given below.
2. Divide the group into smaller groups of 2 to 3. Ask each group to work together to decide on the end of the story.
3. Having decided on the ending the group is asked to work out what happens in-between the end of the told-story and the end that they have created. Give 10-15 minutes to do this. Be clear that they should not introduce new characters, settings or objects in the story but use what has already been given in the story (although objects can be used if they would be naturally found in the settings described).
4. Once the group has created their story then they divide it into 3 (or whoever many is in the group) and decide who is going to tell each bit.
5. Each group then tells their created story to the other groups.

This exercise can be followed by a discussion about different themes that emerge from the same story. Be careful not to compare what each group has created, rather note that all endings are equally right. If appropriate, the actual ending of the story can be told as well. Again, with the proviso that it is not a better ending than those created.

Developments - As with Story Swap, exercises to develop story making skills can be added into the process to help with the telling of the story. Stories created could also be written down, either by the facilitator or individual learners with a focus on developing vocabulary.

(with thanks to Michael Harvey for allowing us to use this exercise)

The Golden Box – Bare-Bones

Only the bare-bones are given here and the teller should put some flesh on the bones through developing descriptions of characters, actions and settings.

There was once a family who decided to make some soup. They needed firewood. So, they sent out their son to get the firewood. It was cold, so he didn't want to go too far. He searched and searched, and he found as much firewood as he could carry. And when he returned to his house, his eyes caught something gleaming, glittery in the snow. Placing the firewood down, he went towards the glittering something, reached in and he pulled out a small golden box. Well, imagine his surprise and his excitement.

He tried to open it. However, it wouldn't open. It was locked. He looked around for a key, but he could find no key. He turned the box around, and then he saw a key. He took it, and he placed it into the lock, and with a click, the box opened. He looked inside, and inside the box, the golden box, he saw a ...

From this point groups work to create their story

Prompts

What can you find in the box?

What pops out of the box?

What surprises can we discover?

The Golden Box is a story that was collected by the Brothers Grimm a long time ago. It was one of the last stories they collected.

Story transcription from The British Library - <https://www.bl.uk/childrens-books/videos/the-golden-box-and-the-magic-flute>

YouTube clip of story told by Sandra Agard - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YjClwP_Twv0

Friendship Skills Activities

Social aspects of emotions are likely to emerge when exploring emotions particularly emotions such as trustworthiness, jealousy, friendliness or unfriendliness. These emotions, and many like them, offer the opportunity to explore social and friendship skills, which can be developed through the following activities.

A Bad Day

Imagine you had a really bad day at school (brainstorm some horrible things that might happen) and you saw a person you know and told them all about it.

What sort of things could they say that would be unhelpful? Brainstorm these then explore why

Then brainstorm things they say or do that could be helpful – Again brainstorm then explore why these are helpful.

What makes a good friend?

Brainstorm the qualities of being a good friend – what do people recognize as qualities of being a good friend in different situations – Tease out qualities to do with trust, loyalty. It can also be helpful to think of characters on TV or in films that seem like good friends and what makes them a good friend.

Listening

Exercise can develop the importance of listening skills. These can begin with working in pairs where one person says what they did over the weekend and the other person listens and then tries to remember and summarise all the things their partner has said. It can develop to similar exercises with an emphasis on listening for feelings and being able to accurately summarise and paraphrase what was said. It can also consider body language – What does someone who is listening look like? Does it matter if someone looks like they are listening or not?

Additional Activities

Here are some additional activities that you may use once the group has formed.

- Alternative thinking
- Tree of life

Alternative thinking

Some groups may benefit from alternative thinking strategies. The group can use the worksheet as an example to identify unhelpful thoughts in the story / in themselves and as a group come up with alternative thoughts. Ones that are realistic but more positive. For example:

Unhelpful = 'Oh, I can't do anything right. It's been such a terrible week'

Alternative = 'I made some mistakes, but today is a brand new day'

Questions you might ask:

'How would these alternative thoughts impact our mood?'

'Does thinking positively always help if we are sad, annoyed etc?'

'Would alternative thoughts change the way we act?'

Tree of life

The Tree of Life is Narrative Therapy intervention based on the assumption that we understand ourselves and live our lives through stories. It is a stand-alone intervention which fits very well into the 'Feelings are Funny Things' as a main activity especially once the group is established and working well together. More information can be found here: <https://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/tree-of-life.pdf>

Last Session- Endings and Goodbyes

The final session is a key part of the group. These activities can be a positive way to bring the group to an end and reflect on the process. If your group has a set end point, you may like to gently begin to remind the participants a few sessions before that the group is coming to the end – no one likes surprise endings. You might like to plan a party or celebration together – or agree a sweet treat that could be brought to the last session.

Remembering the Group

Review what they have done in the group, what things do they remember best, what have they liked (or not liked) about the group. How did it feel the first week? How does it feel now? Favourite exercises and stories, funny incidents

Putting it back together

The group discusses what were there individual favourite stories and then decide as a group which one they liked best. They then retell the story by going through it with each student remembering one bit then somebody else says what happens next until the whole story is remembered. This has worked well and demonstrated their engagement in the story.

Compliments

Each young person given a card with the name of one other group member written on one side. Each person writes something they like or have enjoyed about that person on the other side. Cards then collected and then given to the person who was written about. This can be shared as group or kept and read later. This activity has worked well and is a wonderful way to encourage kindness, however the adult facilitator needs to trust the group to all be kind to one another. It can also be helpful for the facilitator to have thought about a compliment for each participant to be able to subtly offer to students if they are struggling to think of things.

Certificates or Badges

A presentation of certificates/badges or some other memento of the group is either made or presented as. Tangible reminder of their achievements in the group One group made Emotion Jars as a final activity. This website has more information on how to make and use them: <https://www.mindful.org/how-to-create-a-glitter-jar-for-kids/>

Questionnaires

Complete any questionnaires to evaluate the group

Finishing Exercise

Decide on closing exercise and use that to bring group to a close e.g. poem or wind down activity.

Wind-downs and Endings

The purpose of the Wind-Down is to bring the session to an end in a reflective and calming manner. Again the exercises are designed for emotional regulation with an emphasis on being relaxing and soothing. It can also reflect on the content of the session, what was enjoyed and what was not.

Many of these exercises place a focus on awareness of breathing, a key skill for learning relaxation and can lay the basis for learning mindfulness. Mindfulness is increasingly being recognized as a powerful skill for both learning and wellbeing and is increasingly taught in schools. It does need specialised training but is a further development that can be made in the group.

'Mindfulness is simply being aware of what is happening right now without wishing it were different; enjoying the pleasant without holding on when it changes (which it will); being with the unpleasant without fearing it will always be this way (which it won't).'

James Baraz 'Awakening Joy for Kids'

Wind down activities

- Finger breathing
- On Tiptoes
- Making a fist breathing
- High intensity exercise
- Belly breathing
- 5,4,3,2,1 grounding
- Reflection exercises
- Poems

Finger Breathing

1. Notice how you are breathing in and breathing out
 2. Hold your hand in front of you with your fingers spread apart.
 3. Run your first finger along the thumb and fingers of your outstretched hand
 4. Breathe in as you go up the finger and thumb, breathe out as you come down. Maintain a slow unhurried pace.
 5. When you have done all the digits return to the first and start again
- Repeat for 5 minutes

On Tiptoes

1. With the group standing either individually or in a circle, ask them to close their eyes and to become aware of their breathing.
2. As they breathe in they rise up to stand on tiptoes. As they breathe out they return to having the soles of their feet on the ground.
3. Encourage a slow pace to establish a calm breathing pattern with the group rising and falling as they breathe together.

Fist Breathing

Model fist breathing to students, by reading the steps aloud and following each step yourself.

1. Become aware that you are breathing in and breathing out then open and clench your fist in time to breathing in and out.
2. Then place your hand on your stomach to be aware of your breath passing in and out.
3. As you become aware of the rhythm drop the hand movements and focus on your breath.
4. Notice that thoughts and feelings will come into your mind- that's fine, that's what minds do, so just acknowledge them and bring your attention back to your breathe.

High intensity exercise

Aim: to regulate students back to calm, to counter the possible sadness from the session

1. Ask students to find a space in the room
2. Explain that *'some emotions like sadness, reduce our energy and might make us feel shut down or like we don't have motivation to do anything. It helps to do an activity that raises your heart rate slightly, to get us back into a place where we are calm and happy enough to learn or engage in something'*
3. Tell students that *'we are going to do a few quick exercises to get our hearts beating just little bit faster'*.
4. Ask students to do 5 jumping jacks, 5 wall push ups and 5 high knees,
5. End with some slow, deep breaths

Belly Breathing

Aim: to become aware of diaphragmatic breathing. This is a deeper, slower breathing which can help the mind and body feel calm and relaxed. As the lungs fill with air it pushes the diaphragm into the belly causing it to rise.

1. Introduce this as an exercise that can help regulate them back to a calm, relaxed state when they are feeling anxious or any of the emotions covered today. When they feel any of the physical symptoms and sensations, which indicate they may be in fight / flight, they can practice this exercise.
2. Have students sit on a chair, with their feet flat to the floor.
3. Ask students to close their eyes or fix their eyes on a point on the floor and keep the arms by their side.
4. Slowly read the following aloud; *'Place one hand on your belly, right under your ribs. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm moving in and out as you breathe. Place your other one hand on your chest, this will allow you to check that your chest does not rise. Breathe in slowly through your nose. Hold your breath for 3 seconds. Breathe out slowly through your mouth for the count of 5. Repeat 3 times, and then open your eyes when you feel comfortable.'*

Development



This can also be done by having students lay down and use a beanbag, a scrunched ball of paper or any small object to place on their tummy to see the rise and fall in time with their breathing.

5,4,3,2,1 grounding

- **Notice 5 things you can see** right now- things close to you, further away, out of the window. Notice them in detail, name their shapes and colours in your head.
- **Notice 4 things you can feel**- it might be the pressure of your back and bum on your seat, or feet on the ground (this can be helpful as it's a reminder that we are always physically grounded). You might notice the feel of clothes on your skin, or your temperature, or the feel of air moving in and out of your lungs.
- **Notice 3 things you can hear**- again some things might be outside, some might be inside, some might even be in your own body.
- **Notice 2 things you can smell**- this can be difficult, but often our own clothes keep a smell, or we might smell food or an air freshener.
- **Notice 1 thing you can taste**- this can be very hard as we rarely focus on taste unless we're eating, but have a go at just focusing on your taste sense for a bit and see what you notice.

Reflection Exercises

Check-in with group members by asking them one or two of the following questions- go round in circle listening and commenting positively on replies.

- *How have you found today?*
- *What was best thing about the session today?*
- *What are you most looking forward to doing in the next week*
- *Can you think of something that you are doing in the next week that will make you feel excited/curious/grateful? Etc*

Poems

Poems can be very useful in helping pupils reflect on emotions. Listener can find a relaxing position, possibly lying on the floor whilst the poem is read. If appropriate a few minutes can be spent reflecting and discussing the poem.

<p><i>You have -- within you -- the fuel to thrive and to flourish, and to leave this world in better shape than you found it. Sometimes you tap into this fuel – other times you don't. But the sad fact is that most people have no idea how to tap into this fuel or even recognize it when they do.</i></p> <p><i>Where is this fuel within you?</i></p> <p><i>You tap into it whenever you feel energized and excited by new ideas.</i></p> <p><i>You tap into it whenever you feel at one with your surroundings, at peace.</i></p> <p><i>You tap into it whenever you feel playful, creative, or silly.</i></p> <p><i>You tap into it whenever you feel your soul stirred by the sheer beauty of existence.</i></p> <p><i>You tap into it whenever you feel connected to others and loved.</i></p> <p><i>In short, you tap into it whenever positive emotions resonate within you.</i></p> <p>Barbara Fredrickson from <i>Positivity</i>, 2011</p>	<p>The River Cannot Go Back. – Kahlil Gibran</p> <p>It is said that before entering the sea a river trembles with fear. She looks back at the path she has travelled, from the peaks of the mountains, the long winding road crossing forests and villages. And in front of her, she sees an ocean so vast, that to enter there seems nothing more than to disappear forever.</p> <p>But there is no other way. The river cannot go back. Nobody can go back. To go back is impossible in existence. The river needs to take the risk of entering the ocean because only then will fear disappear, because that's where the river will know it's not about disappearing into the ocean, but of becoming the ocean.</p>
<p>C for Curiosity</p> <p>If curiosity was an animal, it would have a jet black beak, beady eyes, coal-coloured wings, and scrawny scratchy feet.</p> <p>It loves to peck mysteries: those things it doesn't know. it wants to find the answers so it's own knowledge might grow</p> <p>It makes us feel inquisitive to understand things more: how do planes fly? Why is grass green? Or what are earlobes for?</p> <p>This is an extract from – <i>An Emotional Menagerie-Feeling from A to Z</i> – with poems for many different feelings</p>	<p>Feelings are Funny Things</p> <p>Feelings are funny things. Feeling ugly doesn't mean you are ugly. Feeling that you're not as good as someone doesn't mean you are not as good as them. Feeling stupid doesn't mean you are stupid. Feeling not good enough doesn't mean you are not good enough.</p> <p>A feeling is not a fact – it comes from what you've thought – a thought can make you feel and a feeling might give you something to think about. It's what you decide to do that matters. Make your actions based on what's important to you – the things you value. Notice your feelings – Let them be and let them go. 'Just keep going – No feeling is final.'</p>

Development

You may want to open up a discussion about regulating ourselves back to a state of calm and what the purpose of these activities are. The group may have their own ideas of things they do. Looking at something like the 'window of tolerance' may support the group to explore the difference between up regulating and down regulating activities.

For more ideas, see the Resilience Project emotional regulation resource for other activities.

APPENDIX

Stories

- 1 Stone Soup
- 2 The Seasons of Life
- 3 The Cracked Pot
- 4 The Talking Tortoise
- 5 The Fearsome Giant
- 6 Beddgelert
- 7 Two Travellers
- 8 The Star the Boy and the Box
- 9 The Clever Wish
- 10 The Merchant of Baghdad
- 11 King March
- 12 The Legend of the Two Dragons

Resources

- Matrix cards
- Family of feelings
- Umbrella worksheets

Stone Soup

This story is recommended for the first week of the group as it very adaptable to different ages and groups, encourages participation and has an embedded message that everyone has something to give to the community whether they think so or not. It also can open an interesting discussion about whether the central character was acting for his own benefit or that of the community.

There was once a village at a place where three countries bordered with each other. Every time there was a war, which had been often, it was this village that bore the brunt. Many people had been lost and buildings destroyed and even though peace had come, the village remained a sad place. Money was short. People didn't talk to each other much and many bore a heavy heart.

One night a traveller came to the village. He had journeyed through many lands and seen many things. What he learnt had made him wise but not rich for he had no money to speak of. He was traveling through a land he had never been before, and it didn't feel the friendliest place. He had not seen a soul for days but at last he came to the place of human life. The sun had set and the sky glowed like the last embers of a dying fire.

The traveller went up to the first house he came too hoping he may get a bite to eat and a bed for the night. A woman answered the door but she was fearful of strangers. She told the traveller, 'There's nothing here for you, we don't have enough for ourselves.'

The man soon realised that if he wanted to eat that night he'd have to think fast. He said to the woman, 'Well thank you. I can see times are hard. But I have soup stone that will feed me for tonight. If I could borrow a pot from you, I can make it myself. It will come back to you no worse than when you gave it to me.'

The woman could not refuse this request and she was curious to see how the man might feed himself from a stone. She gave the man a heavy iron cooking pot and watched from her window as the man collected wood, made a fire next to a tree and filled the pot with water from a stream. Using a rope, he hung the pot from a branch, so the flames licked the bottom of the pot. Soon the water was boiling and the man took a small smooth stone from his pocket. He rubbed it for a moment and, after inspecting it closely, dropped it carefully in the water. He looked after his meal closely, every few minutes stirring the simmering water.

The woman who had watched all this could contain herself no longer and went down to where the man was sitting underneath the tree.

'How can you possibly hope to make a meal out of that?' she asked.

'This is a fine broth,' replied the man, 'and there's enough here for a banquet if you'd care to join me. It's true it's a bit thin seeing as I've been living of it all week. But that's nothing that a potato or two wouldn't put right. Still, there's no point dwelling on that. *What you have to do without isn't worth a thought about.*'

'Well, I think I might have a potato that could go in' said the woman thinking it would be interesting to try some stone soup.

She went back to her house and got two potatoes for the traveller. He gratefully put them in the stew. They talked a while and another villager was passing by, he noticed them and enquired what they were doing. The traveller explained that he was cooking stone soup, 'it's coming on nicely now although with a few carrots it really would be something, but *What you have to do without isn't worth a thought about.*'

The villager thought that he would have a couple of carrots he could contribute. That was nothing to ask for and he went and fetched them, telling his neighbour on the way that they were making stone soup.

funny how people will be attracted to a fire and soon there was quite a group standing around it, and the traveller told them about stone soup.

'It's looking pretty good now, a bit of flour would help thicken it up but *what you have to do without isn't worth a thought about.*'

Someone said they might have some flour they could give and so it went on, as the traveller lamented that soup might benefit from some herbs, spices, noodles, tomatoes, onions and barley, well, all those things were given. Soon the air was sweetened by the aroma of rich broth. The traveller said, 'I've known kings and queens who prefer no dish more than this stone soup. Although, if truth be told they would always like some lamb or beef in it but whatever you must do without is never worth another thought about.'

At this the woman, who had first turned the traveller away remembered that she had a piece of meat, not much, but here was a man that ate with kings and queens and, at the very least, deserved to be offered some hospitality. She went and got the meat and invited everybody into her home where they could feast on a meal fit for kings. The villagers brought bread, cheeses and wine to share. Somebody said they had no food to give but they had firewood. That offer was gratefully accepted. Soon the woman's house was ready for a banquet and a fire was roaring in the hearth.

And such a feast it was, the stone soup was delicious, the wine flowed as well as the conversation. In the orange glow of the fires many hearts warmed and opened. Everyone had a story to tell and at the end of the evening everyone agreed it was the best evening that had been had for many a year. And this was all due to the generosity of the traveller with his stone soup. When everybody had gone the traveller thanked the host and went to. The woman told him that he had forgotten his stone and he should take it with him. The traveller replied that she should keep it. He could always get another one and he thought she needed it more than him. And with that, he left.

After that day, the villagers would often come together to make stone soup, each bringing something for the feast and they told stories and sang songs. They often remembered the traveller and they never could decide whether he was a good man who had brought them together or a bad man who had tricked them out of a meal.

Questions

What emotions did you notice or feel in the story? What bits did you like/not like?

Do you think the traveller was helping the village or tricking them out of a meal?

This traditional story from Portugal is a rich metaphor for growing a community where everybody thinks they have nothing to contribute. If each contributes a little it becomes something. The catalyst is just a stone. The end result is people sharing their stories which helps bind people together. In telling it learners can be asked for their ideas about what could go into the soup. You can also involve learners by asking to repeat the line, 'What you have to do without isn't worth a thought about.' Once they have learnt the line then the teller says the first half of the line and the audience respond with the second.

The Seasons of Life

There were once four brothers at they were at an age when they knew it all - They were always arguing with each other – and they were always arguing with their father. If there was one thing they could all agree on it was that their father knew least of all.

Well, the father wished that his sons might not judge things and each other too quickly and he knew he couldn't reason them out of their beliefs to quickly so he decided that he would send them each on a quest.

In the middle of winter he spoke to his oldest son – ‘

*‘There is a man I know- Some people think he is a **fool***

*But I happen to think he is very **wise**.*

*In his garden is a **tree***

*Go there and see what you can **see***

Then come back and when the time is right tell us what you saw.’

So the First son went, came back and waited. A little while later, in fact it was by now the middle of spring, he took his second youngest son aside and set him the same task. *(Repeat refrain above and test memories of audience by getting them to complete last word of the task above)*

In the middle of the summer, he gave the same task to his third son (repeat refrain) and in the middle of Autumn he... well you know *(Repeat refrain and again let learners finish it).*

After they all had returned the Father called his sons together. He told them that this was the time to share what they had learned.

The oldest son said the tree was old, twisted and gnarled. It could be dead.

The second son disagreed. He said it had white flowers and the bees were buzzing all around it. The blossom smelled sweet it was beautiful and filled him with hope.

The third son said he saw it differently. It was magnificent in full leaf and growing fruit. He was delighted to sit its shade to escape the sun, watch the leaves dance with grace in the summer breeze.

The fourth son said they others were wrong. He talked of the beauty of its dying leaves and the sweetness of its fruit.

The old man said they were all right- It does not do to judge a tree, or anything, especially a person by just one season. It is not until the pattern is revealed that the essence of the thing can be seen. Hope, pleasure and fulfilment can only be measured at the end and what would happen if you gave up at winter? Don't judge a life by just one season.

This story, found on the internet, explores how the same thing can be viewed differently and changes over time. Explore with learners what they think it means and what kind of tree they think it was.

The Cracked Pot

This traditional story from Vietnam is a powerful tale for exploring themes of how we treat ourselves and others, bullying and perfection as well as eliciting feelings. It is also a very good story for the Story Swap. This story deals with issues about how we see ourselves and treat others. This version is from 'Building Relationships through Storytelling' – A Foster Carers Guide to Attachment and Stories' that contain a number of other stories and can be downloaded from <http://tinyurl.com/hpufpcv>

Once a young man and woman got married and they lived in a small house on the top of a hill. The land where they lived was dry and hot, and it was rare that they saw a drop of rain. They had no running water, so twice a day the man would walk down a little dusty track that led to the river. Across his back he carried a pole from which two large clay pots hung for carrying water, one on each side of him. So it was that he carried water each day as he went from being a young man to becoming older, he had children and they themselves had grown.

But all the time he carried the same two pots, only one pot had a small crack in it. Through this crack water would leak out and by the time the man had reached home there were only a few drops of water left. The perfect pot would taunt and tease the cracked pot. As the two pots would swing behind the old man's back the perfect pot would say to the cracked pot,

'You're rubbish you are. I don't know why the old man keeps you, you can't keep any water in you, you're good for nothing. You are useless.' The cracked pot said nothing.

This taunting happened on every trip the man made, up and down the hill, twice a day, day after day. Then one day the cracked pot could bear these hurtful words no longer. When the old man had returned home after fetching water and he had put the pots on the ground, the cracked pot said to him, 'Man, why do you keep me? I'm useless! I can't keep any water in me. Why don't you throw me away and get a new pot? Haven't you realised I've got a crack and I'm not perfect like him'

'Oh pot, of course I know you have a crack,' said the man 'and you, you really don't know that is what makes you special to me. You see your water leaks out and waters one side of the path as I walk up the hill. A long time ago I planted some seeds of flowers and fruit along the path and everyday the water you drip waters them. Turn around and look and see how beautiful the flowers are.'

The pot turned and saw that down the hill, along the path, were flowers of every colour, and they beautiful to see, like a rainbow across a cloudy sky. So every day from then on when the so-called 'perfect' pot taunted him, the cracked pot just took a deep breath and smelled the flowers, and they smelled good. So, if ever you feel less than perfect and wonder what you're there for, just remember that there is no one who is truly perfect and it's our cracks that make us who we are, and, if your feelings ever get so much that you can't bear it, take a breath to appreciate the beauty that's around you.

The Fearsome Giant

There was once a village where the people were friendly and happy. If you walked down the streets you would see people talking to each other and children playing. The sun always seemed to shine. But one day that all changed. The village fell under a long, dark shadow. The people looked to see what had it was that had taken the sun away and saw an enormous giant. They screamed, started to run away but many were not fast enough. The giant scooped a handful of people and squeezed the life out of them. Then as if he was bored, he dropped them to the ground and walked away.

The giant was not seen again but the village was changed. It was as if the shadow remained upon them. Now people stayed indoors, if they had to go out, they would run to wherever they had to go. They had no time to stop and no time for each other. When they did speak, they spoke of the giant. Where had he come from? Some believed it was the mountains, others believed he got bigger the more you looked at it. The people lived in darkness and fear. There was no-one that dared stand up to the horrible, loathsome giant.

But there was a young girl and she saw all the fear that this tat this giant had called even in people who had never seen it. She said to herself, 'This is very strange, no one has seen this giant and everyone is scared. How do we know this giant isn't scared of us. He must have a mother, and he must have a name. If I can find out his name, well maybe we can talk and work something out so that we don't have to be scared all the time.'

So the young girl set out and came near to the place where the giant was. And she could see him, he was standing in the middle of the road. No one could get pass even if they wanted to. Then he saw her and with a few giant strides he came closer to her. And then he roared out load at her,

'Fee, Fi, Foe, Fume, I am your nightmare and I will be your doom.'

The girl wanted to run away but she summoned her courage. As she tried to take a step forward, her knees were shaking and refused to move. Eventually she lifted her leg and it went backward like it had a mind of her own. And when she did she saw the giant grow taller. She took another step backward and saw it grow taller again. She stopped, remembered her determination to find out the giant's name, and summoning up her courage she took a step forward. And the giant shrunk a little. And the girl saw this. She took another step, and another and saw the giant grow smaller with each step. Eventually she stood right before it. And the giant was only a foot high. It was big enough for her to pick up and stand him in the palm of his hand.

'What is your name?' she asked.

Questions

What did you think the giant's name was? (In many versions, the giant answers 'My name is fear')

Where would the girl feel fear in her body?

There are many versions of this old Welsh story which explores the nature of fear. There is a longer version by Taffy Thomas in 'Telling Tales-Storytelling as Emotional literacy' by Taffy Thomas and Steve Killick.

Beddgellert (or Gelert the Dog)

There was once a great Prince, known as Prince Llewelyn. As a reward for his bravery and courage he was given a hound by King John. Llewelyn loved his dog who was called Gelert. Whenever Llewelyn went out hunting, he took Gelert with him where he would run deep into the woods and return immediately when he heard his master's horn. Whenever Llewelyn had to go away to fight, he knew that Gelert would look after his family. He loved his dog as much as own infant son.

One day he returned home and he and he saw Gelert running towards him. And the dog's mouth was dripping with blood. His usual delight at returning home and seeing his faithful hound was disturbed – he knew something was wrong. He went inside the house following a trail of blood and went up to his son's room. There, he found the walls and the sheets of the bed covered in blood. The same blood that dripped from Gelert's fangs.

He called for his child but there was no reply and Llewelyn was filled with the most utter loathing for his once loved dog. 'You hell hound' he cried and he lifted his sword and plunged it deep into Gelert's side. His anger had overwhelmed him and in an impulsive act he had struck. Gelert gave a fearful howl as he fell to the floor, and as he died Llewelyn then heard the sound of someone crying. It was his infant son, wakened by Gelert's last cry. Llewelyn went straight to him, and was filled with the greatest joy that his son was still alive hidden under a mound of furs and unhurt. Beside the furs was the body of a great wolf that had clearly died in a bloody struggle.

Llewelyn realised at once his mistake. Gelert had protected his son and killed the wolf. Long did Llewelyn mourn for his dog and his pain was great. He buried him and built a great cairn of stones high over his grave so that Gelert should never be forgotten.

The story explores impulsive anger, jumping to conclusions and explosive grief and gives a chance to start exploring the emotions of anger and grief. This is a well-known story from Wales where there is a town, Beddgelert (The Grave of Gelert), in Gwynedd, where the dog is supposed to be buried. However, it is not the true source of the story which has been traced back to Asia and medieval Europe. The story was adapted by a hotel owner in Beddgelert to drum up some business and attract people to the town. It may be useful to share this information, and more is available about the story and its background on the internet, as a way of discussing how legends can develop.

This version of the story is from 'Telling Tales-Storytelling as Emotional Literacy' by Taffy Thomas and Steve Killick.

The Two Travellers

An old woman used to spend her time sitting under a tree that was at the top of a hill. From there she would look down upon the town in which she lived. One day, a traveller came up to her and said, 'I'm heading to the town down there. Can you tell me what the people are like there?'

She said, 'Yes, I can but can you tell me something first? What were the people like in the place that you came from?'

'Well, that's easy,' said the man. 'They were horrible. They were rude and untrustworthy. I hated the place and I couldn't wait to leave. It was so bad that I'm not going back there. I want to make a new start in a new town where people are nicer.'

'Well, I think you'll find the people in this town are just the same' she responded.

'Thanks for telling me. You've saved me a lot of trouble. I'm not going there then' and he walked off in a different direction.

A little while later another traveller was passing. He came up to where the old woman was sitting. He had the same question as the previous traveller to ask, 'I'm heading to the town down there. Can you tell me what the people are like there?'

She said the same as what she had said to the first traveller, 'Yes, I can but first can you tell what the people were like in the place that you came from?'

The second traveller replied, 'the people where I came from were lovely. They were always generous, kind and couldn't do enough for you. I was very sorry to leave but I'm ready for something new.'

'Well,' said the old woman 'I expect you will find people in the next town are just the same'

'Oh really, that's great. I can't wait to get there.'

'Well,' said the old woman, 'if you're going that way maybe you could take me with you.' And they walked off down the hill together.

Sometimes what we get what we expect to get. It's our attitude that determines and creates our reality. Our life can be a self-fulfilling prophecy as this story suggests. This story is adapted from a traditional story in 'The Story Giant' by Brian Patten.

The Boy, the Star and the Box.

There was once a young man who would spend his night watching the skies. He loved to look at the stars. One night he saw a star he had not seen before – it was particularly beautiful. From then on, each night, he would look out to see if he could see that star.

One night as he watched it, he saw that it began to move across the sky. He watched as it slowly fell to earth like a falling leaf. As it got nearer, it seemed to change. It became less bright and then it looked as if it had landed in a forest not that far away. Immediately he left for the forest, searching for the star he came to a place where there was a clearing and in the centre of the clearing was a girl with long black hair and a long white dress. She looked beautiful to the young man.

She looked up and saw the young man. “I knew you would come. I have come down to earth for you.”

‘But who are you?’ asked the young man.

“I am the star that you have been watching – and I have watched you back. And as you fell in love in me, I fell in love with you” she replied. The young man did not know what to say, he was speechless, unable to find any words. The girl continued, ‘If you will have me, I will come and live with you.’ The boy found his tongue, ‘Yes, of course. That would make me so happy.’

‘There is one thing that I would ask of you,’ said the girl and she showed the young man a small wooden box that she was holding in her hand. ‘This is mine and I would ask that you never open it to look inside.’

‘Of course, I promise. I will never do it,’ said the young man. It was easy for him to agree to such a thing. He would never look inside he told himself. Why would he?

But time went on and he started thinking to himself, what was it that was in that box? - Why does she want to keep its contents secret? He couldn’t stop thinking about it.

He had to open the box and one day when she was out, he took the box, and slowly opened the lid. There was nothing in the box – at least nothing he could see.

He put the box back- she won’t know that I’ve opened it he thought. She returned later but without even looking at the box, she knew it had been opened. She told him, ‘I meant what I said. Now I must leave you.’

‘But there was nothing in it’ exclaimed the young man.

‘Yes, there was and now it is broken’ she replied and that was the last time that he ever saw her. But what was the thing that could not be seen?

The story is a riddle to which the answer is ‘trust’ and can start a discussion on relationships. This story comes from storyteller, Daniel Morden.

The Clever Wish

Once there was a man or and a woman. They were very poor and often did not have enough to eat. But beyond being poor, they were also very unhappy. They had no children although they had both always wanted to have a child, they had not been lucky enough to have one. The man's mother lived with them and she had lost her sight which made her unhappy and added to the couple's woes.

Well, the man had to go out hunting – maybe he would catch a rabbit which would give them something to eat, at least for a day. As he walked through the woods, he heard a strange noise coming from behind a bush. He went to investigate and found there was a unicorn – a horse as white as snow with a of horn made of golden shell on its forehead. It was stuck in a trap. The man knew that if he took the unicorn he could make a fortune. But he couldn't bear to do it. Such a creature should not be kept by people but allowed to roam free. So, he released the Unicorn from the trap and watched as the Unicorn walked away. But the unicorn stopped and turned back to the man, "You have set me free and that deserves a change in your fortune. I grant you one wish – ask for whatever you want and you shall have it.'

The man thought to himself about what it was he most wanted. At first, he thought of money then they would never be hungry again. Then he thought of his wife and he could hear her saying to him,

'Wish for a child. We have always longed for a child'. Then he thought of his mother unable to see and knew what it would mean to her to see again.

He could not think what would be best. And then he had an idea which meant all their wishes could be granted through just one wish.

This is a riddle story and the group can be asked for their ideas. The solution in the story is that the man wished that his mother could see his new born-child rocking in a cradle made of solid gold. And as the new-born baby would have no need for a golden cradle, he could sell it and that would make them rich.

This old traditional tales encourages visualization and lateral problem-solving. This version is adapted from a version in 'Taffy's Coat Tales' by Taffy Thomas.

The Merchant of Baghdad

There was once a merchant who lived in Baghdad. He had once been rich but now times were hard, his money had run out and he feared losing his house. The merchant sat in his beautiful garden but his mind dwelled on his worries. He smelled the perfume of the colourful flowers and gazed upon the small fountain as it trickled and chuckled into a small pond. Under the shade of an old great tree, he found himself falling into sleep. In his slumber he began to dream and in that dream he heard a voice speak to him, 'Go to Cairo, there you will hear great news, there you will find your fortune.' He woke with a start and dismissed the dream, 'It was just a dream' he thought and dismissed it. He drifted back to sleep and had the dream again and again he dismissed it and dozed again. The dream came again and felt he couldn't dismiss it a third time.

He told his wife of his dream explaining it must be a message to him to find his fortune. His wife tried to talk him out of this ridiculous idea but, realising his heart was set, she helped him pack his bags. The poor merchant then set off on the great journey to Cairo. He walked for many months along roads, across deserts and mountains until he arrived. By this time all his money was spent and his clothes had become rags. He walked around the city, gasping at its wonders but there he realised he did not know where he would go to find his fortune. The city was vast and he began to despair, he had followed a fool's dream. As night fell and having no money and nowhere else to go, he went to a mosque and fell asleep on the floor. In the middle of the night thieves broke in and the commotion they caused led to the local police to be called.

When the Chief of Police arrived, the thieves were long gone and the Chief saw only the merchant asleep on the floor. He immediately assumed the merchant was the thief and roughly picked him up and arrested him. At the police station the merchant was told to explain what he was doing and the merchant professed his innocence. He explained that he had had a dream to come to Cairo and there he would find his fortune but all he had found was the leather of the police man's whip.

When he heard this, the Chief of Police doubled up in laughter, then regaining his composure, said, 'What a thing that I have heard. A man travels a thousand miles to follow a dream. You are no thief but you are certainly a fool. If you want to find wealth the only way is work, hard work. Look, I have had a dream that speaks to me. It tells me that in Baghdad there is a house with a tree and a fountain in its garden. Buried under that tree is a chest of gold and jewels. But do you see me leave my home to find this? No, it is a dream or a fool's errand.'

The policeman then told the merchant to leave Cairo and return to Baghdad. He felt sorry for the poor man and gave him some money to buy food for his return journey. The merchant set off, but he had a spring in his step, for he had heard the great news he had come to hear. The Chief's dream was of the merchant's own house and the tree was the one that stood in his own garden.

When he returned home he greeted his wife and then began to dig under the tree, and there it was – a buried treasure chest of precious stones. He took a long drink from the water at his fountain. The water was crystal clear and ice cold, and digging was hard work. 'Surely, this is the water of life' he cried. He had found his wealth and he did not keep it to himself, sharing it with all the town, recognising that he had, and always had had, all that he needed.

This story, which may be suitable for a group story swap, is an old traditional tale told by Francis Maxey that comes from the Arabian Nights. There is a similar version found in Britain called 'The Peddler of Swaffham'

King March

King March was a good king and his people loved him. But he had a terrible secret, and he lived in fear of people discovering it. Only one other person in his whole Kingdom knew this secret and that was Bifan the Barber.

Every couple of months Bifan would come to King March's castle. King March would make sure that there was nobody else in the room and then he would reach up and he would take off his golden crown. Then up would spring one... TWO horses' ears! Beautiful brown furry horses' ears. And once Bifan had finished cutting the king's hair, the king would turn to be him and say, *"Don't you dare speak of this do you hear me! if I hear that even the slightest rumour that you have told my secret to somebody, I will cut off your head!"*

And then he would pick up his golden crown and cover up his ears once again. This went on for quite some time until one day Bifan the Barber got ill. It happened really suddenly. One day he lay in bed, and he couldn't get up. He had aches and pains all over his body and he felt a deep sadness at the heart of him and everyday was grey and dull. And after some time Bifan's wife became very worried about him so she sent for the doctor and the doctor came to Bifan's house and examined him and asked him some questions. and then she said *"hmm, Bifan, I know what is wrong with you."* Bifan was so excited at the thought he might get better. But the doctor was shaking her head and she said, *"You're carrying a secret for somebody, and the secret is making you sick."* *"Well how do I get better?"* said Bifan *"You must tell your secret. You must share it"* replied the Doctor. *"Well, what if I can't"* said Bifan, feeling his heart sinking into his shoes. *"If you do not share this secret"* said the doctor *"then the secret will kill you"* and she got to her feet and she popped up her bag and out of the door she went. Bifan did not know what to do. How could he tell the king secret when the king had been very clear that if he did, he would lose his head!

Bifan decided to go for a walk to get some fresh air, and he walked down by the river that led up towards the castle. And as he was walking, he saw, growing from the riverbank a patch of reeds tall and strong and proud, swaying a little in the breeze. Suddenly Bifan got an idea. He thought to himself *"I don't have to tell my secret to a person, I could share the secret with the reeds, they're not going to tell anyone"*. So down on his hands and knees he went he put his mouth at the very base of the reeds and he whispered *"the king has the ears of a horse"* and he felt lighter, and he said it again *"the king has the ears of a horse"* he felt a big grin stretching across his face and he did it one more time and you can say it with me if you want to *"the king has the ears of a horse!"*. And as soon as he said that final sentence, oh it was like the sun came out, he felt better. He went home and he thought no more about it.

Now a few weeks later, King March decided to have a party and he invited everybody in the Kingdom to the party and he also invited a fine musician, a piper, to come and play and entertain the people. And as the piper was travelling towards the king's castle, he walked along the same river and there he saw growing from the bank, those tall, strong, proud reeds just blowing a little in the wind and he thought to himself *"I shall make her new pipe for this evening"*. He went down with his penknife, cut one of the reeds and shaped it into a pipe and then he went towards the castle. After the drinking and the dancing and feasting and the storytelling, King March got to his feet in the party and he said, *"please welcome to the stage the piper!"*. The piper got up and he put his mouth on the pipe and he blew and out of that pipe came not music, no not music but a song in the most joyful voice... *"the king has the ears of a horse, the king has the ears of a horse, the king has the ears of a horse"*.

And once it was done there was deafening silence and the piper looked at the king, his face as white as milk but the king was not looking at the piper... the king was looking into the crowd. Bifan looked to the

ground and stepped forward and said "I'm so sorry King March, but your secret was making me sick! I told it to the reeds; I did not think that they would tell anybody". King March drew his sword and Bifan knelt before the king. King March raised it high over Bifan's neck and he was about to bring it down when he looked above him. He saw all the faces of the people who lived in his land. They looked so sad, so distressed. He knew then how ridiculous the situation was and knew that he could solve it.

So, he put his sword down, reached up and took off his golden crown. And one horse's ears sprang up, followed by the second. King March shut his eyes, thinking the people would laugh at him. But he did not hear any laughing. When he opened his eyes, everyone was just looking at him, the way they had before, with the same love and the same pride. For he was the same king: a good king who took care of his people. And he realised then it did not matter about his horse's ears. What mattered was what he did. And in fact, he felt a great weight lifting from his shoulders for the secret had been making him sick too.

YouTube clip of Story told by Tamar Eluned Williams - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4W8YscCNsBY>
Story transcript adapted from - <https://www.literaturewales.org/our-projects/lwcommissions/tamar-eluned-williams/week-two/>

Although it is an old Welsh tale there are many places in other parts of the world that have other versions of the story. For example, the story of has similarities to the Irish folktale of King Maon and there are similar tales from Brittany, India as well as Africa and it also has a resemblance the incident in Greek myth where the god Apollo gave King Midas the ears of an ass for not supporting him in a music playing competition. Many people think the story was actually inspired by Alexander the Great who was said to wear a war helmet adorned with horns. <https://folkrealmstudies.weebly.com/welsh-legends-king-marchs-ears.html>

The Legend of the Two Dragons

In the fifth century the Celtic King Gwrtheyrn chose Dinas Emrys as the site for his castle. From here he hoped to escape the Saxons but his plans for a fortress weren't going well.

Every night the royal masons would lay down their tools only to return the next day to find they'd vanished. Overnight their carefully crafted walls had fallen down too.

This was repeated day after day until King Gwrtheyrn was forced to seek the help of sorcerers and magicians. They advised King Gwrtheyrn that the only way to stop the castle walls from falling down was to sacrifice a boy without a father (born to a human mother and a father from the 'other world').

A search was launched and eventually the child was found in Caer Myrddin in Carmarthen and preparations for the sacrifice were made. But the child, Myrddin Emrys, was no ordinary child. In fact, he was Merlin the wizard (Merlin is Myrddin in Welsh).

Merlin (Myrddin) convinced King Gwrtheyrn that two dragons lay sleeping under a lake inside the mountain. He told him that the fighting dragons were destroying the foundations of his fortress.

King Gwrtheyrn was convinced the boy was correct. He commanded his labourers to dig deep into the mountain. When the men dug down, they discovered an underground lake, just as Merlin/Myrddin had predicted.

The lake was drained and revealed the two-sleeping red and white dragons. They didn't like having their sleep disturbed and they began to fight. Eventually the white dragon flew away and the red dragon returned quietly to his lair.

King Gwrtheyrn's castle was finally built and was duly named Dinas Emrys in honour of Myrddin Emrys, and the red dragon has been celebrated in Wales ever since.

This is a Welsh story is that of the two dragons which are connected to Beddgelert through Dinas Emrys. Dinas Emrys is a rocky mountain which is said to be the home of the dragon you see on our Welsh flag. This is the bare bones of the story, so can be built upon. It is also a very good story for the Story Swap.

Story adapted from <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/wales/craflwyn-and-beddgelert/discover-the-legend-of-two-dragons>



Angry



Furious



Disgusted



Happy



Raging



Joyful



Grateful



Cheerful



Hopeful



Peaceful



Proud



Content



Glad



Thrilled



Pleased



Unhappy



Sad



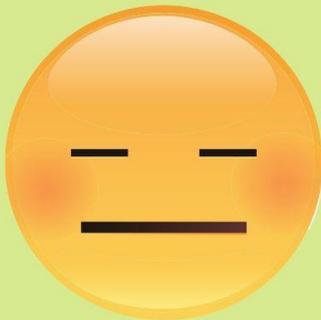
Annoyed



Disappointed



Frustrated



Irritated



Ashamed



Miserable



Devastated



Guilty



Embarrassed



Jealous



Regretful



Scared



Anxious



Nervous



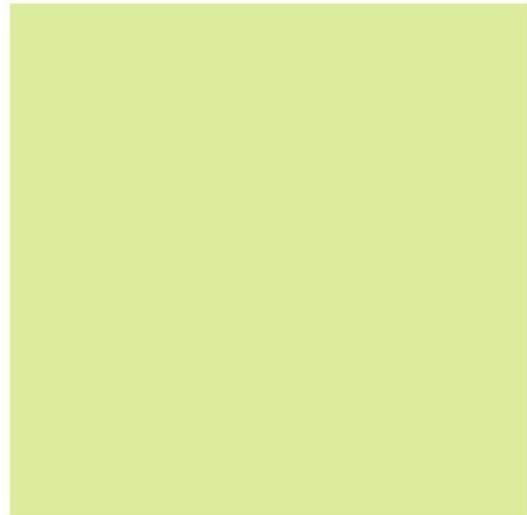
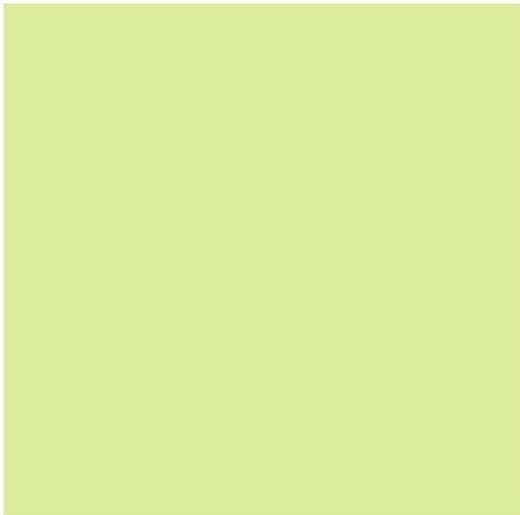
Terrified



Fearful

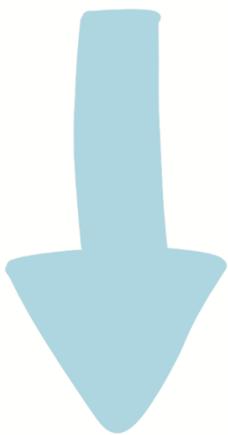


Shocked





High
energy



Low
energy

feels
good



feels
bad



HAPPINESS

fEAR

ANGER

SADNESS

LOVE

JOY

GRATITUDE

AWE

SERENITY/
CONTENTMENT

INSPIRATION

Positive
Emotions
what
feels
good?

INTEREST

PRIDE

AMUSEMENT

HOPE

LOVE

Compassion
Safe Caring
Connected

JOY

excited
delighted
cheerful
jolly

GRATITUDE

thankful
appreciation
glad

AWE

Amazed
wonder
astounded

SERENITY/ CONTENTMENT

peaceful calm
chilled Relaxed

Positive Emotions

what
feels
good?

INSPIRATION

Motivated
Creative
encouraged

INTEREST

Curious
Intrigued
focussed
fascinated

PRIDE

Confident
Accomplished
Satisfied

AMUSEMENT

entertained
tickled pleased
laughter

HOPE

Optimistic
upbeat
positive

Anger

umbrella

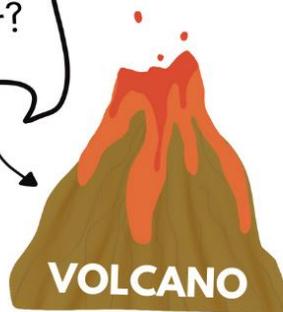
The **NASTY** stuff

What kind of ANGER?



If ANGER was a metaphor?

On a scale of 1-10, how **ANGRY?**



Anger

umbrella

The **NASTY** stuff

Raging

Furious

Frustrated

Irritated

Outraged

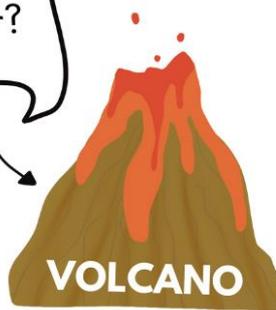
Annoyed

Bitter

What kind of ANGER?

If ANGER was a metaphor?

On a scale of 1-10, how **ANGRY?**



fear

umbrella

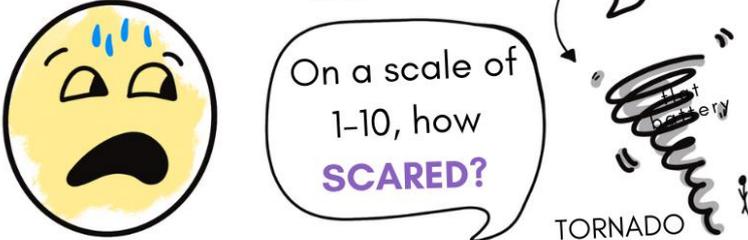
The **SCARY** stuff

What kind of FEAR?

If FEAR was a metaphor?

On a scale of 1-10, how **SCARED**?

TORNADO





The **SCARY** stuff

Anxious

Nervous

Worried

Terrified

Scared

Shocked

A collection of hand-drawn elements including:

- A speech bubble containing the text "What kind of FEAR?"
- A speech bubble containing the text "If FEAR was a metaphor?"
- A speech bubble containing the text "On a scale of 1-10, how SCARED?"
- A yellow circular emoji with a wide-open mouth and blue sweat drops on its forehead.
- A drawing of a black and grey tornado with the word "TORNADO" written below it.
- A small speech bubble coming from the tornado containing the text "that's scary".

Sadness



umbrella

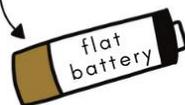
The **SAD** stuff

What kind of SADNESS?



If SADNESS was a metaphor?

On a scale of 1-10, how **SAD?**



Sadness



umbrella

The **SAD** stuff

Ashamed

Devastated

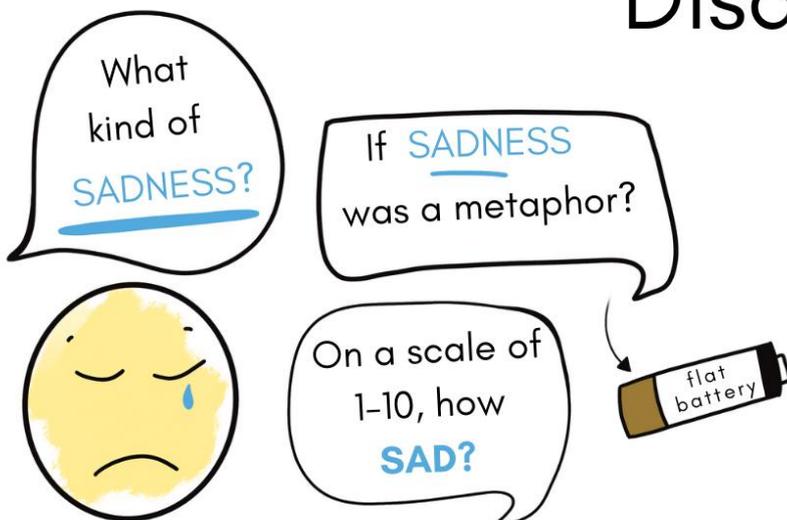
Unhappy

Regretful

Guilty

Disappointed

Miserable





'FEELINGS ARE FUNNY THINGS' CERTIFICATE



Awarded to:

Thank you for sharing your ideas and for your valuable contribution to the group.

Your many skills and abilities include being able to explore and discuss emotions and feelings through stories.

Signed:

Date:

