

# UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS

## Years 7-9

### BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH EMOTIONAL AWARENESS AND SELF-REGULATION

Providing opportunities for young people to practise skills of emotional awareness and self-regulation develops their resilience and enhances their interpersonal relationships.

Becoming skilled at regulating emotions is a protective factor for young people and impacts on a range of other crucial cognitive, emotional and social processes across a broad number of contexts including decision-making, self-esteem and understanding how to manage relationships.

#### Lesson aims

By the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- identify emotional experiences and outline strategies to control emotional responses appropriate to the situation
- analyse conflict scenarios and work through steps for resolution

#### Curriculum links

Health and Physical Education: Personal, Social and Community Health Strand

[\[ACPPS075\]](#) Analyse factors that influence emotions, and develop strategies to demonstrate empathy and sensitivity.

General Capabilities: Personal and Social Capability

### Recognising different emotions

Explore the concept of differing emotions with students via a discussion. This could include emotions that are powerful, that can erupt quickly and can escalate a situation versus those that don't prompt these reactions. Emotions that erupt into reactionary behaviours following something that has occurred are sometimes called 'knee-jerk' reactions. When students react on impulse or reflex there has not been enough time to weigh up the correct emotional response or the possible consequences of their choices.

Ask students to think about times they might have responded powerfully to a situation and to identify the emotion involved? Collate their responses [these are likely to include: *anger, hurt, rejection, fear, disappointment, surprise, happiness etc*]

### Focus setting

Following the discussion above, ask students how much they feel they are in charge of their emotions.. Then show this video titled [Emotions and the Brain](#)

Explore the video content via questions such as:

- Where do our emotions come from?
- What role does the brain play in our emotional responses?
- Can you name the stress chemical hormones the brain releases if it senses threat or danger?
- Can you name the chemical, or hormones, the brain releases if it senses something rewarding or pleasant?
- The feeling brain vs the thinking brain – can you explain the difference?

### Identifying emotions

Helping students to understand, regulate and manage their emotions and their emotional responses to different situations supports the development of positive relationships. This requires students to:

- Identify their emotions
- Use strategies to control their emotional responses appropriate to the situation
- Develop empathy by considering the perspectives and emotional responses of others

The following scenarios provide opportunities to discuss the appropriate emotional reactions if they were dealing with the situation. Students can refer to the emotions they tabulated in the previous activity. Students can complete this activity individually, in pairs or small groups, as appropriate.

### Activity

Read through each scenario and jot down your responses to the following:

What emotions would you feel in this situation?

What could you do to control emotions that may be inappropriate to this situation?

### Situations/scenarios



1. You've been waiting in the tuckshop line at recess and another student pushes in front of you.
2. Your teacher sets a group task to be completed in the lesson. The others in your group start fooling around and even though you try to get them to work together, when the lesson ends your group has nothing to hand in. Your teacher gives you all a lunchtime detention.
3. It's recess and you see a group of your friends playing handball. When you ask to join in, someone calls you a 'loser' and no-one invites you to play.
4. Your parents have just read your report card. They are unhappy about some of your grades/marks and tell you that you're banned from playing games online for 3 months.

### Extended group discussion

Not all situations are the same. What are the things that make a situation more important to you?

Are some situations out of your control?

What emotions might **you** feel in the above scenarios? Why? What emotions might the **other people** in these scenarios feel? Why?

What actions or behaviours could these emotions prompt?

Is the same emotional response required for each of these situations? Why? Why not?

### Group task

Referring to the 4 scenarios above, complete the table below. One has been done as an example only (teachers may wish to remove this).

Emotions	Strategy for managing these emotions
Shock, anger, fury, exasperation,	Pause and take a deep breath  Think through your options, including the consequences, before you speak or act  Calmly explain the situation to a teacher or to the other student if appropriate






