

## SESSION SEVEN

# Recognizing Our Feelings

### SUMMARY:

This session allows us to learn about the full range of our feelings. We will learn about how our emotions change based on many different circumstances, but we don't have to allow our feelings to negatively impact our behavior. We will also discuss the importance of understanding how others are feeling.

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

- **FAMILY: Group Activity**  
Describing Our Feelings  
Recognizing Our Feelings  
Understanding Others' Feelings
- **PARENT: Group Activity**  
The Importance of Harmony  
Your Child's Moods and Emotions
- **YOUTH: Group Activities**  
Emotion Gauges and Musical Chairs

### OBJECTIVES:

**By the end of the session, we hope participants will:**

1. View emotions as a natural part of life.
2. Be able to identify important feelings in ourselves and others.
3. Learn effective ways to manage emotions based on Anishinabe values.
4. Be able to identify "anger busters."

### MATERIALS:

<input type="checkbox"/> Anger Busters and Producers	<input type="checkbox"/> CD Player/Music for Musical Chairs
<input type="checkbox"/> Emotion Gauges	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Cup and Red Cup	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

### PREPARATION CHECKLIST:

- Ask the Guest Elder if they would help run the music for musical chairs.
- Set out the "Anger Busters and Producers" cards from the facilitator folder in the plastic tote.
- Mix the strips of paper in a cup for Musical Chair Madness activity
- Gather the Emotion Gauges from the facilitator folder in the plastic tote. Set out enough for each youth to get one and keep one as an example for the parents.

## As the Families Arrive

15 min



Welcome each family as they arrive. Ask any new family members to fill out a name tag and put them on. If the adult who attended last week is not in attendance, they can use the lanyard from the family folder. Give each returning family their workbooks and lanyards as they check in. Have all participants sign the "Session Sign In and Photo Consent" form. Ask the kids to put a sticker on the family Attendance Chart. Hand out an attendance raffle ticket to each child as they sign in. Write their name on the ticket we keep and put it into the Raffle Jar.

*While we are waiting for all the families to arrive, kids can take a few minutes and look at the pages in the back of your workbook – we are building pages for the scrapbook we will make in Session 13, so if you want to use crayons or colored pencils, you can work on some of those activities.*

## Meal

30 min

Once all of the families have arrived, introduce the Guest Elder to the group and thank them for attending. Let the families know that from now on, we will be asking a youth to assist us with our opening each week. Ask a youth participant to offer tobacco (asemaa) to the Guest Elder so that he or she may pray, smudge, and perform an opening prayer and a blessing of the food. After the prayer is complete, let families know where plates, silverware, and beverages may be found and where the garbage cans are located. Remind families to throw away their items and clean up their area after the meal.

Mingle with the families during the meal. Please spread out and sit with the families. After people have finished eating, make sure that the area is cleaned up and ask others to help if necessary. Set aside any leftover food and redirect the group to their seats.

## Welcome

20 min

Welcome everyone to the session. Reinforce to the families how important their participation is.

*Let's talk about our Take Home Activity from last session...*

- *Was it easy or hard to find an Elder to help you translate the words?*
- *Were there any words you could not translate?*
- *Had you heard any of the feeling words spoken in Anishinabe before?*
- *How did it feel to offer tobacco (asemaa) to an Elder? Was it fun? Were you nervous?*



Give raffle tickets to the youth who completed their Take Home Activity. Write their name on the ticket we keep and put it into the Raffle Jar.

## Understanding Feelings

10 min

Our feelings are natural and normal emotions. There are no “good” feelings or “bad” feelings. However, the way we deal with our feelings can make a big difference in our lives. Lead a brief discussion on harmony.

*The teachings of our Anishinabe ancestors encourage us to maintain harmony at all times. We might think of harmony in nature where all things are interconnected. Our ancestors remind us to treat all living things with respect in order to maintain balance. But harmony can also be found within ourselves. When we react to our feelings too strongly, we can disrupt harmony. Every action we take has a reaction in the world around us. Every choice we make has a consequence: sometime consequences are positive and sometimes they are negative.*

- *What does harmony mean to you?*
- *Do certain emotions disrupt the balance and harmony you feel inside?*

*We have five major emotions: **happy, afraid, disgusted, angry, and sad**. Often times our feelings might be translated through anger. For example, if we are hurt or afraid, we might say or do things out of anger. Can you think of a time when you said or did something that hurt someone when you didn't mean to? Has there ever been a time when someone got mad at you when you didn't think you did anything wrong? Sometimes our emotions are so strong we act or react in ways we wouldn't normally.*

*Our emotions are a combination of three things:*

- 1. Events that happen.*
- 2. Our thoughts and feelings about those events.*
- 3. Our reactions and responses.*

*Sometimes the events that trigger our feelings can build up throughout our day. We may feel strong emotions when we sense that we've lost control or when we feel vulnerable or afraid. Triggers arise when we feel that there are shortages of certain resources, such as money, power, time, and space. They also arise because we experience conflicts and disagreements with others. We may have different values, beliefs, experiences, skills, knowledge, self-interests, and concerns. Sometimes being frustrated, stressed, or confronted with conflicts makes us angry. You might notice fear or frustration simply because something feels "off" or imbalanced. There are many reasons why people get upset, but our behavior is what really matters.*

## Describing Our Feelings

10 min

The next three exercises are intended to help participants think about how to describe their feelings, how to recognize what they are feeling, and how to respond to other peoples' feelings.

*In order to be better at managing our reactions and our behaviors when we feel different feelings, it's important to be familiar with how our feelings actually feel in our bodies. Let's look at the worksheet on **page 36** in the Youth Workbook and **page 26** in the Adult Workbook and think about the emotions you experience. Let's go through these together. Does anyone want to share?*

Prompts may include: 1) What words would you use to describe happy? 2) afraid? 3) How would you finish the sentence, 'If I were to draw a picture of disgusted it would look like -?' 3) How would you describe angry? 5) What about sad?



## Recognizing Our Feelings

**10 min**

This exercise focuses on recognizing our emotions and what we feel like in our bodies when we are experiencing them. By learning to be aware of how different emotions make us feel physically, we can better learn to manage our behaviors. This would be a great time to take pictures for the scrapbooks!

*Let's look at the worksheet on **page 37** in the Youth Workbook and **page 27** in the Adult Workbook. Now that we have talked about how we would define or describe our feelings, we want to think about how our feelings actually FEEL in our bodies. Let's have everybody stand up. We are talking about physical sensations so let's move around a little bit!*

*So everybody, kids, parents, Elders we want you to show us what your body looks like or feels like when you're happy. How does your body show others that you're happy?*

*Show us what your body looks like and feels like when you're afraid?*

*What about when you are disgusted? How does your body look and feel?*

*What about if you are angry? Where does your body feel anger? How does your breathing change? How does your walk change?*

*If you are sad, how does your body look? How can I see that you are sad?*

Thank everyone for participating and give them a few minutes to move back to their seats.

## Understanding Others' Feelings

**10 min**

Part of seeking harmony in our lives is thinking about how our words and actions impact others. This section discusses being more aware of how others are feeling.

*A part of being in a good relationship with others is recognizing and appreciating how they are feeling. For example, if someone is really afraid, it isn't helpful for us to be angry with them. Sometimes we can decide to wait until they are in a better frame of mind to discuss a difficult subject.*

*Turn to the worksheet on **page 38** in the Youth Workbook and **page 28** in the Adult Workbook and let's think about how we know what others are feeling.*

*For the youth, draw a line connecting each of the emotions to the picture you think best shows it. For the parents, take a few minutes to fill in the blanks. How would you recognize each of these feelings in others?*

After the families have completed the worksheet, ask if they have questions or want to share.

## Parent and Youth Breakout Activities - 30 Minutes Total Time

Ask parents to split out into a separate group from their children. Direct them to their individual meetings spaces. Let parents and youth know where they will be moving to and how much time they will be splitting up. We recommend using two adjacent rooms so that you can easily check on each group's progress. One facilitator should be with each group. Ask the Guest Elder to stay with the youth for this activity. Adults should move to a different area for the breakout activity.

### YOUTH

#### Emotion Gauges

**15 min**

Take a few minutes to introduce the emotion gauges.

*This is what we call an emotion gauge. As events happen throughout the day, our feelings change. Friends and family don't always know what kind of day you are having or what kind of mood you are in if you don't tell them. The emotions gauge can be used as a tool to let people know how you are feeling. It would be a good idea to put it somewhere so that people can see it, like on your bedroom door. Each of you will be getting an emotion gauge to take home to use - and we will be using it today.*

Distribute an emotion gauge to each child and explain that you will be going over a list of things that happen in a day. With each statement, youth should hold up their emotion gauge with arrows pointing at how each event affects their feelings.

*Look at the faces on the emotion gauge. Let's go through each one. First we have tired, the calm, then happy. Then we have confused, worried and sad. Then the last two are annoyed and mad.*

*I am going to read a list of things that may happen throughout the day. Use your emotion gauge to show how each event affects your emotions. How do you feel when:*

- 1) You wake up in the morning?*
- 2) You don't get what you want for breakfast?*
- 3) Your parents won't let you wear what you want to school?*
- 4) You aren't allowed to visit your friend after school?*
- 5) You do poorly on an assignment that you worked very hard on?*

Encourage the youth to share their ideas and show how they would use the gauges.

*Can you think of other times we could use our emotion gauges?*

#### Musical Chair Madness

**15 min**

Let the youth know that the next activity is called "Musical Chair Madness." For this activity you are going to use anger as an example feeling. Ask youth to make a circle in the center of the room out of chairs, with one less chair than the total number of players. For example, if there are 7 youth you would only have 6 chairs. Once the youth have set up the game, explain the rules using the following explanation:

*Let's review the rules of the game. You will walk around the chairs following each other and when the music stops you have to hurry to sit in a chair. The one who doesn't make it to a chair is "out." **Remember not to push or shove to get a chair when the music stops.** The person who is "out" will draw a slip from the cup and read it aloud. The rest of the group will decide if it is an anger producer or buster. An anger producer is something that causes us to have angry feelings. An anger buster is something that we can do to avoid feeling angry. When it is decided whether the slip is an anger producer or buster, it is placed in the appropriate cup (Blue=Buster; Red=Producer). We will continue the game until there is only one person left.*



While the youth are playing musical chairs would be a great time to take pictures for the scrapbooks! After the game is over - when there is only one person left - gather the youth back into a group to discuss the emotion gauges. The last person left in the musical chairs activity gets a raffle ticket! Write their name on the ticket we keep and put it into the Raffle Jar.

## PARENTS

### Emotion Gauges

**15 min**

This section discusses the emotion gauges the youth are receiving in their breakout group. Keep one emotion gauge to show the parents as an example.

*Each of the youth are receiving an emotion gauge. We are helping them to be aware of how they may feel at different times in their day, and in different situations.*

*Understanding what our children are feeling is the first step to helping them have better control of their behavior and make better choices about their actions.*

*I am going to read a list of things that happen throughout the day.*

*Where might your child's emotions level be when:*

- 1. They wake up in the morning?*
- 2. They don't get what they want for breakfast?*
- 3. They don't get to wear what that want to school?*
- 4. They aren't allowed to visit a friend after school?*
- 5. They do poorly on an assignment that they worked very hard on?*

Conduct a discussion about recognizing your child's mood and emotions.

*How do you know when your kid is (happy, sad, disgusted, afraid, angry)? How can we help kids' deal with their moods? We know how we sometimes respond negatively when we've had a bad day and then someone approaches us wanting our time or attention, right? How can we think about the kind of mood our kids are in and approach them in a way that recognizes their feelings and stress?*

*Since each of the youth will be taking their emotion gauges home, can you think of ways they might be useful in your communication with your kids?*

After everyone has had a chance to share, conclude the discussion with this overview.

*As we all know, parents are the first and foremost teachers in our children's lives. Our children learn by observing our actions and behaviors so it is very important for us to know how to handle situations in a fashion that we would like our children to adopt. We need to be positive role models for our children and model how to obtain and keep harmony within ourselves, our families, and our communities. We need to understand our own feelings as well as the feelings of others around us.*

## **The Importance of Harmony**

**15 min**

Direct parents to **page 29** of their Workbooks, "**The Importance of Harmony.**" Review the worksheet together and ask for comments or questions.

### *The Importance of Harmony*

*All of our emotions are a natural and normal part of life. The way we behave when we are feeling overwhelmed by an emotion is what counts and has lasting effects. It is important for us to maintain harmony even when we are feeling a full range of emotions.*

### *WHEN OUR EMOTIONS ARE RULING OUR LIVES WE CAN HURT*

*Physically.... We can hurt ourselves (headaches, rashes, ulcers).  
We can hurt others (hitting, kicking, throwing things).*

*Emotionally... We can hurt ourselves (guilt, sadness, depression).  
We can hurt others (put downs, hurt feelings).*

*Relationships... Can be damaged and destroyed. Communication can be blocked. We can find ourselves alone.*

### *REPRESSED EMOTIONS CAN BE VERY HARMFUL*

*When we have feelings that are not acknowledged, their impact can cause drug and alcohol abuse, poor health, violence, and family breakdown.*

### *CAUSES OF DIFFICULT FEELINGS*

*Frustration: When we are not getting what we want or had hoped for.*

*Conflict: When we have to choose between alternatives. Alternatives being faced might both be desirable, have one desirable and one undesirable, or have two undesirable choices.*

*Stress: Stress is like a rubber band: we can only be stretched so far before we snap. Remember that stress can be positive and negative.*

*Making Mistakes: Some people admit their mistakes and learn from them. Some consistently blame others for everything. Everybody makes mistakes, but unless we learn from them, they are useless.*

### *DIFFERENT PEOPLE CAN HANDLE VARYING LEVELS OF STRESS*

*Racehorses: Those who thrive on stress and are only happy with a vigorous, fast-paced lifestyle.*

*Turtles: Those, who in order to be happy, require peace, quiet, and a generally tranquil environment.*

*Are you a turtle, a racehorse, or somewhere in between?*

## **Group Gathering**

**5 min**

Gather your families back together for a group activity, announcements and reminders.

## **Emotions Discussion**

**15 min**

Ask the youth to recall some of the anger busters they encountered in the Musical Chairs Madness game. Ask the group if they can think of any ways to reduce angry feelings when they begin to feel anger.

Write ideas on the whiteboard, chalkboard, or chart tablet where everyone is able to read the list. Some examples of how to reduce feeling overwhelmed by emotions might include:

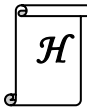
- Offer tobacco (asemaa)
- Breathe deeply or count to ten
- Relax or walk away calmly and take a time out
- Pray
- Decide that the issue doesn't matter/isn't worth fighting over
- Ignore the behavior
- Smile, laugh, or make a joke out of it
- Think about happier things
- Talk to someone about it or ask someone for help
- Write out your feelings
- Do something constructive to improve your community
- Think about or do something else
- Learn a new hobby or skill
- Remain calm and pleasant
- Use reflective listening
- Do something physical, like go for a walk

Remind families about the emotion gauges and encourage families to utilize them and report back next session on how they work.

*Emotion gauges are one way we can learn to identify and communicate how we are feeling. We can't assume others always know how we are feeling. When we experience anger or sadness or happiness, our emotions may seem to overwhelm logic and facts. We may be tempted to react rather than to reason and take action. The challenge for each of us is to recognize our emotions and to express them in a positive manner.*

## Announcements and Reminders

5 min



Tell the families that there are two parts to their **Take Home** assignments.

Direct families to the “**Hassle Logs**” on **pages 9-12** in the youth **Take Home** booklet and **pages 9-13** in the adult **Take Home** booklet. Explain that each time they feel upset, they should fill out a hassle log form.

*By completing the hassle log, we can learn to see a pattern in our strong emotions. For example, maybe someone is more irritable in the mornings than in the evenings.*

Ask if there are any questions regarding the hassle log. Also, explain the “**Feelings**” **Take Home Activity** on **page 13** of the youth **Take Home** booklet, and on **page 14** of the adult **Take Home** booklet.

*On the left side of the paper, there are places for you to write some things that make you feel big emotions. On the right side of the paper there are places for you to write what you do when you feel those big feelings.*

*Remember you get to take your emotion gauges home! Try using them this week, too!*

Remind the youth to bring their take home assignment back next session:

*Remember to bring your **Take Home** booklets back with you next session so you can get the raffle ticket for completing your assignment!*

## Closing

5 min

Tell the families that you appreciate their participation. You may want to ask a family member or Guest Elder to give a closing prayer before ending.

*I just want to tell you how much we appreciate your participation and how excited we will be to have everyone back here next session.*

*We want to especially thank our Guest Elder (Elder's name) \_\_\_\_\_ for being with us!*

*Please be sure to put your workbooks and lanyards in your family folders.*

*Be sure to get your gift cards and sign your receipts!*

*If you can help straighten up the supplies and the room before you leave, we would really appreciate it.*

As people are preparing to leave, be sure to collect the lanyards and the Parent and Youth Workbooks or ask them to put them in their family folder in the plastic facilitator tote.

Have one adult from each family sign the \$20 visa gift card receipt (purple paper) and give them their gift card envelope. Have each eligible child sign the \$10 visa gift card receipt (blue paper) and give them their gift card envelope. Ask the Guest Elder to sign the \$50 visa gift

card receipt (white paper) and give them their gift card envelope. Thank participants for their attendance and participation this week.

Complete the brief one-page 'Weekly Session Evaluation' form for your records. Remember to go online to the online fidelity survey <https://tinyurl.com/bzdddeval> to complete the overall weekly session evaluation BEFORE your next session.

Check to make sure that you have picked up all your supplies before leaving. Be sure that the area is clean and tidy. Check all bathrooms and eating areas to be sure that we aren't leaving any messes behind. Turn off lights and locks doors as directed by the facility.