



3. EMOTIONS... THEY'RE ONLY HUMAN!

Managing emotions and asking for help when needed

Targeted competencies (based on ÉKIP and the WHO)	Managing emotions, stress and anxiety Asking for help
Content for the development of personal and social competencies (MEQ)	Sheet 13 : Making friends and social network Sheet 14 : Inclusion and getting along
Cross-cutting competencies (QEP)	Achieving potential, cooperating with others Solving problems
General objectives of the workshop	By the end of the workshop, students will be able to: • Better recognize their various emotions and understand their purpose; • Use new strategies to experience and manage their stress in a healthy way; • Ask for help if they need it.

Total duration

60-MINUTE version: follow ALL steps, including the ones marked with the icon



40-MINUTE version: DO NOT do activities marked with the icon



Materials and preparation

- Print the worksheet (1 per student): *Explore your inner weather!*
- Print the *Emotions and needs* and *Asking for help* posters, available on the [website](#) in the section: First cycle / Workshops and tools for students / Classroom posters to support your explanations and reinvest learning in class.
- Bring:
 - Three large poster boards for activity C (reuse the same poster boards for all groups participating in the workshop);
 - Permanent markers;
 - Three packs of sticky notes;
 - A stopwatch;
- Have a chalkboard with chalk or interactive whiteboard (IWB) available.

Financial contribution:



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada



Université de
Sherbrooke



Centre RBC
d'expertise universitaire
en santé mentale

Summer 2025

A. Your emotions... your internal weather (5 minutes)

1. You begin the workshop by asking students this question: “Why talk about emotions in a program focused on preventing anxiety?”
2. Listen to a few answers, then complete with the following



Because anxiety is part of the world of emotions (Daniel et al., 2020; Mathews et al., 2016)!

Emotions are **spontaneous internal reactions** that we feel when faced with situations we experience (Naître et grandir, 2025). **There are six basic emotions that are universally recognized** (Ekman & Friesen, 1981; Ekman, 1992): joy, fear, anger, sadness, disgust and surprise. Other, more complex emotions (such as anxiety) stem from these six primary emotions.

Our emotions can be said to be like our **internal weather** (Bruzzone, 2023; Harris, 2009). Every day, and even several times a day, we can experience different emotions, much like weather conditions that change over time. We can start the day feeling joyful, then get angry, and finally end up feeling calm toward the end of the day. We can also cry and laugh at the same time, like a sun shower, which ends up creating a rainbow.

But... what is the purpose of all these emotions?



3

B. Educational clip - Part 1 (5 minutes)

1. Play the video clip *Emotions... they're only human! – Part 1* for your students.
[Video clip – Part 1](#)



4

C. Explore your inner weather! (10 to 15 minutes)

1. In light of the video, explain to the students:



Our emotions speak to us! Much like the weather, our emotions inform us about what is happening inside us! **Becoming aware of our emotional world (our internal weather) helps us to better understand ourselves and regulate our emotions** (Bruzzone, 2023; Dukes et al., 2022; Harris, 2009).

And this is essential for coping with stressful and anxiety-provoking situations in everyday life, as well as for developing good relationships with other people!

2. Hand out the [Explore your inner weather!](#) printable worksheet to students.
3. You then show the students a series of eight assorted videos that are in the slideshow. After each photo, you ask the students to:
 - Close their eyes, take a deep breath, and notice which emotions this photo made them feel;
 - Ask them to circle the emojis that best correspond to the emotions they felt (in the space provided on the worksheet).



5



6-14



4. Then have the students discuss the following questions:
- Why did some people feel different emotions when looking at the same image?
 - Did all the emotions that were felt carry the same weight? Are some better or more real than others?
 - During the activity, did you have control over the emotions that the image made you feel?

5. You complete the activity with the following:



Experiencing emotions, from the most pleasant to the most difficult, is inevitable (Reddy, 2020)! Just as we cannot choose the day's weather, we rarely have control over the emotions that we feel. On the other hand, **we do have power over how we regulate them**: how we experience our emotions, express them, and behave. Whether we are in the midst of an emotional storm or a wave of well-being, it is important to **recognize what is going on within** so that we can take helpful actions (Pekrun, 2022; Riediger & Bellingtier, 2022).

For example, if you notice that it's raining outside, you will probably grab your umbrella or raincoat before going out. However, if you go outside without checking the weather, you may be in for some surprises and experience a lot of inconvenience!

Finally, **whatever they may be, all our emotions have their place and their reason for being. They all have the right to exist within us and to be expressed.** But... not in just any way!



15

D. Your turn! (10 to 15 minutes)

1. You go on to explain that there is a difference between expressing emotions in a healthy way and acting impulsively on emotions (Naître et grandir, 2025).
- a. Ask students for examples of situations where they expressed their emotions in a healthy way and others where they reacted impulsively. Try to highlight the differences between the two types of reactions, as well as the pros and cons of each.



16



17

- b. You share with them some **new strategies for regulating their internal weather**, which can be found in the slideshow (Ciarrochi et al., 2014; Conover & Daiute, 2017; Rottenberg & Gross, 2007; Silk et al., 2003):

- Accept the situation as it is, without resisting it;
- Notice what is going on inside you;
- Welcome your emotions without judging them or trying to block or deny them;
- Express or release your emotions through art, sports, writing, etc.;
- Be attentive to the needs that lie behind your emotions;
- Be compassionate and kind toward yourself;
- Reframe your harmful thoughts into helpful ones;
- Refocus your attention on what is important to you (needs, values and goals);
- Look for solutions using your strengths;
- Ask for help.

2. You can remind them that the strategies from Workshops 1 and 2 (*Strategies for managing stress* and *Strategies for exposure to intolerances*) are also good ways to manage and regulate their emotions, stress and anxiety.
3. You explain that, ultimately, there are a multitude of strategies and that the best strategies are those that enable them to regain their balance!
4. If time permits, conclude this part of the workshop with a brief reminder of **the purpose of emotions**:



Emotions convey an important message about what is happening inside us: **“A need deserves our attention!”**

The more we are able to tune in to what is going on inside us, the more we are able to **act in a caring and supportive way to meet the needs that lie behind our emotions** (Ciarrochi et al., 2014; Silk et al., 2003; Wassner & Sedley, 2024).

E. Two heads are better than one! (5 to 15 minutes)

1. You show students that sometimes, when faced with highly emotional situations, it's also important to be able to ask for help! After all, two heads are better than one! For schools that only have 40 minutes, go directly to point 7 of the activity.



2. To discuss the topic of requests for help, ask the students the following questions:
 - Why is it often said that talking about our emotions and asking for help is a taboo subject?
 - How might asking for help too soon or too often might increase anxiety? Round out the students' answers with these elements:
 - Thinking you can't do it without help;
 - Losing self-confidence;
 - Losing power and self-determination;
 - Depending on the opinions and solutions of others;
 - Exhausting your social network, experiencing isolation;
 - Shrinking your comfort zone.



18

3.  You now have three large poster boards in three different locations in the classroom, along with a pack of sticky notes. On each poster board, you have already written one of the following three questions (using a permanent marker):

- Who to ask for help and how?
- What's stopping you from asking for help (obstacles, fears)?
- What are the positive aspects of asking for help (pros)?

4.  Then divide the class into three groups (one group per poster board). Give each group three minutes to answer the question written on the poster board. You ask them to write their answers on the sticky notes and put them on the poster board.

5.  Then discuss all together as a group. The purpose of the discussion is to pool their answers, while demystifying and legitimizing help requests.

6.  Read the answers written on the sticky notes for each question (poster boards) out loud and ask the students to comment and explain their point of view.

7. Round out their answers (or present strategies for schools that have 40 minutes) from the following list (Andriessen et al., 2019; Heerde & Hemphill, 2018; Menna & Ruck, 2004; Tharaldsen et al., 2017):

- **Who to ask for help and how?**

- Ask a friend if they'd like to do an activity or go for a walk together;
- Text, call or directly talk to a friend, adult or parent you feel you can confide in;
- Meet with a school counsellor;
- Seek advice, guidance or support in a difficult situation;
- Contact official resources: social workers, CLSCs, Tel-jeunes, Alloprof, youth centres, etc.

- **What is stopping you from asking for help (obstacles, fears)?**

- Feeling embarrassed or uncomfortable asking for help;
- Not knowing where, when, how and whom to ask for help;
- Fear of not being welcomed, of bothering others, of being rejected;
- Fear of being judged by others;
- Not wanting others to know that you have a problem;
- Fear of appearing vulnerable or weak;
- Difficulty trusting others;
- Being hard on yourself for needing help, feeling ashamed;
- Believing that you are invincible, that you can do everything on your own;
- Believing that the problem will solve itself (magical thinking!).

- **What are the positive aspects of asking for help (pros)?**
 - Feeling supported, not being alone when facing a challenge;
 - Having someone you can rely on;
 - Regaining self-confidence;
 - Feeling relief, calm;
 - Finding new solutions to address the problem;
 - Getting perspective, seeing the situation differently;
 - Expanding your means and resources;
 - Discovering new strengths;
 - Creating a sense of mutual support and solidarity.



22

F. Educational clip – Part 2 (5 minutes)

1. Play the video clip *Emotions... they're only human! – Part 2* for your students.

[Video clip – Part 2](#)



23

G. OFF-TRAIL challenge

This week, ask the students to pay attention to how they react in a difficult situation they encounter. Ask them: 1) To identify the emotions you felt in response to this situation (what did this situation stir up inside you? What did this emotion tell you?); and 2) to use an emotion regulation strategy to better cope with the situation. You remind them of the importance of accepting their emotions without judging them and daring to ask for help.



24



Text is under a [CC BY-NC 4.0](#) licence. © [OFF-TRAIL program](#) by Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale (2025), Université de Sherbrooke.



PRINTABLE WORKSHEET

Explore your inner weather!



For each photo in the slideshow, circle the emoji that best matches the emotion you feel when you see the image.

Image no. 1

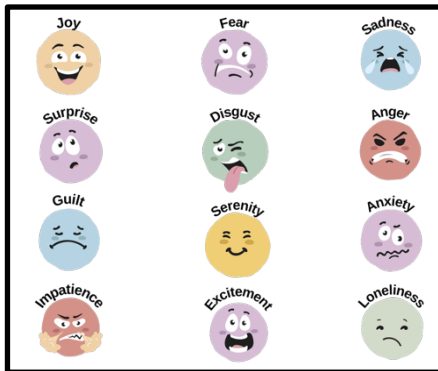


Image no. 2

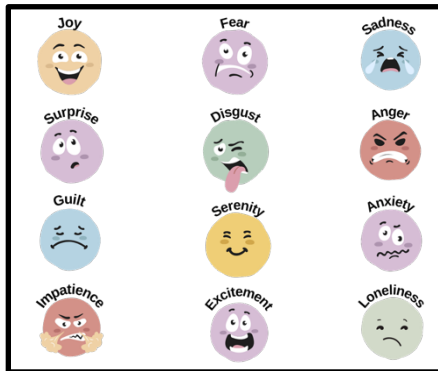


Image no. 3

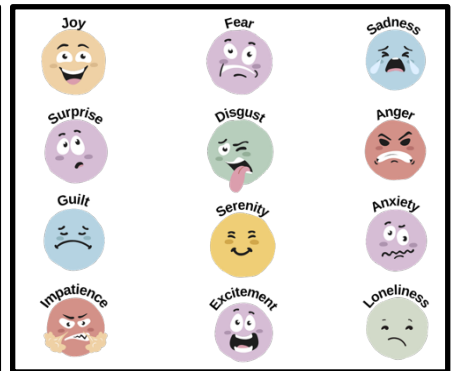


Image no. 4

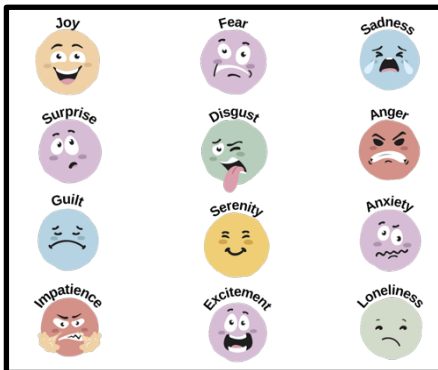


Image no. 5

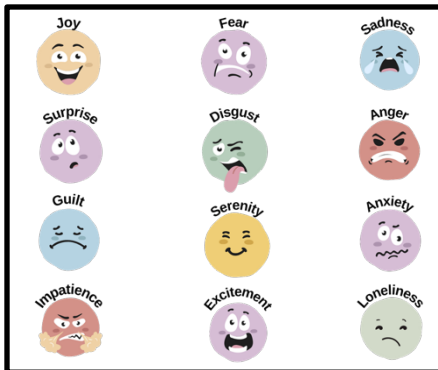


Image no. 6

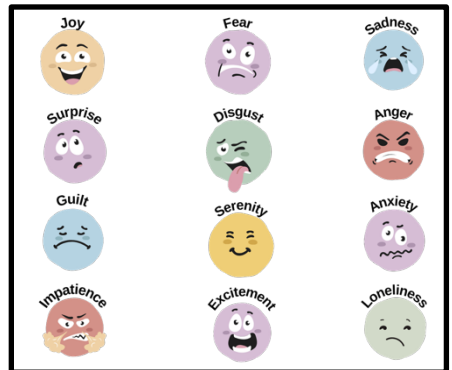


Image no. 7

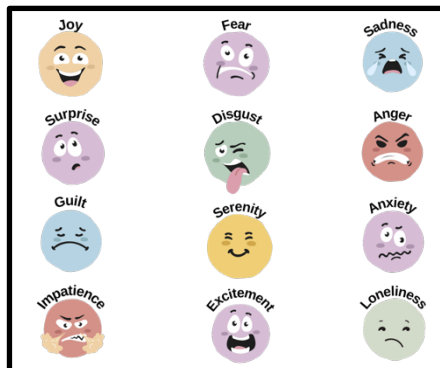


Image no. 8

