



## Exploring Emotions for Kids of All Ages: An “Inside Out” Perspective

A webinar held Aug 28

### Presenters:

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We all enjoyed a lively discussion about the film, the creative depiction of emotions and one’s “emotional control panel” and how to talk about emotions with kids and teens after watching the movie. Host conversations with your families, or share with caring adults in your community so they can have these discussions with their kids.

You can watch the recording here: <https://youtu.be/aqYUCoiuBRg>

## Inside Out Discussion Guide

### Important Guidelines

- Pick the timing wisely to be able to have the conversation
- Remember the acronym HALT (hungry, angry, lonely, tired)
- Be Present - phones away and no huge distractions
- A neutral location for all - so people can feel brave and safe to share
- Sitting next to each other is easier than sitting across from each other
- Use “I” statements (I feel....)
- Ask open-ended questions (rather than yes/no questions)
- Conversation volley is the goal - don’t bombard with questions
- Less is more - Keep It Simple Sweetheart

### Let the youth:

- Establish discussion ground rules *with you* (get buy in)
- Lead the dialogue
- Teach you terminology that they use
- Inquire about your childhood/teen experiences
- Listen without formulating a response
- Has the option to pass on specific questions
- If unable or unwilling to open up to you - have a safe adult that is each youngsters person - won’t violate their trust with you unless required for safety resources

### Discussion Prompts - Inside Out

*\*Language should be modified to be age appropriate for the child\**

*\*\*Not intended to be an interrogation, but a guide for questions and sharing\*\**

- Who is your favorite character, and why? How do you act when you feel that emotion?
- Riley’s “core memories” shape her personality. What are some of your favorite “core memories?” What emotion do you feel when you remember it? *Provide an example from your own life. (Can continue questions like: What does this say about you? or What makes this memory so special when you revisit it?)*

- Riley moved to a new city and felt a lot of emotions. Have you ever experienced a big change, like starting a new school or moving? How did you feel, and who/what helped you feel better?
- Riley's personality is represented by different "islands" (Family, Friendship, Goofball, etc.). What "islands" are in your head?
- Joy learns that letting Sadness take control is sometimes necessary. Can you think of a time when accepting sadness or another difficult emotion helped you move forward in life?

### **Discussion Prompts - Inside Out 2**

- Inside Out 2 introduces new emotions. Which new emotion do you think is most important to you now, and why? How do you feel when you experience that emotion in your own life?
- Joy and Anxiety fight for control over the "Emotional Control Panel." Who would be in charge of your "Emotional Control Panel" most of the time? Why do you think that emotion is in charge in your everyday life?
- Just like Riley faced the challenge of moving to a new school. How did you feel/are you feeling getting ready for a new school (if transitioning from ele/mid, mid/high, or some other school transition)
- Riley had to accept that her friends were no longer going to be with her? Have you experienced changing friendships/losing friendships and how did it make you feel.
- Have you experienced any other big changes recently? How did those changes make you feel? What emotions did you rely on most to get through them?
- It's important to talk about how we feel. When you're feeling a strong emotion, who do you talk to? Riley goes through a lot of new experiences as she grows up. What's something new you've tried recently? How did it make you feel at first, and how do you feel about it now?

*These prompts are simply a beginning for conversations to have with children about the movie and emotions. Be creative and fun as you add your own when talking with the special children in your life!*

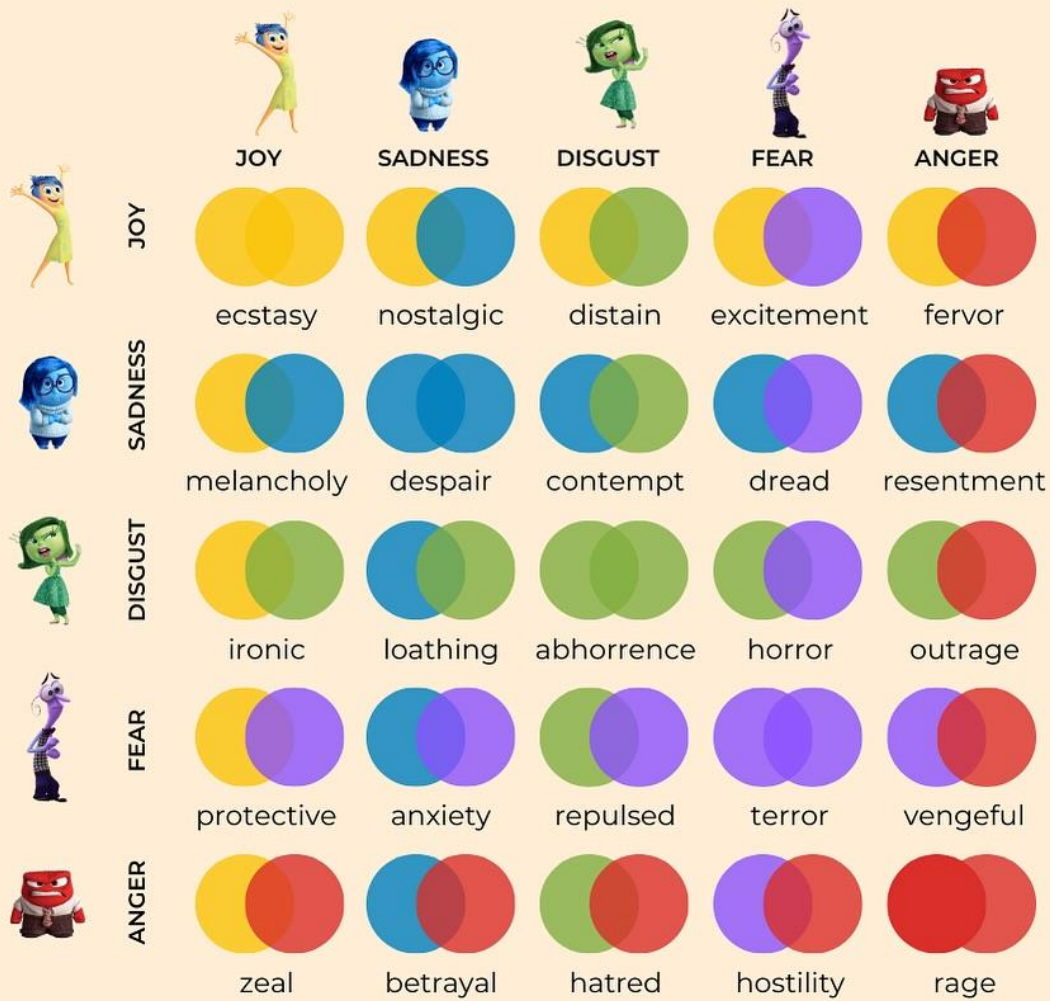
**For Pre-teens & Teens**

Both movies address the reality that sometimes emotions combine, rather than experiencing them independently.

How do you experience mixed emotions in your own life?

Can you think of a time when you felt both happy and sad or nervous and excited at the same time?

# what do you get when your emotions combine?



source: Photos from Disney/Pixar



## **Any DISCUSSION AFTER The movie is a WIN**

- Don't bring expectations - outcomes will vary
- Youngsters NEED TO KNOW you care and are willing to be open about all feelings
- Stay curious and teachable
- Role model how you identify and manage your own emotions
- All emotions deserve to be respected
- There are no right or wrong answers, or not having the ability to answer
- You cannot control, fix or manage another's emotions
- Be flexible - conversations may wander
- Breaks unspoken rules in the family impacted by addiction: Don't talk. Don't trust. Don't feel. This is where hope and healing reside!



# Activity: Inside Out

eluna

RESOURCE CENTER



My Emotion	Feels Like	Sounds Like	A memory when I felt...
Sadness			
Disgust			
Joy			
Anger			
Fear			
Anxiety			
Embarrassment			
Envy			
Ennui			

[https://elunanetwork.org/assets/files/ERC\\_Activity\\_Inside\\_Out\\_1\\_and\\_2.pdf](https://elunanetwork.org/assets/files/ERC_Activity_Inside_Out_1_and_2.pdf)



Emotional Response and Management Exercise



# Activity: Inside Out

eluna

RESOURCE CENTER

*\*Slightly Modified by NACoA*



Sadness



Disgust



Joy



Anger



Fear



Anxiety



Embarrassment



Envy



Ennui

My Emotion	Feels Like	What Can I Do?
Sadness		
Disgust		
Joy		
Anger		
Fear		
Anxiety		
Embarrassment		
Envy		
Ennui		

## Emotional Self-Regulation Tools

- Fidget Toys
- Affirmations
- Sensory Stickers
- Journal
- Listening to Calming Music
- Art
- Mindfulness Breathing/Yoga
- Ice Cube Exercise
- Extremely Sour Candy
- 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Method <https://nacoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/54321-Method.pdf>
- Emotional Dysregulation & Regulation Demo <https://nacoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Emotional-Regulation-Exercise.pdf>

## When You Observe Children Struggling with Emotions

- Inquire if they'd like to talk
- Emotional Check In/Wave - can use characters rather than emotions
- Be the mirror - state the facts/observations that concern you
- Create a more soothing environment - play soothing music, light a candle/turn on diffuser with essential oils, replace bright lights with soft lamps
- Invite them to go for a walk, sit outside, do yoga together
- Guide them to their worksheet with suggestions of how to deal with the emotion
- Determine if more resources/support are necessary

## Know Your Limits – Other Resources Available to Help

- Boys and Girls Clubs/The Y - and other family supporting organizations
- Educational Support Groups
- Supportive Camps - combine educational support with fun
- Consider Emotional Support Pets
- Counseling/Coaching
- Connect with school guidance counselor/school psychologist
- Pediatrician/ Adolescent Care Provider
- Local Health Clinics
- Outreach Coordinator at local Faith Communities
- National Nonprofits Advocating for Issues of Concern

## If Your Child is in Crisis

### Emergency 911

**\*SAMHSA National Help Line – 1.800.662.HELP (4357)** - Free, confidential 24/7/365 referral and information service



**\*988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** – 24/7 Call, Text, Chat

*\*English and Spanish*

*Make a list of the Mental Health Crisis Response resources in your community*

## **Other Tools to Help Guide Important Conversations with Kids & Teens**

### **Emotions**

Sesame Workshop - Feelings and Emotions

<https://sesameworkshop.org/resources/feelings-and-emotions/>

Child Mind Institute – How to Ask What Kids Are Feeling

<https://childmind.org/article/how-to-ask-what-kids-are-feeling-during-stressful-times>

Ideas for Teaching Children About Emotions

<https://www.ecmhc.org/ideas/emotions.html>

Children’s Emotional Development is Built into the Architecture of Their Brains

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/childrens-emotional-development-is-built-into-the-architecture-of-their-brains/>

Support Teens to Release Emotions

<https://parentandteen.com/support-teens-release-emotions/>

Mental Health America – Supporting Young Minds Guides

<https://mhanational.org/young-minds>

### **Conversations Discussing Alcohol/Substance Use and Addiction**

NACoA’s Tools for Kids

[https://nacoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Tools\\_for\\_Kids.pdf](https://nacoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Tools_for_Kids.pdf)

**\*\*NACoA’s *Tools for Parents and Caregivers* Coming in September!**

Support for Grieving COAs

[https://nacoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Support-for-Grieving-COAs.NACoA\\_.pdf](https://nacoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Support-for-Grieving-COAs.NACoA_.pdf)

Seven Cs

<https://nacoa.org/wp-admin/upload.php?item=18141>

Abstinence, Sobriety, and Recovery

<https://nacoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Abstinence-Sobriety-and-Recovery.pdf>

Sesame Workshop - *Many helpful topics, with guidance for supportive discussions*

Parental Addiction

<https://sesameworkshop.org/resources/explaining-addiction/>

Child Mind Institute – How and When do I talk to my kids about alcohol and drugs?  
[childmind.org/positiveparenting/alcohol-and-drugs/](https://childmind.org/positiveparenting/alcohol-and-drugs/)

SAMHSA Talk – They Hear You  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/parent-resources/why-you-should-talk-your-child>

HealthyChildren.org - Why to Have the Alcohol Talk Early  
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/Why-to-Have-the-Alcohol-Talk-Early.aspx>

Ask Listen and Learn - for adults with kids 9 – 13 years old  
<https://asklistenlearn.org/>

NIAAA for Middle School  
<https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohols-effects-health/niaaa-middle-school>

Wait21  
[Wait21.org](https://wait21.org)

### ***Straight Talk from Claudia Black: What Recovering Parents Should Tell Their Kids about Drugs and Alcohol***

By Claudia Black, PhD  
<https://www.amazon.com/Straight-Talk-Claudia-Black-Recovering/dp/1592850413>

### **Embrace Family Recovery Podcast**

Through conversations with family members and professionals in the field of addiction Margaret will share healthy coping strategies and ways to stop the disease of addiction from hijacking your life.  
<https://embracefamilyrecovery.com/podcast/>

### **Additional NACoA Supportive Resources**

NACoA Events – Additional opportunities through a variety of online and in person event  
<https://nacoa.org/events/>

NACoA's ACOA Education and Discussion Meeting – ideally suited for adults who were impacted by addiction as children who are looking for education and support through an online facilitate meeting, held the second Thursday each month. *Listed on the NACoA Events Page.*

NACoA Newsroom – Features weekly blogs on important topics for children & families impacted by the disease of addiction  
<https://nacoa.org/newsroom/>

NACoA's List of Spanish Resources  
<https://nacoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Spanish-Resources.NACoA24.pdf>