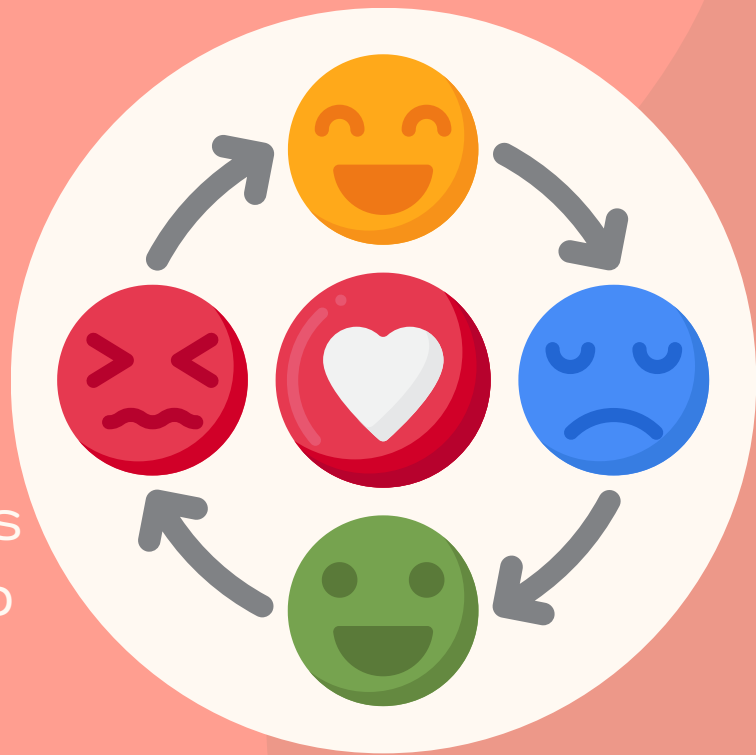




Building Emotional Intelligence in Adolescents

A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING EMPATHY, SELF-AWARENESS, SOCIAL SKILLS, AND EMOTIONS IN EVERYDAY LIFE AND BEYOND



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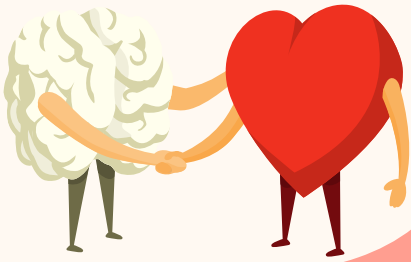


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Author's Note

This toolkit was brought to you by NAMI Mercer and created by Jacob Adam. After a certain age, children begin to understand more complex concepts beyond toys. They begin to understand concepts like self-awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and social skills,



It is vital for parents and children approaching adolescence to learn about these concepts for the sake of development and navigating through this murky period in a human's life!

What is Emotional Intelligence?

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is essential for adolescents as it enables them to effectively manage their own emotions and understand the feelings of those around them. EI comprises five key elements: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Adolescents with high EI can recognize their emotional states, comprehend their implications, and grasp how these emotions influence their behavior and interactions with peers and adults.



While it may be challenging for adolescents to "manage" the emotions of others, as they cannot directly control someone else's feelings or actions, honing the skill of identifying the underlying emotions behind others' behaviors can enhance their understanding of different perspectives and facilitate more positive and supportive relationships. By developing emotional intelligence, adolescents can navigate social dynamics with greater empathy, resilience, and effectiveness, laying the groundwork for healthier personal and interpersonal development during these formative years.



Understanding Emotions

To properly understand emotions in adolescence, it was better to get them from the source. The Child Mind Institute asked some high school students what their emotions and feelings were. These sessions were done with health professionals licensed in the U.S.



The video player shows a thumbnail for a video titled "For Kids in High School UNDERSTANDING FEELINGS". The thumbnail features a young woman with long dark hair looking directly at the camera. The video player includes a play button, a progress bar at 0:00 / 4:54, and various control icons like volume, closed captions, settings, and full screen. Logos for Child Mind Institute and The California Healthy Minds Thriving Kids Project are visible in the bottom left corner.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTeYpQ32JP8>

5 Components of Emotional Intelligence

Self-Regulation	Why it is important: Converting negative thoughts and emotions into positive ones and knowing when to pause between emotions and actions	When it comes up: Coping with stress and making healthier choices
Social Skills	Why is it important: Being approachable and easy to talk to for all-kinds of people	When it comes up: When forming friends and in group activities
Empathy	Why it is important: Being able to walk in someone's shoes, to be compassionate and understanding	When it comes up: Engaging teams in a workplace
Motivation	Why it is important: Drives our actions, influences how we regulate emotions, navigate social interactions, and pursue goals	When it comes up: Experiencing increased academic, social, and personal responsibilities
Self-Awareness	Why it is important: The ability to recognize your strengths & weaknesses, along with when it is necessary to pause and evaluate your emotional state and thoughts before taking action	When it comes up: Participating in social interaction in a middle school or high school setting



Developing Self-Awareness

- Ask for feedback!

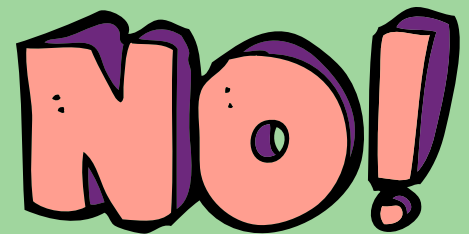
Change and correct maladaptive views that you have built into your self-image



- Recognize your Strengths & Weaknesses!
Know your limits! Know your abilities and what you can further work on.

- Practice Saying “No”

Set goals and resist distractions in your daily life. This will result in long-term satisfaction



- Monitor your Self-Talk

Make sure it is positive! Celebrate your wins and do not dwell on your losses



Fostering Empathy

Discuss how a character in a story might be feeling.



Talk about a friend you suspect might be in trouble, how you can help them, and what was going through your mind then.



TED Talk



<https://youtu.be/sKpWYi6j55w?si=tz57BOtlBLx8Vasi>

When Coping with Difficult Emotions...



- Re-evaluate the five components of EI

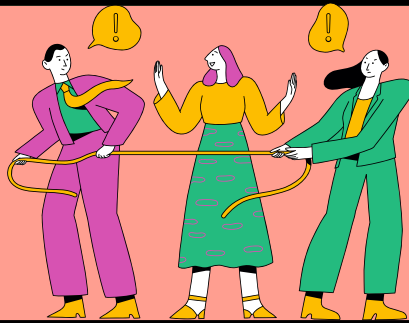
- When overwhelmed, seek support and help from trusted adults, friends, or mental health professionals.



- Engage in activities that promote relaxation and stress relief, such as hobbies, exercise, or spending time in nature.

Applying Emotional Intelligence in Real Life Relationships

Conflict resolution: Using EI skills to manage disagreements constructively and find mutually beneficial solutions.



Peer interactions: Demonstrating empathy and understanding in peer interactions, fostering a supportive social environment



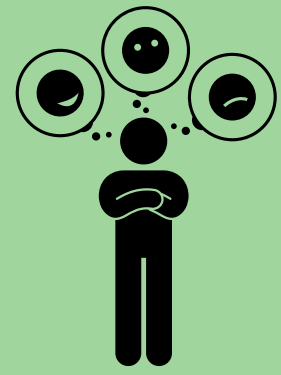
Romantic relationships: Building trust, communication, and respect through EI skills, leading to healthier partnerships.

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in the development and well-being of adolescents. Through understanding and managing your own emotions, as well as empathizing with others, adolescents can navigate the complexities of social interactions, academic challenges, and personal growth more effectively. Cultivating emotional intelligence not only enhances your interpersonal relationships but also equips you with valuable skills for resilience, conflict resolution, and decision-making.

As adolescents continue to mature and face the inevitable ups and downs of life, nurturing emotional intelligence remains a fundamental aspect of your journey toward becoming confident, empathetic, and emotionally resilient adults. Therefore, fostering emotional intelligence in adolescents should be prioritized in educational and familial settings to support your encompassing development and prepare you for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

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