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Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from *The Social-Emotional Learning Playbook* by Nancy Frey, Douglas Fisher, and Dominique Smith.

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EMOTIONAL REGULATION CONTINUES WITH STUDENTS

Much of what we discussed in the previous section, which was focused on your own emotional regulation, applies to students too. Like adults, students make mistakes with their emotional regulation and under-react or overreact. They are still developing the skills to recognize and manage their emotions. And we all know that when someone is in a high emotion state, learning is compromised. Jones et al. (2017) note that “children must learn to recognize, express, and regulate their emotions before they can be expected to interact with others who are engaged in the same set of processes” (p. 16). The whole point of having emotions is to focus our attention and motivate us to take action. Think of a feeling that you’ve recently experienced.

Emotion itself is not bad (or good).

What is that feeling telling you to focus on? We need to discard the idea that some emotions are good and others are bad. We are emotional beings, and our emotions help us make decisions and take action. It’s when we fail to regulate our actions that bad things can happen. But the emotion itself is not bad (or good).

Emotional regulation for students begins with learning the names of emotions and matching those labels to the feelings that are going on inside. For younger students, the zones of regulation (Kuypers, 2013) provide a color-based vocabulary for expressing emotional states:

- **Blue zone:** I am feeling sad, sick, tired, bored, moving slowly
- **Green zone:** I am feeling happy, calm, okay, focused, ready to learn
- **Yellow zone:** I am feeling frustrated, worried, silly/wiggly, excited, a little out of control
- **Red zone:** I am feeling mad/angry, terrified, yelling/hitting, elated, out of control

Using this system, students learn that

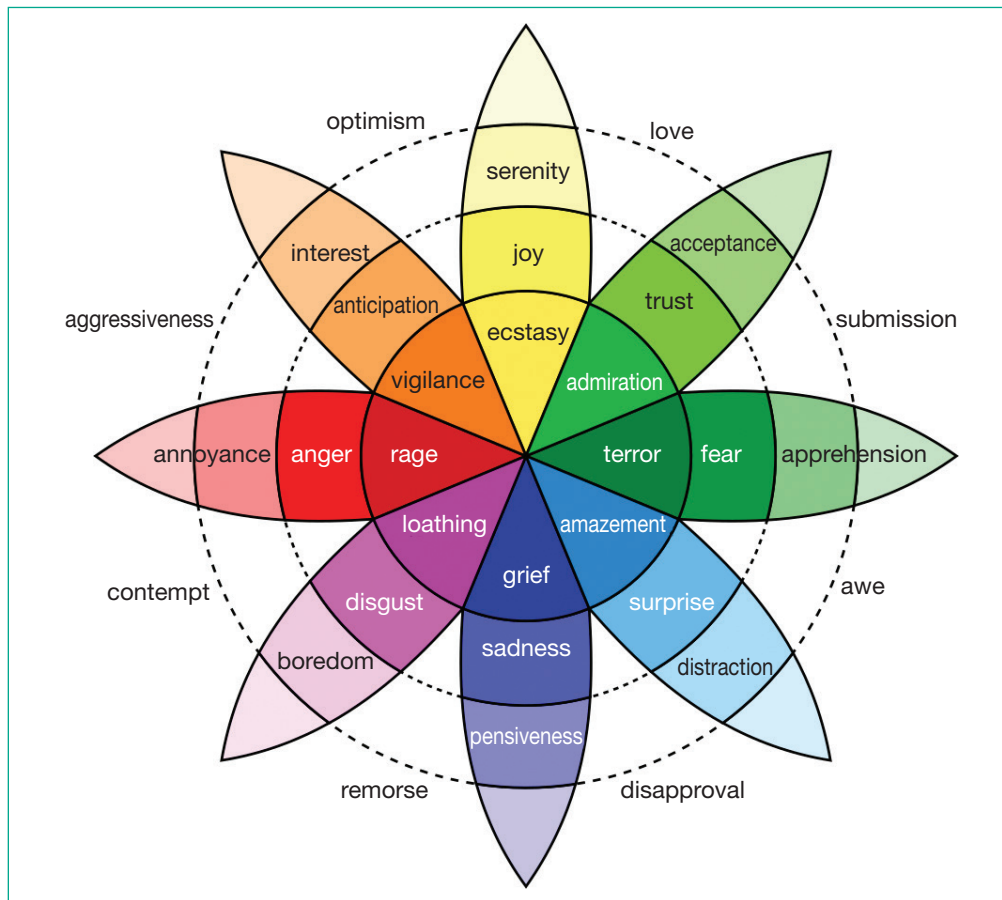
- We all have emotions.
- There are names for the feelings that we have.
- Emotions are not good or bad.
- There are ways to respond when you experience a specific emotion.

Older students are introduced to a more complex model of emotions, such as the framework developed by Plutchik (2002; see Figure 3.2), which suggests that there are eight basic emotions: joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, anticipation, anger, and disgust. Notice that this model creates opposites:

- Joy is the opposite of sadness.
- Fear is the opposite of anger.
- Anticipation is the opposite of surprise.
- Disgust is the opposite of trust.

This model also acknowledges combinations, such as how anticipation and joy combine to become optimism, and joy and trust combine to become love. Plutchik (2001) believed that humans have the capacity to experience 34,000 unique emotions. Emotions are complex and being able to recognize that there may be many emotions occurring simultaneously is a valuable skill, especially when it comes to regulating those emotions.

FIGURE 3.2 WHEEL OF EMOTIONS



SOURCE: Emotional Wheel by Robert Plutchik.

The group Six Seconds (n.d.) provides a free download of their Emotoscope (www.6seconds.org/free-emotoscope-feeling-chart), which organizes emotions into categories and then provides a list of words, a sentence, the purpose, and the sensation for each emotion. The document is four pages long and can be used to teach students about their emotions. For example, in the category *mad*, *annoyed* is one of the words.

- The *sentence* reads: I feel annoyed because things are not going my way.
- The *purpose* reads: Focus attention on a problem you've ignored. Note that each emotion serves a purpose for the person experiencing it.

- The *sensations* are agitation, headache, tense muscles.

As another example, in the category *glad*, *confident* is one of the words.

- The *sentence* reads: I feel confident because I know I can meet my goals.
- The *purpose* reads: Reinforce the value of your efforts.
- And the *sensations* are eyes relaxed, head held high, relaxed body.

One of the benefits of this Emotoscope is the sensation experienced as these words help students identify what they are feeling and then create a label for the experience.

Brackett and Frank (2017) suggest that students be provided with regular opportunities to gauge their emotional state in different settings. They provide four questions that educators can use to invite self-reflection and discussion:

1. How do you feel at the start of the school day?
2. What emotions do you feel throughout the day while learning?
3. Do you feel differently when walking in the hallway, sitting in the lunchroom, or at recess or passing period?
4. How do you feel at the end of the school day?

These questions require that students recognize their feelings and have names for them. This is the first step to regulating emotions and developing habits that are appropriate responses to the range of emotions we all experience throughout our day.



NOTE TO SELF

Consider the ways in which you can teach students about emotions, specifically how to name the emotions that they experience. Some ideas are included below that you might adapt or adopt. These are all from our colleagues who offered some ideas. They may or may not all work for you. Take note of ideas you have for this aspect of teaching.

ADVICE FROM A COLLEAGUE	MY ADOPTION OR ADAPTATION PLAN
Create a place in the classroom where emotions are posted and have students identify which emotions they are experiencing.	

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<p>Notice the emotions of characters in books as you are reading. Label the emotions and talk about the way that you knew that the character was experiencing that emotion.</p>	
<p>Host class check-ins using the questions from Brackett and Frank (2017) inviting students to describe what they are feeling.</p>	
<p>Provide each student with an emotion wheel to keep at their desk so that they can refer to it when their state changes.</p>	
<p>Play emotional charades. Have students write down emotions on slips of paper and draw one at a time with a volunteer student acting it out while the class attempts to name it.</p>	
<p>Create writing prompts and journal entries in which students describe a situation and their emotional response.</p>	
<p>Additional ideas from colleagues:</p>	
<p>Recommendations for my colleagues:</p>	