

I DEAL

# Dealing with Emotions



Module

of War Child's I DEAL intervention



*What to do with our feelings?*





War Child Holland is an independent international non-governmental organization. The organization invests in a peaceful future of children affected by armed conflict. War Child Holland is part of War Child International, a network of independent organizations.

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## THEME INTRODUCTION

What are emotions, or feelings? What are they good for? Should we master our emotions?

In this module we will show that being aware of your emotions is important, especially when growing up.

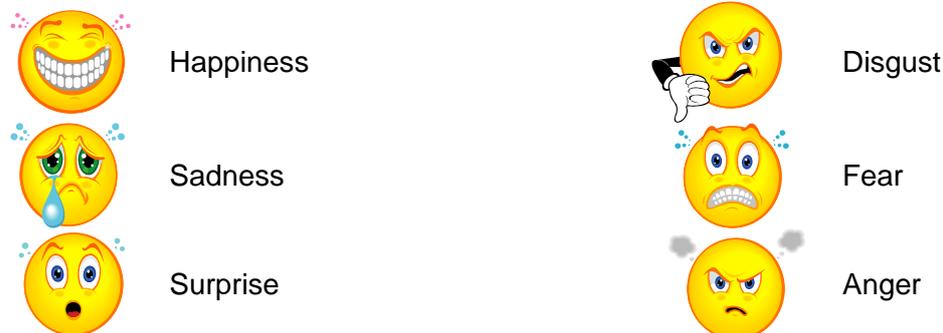
*Emotion is an affective state in which joy, sorrow, fear, hate, or the like, is experienced, as distinguished from reason or will. Emotions are human beings' 'thermometers' as to what is really going on around them. Emotions are usually accompanied by bodily changes, like increased heartbeat and sweating.*

Emotions lead us. Thus, human beings are led by more than just reason (thinking). Often we first have an emotion, then we think, and then we act.

Emotions can be recognized through facial expression or other physical reactions like crying, shaking, or body posture.

### **Are emotions universal?**

Some emotions and their corresponding facial expressions are universal across human cultures. Universal emotions are:



Subsequently there are numerous possible emotional reactions that will greatly differ per situation, person and culture.

Specific emotional responses, as well as a group's interpretation of their significance, may be influenced by cultural norms. Different societies deal differently with emotions such as love, hate, and the desire for vengeance. What in one society will be considered cruel may provoke responses of enjoyment in another society. Or, talking about sex may be normal in some cultures, while this would provoke shame or disgust in others. In other words: Emotion and the way you react depend on social conventions, expectations, norms, and behavior of the group in which you live.

## ***Why are emotions important?***

Emotions are functional. They are believed to serve the following human interests:

### **Survival**

Our emotions have the potential to serve as a delicate and sophisticated internal guidance system. Our emotions alert us when a natural human need is not met. For example, when we feel lonely, our need for connection with other people is not met. When we feel afraid, our need for safety is not met. When we feel rejected, it is our need for acceptance, which is not met. Thus, emotions urge us to go and look for that connection, safety, and acceptance – all necessary for human survival.

### **Decision making**

Our emotions are a valuable source of information. Our emotions help us make decisions. Studies show that people with brain damage, whose emotional connections malfunction, cannot make even simple decisions. Why? Because you need to know how you will feel about your choices.

### **Boundary setting**

When we feel uncomfortable with a person's behavior, our emotions alert us. If we learn to trust our emotions and feel confident expressing ourselves, we can let the other person know we feel uncomfortable as soon as we are aware of our feeling. Or we may decide to keep our distance from that person. In any case, emotions help us to set boundaries, which are necessary to protect our physical and mental health.

### **Communication**

Our emotions help us communicate. Our facial expressions, for example, convey a wide range of emotions. If we look sad or hurt, we are signaling to others that we need their help. If we are verbally skilled we will be able to express more of our emotional needs and thereby have a better chance of filling them. If we are effective at listening to the emotional troubles of others, we are better able to help them feel understood, important and cared for.

### **Happiness**

The only real way to know that you are happy is to *feel* happy. When we feel happy, we feel content and fulfilled. This feeling originates from having our needs met, particularly our emotional needs. We can be warm, dry, and full of food, but still unhappy. Our emotions and our feelings let us know when we are unhappy; when something is missing or needed. The better we identify our emotions, the easier it will be to determine what we need to be happy.

For children to develop in a healthy way it is important that they learn to recognize their emotions. They need to realize why they have certain emotions, to learn how to express their emotions in a culturally appropriate way and how to deal with their emotions. A child needs to learn that when he or she is angry, not to become physically aggressive towards others, but to try and talk about his emotion with his peers or with trusted adults. Or when a child is afraid it needs to understand why it is afraid (“Am I in danger? Then I should look for safety”).

The ability to express and deal with emotions, as well as being able to recognize and deal with the emotions of others, are powerful coping mechanisms that will enhance children’s resilience in difficult situations.

### **Goal of this module**

Children have more tools to recognize and deal with their own emotions and those of others in a constructive way.

#### **Session 1: What are emotions?**

Goal: Children have learned to differentiate between emotions

In this first session you will make the children familiar with the concept of emotions. Some may not even know the word. If you, being the facilitator, give examples the children can identify with, or give examples of your own emotions and vulnerabilities, the children are more likely to open up.

#### **Session 2: When and how do you react?**

Goal: Children have more understanding of their own emotions and reactions

The second session will trigger the children to think about their *own* emotions. You will invite them to identify what is happening in their hearts and minds. Hopefully, you will get them to speak out on their feelings.

#### **Session 3: How to deal with emotions?**

Goal: Children have learned to deal with their emotions in a constructive way

In the third session, you will put forward different situations in which strong emotional reactions may occur. You will make them aware of the effect of their reactions on other people. They will learn about alternative reactions to strong emotions.



## SESSION 1: WHAT ARE EMOTIONS?

**Goal:** Children have learned to differentiate between emotions

**Methods:** Group talk  
Exercises  
After-talk

**Resources:** 10 Cards with different emotions on it: Happy, Frustrated, Sad, Furious, Shocked, Shy, Surprised, Proud, Irritated, and Fearful



### Group talk

Welcome everybody! Let us start with a game to warm up.



### Exercise 1: Follow the leader

*Warming up (5-10 minutes).*

1. *Make the children stand in a circle.*
2. *Step forward with a certain sound & movement (for example 'Helloooo' with a happy voice & gesture).*
3. *Let the whole group imitate exactly what you did.*
4. *Go on making a variety of sounds and movements using different emotions that the group can imitate. (You can say hello in a 100 different ways: angry, sad, proud, arrogant, afraid, hopeful, loud voice, small voice, etc.). The more varieties you make, the more you stimulate expression and imagination within the group.*
5. *When the group gets 'hang of it', let (different) children facilitate a round.*



*Note: make sure to maintain the 'rhythm' (tempo) of the game.*



### Group talk

Welcome everybody! The coming 3 sessions we are going to look at emotions. Who knows what emotions are? *(Children will answer).*



*Note: beforehand, identify the word 'emotion' in the local language. There might not be one single word for it (!) which implies you will need some time to explain what an emotion is.*

Emotions are feelings of people. In the game we just did, we also saw emotions. Which emotions did you recognize? (Happy, sad, angry) Who of you is sometimes happy? And sad? And angry? Are you always angry? No! Feelings can change. It depends on what happens in your life.

Having those feelings is normal. But if you are ALWAYS angry, or ALWAYS sad then there is something wrong. (You can give an example of your own life.)

There are 6 basic emotions: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, disgust and surprise. Other emotions like loneliness, confusion, excitement etc can be linked into those 6 basic ones.

Is it important that you know your emotions? Yes, it is important, since you will have emotions and you will (re)act on them. Sometimes you will (re)act in a good way, but sometimes it can be negative. In the next exercise we will look at different emotions.



### Exercise 2: Emotion relay

*Reading emotions from different facial expressions (15-20 minutes).*

1. Divide the group in 4 smaller groups. Make the groups stand at a distance from one another, so that one group will not disturb another.
2. Ask each group to stand in line.
3. Let the numbers 1 (those children standing in front) face you. Ask the others to turn their back, so they cannot see what happens.
4. Ask the numbers 1 to come forward and show them one of the prepared cards with an emotion. (Or whisper the emotion into their ear).
5. Ask the numbers 1 to run back to their group, tap number 2 on the shoulder, who then turns around. The numbers 1 express the given emotion, **without talking**.
6. Now number 2 should tap number 3 on the shoulder and show him/her the same emotion, et cetera.
7. As soon as the last one in line has understood the emotion, let him/her run forward to you. The child picks the card with the right emotion on it. If correct it is a point. (Keep the score for the 4 groups!)
8. Repeat the game with a new front (wo)man; preferably as many times as necessary to give every child the opportunity to be number 1.
9. The group with the most points is the Emotion Champs of that session!



### Group talk

It is important to recognize emotions. You can read emotions from somebody's face. How else can you know what someone is feeling? How would you, for instance, see that somebody is angry? (Let the children answer and **show** what they mean (gestures or other body language, tone of voice).

In the following game we will try to show emotions in different ways, with the whole body.



### Exercise 3: Cover the space

*Concentrating on quickly finding an emotion (5-15 minutes).*

1. Ask the children to just walk around the space - without talking or making contact with others..
2. Tell them to constantly try and cover the whole space. This means they should constantly try to fill up empty space.

3. *Instruct them to 'freeze' when you clap. This means that everybody stops moving immediately and freeze into the exact position they happen to be in. When you shout 'move', the children have to start moving again.*
4. *Repeat this a couple of times, until you see people are able to respond well to those instructions.*
5. *Now add the following instructions. Explain that before the clap, you will call out different things, in order to make them freeze in a certain way. Things like professions, people or feelings. Children have to freeze into a position expressing the instruction you gave.*
6. *Start easy with instructions like: driver, mother, teacher, child, etc.*
7. *Then bring in emotions, like: happy, sad, angry, shy, surprised, etc*
8. *Expand by combining a person/profession and an emotion, like: happy child, angry driver.*
9. *Expand by introducing different situations the children can relate to: football team that won a game, children who lost their parents, siblings fighting over food etc.*



### **Group talk**

Well done! As you have seen, emotions can be shown in different ways: your face, the way you walk; the way you act and behave. (Give some examples of what you have observed from the children. For instance when you mentioned 'sad' you saw some kids 'crying'.)

Emotions are followed by reactions. A reaction to being sad, for instance, is crying. If you are angry, some children want to fight. Next time we will look at that: how you react on emotions.



### **Assignment for next time**

For next time: think for yourself how you react when you are, for instance, sad or angry. What do you do? Use your diary to write these things down.

### **Exercise 4: Miss Mamboleo**

*Closing game (5-15 minutes).*

1. *Ask the group to form a circle.*
2. *Explain to the group that we are all looking for Miss Mamboleo.*
3. *Start yourself by asking your neighbor: 'I am looking for Miss Mamboleo. Have you seen her?' But, while talking, you cannot show your teeth! So while speaking, everybody has to hide their teeth (by putting their lips over their teeth)*
4. *Instruct that neighbor to answer: 'No I haven't seen her. But let me ask my neighbor'.(check if the neighbor is not showing teeth!)*
5. *She or he will then turn to his/her neighbor to ask for Miss Mamboleo using the same lines. The neighbor will answer with the same lines, etc. Until the message has gone around and has come back to you.*
6. *Tell the children that most of the time, people speak to each other with a certain emotion. We will now try this with different emotions. Now repeat the exercise while imagining that everyone is desperate to find Miss Mamboleo. That*

- despair is to be seen and heard in the way you ask where Miss Mamboleo is.  
When it reaches to the last child, the emotion has to be as strong as possible!*
7. *Again, now in a happy way (e.g. because there is great news for Miss Mamboleo).  
Try some emotions.*

## SESSION 2: WHEN AND HOW DO YOU REACT?

Goal:	Children have more understanding of their own emotions and reactions
Methods:	Group talk Exercises After talk
Resources:	Emotional worksheet (see annex on page 15)



### Group talk

Welcome everybody! Let us start with a game to warm up.



### Exercise 1: Repetition

*Repeat the game you ended with last week in order to warm up (5-10 minutes).*

*Do the same Miss Mamboleo game and add different emotions: an angry version, or a bored or happy version.*



### Group talk

Today we will look at how you react to emotions. Everybody has emotions and everybody reacts to emotions. That is normal. Some reactions are helpful; others are not.

Did you do your assignment? In small groups you can share your answers in the following exercise.



### Exercise 2: Emotional worksheet

*Reflecting on personal emotions and reactions (20-40 minutes).*

- 1. Divide the group in small groups of 5. Separate girls from boys if you think this is more suitable.*
- 2. Make the children discuss the results of last week's assignment. How do the individual children react when being sad? Or happy? Or angry? Explain that each child in the group can say something about their own emotions and reactions. Let them think of examples from their daily lives.*
- 3. Hand out the emotional worksheet, one for each child. Make the children have a look at the questions.*
- 4. Ask the children to discuss the answers in their small group.*
- 5. Let them choose one emotion and reaction and make a small drama play of it. It can be just a small scene in which that emotion comes forward. So once the children have chosen the emotion & the reaction, they will have to think of a*

situation to show in the drama scene. ' They will have to divide roles and think of the small story' they want to show.

6. Set a stage and make each group perform the play/scene while the rest is audience! If time, let the audience give feedback on what they saw after each scene.



*Note: as facilitator you have to help the small groups. See if everybody can contribute; stop them from teasing somebody with a certain feeling or reaction. Emphasize that everybody has feelings and that this is a normal thing. The Emotional worksheet only discusses the emotions happiness, sadness, anger and fear, because these are the easiest to recognize - and the most relevant emotions.*



### **Assignment for next time**

Ask yourself: when do I get a certain emotion and how did I react? And was that reaction helping me? Or was it not?

### **Exercise 3: Pass the bird**

*Closing game (5-10 minutes).*

1. Make the children stand in a circle.
2. Make a 'cup' of your two hands and tell them that you are holding a very small bird in your hands. And that you are going to pass the bird around the circle.
3. Let the imaginary bird pass around the circle once. Tell the children that they must be very careful while handing over the bird, as it is very small.
4. Pass the bird around again and ask the children to whisper or say something nice to the bird. Like: hello little bird, I like you because your wings are so beautiful.
5. Tell the children that the bird wants to fly but that it needs their help. Cautiously throw it across the circle to each other and catch.
6. Let someone 'throw' the bird up in the air and everyone wave goodbye.

**Annex to Session 2: My emotional worksheet**

<b>My emotional worksheet</b>
<b>My name is:</b>
<b>I am happiest when...</b>
<b>I am saddest when...</b>
<b>I hate it when...</b>
<b>My greatest fear is...</b>
<b>When I am happy, I...</b>
<b>When I am sad, I...</b>
<b>When I am angry, I...</b>
<b>When I am frightened, I...</b>
<b>Sometimes I feel...</b>
<b>And when I do (feel like this) I would...</b>



## SESSION 3: HOW TO DEAL WITH EMOTIONS?

Goal: Children have learned to deal with their emotions

Methods: Group talk  
Exercises  
After talk

Resources: 3 big cards depicting an A, B and C respectively



### Group talk

Welcome everybody! Let us start with a game to warm up.



### Exercise 1: Repetition

*Repeat the game you ended with last week in order to warm up (5-10 minutes).*

*Pass the bird and tell the bird about your week.*



### Group talk

Today we look at how we *deal* with emotions.

Emotions and reactions are linked to something that happens. Did you notice that last week? Can you give us some examples? *(The children give examples).*

Let me give you an example *(or give an example one of the kids told you)*: your mother was angry with you and yelled at you. That made you feel sad and also a bit angry. Then your little sister came to ask you to carry her and you got really angry with her so that you want to slap her....

This is just an example, but it *does* happen like that, right? Today we will look at how we can deal with our emotions and with our reactions. This is not easy. But let us try.



### Exercise 2: Role play

*Thinking about and testing the adequacy of emotional reactions in given situations (30-45 minutes).*

- 1. Divide the group in small groups of 5 or 6 children.*
- 2. Make the small groups discuss the assignment of last week. Ask every child to give one example of a situation, emotions and reaction.*
- 3. Let the group pick one situation and ask them to make two short role-plays: first one with the situation, emotion and a negative reaction (a reaction that does not help to solve the situation or that leads to more problems). Then the same role-play, with the same situation and emotion BUT change the reaction in something more helpful.*

4. Ask them to show the role-plays to the other groups.
5. Gather the whole group and discuss the role-plays: what are helpful, constructive reactions? Is it difficult to react like this? Why is it, for instance, easier to beat somebody than to sit down to tell him that you did not like what he just said or did? Yet, the latter option is better for everyone to feel good and happy!



*Note: take your time for this! Really let the children talk about their reactions. If you feel that your group needs more time to discuss dealing with emotions, then spend another session on it. Discuss this with your supervisor or make your own plan for an extra session.*



### **Exercise 3: Emotion & reaction quiz**

*Discussing emotional reactions (15-20 minutes).*

1. Make three 'answering posts' with the cards you prepared: A, B and C. For instance, attach the three cards to the wall - not too close to one another.
2. Let all children stand in a line, about 10 meters from the answering posts. Position yourself in such a way that all children can hear you.
3. Read aloud the first quiz question from the annex on page 20.
4. Read aloud the three possible answers. Ask the children to pick one. Explain them to demonstrate their choice by running to the corresponding answering posts.
5. Ask the group what they think is the best answer - and why.
6. Give the right answer and explain why. Reason why the other options are not right.
7. Proceed to the next question and follow steps 4 to 6 again.



*Note: the purpose of this quiz is to make children think. This is not an assessment to see how many children know the correct answer. So do not mark results as a teacher does at school. Instead, discuss the given emotional reactions.*



*Note: you also can do this quiz in small groups so that kids have to discuss about the answer before choosing one.*



### **Module evaluation**

Evaluate the module, by presenting questions like:

- What have you learned about this theme?
- What was easy, what was difficult for you?
- Did you already use something you learned in I DEAL in your daily life?
- If so, how? If not, what is keeping you from using it?
- Did you miss anything? What else would you have liked to learn about this theme?



#### **Exercise 4: Closing song**

*Pick the group's favorite game to close this last session or sing this song (5-10 min).*

1. *Let the children form a circle.*
2. *Sing and clap:*  
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)  
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)  
If you're happy and you know it and you really want to show it, if you're happy  
and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)
3. *Let the children sing and clap along with the whole group.*
4. *Change to other emotions, for instance:*  
If you're angry and you know it, stamp your feet (stamp, stamp) et cetera.  
If you're sad and you know it, cry it out (whhiiijj, whhhiiijj)

### **Annex to Session 3: Emotions & reactions quiz - questions**

Note: the bold answers are the correct answers.

Note: you can come up with other questions if you know better ones, or if you wish to have more than these ten.

1. What do you do when a boy in class calls you a liar?
  - A. You kick him.
  - B. You ask him: "Why did you call me a liar?"**
  - C. You start crying and run to your mother.
  
2. Your friend just won a football match. You yourself also love to play football, but you were not chosen for the team. Still, you are angry about that. Your friend comes to inform you that he won the match. He is very excited and wants to tell about the match. What do you do?
  - A. You tell him to stop bothering you.
  - B. You pretend to listen, but you do not want to hear what he is saying.
  - C. You listen to him. It is not his fault that you are not in the team.**
  
3. You had a very good mark for mathematics at school and you are very happy. What do you do?
  - A. You run home and start telling about your marks to the first person you meet there.**
  - B. You tell your best friend.**
  - C. You do not tell anybody.
  
4. Your mom is angry at you, but you do not know why. What do you do?
  - A. You run away from home to your auntie's place.
  - B. You find out why she is angry.**
  - C. You get angry too.
  
5. Your friend asks you to come with him, because he wants to tease a girl near the borehole. What do you?
  - A. You go with him.
  - B. You say that you are busy doing other things.
  - C. You tell him that is not a nice thing to do, teasing others.**

6. A friend accuses you of having stolen his books. This is untrue, but your friend is really angry. What do you do?
- A. You fight.
  - B. You go home and decide this boy is no longer your friend.
  - C. You ask him why he thinks that you have stolen his books and explain that you did not.**
7. A boy or girl tells you he/she is in love with you. You however like him or her but you feel you are too young for love. What do you do?
- A. You start crying.
  - B. You tell him that you are too young and just want to be friends.**
  - C. You run to the teacher and tell him or her.
8. You and your friends are at the borehole. A man comes to you and start pushing your friend, who is a girl. The man wants to have sex with her. What do you do?
- A. You run away and hide, leaving your friend behind.
  - B. You start shouting for help.**
  - C. You report to your parents.**
9. You didn't sleep well. You had a bad dream. What do you do?
- A. You tell somebody you trust.**
  - B. You run away from home, because you fear your home now.
  - C. You keep quiet.
10. You have been asked to perform at the music gala of the school. You feel very pleased, but also scared to perform. What do you do?
- A. On the day of the gala you report being sick and run away.
  - B. You tell yourself: I can do this!**
  - C. You tell your teacher: "please select somebody else!".