

Respecting Our (Emotional) Selves

This lesson gives students an opportunity to develop specific strategies to help them cope with emotional experiences, giving them greater opportunity for self-care and self-respect.

Respect Sub-Concept(s)

Self-care, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

25-30 minutes

Required Materials

Caring for Ourselves and our Emotions worksheet (see below)

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Explore healthy ways to care for their own mental and emotional health.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Write a positive affirmation on the board today to remind everyone (including yourself!) that you are a valuable member of the class.

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Revise this lesson to be sensitive to students who have experienced (or who regularly experience) traumatic situations that would make discussing what makes them scared or angry difficult.
- Pre-assign partners (for the think-pair-share) so kids are branching out from their usual friend groups.

Share



3-5 minutes

Open by reviewing the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation's definition of **respect**: *Treating people, places, and things with kindness*. Remind students that this also means treating ourselves with kindness.

If this works for your class dynamic, invite students to turn to their neighbor (or to your pre-assigned partner, if applicable) and ask them to share one **positive emotion** they experienced in the last week and what they did when they noticed that emotion. Model this for the class first before having them share with each other.

If you don't feel students would be comfortable sharing, you can turn this into a journaling exercise.



Inspire

5-7 minutes

Write the following quote on the board:

“No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” —Eleanor Roosevelt

Ask students what they think this quote means. Essentially this means that we have the power to decide how we are going to feel about something that we hear, see, or experience. Sometimes this is hard to understand or even believe, but knowing that we are in charge of our emotions helps us respect ourselves and others.

There are healthy and unhealthy ways to care for our emotional well-being, which can impact how we feel. What are some unhealthy ways we can treat ourselves? I think Eleanor Roosevelt would say allowing someone else to make us feel bad about ourselves is one unhealthy way that we treat ourselves. What do you think?

Invite student response.

Ask: What are some healthy ways we can treat ourselves?

Invite student response.

Remember, our goal is to show ourselves respect first so that we can show respect to others.



Empower

10-15 minutes

Hand out the “Caring for Ourselves and Our Emotions” sheet. Then divide the students into pairs.

With their partner, students should discuss what these tips for self-care mean and some ways that you can follow the tips. After students have completed the activity sheet, invite students to share some of their ideas. Explain that they will be taking their “Caring for Ourselves and Our Emotions” sheet home to discuss with their parents, guardian, or the trusted adults they live with.



Reflect

5 minutes

To gauge understanding of the material, choose one or more of the reflection questions as discussion, writing, or journal prompts. Consider providing additional time for deeper reflection as needed.

Reflection Questions

- How can these tips help you be kind to yourself?
- Why do you think it's important to be kind to yourself?
- Do you think mental health is as important as physical health? Why or why not?



Extension Ideas

- Have students take home the completed “Caring for Ourselves and Our Emotions” worksheet and the Home Extension Activity sheet. Ask them to discuss some of the tips and ways they can try these tips with their parent, guardian, or a trusted adult they live with and also answer the questions on the Home Extension Activity sheet.
- After a week of trying these techniques discuss the following with the students:
 - Did you try any of these tips at home? Did they help you manage your feelings in a way that showed kindness to yourself?
 - What are some ways to handle negative feelings?
 - What ways did your family discuss that they could support you? Encourage students to continue practicing these techniques and check-in with them regularly about whether they are helping them manage emotions more effectively.



The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>

Caring for Ourselves and Our Emotions

Directions: Below are some tips for staying mentally and emotionally healthy. With your partner, discuss what each tip means and ways you can try this tip. Write your own answers in the space provided.

Tip	What does this mean?	What are some ways you can try this?
1. Give your brain a break.		
2. Exercise your brain.		
3. Eat healthy.		
4. Notice and feel your feelings.		
5. Don't avoid your problems.		
6. Accept the sad or bad things that happen in your life.		
7. Help yourself to feel better.		

Home Extension Activity

Name _____

Return by _____

As part of the Random Acts of Kindness program, we have been talking in class about taking care of ourselves, and how doing so affects how we feel. We discussed the following tips:

- Give your brain a break.
- Exercise your brain.
- Eat healthy.
- Notice and feel your feelings.
- Don't avoid your problems.
- Accept the sad or bad things that happen in your life.
- Help yourself to feel better.

Directions: Discuss the following questions and write or have your student write responses below or on the back and return to school by the date shown:

Do you think these tips can help you? What specific ways are you going to try to use these tips this week to show kindness to yourself?

What are some ways we can learn to handle negative feelings?

How can we support you at home?
