



Coping Skill: Getting to Know Your Feelings

Welcome back!

For our next coping skill, we're going to talk about getting to know your feelings.

First, I'm going to tell you a little bit about why it's so important to know your own feelings. Then, I'll tell you about 5 different ways you can practice being more aware of your emotions, and then we'll give them a try together! Ready?

So what *ARE* feelings? Feelings are just signals from your body that help your brain understand what's happening. These signals can actually help us make good decisions. For example, if you're not a good swimmer, you might be afraid to go in the deep end of the pool. That fear is a good thing, because that choice to stay away from the water could help you stay safe.

Sometimes it's really easy to know what you're feeling. You might notice yourself feeling sad, or angry, or happy. But other times, we can forget to pay attention to our emotions.

Being more aware of your feelings is an important skill that can help you know yourself better, make good decisions in difficult situations, and get along better with others. So let's practice!

Number One: Notice and Name Your Feelings

Let's start by just noticing how you feel right now. Close your eyes, and see if you can find what it is that you're feeling at this moment. Maybe relaxed? Or excited? Whatever it is, say the name of the feeling to yourself.

Great job!

The next step is to try and notice and name your feelings when things are happening in your everyday life. You might feel proud when you do well on a test, or disappointed when you don't. You might feel nervous when you're waiting to see how you did on a test! Or you might feel happy, or relaxed, when you're spending time with your friends. Whatever it is you're feeling, just try to pause throughout the day and say the word to yourself. This is how we start to build the habit of knowing and noticing our feelings.

Number Two: Track and Rate Your Emotions

I want you to pick one feeling. Got it? Now you're going to track that feeling for the rest of the day, or tomorrow if you need more time. Notice how often you feel it. Let's say you chose happy. Maybe you feel happy when you run into your friend, or happy because school let out for the day, or happy to eat your favorite snack. Everytime you feel this feeling, pause and notice. You can even write it down.

The other thing you can try is rating your feelings. Let's start with the feeling you noticed in yourself right now, from step one. Is the feeling mild, medium, or strong? You can also use a scale of 1 to 10. What do you think?

You're already getting better at noticing how you're feeling. So let's move on to Number Three!

Number Three: Learn Some New Words for Feelings

Once you've started noticing your feelings, you might realize that you're running out of words, or can't quite find the right one to describe your emotions. Let's try right now to make a list of all the feelings words we can think of. Take a few minutes, and then come back!

How did it go? How many words could you think of?

There are lots of great words for feelings. For example, instead of angry, you might say "irate" or "annoyed". For happy, maybe you could say "delighted" or "thrilled". We've come up with a big giant list of feelings words that you can start to use as you're learning how to name your emotions. [Click here to check it out](#), and then come back!

Great. I think you're ready for the next step!

Number Four: Sharing Your Feelings

The next thing I'd like you to do is start a Feelings Journal. You can find a blank notebook, or keep track of them right here! [Click here to get started.](#)

Try to take at least a few minutes each day to write down how you feel and why. This is a great way to start practicing putting your feelings into words.

Another way is to share your feelings with your family and friends. Try to make it a daily habit to share your feelings with the people closest to you. It might seem strange at first, but sharing your feelings with people can make you feel even closer to them. If you're not ready to share feelings that are really personal, try just sharing a normal, everyday emotions. It gets easier the more you try it, I promise!

Number Five: Notice Feelings in Other Places

The next thing I'd like you to try is noticing feelings in songs, movies, and books. When people make art, they often make things with the intent of making people feel specific emotions. The next time you're listening to music or watching TV, try to notice the feelings that come up for you, or the feelings of the characters that you see. What did the artist do to show those feelings? How do you feel watching or listening?

So, there you have it. Five things I'd like you to try to start knowing and noticing your feelings. Just remember: there are no wrong emotions. When you notice your feelings, don't judge them as being good or bad. The idea is to accept how you feel, no matter what: your only job is to notice and name them.

Once you get the hang of it, you'll start to see that noticing and naming your emotions makes it much easier to make good decisions about how to act, even in difficult situations.

Try it out - and let us know how it's going! Great job today. You've got this!