

IDENTIFYING OUR FEELINGS

MATERIALS |

paper, writing utensils,
“The Feelings Wheel”
handout (see appendix)

OBJECTIVES | The objectives of this activity are for participants to understand the many emotions humans feel and to be able to better recognize their own feelings.

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS |

Ask participants to individually brainstorm all of the emotions they can think of.

After they have created their lists discuss the following. It may be helpful to invite participants to choose just one of the feelings from the list to reflect on:

- How do you know when you are having these feelings?
- What sensations do you have in you body when you feel these feelings?
- How do you act when you are having these feelings?

Now inform participants that while many people recognize feelings like “sad,” “mad” or “happy,” there are actually many more feelings that humans experience throughout their days and lives.

Pass out or display “The Feelings Wheel” handout and read through it with the group. After you’ve reviewed the handout, invite participants to close their eyes and reflect on how they are feeling right now. Ask them to quietly reflect to themselves.

- How do you know you are feeling this way?
- Where do you feel it in your body?

Now invite participants to locate their feeling on The Feelings Wheel and identify what the root of their feeling is noting that at the core of most feelings are: sad, mad, scared, peaceful, joyful, or powerful. Ask them if the root on the wheel feels right and true. Invite them to consider picking a different word or feeling if they find it would more accurately capture how they feel.

Explain that all feelings are valid—there are no bad feelings. We will all experience all of these feelings in our lifetime. What we need to be careful about is how we emote when we are mad or upset, so that we do not hurt others with our words or actions, and how we can seek out support and comfort from others when we are feeling sad. Let them know that many of the activities you will be doing together will include them sharing how they feel so they can become more aware of their own emotions.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS |

- What did it feel like to do this activity?
- What new information did you learn about feelings and emotion?
- What did you learn about yourself?



SUPPORTING MEDIA |

<https://www.michiganlearning.org/building-foundational-skills/>

NOTES |

ALTERNATIVE: Divide participants into small groups and assign each group a feeling from The Feelings Wheel. Ask them to come up with an example of what it is to feel this way or brainstorm times in their lives when they have felt this way. Have each group share out an example or explanation with the full group.

EXTENSION: This is a good opportunity to check in with students about who in the school (or in their lives) they feel they can go to for support when they need it. If students do not report having a person like this facilitators should connect them with resources.