

Emotional Literacy in Elementary School Students

An **app** to help students **increase their emotional intelligence through activities** such as mindfulness exercises, drawing, and choose your own adventure.

Purpose

- 1 **Empower** kids to talk about their emotions by teaching them the **vocabulary for what they are feeling**
- 2 **Teach strategies** for dealing with the identified emotions

Emotional Regulation

- 1 **Recognize** and **label** emotions in oneself and others
- 2 **Identify triggers** and root causes behind emotions
- 3 Utilize strategies to **manage emotions** effectively

Interviews

“ If you infuse a school culture with a sense of **mindfulness**, you can create a space of **collective community** where people can make mistakes, learn, and work hard but also **be centered and present with ourselves and one another**. ”

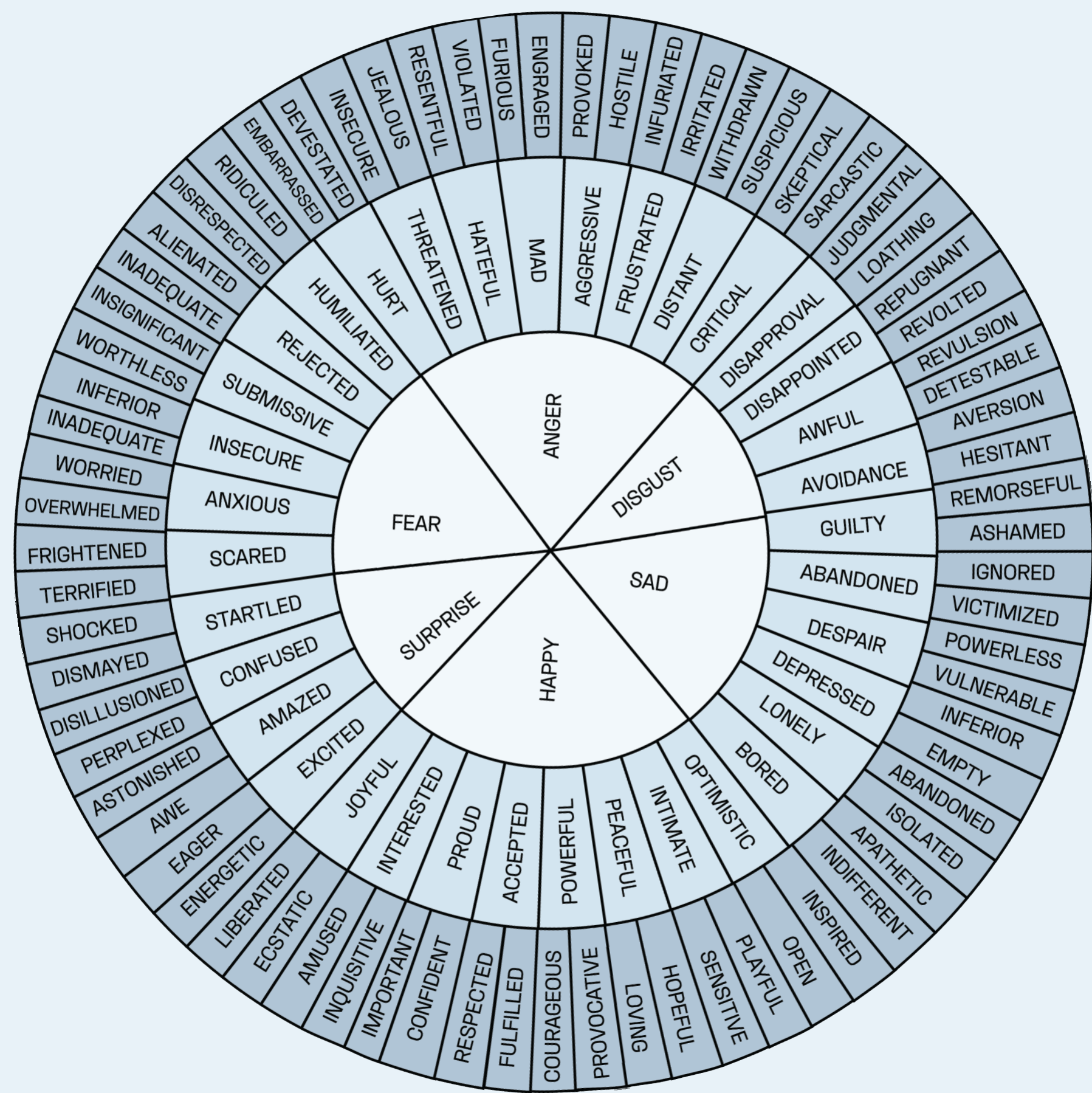
DR. KRISTEN LEE — EXPERT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND EDUCATION

“ Trying to focus on a specific student with **behavioral issues** will mean I **can’t teach my lesson** and I **won’t be able to focus on the other students** in the classroom. After a student has a instance where they’re angry or something I **try to get them to talk about it**. ”

TWO TEACHERS FROM TEACH FOR AMERICA

“ Creating a **whole lifestyle** and **emphasizing it throughout the day** – not just focusing on academic practices (which we of course include in curriculum) but also a **way of interacting with and being in the world**. ”

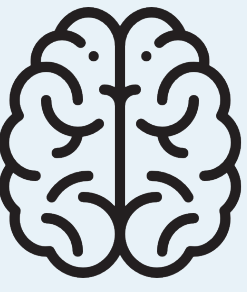
MJ GLASSMAN — YOGA PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM DEVELOPER



Wheel based on The Feelings Wheel, feelingswheel.com

The Problem

Poverty has been consistently linked with poor health and increased risk for psychological disorders in children and adults that can persist across the life span



Early and chronic exposure to stressors can cause physiologic disruptions and changes in brain architecture and functioning, which can lead to **negative long-term** physical and mental health consequences



<15% Children experiencing poverty who are in need of mental health care receive services, and **even fewer** complete treatment

- Who?** Students who struggle with dealing with their emotions and concentrating in class
- When?** When they are at elementary school age
- Where?** Inside and outside the classroom
- Why?** Lack of support, anxiety, problems at home

Contributing Factors

- Stigma** The stigma of mental health treatment and living in poverty can create **self-blame** and **self-loathing**, which can inhibit families from seeking care
- History of Mistrust** **Mistrust of the mental health care system**, perceive that any disclosure of mental health problems may result in hospitalization, overmedication, or separation from family
- Limited Availability of Resources** Need for more **upstream, innovative, comprehensive** approaches to addressing mental health problems that target children in their natural contexts
- Separation** Impoverished parents **concerned** that a diagnosis may cause their **children** to be **removed from their care**

Stressors

- Home Life** Parents never home, Parents uninvolved, Too loud, no quiet space, Parents separating, Parents fighting, Siblings fighting, Abuse
- School Life** Struggling in class, Inability to focus, Pressure to succeed, Bad teachers, Imposter syndrome, Not getting along with teachers
- Social Life** Not getting along, Bullying, Loneliness, Fitting in
- Finances** Access to food, Lack of basic needs, No books, Access to healthcare

Influence on Education

- “ Children attending lower quality schools may be **more likely to act out**, have **trouble with peers**, or feel **anxious** ”
- “ Disruptive students often do **not accurately assess** their emotional states ”