

MANAGE MY EMOTIONS CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to help you practice your MME Journey.

PART 1: KNOW I CAN CHANGE

- ☐ Know *why* I want to change.
- ☐ Identify compelling reasons to change.
- ☐ Know that I am worthy.
- ☐ Identify my coping skills.
- ☐ Expand my range of coping strategies.
- ☐ Remember that my emotions are temporary.
- ☐ Remember that my emotions are labels of my feelings.
- ☐ Know how my brain works.

PART 2: HOW DO I CHANGE

- ☐ Identify a specific area to change.
- ☐ Change now.
- ☐ Build a practice to maintain my changes.
- ☐ Repeat to Practice, Practice, Practice.

PART 3: MANAGE EMOTIONS, IN MYSELF

- ☐ Identify if each of my five core emotions in balance. Not too much, not too little.
- ☐ Identify if there is a pattern of certain emotions being in excess while others are weak.
- ☐ Out of the range of tools, identify which one(s) to use as a starting point.
- ☐ Consider starting with tools in my areas of weakness.
- ☐ Practice tools.
- ☐ Expand my use of different tools to find the best one(s) for me.

PART 4: APPLY IT NOW, BEYOND ME

- ☐ Notice how emotions within me connect to the outside world.
- ☐ Notice how my dance with the outside world keeps me “stuck” in my emotional pattern.
- ☐ Expand my motivation and communication skills.
- ☐ Examine my relationship with my beloved, family, and friends to determine reciprocity and balance of emotional practice.
- ☐ Consider my relationship with my employer, school, or vocational practice to find opportunities for a wide range of personal success.
- ☐ Knowing that healing practices have several themes around the world, consider how my emotional balance affects not only my mood but also my mind, body, and spirit.
- ☐ As I move toward balance, review again to determine what new actions may be needed.
- ☐ Practice. Practice. Practice.

MANAGE MY EMOTIONS

What I Wish I'd Learned in School
about Anger, Fear and Love



Kenneth J. Martz, Psy.D.

MANAGE MY EMOTIONS: BREATHING

Use this cheat sheet to start practicing abdominal breathing.

PURPOSE

- ☐ Breathe using the diaphragm muscle at the lower edge of the rib cage can increase the bloodstream's oxygen supply and create feelings of relaxation.

HOW TO PRACTICE ABDOMINAL BREATHING

- ☐ Sit in a comfortable position with eyes closed.
- ☐ Exhale completely by breathing out through the nose, pulling the belly in and upward
- ☐ Inhale slowly by relaxing the belly down and outward, keeping the ribcage still
- ☐ Repeat exhaling slowly to a count of 8 and inhaling to a count of 4
 - If this causes strain, you may use counts of 6 and 3,
 - As you become more relaxed, you may try increasing to a count of 10 and 5 but ONLY if it is not a strain to do so
- ☐ As an option, when exhaling, mentally say the word "relax" or "let go."
- ☐ Once you have become practiced at recognizing and using the diaphragm, it will be easier to do without exaggerated movements in the stomach
- ☐ Continue for several breaths or several minutes
- ☐ Bring this "settled" feeling with you into your day.

TROUBLESHOOTING

- ☐ If you are having trouble, you may practice lying on your back. This position will help direct the movement of the breath into the belly.

EXPLORE FURTHER

- ☐ Energizing Breath: Once you can readily practice abdominal breathing, you can also explore inhalations to a count of 8 and exhalations to a count of 4. You may find this variation more energizing and helpful if you are sleepy.
- ☐ Three-Part Breath: Once you can readily isolate this form of breathing, you may try a "three-part breath" in which you begin by 1) breathing into the abdomen, then 2) ribs (a slight open to the side of the chest), and 3) chest (a slight lift at the top front of the chest). Continue with the desired counts for inhaling and exhaling. This breath helps to strengthen the lung, oxygen flow, and practice awareness.

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MANAGE MY EMOTIONS: RELAXATION

Use this cheat sheet to practice relaxation techniques.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

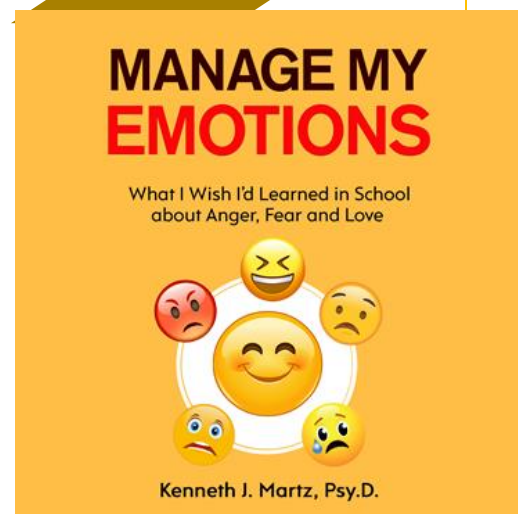
- ☐ This method progresses through the body tensing and relaxing each muscle group. It can lead to
 - Reduced muscle tension and,
 - Greater awareness of when a muscle group is tense or relaxed

HOW TO PRACTICE ABDOMINAL BREATHING

- ☐ Close your eyes and move into a comfortable seated or reclined position
- ☐ Begin using abdominal breathing
- ☐ Inhale while pressing your toes downward as if stepping on a gas pedal
- ☐ Exhale while releasing tension on your feet
- ☐ Repeat steps 3 and 4 three to five times
- ☐ Repeat steps 3 through 5, tensing and releasing the following body parts:
 - Pull your toes upwards (flexing the foot toward your head)
 - Press the heels away from your body (you should feel a stretch in the calf muscle)
 - Tense your thighs
 - Tighten your stomach
 - Clench your chest (It may help to curl your arms in front of your belly like flexing your muscles)
 - Make a fist and curl your hand inward
 - Extend your fingers and open your hand backward (like making a stop sign)
 - Tighten your biceps (bend arm at the elbow)
 - Shrug shoulders
 - Clench face muscles (jaw, cheeks, forehead, scalp)
- ☐ While doing this, pay particular attention to the difference between a muscle feeling tense versus relaxed so that you can recognize these sensations easily
- ☐ Relax here for a few minutes before opening your eyes

TROUBLESHOOTING

- ☐ After this exercise, you may feel “heavy” as this practice fatigues each muscle group, forcing the muscle to let go of any stress it was carrying.



MANAGE MY EMOTIONS: MEDITATION

Use this cheat sheet to start practicing meditation.

BASIC STEPS

- ☐ Sit in a comfortable position with eyes closed.
- ☐ Move around until you feel comfortable, then settle into a position with the intention of remaining still.
- ☐ Choose a point of focus, like your breathing, a candle, or a word.
 - Using a word can quiet the mental chatter and distractions (Om, calm, etc.).
 - Using the breath allows the mind to be still as your meditation deepens.
 - Using a candle is useful for visual people, but having your eyes open may reduce concentration.
- ☐ Repeat the word or focus your attention on your breath for the desired length of time.
 - (You may begin with 5-10 minutes and slowly increase to 20-30 minutes twice a day)
- ☐ When (not if) you recognize that you are thinking, gently return your attention to your point of focus (word/breath/candle).
- ☐ As you do so, your body will naturally begin to relax without effort, and the thoughts will start to settle just like a snow globe settles.
- ☐ When finished, *slowly* release your attention and *slowly* move back into the room.
- ☐ Bring this “settled” feeling with you into your day.

THREE THINGS TO EXPECT

- ☐ You will fall asleep,
- ☐ Distracting thoughts will enter your head or
- ☐ You will “slip into the gap (the mental pause between thoughts).” In this case, for a moment (or increasing times as your concentration improves), you will be sitting without any thought.

TROUBLESHOOTING

- ☐ If you fell asleep, you were probably tired, so accept it and return to your practice the next time. When distracting thoughts happen, such as an itch, gently and effortlessly maintain your attention to your point of focus. If you must scratch the itch, do so without judging yourself for doing so.
- ☐ When hundreds of other thoughts come racing into your mind, gently and nonjudgmentally return to your point of focus (again and again). This practice of refocusing will help to develop patience with yourself as your concentration slowly improves.
- ☐ As long as you are sitting and gently returning your mind to your point of focus when it wanders, you are doing great.

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Joy/Boredom

Happy, Loving, Delighted,
Glad, Upbeat, Playful,
Amused, Lighthearted

Manic, Lonely, Empty,
Fatigued, Dull, Tired

Compassion/Insensitive

Trusting, Caring,
Benevolent, Merciful,
Sympathetic, Sweet,
Warmhearted, Tender

Anxious, Worried, Concern,
Ruminate, Obsessive,
Pensive

Sad/Respect

Proud, Smart, Dignity,
Honor, Appreciation,
Gratitude, Thankful

Grief, Guilty, Stupid,
Inadequate, Ashamed,
Hurt, Insignificant, Weak,
Embarrassed, Helpless,
Submissive

Fear/Courage

Brave, Daring, Grit, Valor,
Perseverance, Endurance

Scared Confused, Horror,
Panic, Terror, Fright, Shaken,
Fearful, Startled

Anger/Drive

Confident, Vision, Directed,
Passionate, Motivated

Mad, Rage, Hate, Impatience,
Temper, Jealous, Frustrated,
Rage, Furious, Irritated,
Hostile, Critical. Annoyed

MANAGE MY EMOTIONS PARENT'S GUIDE

Parents and guardians can use this guide for the best outcomes.

THANKS!

I have spent much of my career managing the effects of lifelong challenges experienced by men, women, and children of all ages. Caring for our children is a difficult task but is critical to their long-term success and happiness. I appreciate your willingness to support the children in your life today as we work together to build a better future.

USING MANAGE MY EMOTIONS FOR KIDS

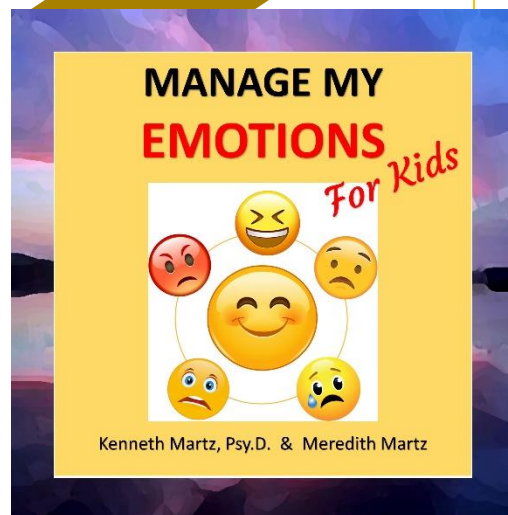
- ☐ Alignment: The children's edition is closely aligned to the adult edition. You can read the corresponding chapter in the adult edition for additional information for almost every page and topic.
- ☐ Reading: Consider reading the book together as a conversation starter or allowing the child to read alone.
- ☐ Use everyday experiences to apply and reinforce the lessons in the book.
- ☐ Practice: Repeat often to Practice, Practice, Practice. See tips below for ideas.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- ☐ Role model emotional balance, with our words and actions.
- ☐ Emotions work together. So, if you are concerned about one emotion, consider the others as well (for example, sometimes anger covers feelings of fear or hurt).
- ☐ Consider the emotional, behavioral, physical, mental, and spiritual needs of my child.
- ☐ Talk to my child, communicate that it is "safe" to share their challenges with you.
- ☐ Help my child to express emotions in their preferred language. Some individuals may connect better through writing (journal), art, physical exercises, social games, or rituals. Whatever form or forms work best with them for expression, use that form.

SPECIFIC TOOLS AND PRACTICES

- ☐ Practice awareness. We cannot change things without awareness of them.
 - Awareness includes labeling emotion and consciousness of physical sensations that we label as an emotion. This step is more advanced, but as you practice helping your loved one identify the emotion, you can also invite a description of how it feels, for example, in their head, heart, or belly.
- ☐ Practice labeling emotions. The full-page children's edition of the emotional circle can be printed and used to reinforce awareness of emotions. See also the adult edition of the emotional circle for more emotional choices.



- ☐ Practice breathing exercises. Simple observation of breathing is a great first step toward a mindful meditation practice. As a rule of thumb, if you move toward a meditation practice, meditate for no more than 2 minutes per year of the child's age.
- ☐ Practice by using games when possible, to be engaging. These games allow you to encourage by participating. For example, the gratitude game (taking turns calling out things we are grateful for).
- ☐ Practice listening and reflecting the emotion to help your loved one learn to identify emotions and feel understood. For example. "Aww, that's sad," "Sounds frustrating," or "Wow, you must feel really proud."
- ☐ Practice solution-focused thinking by using strength-based goal-based language and questions:
 - How would you like it to be? What is the best outcome?
 - What skills do you have to help with that?
 - What is one small thing you can do today to get closer to that outcome?
 - What would help that [emotion] to feel better?
 - What is the growth/learning opportunity in this situation?
- ☐ Practice, Practice, Practice. The more we practice, the easier it is and the more skillful we become. See also the Practice Builder Handout.

FOUR THINGS TO REMEMBER

- ☐ Remember that parenting and emotional skill development is a process, not an event. Allow yourself and your child to be a beginner and to grow with perseverance over time.
- ☐ Remember that children are resilient. Mistakes are more easily corrected since they have not been practiced for decades.
- ☐ Remember that patterns set today can become a lifelong success. Small good habits started today can build a lifelong worldview.
- ☐ Remember that wherever you are, start here now. Let go of any guilt or mistakes of your own past, and begin to learn and practice new skills today.

OTHER RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

- ☐ See also the Manage My Emotions text, and Manage My Emotions Journal. The more you understand these principles, the better you can support your loved one. It can be found on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B08Q4KR1XL>
- ☐ The SAMHSA Store has hundreds of titles on various issues, including physical health, mental health, substance use, medications, and more. You can use the sorting features to find the proper age range or topic at <https://store.samhsa.gov/>
- ☐ SAMSHA has additional tools for talking with your children about alcohol and drugs. Free tools include videos, posters, and interactive exercises on speaking with our children. Their campaign "Talk, They Hear You" can be found at <https://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking>
- ☐ Know that you are not alone. Connect with friends, counselors, pastors, parenting support groups, and other organizations such as the National Charity League, Boy/Girl Scouts that provide connections and support for ongoing effective parenting skills.

The Emotional Circle

Awareness

What am I feeling right now? It is often more than one.

