

Activity 15

Thoughts or Feelings?

For You to Know

Thoughts and feelings can be confusing, and they are not the same thing. Learning the difference can help you know what to do in each situation.

It is important for you to know the difference between thoughts and feelings, because changing the way you think about something can actually change the way you feel. Let's review some of the differences between the two.

Thoughts

Thoughts are like sentences in your mind; for example, the statement "I feel like you're not listening to me" is actually a thought: *I think you are not listening to me.*

Just having a thought can change your feelings. For example, thinking about something sad can actually make you feel sad. This also works in reverse. If you are sad and think about something happy, your feeling of sadness can change.

Thoughts are not always true. You can think to yourself that the sky is green, but when you look out the window you see that your thought doesn't fit the facts. This can happen a lot, and it's important to learn to check whether your thoughts fit the facts.

Feelings

Feelings are shorter than thoughts and usually take only around three words to express; for example, "I feel angry" expresses a feeling, while "I think you are not listening to me" is a thought. Notice that "I think you are not listening to me" is not a fact because we don't know for sure that someone is not listening. This is why it is important to notice the difference between thoughts and feelings. You can always check in with the person to see if your thoughts are true.

Your feelings are your brain's way of telling you important things about what is going on. You can learn more about this in activity 16 from the printed workbook.

Feelings can be very overwhelming and intense. In fact, feelings can be so intense that they can make it hard for you to know if your thoughts fit the facts.

For You to Do

Learning to tell the difference between thoughts and feelings takes practice. Use this chart to practice recording the different thoughts and feelings you have. Also, take this opportunity to see if your thought fits the facts. Ask yourself, *Are my thoughts telling me the truth?* Remember that practice makes perfect!

<i>Situation</i>	<i>Thought</i>	<i>What Are the Facts?</i>	<i>Feeling</i>
<i>I'm trying to tell Mom about my day, but she's looking at her phone.</i>	<i>Mom isn't listening.</i>	<i>Mom is looking at her phone. I don't know for sure if she's listening. (Hint: You can check with your mom by asking, "Are you listening?"</i>	<i>Frustrated</i>

Activity 18

Feelings Are Constantly Changing

For You to Know

Feelings can be confusing. They can change from one minute to the next, and you can even have more than one feeling at a time!

People can have more than one feeling at a time, and feelings can come one right after another like cars on a busy highway. The feeling you have first is called the primary feeling. It appears quickly, and it can impact your urges and actions in negative ways. The feelings that come next are called the secondary feelings. They hang around a little longer.

Let's read an example of primary and secondary feelings in action.

You've been invited to a friend's house for a sleepover. You are *so* anxious! That's your primary feeling. In fact, your anxiety is so big that you don't go to the sleepover. This makes your friend sad because she wanted to see you. Now you feel sad and guilty because your not being at the sleepover hurt your friend's feelings. Sadness and guilt are your secondary feelings.

For You to Do

Learning to identify your primary and secondary feelings takes practice. For a week keep a log of situations and primary and secondary feelings that you experience.

<i>Day</i>	<i>Situation</i>	<i>Primary Feeling (Happens first, happens fast!)</i>	<i>Secondary Feeling (Happens second, hangs around!)</i>
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Things to think about: What did you notice? Was there a primary feeling that happened more often? Was there a secondary feeling that you felt more often than others?

Activity 20

You Don't Have to Act on Your Urge

For You to Know

By being aware of your thoughts and feelings (which is part of mindfulness) you can learn to notice urges and control your actions.

In activity 19 from the printed workbook, Kyle was so angry that he hit Jason, and a fight broke out in the cafeteria. Kyle got in trouble because of the fight, not because he was angry.

Let's slow it down...

Feeling: Kyle is feeling angry.

Urge: Kyle has the urge to hit Jason.

Action: Kyle acts on the urge and hits Jason.

Situations like these happen fast, and your feelings and urges can be overwhelming! Learning to identify your urges and possible reactions to them can help.

Let's look at the example of Kyle again. Here are some possible urges he may have in reaction to anger:

- Hit
- Scream
- Walk away
- Throw something
- Talk it out

When choosing how to respond to your emotion, it is important to think about your choices. Which choice will lead to you feeling good about yourself and which choice will help you not get in trouble, as Kyle did in our example.

You will likely find it easier to identify your feeling, urge, and action in less emotional situations first. Practice as much as possible, so that in a really big moment you can make a good choice about whether or not to act on your urge.

For You to Do

Practice identifying your feeling, urge, and action. Record the results in the chart below. There is also a column for you to list the helpful action you chose.

	<i>Event</i>	<i>Feeling</i>	<i>Urge</i>	<i>Action You Chose</i>
Practice #1				
Practice #2				
Practice #3				
Practice #4				

Notice whether there were times when you realized that you did not have to act on your urge. Practice often! The more times you practice, the easier it will become for you to make better decisions in the moment.

Activity 21

Situation, Feeling, Intensity Game

For You to Know

Different people have different feelings when in the same situation. This is totally normal. People have different intensities of feelings as well; this is also normal.

Having different feelings and different intensities of feelings is not good or bad, right or wrong; it's just different. The activity that follows is a game you can play as often as you like to help you practice identifying what feelings you have and how intense, or strong, they are. You can play with friends, siblings, or even your parents. Parents need to practice these skills too!

When you play, talk with the other players about why they choose the feeling and intensity they do.

For You to Do

Print and cut out the cards on the next few pages. There are blank situation cards you can add to and a blank feeling card for you to add any feeling that may not be listed. There are two variations to using these cards as a game below, and you can find a third variation under the bonus activity, "Practice, Practice, Practice."

Be creative and have some fun! The goal is to practice identifying feelings and the intensity you would feel. As you move through the exercises in the printed workbook, you can come back to this game and talk about what tool you might use to change the intensity.

Variation 1

1. Print enough copies of the feeling and intensity cards so that each player has a full set. Print one copy of the situation cards.
2. Cut out the three sets of cards.
3. Each person playing gets one of each feeling card and one of each intensity card (1–10).
4. Place the situation cards facedown in the middle of the table.
5. The player whose turn it is picks a card and lays it faceup.
6. The other players each decide which feeling makes sense to them and lays down that card in front of them, along with the intensity they would feel.
7. Discuss any differences or similarities among the players. Remember that everyone might have a different feeling and intensity.
8. The game continues until all situation cards have been turned over and discussed.

Variation 2

1. Print a copy of the intensity cards for each person who will be playing.
2. Cut out the situation, feeling, and intensity cards.
3. Find a large space where you can move around and run.
4. Tape feelings cards on a far wall, with a little space between each one.
5. Players each hold their own intensity cards (1–10).
6. Put all the situation cards in a basket.
7. In turn, draw a situation card out of the basket, read it, decide which feeling you would have, then run as fast as you can to the feeling.
8. Hold up the intensity card when you get there.
9. Discuss with other players the feeling you chose and the intensity you felt.
10. The game is over when all situations have been discussed.

Feeling Cards

Anger	Fear	Jealousy
Guilt	Overwhelmed or Excited	Love
Sadness	Happiness	_____

Intensity Cards

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10		

Situation Cards

<p>Your brother takes your favorite toy.</p>	<p>Someone at school takes your place in line.</p>	<p>Your sister calls you a name.</p>
<p>The family plans change! You can't go to the zoo (or your favorite place).</p>	<p>Your classmate is sitting very close to you.</p>	<p>You lose your favorite toy or special item.</p>
<p>You lose a game.</p>	<p>You blame your brother for something, and he gets in trouble</p>	<p>You want to tell your mom a story, but she is listening to your sister.</p>
<p>You get exactly what you wanted for your birthday.</p>	<p>Your sister gets your favorite thing for <i>her</i> birthday.</p>	<p>A friend at school teases you.</p>
<p>You are meeting your new teacher for the first time.</p>	<p>You have to give a presentation in front of the class.</p>	<p>You have to take a test.</p>
<p>You are at a birthday party, and everyone is having the best time ever!</p>	<p>You and your brother are running around playing your favorite game. It is <i>such</i> a burst of energy!</p>	<p>You are left out of a game at school.</p>

Activity 30

You Have to DEAL

DEAL

Congratulations to me! I was faced with a tough decision when

I made a good choice by taking these steps to help me DEAL:

D—Take **deep** breaths.

E—**Examine** my options.

A—**Ask** myself, *What is most important right now, in this very moment?*

L—**Listen** to my full mind and do my best.

Excellent job!

This Certificate of Achievement is awarded to

For completing Don't Let Your Emotions Run
Your Life for Kids

On _____
(date of completion)

