

HANDLING EMOTIONS

Group 4

Value: Right Conduct: **Sub-Value:** Self Control

Topic: Controlling Emotions

Objective: “Explore emotions that are personally relevant. To see the relationships between emotions and identify subtle differences and levels of emotions intensity”

Opening Prayers: Three Oms followed by Gananam Twa

Meditation:

For the Guru:

Introduce the topic “Handling Emotions” and give Swami’s message on “Thoughts, Words and Deed”

Discuss with the students to always remember that emotion is derived from thought. If we find ourselves experiencing strong emotions, it’s helpful to examine the thoughts that preceded them. Then ask the question, are these thoughts based on truth, or my perception of the truth?

Have students identify negative emotions that stem from thoughts, example:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Self-defeating
- Anger
- Hostile/aggressive

Explain that every bad feeling you have is the result of negative feeling. Your emotions result entirely from the way you look at things, by your internal dialogue on a series of events that happen to you. If your understanding of what’s happening is accurate, your emotions will be normal. If your perception is twisted and distorted in some way, your emotional response will be abnormal.

CIRCLE of CONCERN and CIRCLE of INFLUENCE

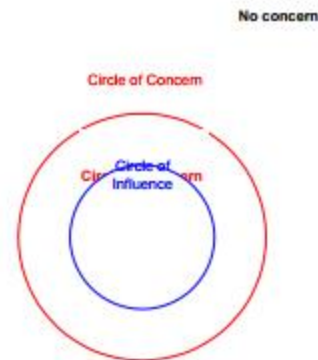
This technique is good for separating out lower from higher priorities, and gaining ownership for action.

Instead of reacting to or worrying about conditions over which you have little or no control, proactive people focus their time and energy on things they can control. The problems challenges, and opportunities we face fall into two areas – Circle of Concern and Circle of Influence.

A **Circle of Concern** encompasses the wide range of concerns we have, such as our health, our children, problems at work, the amount of government borrowing, or the threat of war.



A **Circle of Influence** encompasses those concerns that we can do something about. They are concerns that we have some control over.



How does this work?

1. The presenter draws a circle on a flip chart. The presenter writes, inside the circle, all the issues of concern that the group are feeling. The group contributes by probing and questioning, so that any other underlying concerns or facts related to the issue are raised.
2. The presenter draws a Circle of Influence within a Circle of Concern on a second flipchart. The presenter and the group can then transfer the issues raised into either the Circle of Concern or into the Circle of Influence.
3. The group can now explore the steps needed to behave proactively. They might use role play to explore proactive language and behaviour in terms of the issue presented. They can draw up an action plan.

Determining concerns

A useful way of determining which Circle people's concerns are in is by listening to the language used. You can distinguish between the use of the words **"have"** and **"be"**. Circles of Concern are full of "have's" while Circles of Influence are full of "be's". The table below provides some examples.

Have's (Reactive)	Be's (Proactive)
I'll be happy when I have a full establishment...	I can be a better role model...
If only I had a boss who wasn't...	I can be more organised / resourceful...
If I had respect from...	I can be more loving / understanding...
If I could just have management days...	I will be more diligent...
If the environment was more conducive...	I can seek out personnel and be able to understand...

Guru reads

the story of “**The Packet of Cookies**”

A young lady was waiting for her flight in the boarding room of a big airport. As she would need to wait for a long time, she decided to buy a book to read and a packet of cookies to snack on. She sat down in an armchair in the VIP room of the airport to relax and read in peace.

A man sat down in the next seat, opened his magazine and started reading. When she took out the first cookie, the man took one also. She felt irritated but said nothing. She just thought: “What a nerve!” If I was in the mood I would punch him for daring!”

For each cookie she took, the man took one too. This was infuriating her but she didn’t want to cause a scene. When only one cookie remained, she thought to herself “What will this rude man do now?”

Then the man, taking the last cookie, divided it into half, giving her one half. That was too much! She was really angry now. In a huff, she took her book, the rest of her things and stormed off to board the plane.

When she sat down in her seat on the plane, she looked into her purse to take out her reading glasses, and to her surprise, her packet of cookies was there, untouched and unopened.

She felt so ashamed. She realised that she was wrong. She had forgotten that her cookies were kept in her purse. The man had divided his cookies with her, without feeling angry or bitter, while she had been very angry, thinking that she was dividing her cookies with him. And now there was no chance to explain herself, nor to apologies.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

- Have you ever lost your cool and then realised later that you were in the wrong?
- What are some positive and negative emotions you find in the story?
- How can we save ourselves some embarrassment and make sure that we are in possession of all of the facts before reacting?
- Can you experience more than one emotion at the same time?
- Where do emotions come from?
- What are the basic emotions that all humans share no matter what culture?

Gurus can discuss the tools in helping one to deal with emotions, examples:

1. Write it down:

Use journaling daily and always ask questions such as, why do I feel so overwhelmed today?

2. Take responsibility:

It’s true that other people’s words and actions affect us, but we also need to take responsibility for the emotions we feel in response to those words and actions. No one can make you feel anything; it’s always your choice.

3. Take time away:

When you are strongly connecting with a negative reactive emotion, it’s important to take time away from the person or situation you are reacting to. Never act on strong emotion. Wait until you are feeling calm. (use Swami’s advice: take three deep breaths)

4. Be aware of your triggers:

If you know you struggle with specific emotions, such as anger, jealousy or fear, try to become aware of the circumstances that trigger them. What is causing this feeling inside you?

5. Choose how you want to react:

The way that we react and manage our emotions is habit. Learn to listen to your emotions, to identify, understand and then choose them. With continuous effort and discipline you can start to build this essential skill.

GROUP ACTIVITY:

Discuss any emotions that students never experience. Have students brain storm a list of emotions.

1. Choose one of the following:
 - From the student's generated list, identify eight emotions the class would like to examine more fully.
 - Choose emotions that support other related learning. Keep your choice of eight emotions secret from the class until after the following step:
2. Divide the class into small groups. Secretly assign one emotion to each group and ask them to create a skit to act out the emotion. The other groups can guess the emotion based on facial expressions, body language or scenario if the actors are using words.

Life Applications/ Adaptations:

Invite students to describe a time when they felt a particular emotion. Alternatively, students can create a fictional story in which the main character experiences the emotion.