

LESSON 6 - VISITING FEELINGS CORE TOOL

Timing	This lesson is designed for a 25-30 minute framework.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bell or chime • Index Cards • Visiting Feelings Tool
Outcome	Students will list the emotions that they are aversive to (go away!) and are attached to (always stay!). Students will learn that we treat all emotions as visiting friends.
Sequence	This is the sixth lesson in the Contentment & Balance pillar. This leads into lesson seven where students can understand how to cultivate gratitude towards emotions.

Notes:

Lesson Summary for Teachers

In this lesson, we combine Lessons 4 & 5 into a single practice that allows us to cultivate a sense of completeness and unconditional acceptance of all emotions. The main purpose of this lesson is to teach that emotions are natural processes that come and go. Allowing them to do so without over-reacting to them empowers us to navigate our lives more consciously and intentionally – without becoming hijacked by our reactive tendencies. Ultimately, the Visiting Feelings practice progresses beyond accepting individual emotions or challenging situations, and it becomes an attitude of genuine appreciation for what it means to be an emotional human being. By having a regular practice of the Visiting Feelings Tool, and an understanding of the science behind the practice, students will be able to use the practice to give them a sense of completeness and wellbeing that nothing can take away from them.

In this activity, students explore which emotions they want to cling to (Always Stay!) and which emotions they are aversive to (Go Away!). They learn that these two relationships can be unhealthy and lead to feelings of unwell and suffering. In the second part of the exercise, students work with the emotions that they want to Go Away! or Always Stay! and cultivate a new friendship with them. These emotions are treated like friends who are coming for a visit. We treat our guests kindly, appreciate them for bringing us valuable information about the world around us, and we let them leave when they are ready. The final part of the exercise involves a gratitude practice for each emotion as it comes and goes. We thank all of our emotions, pleasant or unpleasant, for being an important part of who we are.

Outcome Overview

Students will know:

- We can develop a friendship with all emotions, instead of running away from them or expecting them to stay forever.
- We appreciate all of our emotions for the valuable information they bring about the world around us.
- We use the Visiting Feelings Tool when we experience an emotion that we want to go away or always stay.

Students will be able to (skills):

- List emotions that they are averse to (go away!) or are attached to (always stay!).
- Generate an understanding that these emotions are visitors that come and go sometimes, and we should allow them to do so naturally.
- Generate gratitude for the emotions that they are aversive to, and for those that they are attached to.

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Touching Base on Contentment & Balance Practice

Has anyone had any practice letting your pleasant emotions come and go without trying to hold onto them? Has anyone had any practice letting your unpleasant emotions come and go without trying to push them away?

Lesson for Students

Begin this lesson with the Mindful Breathing practice. See the Mindful Breathing card for cues.

So far we have learned the importance of allowing all of your emotions – pleasant and unpleasant – to come and go.

Today, we're going to put these practices together and learn a new strategy to help us make friends with all of our emotions.

It's called the Visiting Feelings Tool, and it's designed to help you accept and feel good about all of your emotional experiences, regardless of which emotions come and go.

Emotions are like friends who come for a visit and go when they're ready. Emotions bring us important information about the world around us. Are you treating all of your emotions as friends?

Do you wish some emotions would go away, and that others would always stay?

Let students answer.

Step 1: Find

Distribute one index card to each student.

List at least three emotions that you don't like and wish they would go away. Label at the top "Go Away!" Then flip over the index card and list at least three emotions that you want to hold on to so that they always stay. Label this side of your card "Always Stay!"

Teacher creates a model answer while students are writing.

Go Away!	Always Stay!

Step 2: Friend

It's unkind to tell our guests and friends to 'go away!' or to make them 'always stay!'

Let's be more kind and loving toward our emotions. Take a moment to make friends with them, because they are here to help you.

For each Go Away or Always Stay emotion write:

"I am grateful for [emotion], because you help me _____. I will let you come for a visit and go when you're ready."

Have the students imagine allowing each emotion to come and go.

Repeat this process until they have practiced it with each emotion.

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Lesson for Students (Cont.)

Step 3: Feel

When an emotion comes for a visit, gently thank them for coming to help you. Be with them and watch while they have a visit and softly leave.

Have the students share with a partner, an emotion that they are working on feeling grateful for. The student should share why this emotion is a friend to them.

Between now and the next time we practice together, see if you can practice the Visiting Feelings Tool at home, outside, or even during an intense emotional experience. Can you use the Visiting Feelings Tool to learn more about your emotion guests, even when the emotion feels intense? Can you use the Visiting Feelings to accept an emotion as it arises, and allow it to pass through naturally?

Reflection Questions & Assessment

- Journal: *Describe which emotions you want to “go away” or “always stay.” Then describe one strategy you are working on to allow the emotion to come and go naturally, just as you would do for a friend.*
- *How do you think seeing emotions as friends or guests will help you?*
- *Was it more difficult to see some emotions as friends than others?*

Weekly Practice

Students are encouraged to practice the Visiting Feelings Tool to learn more about their emotion guests.

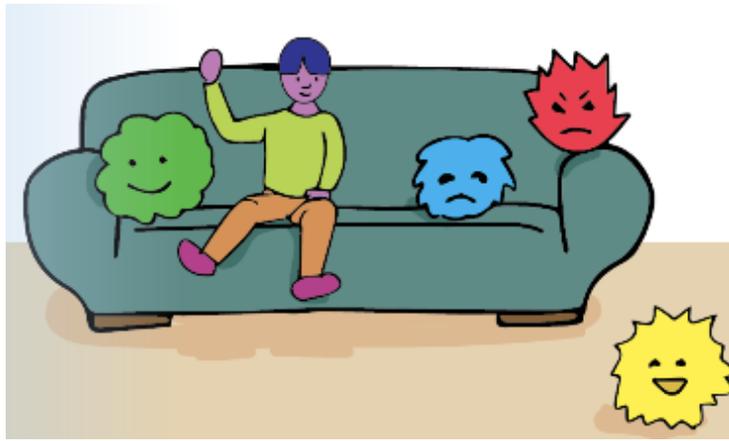
Teacher to Teacher Commentary

- For younger intermediate students, we recommend using a simplified, developmentally appropriate list of emotions (e.g. happy, sad, angry, afraid, lonely, etc.).
- All students can benefit from using art, music, or movement variations instead of contemplation to engage with this activity.
- As students independently write which emotion they want to stay and go away, have a list prepared to help any students needing support.
- You might want to prep the list and headings in advance so students simply jot down the emotion they want to stay and go away.
- You can choose to either use the word “guest” or “friend” in this exercise. Some students may have trouble seeing all emotions as friends but helping them at least see emotions as guests is helpful. You welcome guests into your home and then they leave when they are ready.
- You may want to give each student his/her own copy of the core tool to follow along with this lesson.
- It’s helpful for students to have the words to say. Provide a copy to place in their notebook or an easy reference area.
 - “Thank you (emotion) for visiting and helping me. I am grateful for [emotion], because you help me_____. I will watch while you have a visit and I’ll watch you softly leave when you’re ready.”

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Diving Deeper

- Have students examine the song, “Let It Go” from the Walt Disney movie Frozen. Determine the emotions and whether the singer is always stay or go away. Have students write a new version of the song encouraging emotions to come for a visit. You can also do the same with other songs relating to emotions.
- Students can color the emotions they wish would go away or always stay to match their list. Alternatively, they can pretend to be these emotions, using their facial, vocal, and bodily expressions to act them out.



Identify the emotions that you want to Always Stay! or Go Away!



Let's be kind and loving to our emotions. When the emotion arises, treat it like a welcome guest and offer gratitude to the message it brings.



When a feeling comes for a visit, thank them for coming to help you. Be with them and watch while they visit and softly leave.