

INSIDE OUT BY THE AGES

Movie Discussion Guide from Rev. Kimberly Secrist Ashby

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This discussion guide is designed for parents to use with their children of various ages to engage with and discuss the movie "Inside Out" from Pixar and Disney.

For Preschoolers:

1. Discuss the five emotions (joy, sadness, anger, fear, disgust). Ask your child to make the faces associated with each emotion. Ask if he/she can remember a time recently when he/she felt that emotion. Remind your child that God made our emotions, and it's okay to feel them!
2. Make it a game to identify when one of the emotions is really showing up. You might even have stickers to award when your child identifies an emotion in him/herself or someone else in the family right away!
3. Riley has a lot of special memories that keep her going. Some of them are sweet, some are silly, some are serious. What are some of your child's special memories? Spend time discussing them and sharing how each of you (who were there) might remember each moment a little differently, but that's a good thing! God gave us all memories to help us treasure each day! At night when you say prayers, thank God for a memory of that day that you want to keep.
4. Talk about how life for Riley got better when she and her parents talked about how they really felt. Make a little time on a regular basis to talk about how you're feeling, especially about tough situations. Listen to each person, ask them to identify their emotion, and thank each person for sharing truthfully. How do you feel after you talk? Why?

For Elementary School Students:

1. Discuss the five emotions. Ask your child to think about some times when one emotion took over inside and it was hard to him/her to feel or think about anything else. What is it like when an emotion takes over? Why do you think God gave us emotions?
2. This age group might still get in to identifying emotions when they show up in different people in the family and in themselves. Affirm them for knowing what emotion is in the driver's seat at various times. Ask your child if that's the emotion he/she wants to have in charge. If not, what can your child do about it? How did Jesus handle emotions? (Jesus felt them all, but didn't stay in just one emotion.)
3. Older elementary students can talk about the subconscious part. Introduce it by saying we all have situations that cause us to panic. It's because there's a memory stored in that dark basement of the subconscious that comes up every now and then. Ask your child if he/she can

remember a time when panic took over. Remind your child that God is there in every part of us, even that one, and God will help us calm down and see that things will be okay.

4. Was it interesting to see inside Mom's head, Dad's head, and Riley's head all at the same time? They were talking about the first day of school. Did they all think and feel the same things? What happened when their emotions took over? What did you learn about the way different people think in the same situation at the same time?

5. Riley has different islands in the movie – family, goofiness, hockey, friendship, and imagination. Do you have islands? What do you think they're called? How does it feel to do things on those islands? Where is God in this? Does God live just on one island, or is God everywhere in our lives?

6. Later in the movie, Joy and Sadness learn that they can work together really well, and that sometimes we feel Sadness before we can really understand Joy. Does that make sense to you? Why or why not? Do you think God intends for us to have both Joy and Sadness in our lives?

For Youth:

1. How do you see the five basic emotions acting and interacting in your life? How aware are you of your emotions? Do you recognize many times when your emotions are mixed, like when Joy and Sadness work together? Are there any emotions you ignore, and if so, what do you lose?

2. What would life be like if we had no emotions? What would change? How would we relate to each other, or would we relate to each other? What do you think God intended when God gave us our emotions? How are they an integral part of our human life and our connection to God?

3. In the movie, Joy and Sadness travel to different parts of the brain – long-term memory, the subconscious, the train of thoughts, the memory dump. Describe how each of these parts helps you and hurts you, and consider whether or not there are ways you can guide your brain in how it uses them. What parts of your brain is God in? Does it help to know that there is nothing God doesn't already know about you?

4. The movie shows dialogue between parents and child, and a little bit between peers. How did that reflect your interactions with your parents? With your peers? Did the movie give you any insight into how other people might be feeling and thinking at the same time? How will you use that insight in your future interactions?

5. Consider what your own core memories are. In the movie, core memories are the first defining moments for the areas of personality and self-expression that become important to each person. What are those core memories that play in your head, and what do they say to you? How did they help to shape who you are today? What role do you play in someone else's life to help them develop core memories?

6. What are your islands, or areas of personality and self-expression? Faith isn't brought into this movie, but let's put it in among the picture seen from headquarters. Where does faith in God go? Is it a color, is it an island, or how would you add it in? How does faith in God interact with everything else?

7. Riley experiences a lot of loss in the movie. She moves and has to start over, and her memories turn sad. One by one her islands crumble. How do you identify with her? What was the turning point for her? (I think it's when she shares her sadness with her parents, and they tell her they're sad too). What do you learn from that? How is Riley's life restored and transformed once she admits to herself what she's really feeling and bonds with her parents?

8. "It takes both the sun and the rain to make a rainbow." How do you see that reflected in this movie? How does that relate to our faith in God and our relationship with God?

9. There is an element of sacrifice in this movie when Bing Bong stays back in the memory dump so that Joy can get back up to help Riley. How do you make a parallel with our faith? Are there times when we must make sacrifices? Why or why not? (I think sacrifices happen when we give up our own will and desires to pursue fulfilling God's will for us and others.)

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