



Girls & Their Big Emotions

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO HELPING TWEEN GIRLS MANAGE THEIR
EMOTIONS

Raising a daughter involves A LOT of emotions – from both you and her. As parents with busy lives and busy kids, it can be overwhelming at times when emotions get the best of us. It's important to remember that emotions are a map and every emotion can teach and guide you if you are willing to listen.

When emotions run high, here is a common scenario:

Parent walks into room where daughters are arguing.

Parent: Why are you so mad??

Older Daughter: My sister won't stop talking to me, and I need a quiet place to work. She is bothering me so much!!!

Soon, the situation escalates and the two sisters are now fighting and screaming at each other. Parent becomes exasperated and shouts at everyone to calm down and forces a resolution.

Ugh. Does this sound familiar? This is just one of many scenarios that we encounter as parents especially as tween emotions and hormones get the best of our daughters. What if there was a better way to handle this situation?

Learning How to Respond Instead of How to React

As parents, we can coach our daughters' emotional responses to situations and people without telling them how they should or should not feel. Helping them develop their EQ (or emotional intelligence) will foster building healthier relationships, improved communication, and a better ability to process emotions.

Here is how to start:

1) It starts with awareness. Ask questions! Make some space for them to be aware of what is going on in the situation.

What are the facts?

-You need a quiet place to work.

-You have lots of homework due tomorrow.

-Your sister wants to sing.

2) Name the emotion. (See page 7 for a list of emotions). Help them see they need to take responsibility for their emotion. Do not tell them how they should or should not feel.

Parent: Can you identify your emotion?

Daughter: I am mad.

Parent: What thought is causing that emotion?

Daughter: My sister's singing is loud & annoying. She won't stop!

1) Help guide or reframe.

Parent: How do you want to feel?

Daughter: I want to feel happy and focused to get my work done.

Parent: Is there an action you need to take or polite request you need to make?

Daughter: I can leave and go to a quiet place (in annoyed tone).

Parent: Is there a different way you can think about this situation?

Daughter: I will feel happy if I go to another room.

In most situations, like this one, there are typically four options when it comes to taking an action and experiencing an emotion. If your daughter becomes stuck, you can provide four options such as:

1. Stay where you are & feel mad
2. Stay where you are & feel happy
3. Leave to find quiet place & feel mad
4. Leave to find quiet place & feel happy

Let them decide on the outcome and how to feel about it. Let them take responsibility for how they feel.

Emotions Don't Happen to Us. We Create Them.

Our feelings and emotions are not facts. Helping girls understand this point will also make conflict resolution easier. People don't make us feel a certain emotion. We choose to feel the emotion in the moment, and we need to take responsibility for how we feel.

Similarly, you cannot control how someone else feels, and you cannot create an emotion for someone else. But you can try to understand why the other person feels that way.

Practice!

-Exercise 1: Establish a gratitude practice.

We have the power to generate our emotions. If you want to feel grateful, then spend time thinking grateful thoughts. Feeling grateful has many benefits including increasing empathy for others. (See Gratitude Daily Journal on page 5)

-Exercise 2: Practice an emotion.

Similar to a gratitude practice, write or think thoughts that generate the specific emotion. When you are intentionally practicing how to feel an emotion, you'll begin to experience it on purpose. Then, generating an emotion becomes as easy as thinking a thought. (See Emotions Journal on page 6).

Encourage your daughter to check in with her emotions at least one time each day and state clearly, "I feel _____." (See Emotions Journal on page 6 and List of Emotions on page 7).

-Exercise 3: Envision how you want to feel about your day.

When it comes to an upcoming test or event at school, visualize things going well instead of how they can go wrong. Imagine how you want to feel. What kind of thoughts would generate those emotions?

Create space each week (daily, if possible) for them to practice. It does not come natural, so that's why we need to practice! And it's a great exercise for the whole family - including parents.

As parents, we cannot control what our kids think and feel. But we can start empowering our girls to name their emotions; take responsibility for their emotions and actions; and **help them** practice positive emotions such as gratitude and happiness.

Lorrie Gray (LorrieGray.com) is a holistic life coach offering one-on-one coaching and creator of the Joy Now program for women with chronic health issues based in Los Angeles. Gray is the mom of two daughters, ages 11 and 8. She can be reached at hello@lorriegrays.com.

Elizabeth Rietz is the CEO & Co-founder of Bleuet (BleuetGirl.com), apparel, resources and community for raising strong, confident, and kind girls. Rietz is the mom of two daughters, ages 12 and 10. She can be reached at liz@bleuetgirl.com.





Gratitude

A DAILY JOURNAL

I am grateful for

Five horizontal light blue rectangular boxes stacked vertically, intended for writing things one is grateful for.

Great things that happened today

A large light blue rectangular box intended for writing great things that happened today.

I can make tomorrow awesome by

A large light blue rectangular box intended for writing ways to make tomorrow awesome.



Emotions

A DAILY JOURNAL

Today, I feel

Four light blue horizontal bars for writing.

Why?

Four light blue horizontal bars for writing.

I would like to feel

Four light blue horizontal bars for writing.

What thoughts generate these feelings?

Four light blue horizontal bars for writing.

Emotions

Active	Discouraged	Ill	Resentful
Amazed	Disgusted	Imaginative	Sad
Animated	Down	Inadequate	Safe
Angry	Eager	Insecure	Satisfied
Annoyed	Elated	Inspired	Scared
Anxious	Embarrassed	Interested	Self-conscious
Artistic	Energetic	Irritated	Shaky
Ashamed	Envious	Jealous	Shocked
Attached	Excited	Joy	Shy
Awful	Exhausted	Kind	Silly
Awe	Fantastic	Lonely	Sore
Bitter	Focused	Lost	Stressed
Brave	Foolish	Loving	Stubborn
Bold	Friendly	Low	Stuck
Bored	Frustrated	Mad	Stupid
Cheerful	Furious	Miserable	Suspicious
Clever	Generous	Motivated	Tense
Confident	Giggly	Nervous	Terrified
Comfortable	Giving	Obsessed	Thirsty
Confused	Glad	Overwhelmed	Tired
Content	Gloomy	Panicked	Trapped
Creative	Guilty	Peaceful	Uncomfortable
Crushed	Happy	Playful	Uneasy
Curious	Heartbroken	Proud	Worn out
Delighted	Helpful	Relaxed	Worried
Depressed	Hurt	Relieved	Worthless