

## VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE

for use with  
Program 3

# DEALING with FEELINGS

In the Youth Guidance Video Series



### EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

- 🍏 Children learn that other kids experience the same kinds of emotions they do.
- 🍏 Children learn that it's important to understand what we're feeling and to be honest about it.
- 🍏 Children learn that we can often benefit by discussing our feelings with someone we trust.

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## HOW TO USE THIS VIDEO

*Use in classrooms, libraries, youth service agencies, youth groups, or show it to your kids at home. Ideal for parents, too.*

***YOU CAN CHOOSE!***<sup>®</sup> is an entertaining and thought provoking video series designed to help children develop a range of important life skills and a healthy self-esteem. Each episode presents an imaginative skit in which one character makes a tough choice with the help of a group of real elementary school children. In this program, ***Dealing With Feelings***, Tuggy Turtle decides to accept his feelings and to express them honestly and positively instead of denying and hiding them.

In addition to learning how to cope with unpleasant feelings, viewers will see that everything they do involves choices and that they have the power within themselves to make the best choices.

You can greatly enhance the impact and usefulness of this video by following it up with discussions, writing assignments, learning activities, and by enlisting parental support. We have prepared this guide to help you in your efforts.

Before you show the tape, we recommend that you ask a few questions to start the kids thinking about the issues treated in the program. You'll find some appropriate questions in the "Discussion Questions" section of this guide.

Since the program is divided into three segments, you have the option of stopping the tape after any segment to talk about it. Here is how the program breaks down:

1. **Skit, Act I:** Tuggy Turtle falls into a dilemma and faces a difficult decision.
2. **Group Discussion:** School children explore the issues and decide what Tuggy should do.
3. **Skit, Act II:** Tuggy follows the children's advice and discovers the personal rewards that come from making a good choice.

While this discussion guide may appear to be written for classroom teachers, any group leader or parent will find it a useful tool for getting the most out of this ***You Can Choose!***<sup>®</sup> video program.

## THE STORY

As Tuggy and his best friend, Moose, prepare for a YMCA camping trip, Tuggy begins to panic at the thought of spending the whole weekend away from home. Unable to acknowledge that he's feeling scared, he makes a lot of silly excuses for why he can't go. He even starts a fight with Moose when Moose suggests that maybe Tuggy is a bit afraid. Moose shuffles away with hurt feelings and Tuggy is left completely confused about his own behavior. He doesn't know what he's feeling or what to do about it. But it all becomes clear when a group of real children, led by host Michael Pritchard, conclude that Tuggy is feeling fear and he should accept that and tell Moose. When Tuggy confesses, Moose is impressed with Tuggy's honesty and confides that he, too, has been feeling a bit afraid. They decide to go on the camping trip together and provide comfort for each other.

## HOW TO COPE With an Unpleasant Feeling

In his book, *Dealing With Feelings\**, Eric Dlugokinski offers this four-step method for coping:

1. **ACCEPT** your feelings. Say to yourself: "I am sad." "I am frightened." "I am angry." "I am embarrassed." It's all right to have feelings.
2. **RELAX** and take "time out" before you act. Take slow deep breaths and relax all the muscles of your body. Pretend you are in a safe place.
3. **THINK** about ways to help yourself. Thinking helps you do something smart instead of harming yourself or making things worse.
4. **DO** something to help yourself. Maybe it would help to talk to someone, or to do something you enjoy. If it doesn't work, go back to step 3.

\* Published by Feelings Factory, Inc., Raleigh, NC

This page may be copied and handed out to the children.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### *Questions to ask before showing the tape.*

1. What kinds of things are scary to kids?  
(Make a chart and put it on the wall.)
2. Is it okay to feel afraid when something scares you? Is it ever not okay?
3. How do people act when they don't want to admit they are afraid?

### *Questions to ask after showing the tape.*

4. How did Tuggy "cover-up" his feelings in the first act?
5. How did covering up his feelings affect his friendship with Moose?
6. How did Moose feel when Tuggy finally admitted he was afraid?
7. Did the kids in the discussion part of the program say anything that you strongly agree or disagree with?
8. What did you learn from this video?
9. What are the kinds of emotions or feelings that we might have on a typical day? Which are the hardest to show? Why?
10. What do you do when you are feeling afraid? Who can you talk to?
11. Does being a boy or a girl affect the way you show your feelings? If so, can you give an example?
12. Can you think of any ways in which it might be harmful to keep your feelings hidden? What could happen?

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

1. The purpose of this activity is to help kids understand that there are things they can do to change the way they are feeling. Have the group brainstorm ways of making each of the changes listed below. Put all the ideas on the board, and then have each child write down the ones that would work best for him or her, personally. As a warm up, have the group think of synonyms for each of the feelings in this list.

- a) I am feeling bored. I would like to feel enthusiastic.
- b) I am feeling fidgety and anxious. I would like to feel calmer.
- c) I am feeling afraid. I would like to feel secure.
- d) I am feeling sad. I would like to feel happier.
- e) I am feeling angry. I would like to feel more peaceful.
- f) I am feeling nervous. I would like to feel more confident or sure of myself.

2. Have the group make a list of "helpers" who are available to kids who might be afraid or worried. Ask the kids to describe instances when they've used these helpers.

3. Design a "Dealing with Feelings" poster that illustrates the four-step method on the opposite page. Keep it displayed on a wall.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Describe in as much detail as you can what it is like to cry. What it is like to laugh.
2. Write a letter to an imaginary friend telling about a time you really felt good about something. Describe the feeling as fully as possible. Do the same for a time you really felt bad about something.
3. Describe a time you had a hard time coping with the way you felt about something. What made it hard? What did you do about it? Is there something you could have done that would have made it easier?
4. Select one of the feelings from Page 5 (or any other feeling that comes to mind) and think of an animal that reminds you of that feeling. What is it about that animal that reminds you of that feeling? Write a poem about that animal.
5. Make a list of things you do that make you feel happy or good about yourself. Make a list of things other people (friends, family, teachers) do that make you feel happy or good about yourself.
6. Describe what a person looks and acts like when he or she is feeling:
  - a) proud
  - b) scared
  - c) angry
  - d) embarrassed
  - e) happy
  - f) sad
7. Make a list of people you trust enough to discuss your feelings with.

## HOME ASSIGNMENTS

To enlist the involvement of parents, make copies of the Parents' Page (see next page) and send them home with the children. Tell the children to discuss the video with their parents, and to perform the following activities.

1. With help from your family make a list of your "firsts," with dates (first walked, first tooth, first day/night away from home etc.) Ask them to describe how you felt on each of these occasions. Ask how they felt on each of these occasions. Write these feelings next to each "first" on your list.
2. Ask an adult in your family what things scare him or her. These can be added to a "Things That Scare Adults" chart in class.
3. Ask your family members what they do to relax when they are feeling angry. Ask them what they do to help themselves when they are angry. Ask them to help you think of things you can do to relax and help yourself when you are angry.

*Note to the teacher or group leader: It might be a good idea to think of some way for the children to share the outcomes of these activities with each other. Perhaps they could give written or oral reports or discuss their experiences in small groups.*

(Copy this page and send it home to the parents.)

## PARENTS' PAGE

Dear Parent,

Your child is involved in learning-activities designed to enhance self-esteem, develop positive life skills, and empower young people to make good choices for themselves.

He or she may be asked to complete several tasks at home. Your cooperation with these activities will support our overall program.

The current lesson is about fears and other kinds of feelings. We have shown a video entitled, *Dealing With Feelings*, which presents a skit and discussion about how denying our feelings can cause problems for us, and how recognizing those feelings and expressing them honestly and positively is often best.

**Here are some things you can do to support the idea that fears and other feelings are normal and that appropriate sharing of our feelings is healthy.**

- Ask your child to tell you about the video program and what he or she learned from it.
- When your child behaves emotionally, don't overreact. Your calmness is the best model. When your child calms down, talk about the feelings and discuss ways of dealing with them.
- Affirm to your child that strong feelings are normal. That we all have them and must learn to deal with them. It is part of growing up.
- Encourage new or unfamiliar activities. Confidence is a product of successful experiences. Applaud the little victories.

## ABOUT MICHAEL PRITCHARD

Michael Pritchard is a juvenile probation officer turned comedian / youth counselor / public speaker. After his college graduation in 1973, Mike went to work for the St. Louis Police Department and then moved to San Francisco's juvenile hall. In his years of working with young offenders, Mike discovered that his penchant for humor served as a powerful counseling tool, enabling him to break down communication barriers and help a lot of troubled kids turn their lives around. As Mike is fond of saying, "the shortest distance between any two people is a good laugh." Mike's unusual combination of talents gained him recognition as California's "Probation Officer of the Year" the same year that he won the San Francisco International Comedy Competition.

Whether he's being funny or serious, Mike's big love is talking with kids about the choices they make in their lives. He teaches young people that they have the power of choice, that they are responsible for the choices they make, and that they owe it to themselves to choose the best.



"The shortest distance between two people is a good laugh."

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