Teaching Mindfulness of Emotions with Emojis
by Christine de Guzman

Emojis can be a fun safe way to begin conversations about mindfulness of emotions. I recommend this lesson comes after the students have had some experience and practice with awareness of body sensations/body scans. Learn more about the Mindful Schools curriculum at mindfulteaches.org/MEE

Objectives:
- Identifying emotions
- Connecting emotions to body sensations
- Normalizing all emotions, even negative ones
- Exploring how mindful awareness might be helpful with strong emotions

Preparation:
Print out and laminate a variety of emojis

More Discussion Questions:
- What does your face and body look like when you feel the feeling expressed by this emoji?
- When are times when you've felt this emotion?
- Would anyone like to share a situation when you used a particular emoji?
- What was a situation in which a friend used this emoji?
- How can practicing mindfulness be helpful when we use an emoji (particularly without accompanying words)?
- Have ever you had a friend perceive an emoji differently than your intention?
- How can practicing mindfulness be helpful when we are communicating through text and online messages?

Sample Script for Younger Students K–3rd Grade:
Today we’re going to explore mindfulness and emotions. Raise your hands if you know what emotions are. What are some examples of emotions? (List them on a board if possible.)

Raise your hand if you know what an emoji is. Who wants to say what an emoji is?

Emojis are little faces that can express emotions. I brought a few to share today. I’m going to pull one out and if you would like to say what emotion it expresses, please raise a quiet hand. (Pull one out and call on a few students. There may be a few interpretations but generally there is a consensus. Use the consensus emotion to continue.)

Let’s say this face is “____.” Has anyone ever felt this way? Would anyone like to share a time you felt this way? This is what my face and body are like when I’ve felt this way. (I demonstrate, often exaggerated). If you’d like, you can show me what your face and body look like when you feel _____. (Describe what you see, e.g, frowns, big fists, shaking, wide smiles, etc).

Try holding your face and body like that for a few more seconds and see if you can use your mindfulness to notice how it feels. Notice how it feels in your face and muscles and breath and heart. Who would like to share what you noticed?

(Repeat with other emojis, always ending with a positive emotion. For younger students, I usually use emojis that are easily interpreted as happy, sad, angry, and scared).

Why do you think it might be helpful to notice how your body feels when you have an emotion?

For your mindfulness homework, try slowing down and noticing how your body feels when you're having an emotion. Let’s talk about what you noticed at our next mindfulness lesson.
Teaching Mindfulness of Emotions with Emojis

by Christine de Guzman

Emojis can be a fun safe way to begin conversations about mindfulness of emotions. I recommend this lesson comes after the students have had some experience and practice with awareness of body sensations/body scans. Learn more about the Mindful Schools curriculum at mindfulteachers.org/MEE

Objectives:
- Identifying emotions
- Connecting emotions to body sensations
- Normalizing all emotions, even negative ones
- Exploring how mindful awareness might be helpful with strong emotions

Preparation:
Print out and laminate a variety of emojis

Sample Script for Older Students 4th – 6th Grade:

Today we’re going to explore mindfulness and emotions. Raise your hands if you know what emotions are. What are some examples of emotions? (List them on a board if possible.)

Raise your hand if you’ve ever seen or used an emoji. I brought some emojis today. I’m going to pull one out and if you’d like to identify the emotion you think this emoji is expressing, raise a quiet hand.

(Pull one out and call on a few students. There may be a few interpretations but generally there is a consensus. Use the consensus emotion to continue).

Let’s say this face is “________.” Has anyone ever felt this way? Would anyone like to share a time you felt this way or maybe a recent time you used this emoji to express this feeling to someone else? When you have felt ________, do you notice any changes in your muscles? Breath? Heart rate? Energy level? What other things have you noticed in your body with this feeling?

(Repeat with other emojis, always ending with a positive emotion. Older students are able to grasp some of the emojis whose emotions are ambiguous).

Why do you think it might be helpful to notice how your body feels when you have an emotion?

For your mindfulness homework, try slowing down and noticing how your body feels when you’re having an emotion. Let’s talk about what you noticed at our next mindfulness lesson.