

Session 13: Sample Lesson— Responding to Emotions

Welcome the thirteenth session of the *Life on Life Sunday School Teachers' Training Curriculum*. We are going to witness a live session of *Life on Life Sunday School Curriculum*. Today's lesson is taken from the Lower Primary book and the lesson is Responding to Emotions. You can teach *Life on Life Sunday School Curriculum* to the children more effectively if you follow the Sunday School Teacher's Guide.

Responding to Emotions

Quarter 1 • Lesson 7

Focus on Character Development

1. *Connecting*: Play an up and down emotions game.
2. *Teaching*: Learn how Hannah expressed emotions and responded in healthy ways (1 Samuel 1:2–11; 2 Timothy 1:7).
3. *Responding*: Act out how you can take control of your emotions.

SUPPLIES

- Bible

Optional Supplies:

- Student Pages
- Crayons or colored pencils

Teacher Devotion

Evening, morning and noon I groan and cry out.

And [the LORD] hears my voice.

Psalm 55:17

God is with you all the time. He is with you at all times and in everything you experience. That sounds simple, but it is not. You may think of God being with you only during the extremely difficult times in your life. What about those little moments when your emotions attempt to take you away from what is good? Are you aware that God is with you in those emotional moments? No matter the time of day, He hears your voice. When you are frustrated, He hears you say you want to give up. When you are angry, He hears how you want to use harsh words with the person who angered you. When you grieve the passing of a loved one, He hears your cries and sees your tears.

God is there at all times to give you the power and love you need to control your emotions. Choose a Bible verse that reminds you that God is in control. Memorize it. Then, say it out loud any time your emotions become difficult to manage. The best way to control your emotions is to call on the One who created them.

Family Connection: Encourage families to ask their children to share a good way they can respond to a strong emotion. Have the children explain what emotions the response might help them with. Sharing how to respond the right way to a situation will help children remember what they have just learned.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Play an up and down emotions game.

Greet the children as they come into class. Ask them to briefly share 1 emotion they feel today.

Today we will talk about good ways to deal with our emotions. You have learned that before you can do anything with an emotion, you have to know which one you are feeling. Sometimes your emotions seem to go up and down. You are happy part of the day and then upset another part of the day. You can be excited one moment and then afraid the next.

Let's play an up and down game to help us understand our up and down emotions.

Stand up. Stretch your arms out to your sides. If possible, give yourself some space. If you are touching someone next to you with your arm, move so that you are no longer touching that person.

I will call out an emotion. If you think the emotion is good, jump up (jump). If you think the emotion is not good, bend your legs and squat down (squat). Practice with me.

Happy (jump)

Sad (squat)

Okay, let's try it with some different emotions.

Anger (squat)

Joy (jump)

Fear (squat)

Love (jump)

Surprise (jump and squat)

That's right! Surprise can make us feel good and bad, depending on what is done to surprise us.

Let's try the emotions exercise again. This time, when I say an emotion, use your body to show me what it looks like to feel it.

Read the emotions again and join the children in acting out the emotions. For example, you might jump up and down when you read the word "anger." This reinforces what they already know and helps them if they are not sure about an emotion.

Good job showing emotions! The actions you showed for the emotions are called reactions. These are ways we show on the outside the emotions we feel on the inside. Reactions can

be difficult to control. Today, we will talk about our responses to emotions. A response to an emotion is an action that we can control.

Choose 3 children to tell you which emotion is easiest for them to manage. Choose 3 children to tell you which emotion is easiest to get out of control. Ask the children to sit down for the teaching.

2. Teaching: Learn how Hannah expressed emotions and responded in healthy ways (1 Samuel 1:2–11; 2 Timothy 1:7).

Let's read a true story from the Bible. Listen closely for emotion words. When you hear an emotion word, stand up and sit down quickly.

Teacher Tip: The part of the brain that understands the meaning of facial expressions and body language is not fully developed in young children. This means that young children cannot recognize the emotions of others when they are only communicated through facial expressions. It is helpful to use words in emotional situations because children understand words and may not understand facial expressions.

A man named Elkanah had 2 wives. One was named Hannah. The other was named Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not have any children. Year after year Elkanah went from his town to worship the Lord God in Shiloh. Part of the way he worshipped was to give some meat to be burned on the altar.

Every time Elkanah gave a share of the meat to Peninnah. He also gave a share to each of her sons and daughters. But he gave 2 shares of meat to Hannah. That is because he loved (stand, sit) her. He also gave her 2 shares because the Lord had kept her from having children. These 2 women did not get along. Listen to how Peninnah treated Hannah:

If possible, read the verse directly from your Bible.

*Peninnah teased Hannah year after year.
Every time Hannah would go up to the house of the LORD,
Elkanah's other wife would tease her.
She would keep doing it until Hannah cried and wouldn't eat.*

1 Samuel 1:7

- **What do you think Hannah was feeling?**
- **How did you know Hannah was sad?**
- **What would you do if someone said mean words to you many times?**

She cried.

Possible answers include: Saying mean words back to the person. Fighting with the person. Hurting the person. Asking the person to stop.

- **Would your response be good? Why or why not?**

Teacher Tip: If children have difficulty answering a question, they may feel embarrassed and sometimes angry with themselves. Allow them to choose another child to help them. The power to choose will help restore their confidence.

One time, Hannah was very sad (stand, sit) because she could not have children. She cried and cried. She prayed to God:

*LORD, you rule over all. Please see how I'm suffering!
 Show concern for me!
 Don't forget about me! Please give me a son! If you do,
 I'll give him back to the LORD.
 Then he will serve the LORD all the days of his life.*
 1 Samuel 1:11b

Hannah knew she was sad (stand, sit) because she wanted a baby, and Peninnah made fun of her for not having a child.

- Did Hannah respond in a good way to her strong emotions of anger and sadness?

Allow children to respond.

- How do you know Hannah responded well to her situation?

Allow children to respond.

By praying to God and explaining her strong emotions, Hannah was able to calm down. God heard her prayer. After years of waiting He gave her a son. His name was Samuel. She raised him in a way that would bring honor and joy to God. Hannah took what could have been an opportunity to be angry at everyone around her, including God, and she turned it into a good situation.

Hannah used what she knew about the emotions she felt and asked God for help. It is important to recognize what you are feeling. When you identify your emotions, you can think through your responses.

When we experience strong emotions, such as anger, God wants us to talk with Him. For those of us who are Christians, His Spirit lives in us and will help us control ourselves. Listen to this verse:

*God gave us his Spirit.
 And the Spirit doesn't make us weak and fearful.
 Instead, the Spirit gives us power and love.
 He helps us control ourselves.*
 2 Timothy 1:7

Close your eyes for a moment while I describe the strong emotion of anger that is out of control. It begins with a fiery feeling inside your chest. It is so strong that you feel as if you will burst. Your eyes become wet and blurry, but you do not know why. You feel your heart pounding inside your chest. You feel like you can hardly breathe. Your hand closes into a fist. Then, it happens. You reach out your arm, fist clenched, and hit the person who made you angry.

Allow 2–3 children to respond to each of the following questions.

- **Why is this the wrong response to your anger?**
- **What can you do when your emotions are out of control?**

Here are some suggestions to help you. Everyone stand up. You will practice these with me.

1. Calm yourself and rest.

Your emotions can easily get out of control when you are tired. Many times, when you get angry or upset, it is because you are tired. No one thinks his best when he is tired. It is easy to lose your patience and respond in a way that is not normal for you. When you start to become angry or upset, you can take a big breath and let it out slowly.

Do the next activity with the children.

Let's stop. Take a deep breath in, and out. When I pause, repeat after me. "When my emotions are out of control (pause), I can rest (pause and pretend to sleep)."

2. Move around.

When you are angry, your body builds up extra energy that needs to be used. That is why you sometimes feel like punching someone when you are angry. That would be the wrong response, though.

Lead the children in pretending to do the exercises that follow.

When I pause, repeat what I say and do these right response exercises with me right where you are standing. "When I am angry (pause), I can walk (pause), jump (pause), or run in place (pause)."

3. Talk with someone.

Go to someone you trust and who will listen to you. Talk about the emotions you feel. Tell him what happened and why you feel the emotion. Then, let him ask you questions about the way you feel. Be sure to use your words to answer his questions.

When I pause, repeat what I say and do these right response exercises with me right where you are standing. "When I am angry (pause), I can talk with someone (cup hands around mouth like you are going to whisper into someone's ear)."

4. Cry.

Hannah cried in today's story. Sometimes you need to cry. If you cannot or do not want to cry in front of others, then go somewhere by yourself and cry. It only makes you feel sad for a longer time if you keep everything inside.

When I pause, repeat after me. "It is okay (pause) to cry (pause and pretend to cry)."

Teacher Tip: If any of these tips are not appropriate in your culture, share other tips that are appropriate.

5. Finally, but most importantly, talk with God about what you are feeling. Say a Bible verse and pray. We have learned 2 memory verses together. To calm yourself, you can use one of the verses you have already learned or one that we will learn later. Use God's words from the Bible to help you control your emotions! Then, say a prayer and ask God to help you do something good with your strong emotions.

Optional: If you are using *Student Pages*, allow the children to trace the words of the Bible verse with crayons or colored pencils. Help the children to memorize 2 Timothy 1:7. Tell them it is a great verse to say when their emotions are out of control.

3. Responding: Act out how you can take control of your emotions.

Put the children into groups of 3–4.

Let's act out how we would respond to a situation that made us feel strong emotions. Each group will act out what happens in the situation, including how you would respond to it. Each group must agree on how to handle the situation. Remember, God helps us control ourselves.

Read 1 of the following situations. Allow the groups 7 minutes to respond.

Situation 1:

Your grandmother lived with you for 3 years. She played games with you and listened to you each day. She told you she loved you. You were very close to your grandmother. This week your grandmother became very sick and died. What emotion do you feel? What should you do?

Situation 2:

You are learning how to read. It is very hard for you. Every time your teacher says that you need to practice reading, you become upset. No one in your family can read. You do not like when you are not able to do something. What emotion do you feel? What should you do?

Visit each group to watch the children act out the situation. If there is time, have the children act out the second situation.

Read the memory verse to the class.

Be joyful with those who are joyful. Be sad with those who are sad.

Romans 12:15

Repeat the rhythm you created and encourage students to clap or pat their hands on a surface to help keep the rhythm. Repeat the verse and rhythm with the children at least 3 times.

End class by speaking this blessing, based on 2 Timothy 1:7, over the children.

Blessing: May the God who gives you a spirit of power and love help you control all of your emotions.

Do you have any questions? Thank you for joining us, let's pray.

Loving Father, we submit everyone who has joined the session today. I submit all the teachers to guide the children well. Let each and everyone of us be able to control our emotions well. Please be with us and guide us correctly. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

- What have you learned in this session about teaching this curriculum?

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