

Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion

Emotions help us understand and make sense of what is going on inside us in reaction to events, experiences, or interactions. Essential self-awareness and self-management skills help teens navigate emotions, helping them learn how to control their responses and make better choices when they respond to strong emotions.

Share the Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion process with your teen to help him or her deal with and learn from strong emotions:

1. **EMOTION** Identify your emotions.
2. **THOUGHT** Analyze why the situation is causing these emotions and the effect the situation is having or can have on your life. Then decide what you can and cannot change.
3. **ACTION** Choose a positive way to respond. Then reflect on something positive you can learn from the situation.
4. **NEW EMOTION** Notice in what way your emotion has shifted as a result of this Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion process.

The Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion process will help your teen regulate his or her emotions so that strong emotions do not keep your teen down.

Building Your Teen’s Social and Emotional Competence

Self-management and self-awareness are social and emotional learning competencies that help teens effectively regulate their emotions, control impulses, motivate themselves, take the perspective of, and empathize with others, including those of diverse backgrounds and cultures. These activities help teens build the capacity to identify emotions and practice self-discipline.

Analyze It!

Ask your teen to pay attention to the connection between emotions, thoughts, and actions over the next few days. Then ask your teen to analyze using the Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion process.

Observe It!

Have your teen watch a TV show or movie and observe how the characters’ emotions, thoughts, and actions are related.

Many teens are experiencing feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, and fear due to the onset of COVID-19. They need a chance to share their thoughts and feelings and ask questions. Make sure you are accurately informed and ready to educate your teen knowing the information is evolving all the time. Get information from: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

