

HOW TO COPE

With An Unpleasant Feeling

Sometimes we feel good, and sometimes we feel bad. Both kinds of feelings are normal. Of course, we all enjoy good feelings. But when we don't like the way we are feeling, sometimes we don't know what to do about it. Here is a plan that will help you help yourself when your feelings are bothering you.

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.

* The above material is borrowed from the book "Dealing With Feelings," by Dr. Eric Dlugokinski. Published by Feelings Factory, Inc., Raleigh, NC. Reprinted by permission of author.

TO DO

- 1) Look in a mirror and make a sad face, then a mad face, then a glad face. Now draw a picture of what your face looked like with each feeling.
- 2) What feeling made you feel the best?
- 3) It's ok to have those feelings, but if it's making you feel bad, go through the steps above and try to change whatever is making you feel bad, so you can be glad again.