



Self-Management – **Emotional Regulation** ebook

Five conversations that show you how your child really follows through

Bloomster

Why big feelings are hard at this age

It's a skill, not a temperament. Nobody is born knowing what to do with big feelings. It's learned — and 9–14 is when it's learned.

The feelings really are bigger. Hormones and a still-developing brain make emotions hit harder at this age. The intensity is real, not drama.

They don't have the words yet. When a feeling has no name, it comes out sideways — outbursts, slammed doors, or going quiet.

"What's wrong?" closes the door. The instinct is to fix the feeling fast. But the direct question usually ends the conversation instead of starting it.

You're the model, not the fixer. Most of us never learned this as kids either. Naming your own feelings out loud teaches more than any lecture.

How to use this

Not at the table. At pickup, in the drive-thru line, walking the dog — sideways works better than eye-to-eye.

Read one aloud like you just thought of it. "Okay, weird question — imagine this..."

Don't correct the first answer. Even a messy one. Ask "and then what would you feel?" — you're listening for how they handle feelings, not grading.



SCENARIO 1:

Can they name the sting?

You're having a hard time understanding a science lesson, and you ask a classmate for help. They're mean about it — they say the lesson is really easy and that they can't help you. How do you think that would make you feel?

Why this one

Small moment, real sting.
Everyday hurts like this are where regulation gets practiced first.

Their words, not yours.
It invites your child to describe a feeling with no coaching from you.

Listen for

A name for the feeling.
Embarrassed, angry, discouraged — can they label it, or is it all just "bad"?

What they'd do with it.
Once the feeling lands, is the next move helpful — or does it make things worse?

SCENARIO 2:

Can they sit with the wait?

You've just finished a big test at school and feel really nervous about how you did. You're not sure what grade you'll get, but you're starting to feel upset just thinking about it. What do you think made you feel this way — and how do you usually handle nerves or worries?

Why this one

The wait is the hard part.
There's nothing left to do but sit with the worry — that's pure regulation.

School pressure never stops. Tests keep coming — how they recover matters more than any one grade.

Listen for

A calming move. Deep breaths, "I prepared for this," thinking of something else — do they have any strategy at all?

Where the worry starts. Can they trace the feeling to its source — or does it just arrive?

SCENARIO 3:

A bad mood out of nowhere

You wake up and everything just feels off — you're irritable, snappy with the people around you, and nothing has obviously gone wrong. Someone asks what's the matter and you almost bite their head off. What's going on, and what could you do about it?

Why this one

The feeling has no cause to point at. Nothing happened — so they have to look inward instead of blaming the day.

The snap isn't the problem — not noticing it is. Catching the mood before it hits someone is the skill.

Listen for

A name for it. Can they land on tired, overwhelmed, off — or is it just "leave me alone"?

A move that helps. A break, some air, naming it out loud — or does it just leak onto everyone nearby?

SCENARIO 4:

Carrying something heavy alone

Something's been weighing on you for a few days — you're not sleeping great and you feel low, but you haven't told anyone. Part of you figures you should just handle it yourself. What would you do?

Why this one

Bottling feels like strength. At this age, keeping it in can seem like the mature move — this tests whether they know it isn't.

Naming it to someone shrinks it. Saying a heavy feeling out loud is a regulation tool, not a weakness.

Listen for

Reaching out, or sealing off. Does telling someone trusted come up at all — or is solo the only plan?

Who they'd tell. A parent, a friend, a teacher — is there anyone on the list, or nobody?

SCENARIO 5:

When everyone else seems better?

> Everyone around you is talking about their achievements — sports, school, something else — and you start feeling like you're not as good, or that you're falling behind. What do you do with that feeling?

Why this one

Comparison is everywhere. Sports, grades, group chats — some scoreboard is always running at this age.

This feeling hides. Falling-behind feelings almost never get said out loud — this invites them into the open.

Listen for

The self-talk. Is it "I'm not good at anything" — or "I'm still learning"?

Dodging the topic. Changing the subject is an answer too — worth one gentle second ask.

What to listen for across all five

One answer tells you little. Patterns tell you a lot:

No name for the feeling. Everything upsetting is just "bad" — or "fine." The vocabulary isn't there yet.

No calming move. Worry and anger just run their course; there's nothing to reach for.

Avoiding is the strategy. Changing the subject, skipping the talk, retreating from the friend.

Self-talk turns on them. Falling short becomes "I'm not good at anything."

Heard a few of these? Normal — these are learned skills, and this is exactly the age to learn them.

If one of those patterns sounded familiar, you haven't found a problem — you've found the starting point. Here's what to do with it.

Bloomster Course: Emotional You: Managing Your Emotions

One conversation opens the door — practice builds the skill. In this course, your child learns what emotions actually are — where they show up in the body, how they drive thoughts and behavior — and builds a personal toolbox for handling the hard ones and growing the good ones. What they build:

Names for every feeling. Identifying and labeling emotions — the vocabulary that makes everything else possible.

A toolbox for hot moments. Deep breathing, reframing, expressive outlets — practiced until they're easy to reach for.

Talking instead of retreating. Sharing feelings with people they trust — support as a skill, not a rescue.

Self-talk that's on their side. Challenging unhelpful thoughts and building positive ones on purpose.

Start the course free — 7 days, no credit card, nothing to cancel. Find Your Child's Starting Point.

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