

YOUR EMOTIONS

Emotions are the feelings that influence you. Sometimes you can control your emotions (for example, being able to stay in your seat at a Red Sox game even though you are excited about the win). Sometimes emotions seem to control you (you can't stop crying because you're very sad about something).

Emotions contribute to how and why we do things (for example, at the school dance you wonder if you have picked the right clothes or combed your hair enough. This makes you feel self-conscious, so you try not to be noticed and kind of hang back in the shadows).

Many times we worry about things even before they happen. Just thinking about having to go some place, or see someone, or do something can make us feel ANXIOUS. People with AS frequently experience a good deal of ANXIETY (feeling nervous and upset). Sometimes you know what you are anxious about (going to the dentist?), and sometimes it's just a general feeling of worry.

What makes you anxious? (taking tests, going shopping?)



Tuning in to our emotions can help us survive in uncomfortable places and situations.

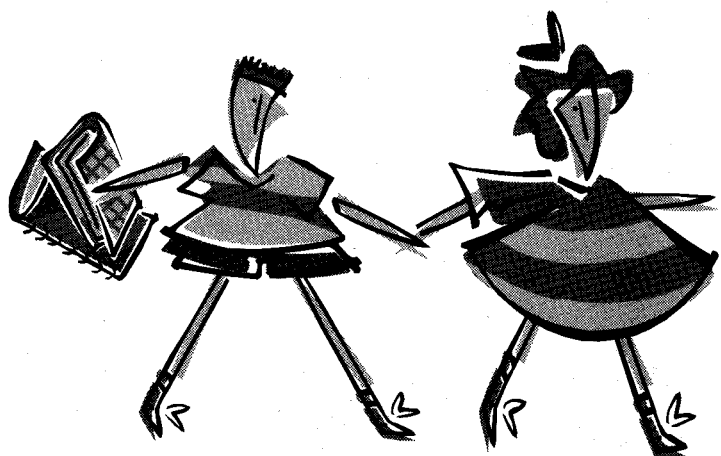
Here's an example: You need dressy clothes for a family wedding. You get overwhelmed in noisy, crowded department stores with so many choices. Knowing how you feel about big stores, you can plan to:

- Order from a catalog
- Go to a small specialty store where people help you to pick out and match clothes
- Have someone pre-select some outfits and either bring them home or have them held in the dressing room at the store so you can pick without having to go all over the store
- Go at off times when few people will be shopping

Again, knowing what you like or FEEL will help you make plans and arrangements that will work best for you.

There's another very important reason for getting to know your feelings:

Sometimes people with AS have trouble understanding feelings (like "love" and "caring") that other people talk about feeling toward their parents, friends and relatives. These words seem to lack meaning. But many people with AS want to understand and experience deep and meaningful connections and relationships with the people in their world. They just need some help to understand the idea and recognize the feelings. Learning about feelings and emotions can help you to make relationships more personal and help you to feel closer to the people you want to feel close to.



Your Emotions (Feelings):

How to Recognize Them – How to Understand Them

- **Do you know what it feels like to be ...**

- Happy?
- Calm?
- Frustrated?
- Sad?
- Angry?
- Nervous/anxious?

- **Can you tell what you are feeling at a particular moment in time?**

- **Can you tell what other people are feeling?**

It is important to learn how to do this.

Think about the following:

- When things are going smoothly, people usually feel CONTENT – or calm.
- When good things happen, people often feel HAPPY.
- What do you think people feel when things are going wrong – when they make mistakes? _____

Try to decide what you might feel when:

- Someone calls you a bad name or makes fun of you. _____
- You get a really good grade in school. _____
- Someone picks you to be on their team. _____
- You did your homework but left it at home. _____
- You can't find a seat in the lunchroom. _____
- You're going on vacation tomorrow. _____

Try to explain what the following words mean and what it feels like to be:

Happy (For example, "happy means feeling good about what is going on; when I feel happy I am not worrying, I feel kind of calm but excited too."): _____

Sad: _____

Angry: _____

Frustrated: _____

Annoyed: _____

Delighted: _____

Name some times when you felt each of these feelings (for example, I was annoyed when my sister knocked my Legos down): _____
