

CREATIVE + THERAPIES

The Solution-Focused 'SAD-MAD-GLAD' Talk

OR -THE 'SAD-MAD-GLAD' GAME, AS IT IS DESCRIBED TO YOUNGER CHILDREN.

Objectives :

- * To learn to identify and express feelings.
- * To use words rather than behavior to get needs met.
- * To increase ability to tolerate frustration by being able to see through to many solutions.

As children learn to identify and express their feelings and resolve their challenges with an understanding parent, their fuse lengthens. They naturally become more calm. At the same time each day, (boys often prefer bedtime, while girls like right after school) have the 'Sad-Mad-Glad' Talk, or as it is described to younger children: "play the Sad-Mad-Glad Game." Using the script below, give your child a benign example from your own day for him/her to model after. For the first seven days, do the activity in written form and bring it to your next appointment. The emphasis is on the process not on the writing skill, so the child or the parent can fill out the worksheet below. After doing this exercise for a few weeks build your child's developing skills into your daily interactions, such as by asking, "What's the problem, what's the plan?" The emphasis is on using 'I statements' rather than blaming or trying to control others. Remember, when you point the finger at someone else, three fingers are pointing back at you. Teach and use the word solution and encourage the skill of becoming solution oriented. Explore many solutions by asking questions such as: "*How do you think it could have been handled differently/more successfully?*" "*What else could you do?*" "*What other solutions are there?*" "*If you had done that what do you think I/your teacher/your best friend would have done?*" At first this may seem unnatural, keep at it, the skills developed are gifts for a lifetime. Remember, the power of the positive versus challenging ratio is 4:1 so do lots of glads!

SAD – SAD – SAD – SAD –SAD– SAD – SAD – SAD

What I feel _____

What happened _____

Solutions _____

MAD – MAD – MAD – MAD –MAD – MAD - MAD

What I feel _____

What happened _____

Solutions _____

GLAD – GLAD – GLAD – GLAD – GLAD – TIMES FOUR

What I feel _____

What happened _____

What I feel _____

What happened _____

What I feel _____

What happened _____

- *Please note: Do not do this activity while eating food, to avoid connecting feelings with food;*
- *The title of 'Sad-Mad-Glad' is used because it rhymes and is lighter and easier to remember. With older children we work on the expression of the core emotions accurately identifying them as sadness, anger, joy and sometimes including fear and infrequently disgust.*
- *For further ideas and language read about the Peace Table under Skills and Techniques navigational setting*