Module 6: Bouncing Back from Disappointment

**Objective**

Increase an understanding of disappointment and explore constructive ways to bounce back from it and/or avoid it when possible

**Procedure**

1. Ask children to define what it means to feel **disappointed**.
2. Write their responses on board or in notebook. Clarify that disappointment is a common, natural human feeling. Disappointment is experienced when we look forward to something happening in a certain way or at a certain time and it doesn’t happen the way we had wanted or expected.
3. Write on the board:

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| ***I*** *(wanted, expected, or was looking forward to)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*  ***BUT*** *(this happened instead)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* |

* Instruct children to fill in the first blank with an event. Instruct them to fill in the second blank with what happened instead.
* *Example:* ***I*** *wanted to see the movie* ***BUT*** *when I got to the theater the movie was sold out.*

1. Clarify thatdisappointment can trigger other strong emotions in us like frustration, jealousy, embarrassment, sadness and anger. Offer relevant examples of disappointing situations that trigger other emotions.

* *We can be disappointed and feel frustrated when there is a change in our routine.*
* *We can be disappointed and feel jealous when a classmate gets chosen do something that we had wanted to do.*
* *We can be disappointed and feel sad when our plans get cancelled.*
* *We can be disappointed and feel angry when we ask for something we really want, and the answer is “No.”*

1. Explain that we all feel disappointment and rejection at times. Things can’t always go our way.
2. Brainstorm with the children a definition of **compromise**. Compare this general definition with what they brainstormed. *Compromise is a settlement by mutual concessions; an agreement reached by each party adjusting their initial demands/desires.* Compromise is a way to work out an agreement that works for you and the other person. It involves each person agreeing to give up some of what they first wanted yet holding onto some of what they wanted, so both win.
3. Present the strategy of compromise as a helpful way to handle situations. Compromise, when it can be reached, is a positive way to avoid disappointment. We can make compromises with parents, teachers, and friends. Elicit compromises that can be made in the following example:

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| *Scenario: You really want to finish playing your computer game but your mom asks you to walk the dog.* |
| *Question: What could you say to mom to try to work out a compromise?* |
| *Possible Compromises:*   * *Can I finish this level first?* * *I’m in the middle of a game can we switch and you walk him now and I’ll walk him after dinner?* * *Can I save the game while I’m walking the dog, and go back to playing when I return?* |

Emphasize that parents are in charge of the home and teachers are in charge of the classroom so the adults have the final say. Sometimes parents and teachers might be willing to work out a compromise with you but sometimes they will not. If the answer is still “no” after you have tried to work out a compromise you have to abide by their decision.

1. Offer other examples to further explore this concept:

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| *Scenario: You really want to play soccer but your friend really wants to play basketball.* |
| *Question: What could you say to your friend to work out a compromise?* |
| *Possible Compromises:*   * *How about we play soccer today and play basketball tomorrow.* * *How about we play soccer for part of recess and basketball for the other half of recess.* |

Friends should be flexible with each other. When you don’t try to work out compromises with your friends, but instead insist that they do things your way all the time, your friends will feel disappointed, think that you are being bossy and may not want to hang out with you.

Encourage children to give more examples of compromises they make with their friends.

1. Discuss problem solving as another way of avoiding disappointment. After facing a specific disappointment, it is helpful to think about things you could do differently to prevent that disappointing situation from happening again. Suggest that prevention takes thoughtfulness and a willingness to prepare yourself differently so you don’t set yourself up for an unnecessary disappointment.Reflect onwhat can you do differently or how can you set up your environment differently so that you can prevent repeating disappointments.
2. Further explore the use of problem solving. Have them come up with things that the child in the example can do differently so they would not have to stop in the middle of playing their video came. For example: Walking the dog before starting to play the game, make a chore list with specific times that you will walk the dog, etc.
3. Offer other examples to further explore this concept:

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| *Scenario: You are disappointed because you could not participate in gym class because you forgot to wear your sneakers.* |
| *Question: What are some of the ideas you could discuss with your mom to make it less likely that that would happen again?* |
| *Preventing Disappointment in the Future:*   * *Always wear sneakers to school.* * *Write when you have gym on a calendar in your room that you check every morning before leaving for school.* * *Put your clothes including what shoes you will be wearing out the night before.* |

1. Many times we can easily accept the disappointments in our day and move on. But other times, when we are feeling especially sad, upset, or angry because we do not have any control or say in a situation, and it can not be changed, it is important to identify why the disappointment has happened. Use your Disappointment Card Set to identify the category that best fits the reason why the disappointment has occurred. Placing the disappointment into a category will help you to see the situation from another perspective, which can help you to let go of the unhappy feelings so you can move on.

**Discussion Points**

* To create and keep good relationships and friendships we need to create compromises and solve problems instead of getting upset or just walking away when feeling disappointed.
* Good organizational skills can keep us from becoming disappointed. Discuss systems to stay organized
* You can’t change a situation that has already occurred but what you can do is make a plan so that it is less likely to happen again. We can prevent some of the same disappointments from happening over again in the future.
* Disappointment is part of life. Creating compromises, problem solving, and identifying reasons why you are disappointed are all responsible choices that can help you work through your feelings.