

The Social Times

HANDLING DISAPPOINTMENTS

I Second That Emotion!
Rating the Size of Your Problems

Coming to Our Senses:
"Eye Noise"

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HANDLING DISAPPOINTMENTS: Don't Let Changes Throw You Off Course

Imagine being really excited about your end-of-the-year class picnic at the park near school. Your mom packed your lunch box with all your favorites, and your dad will bring your bicycle so you can ride around with your friends. It's all planned!

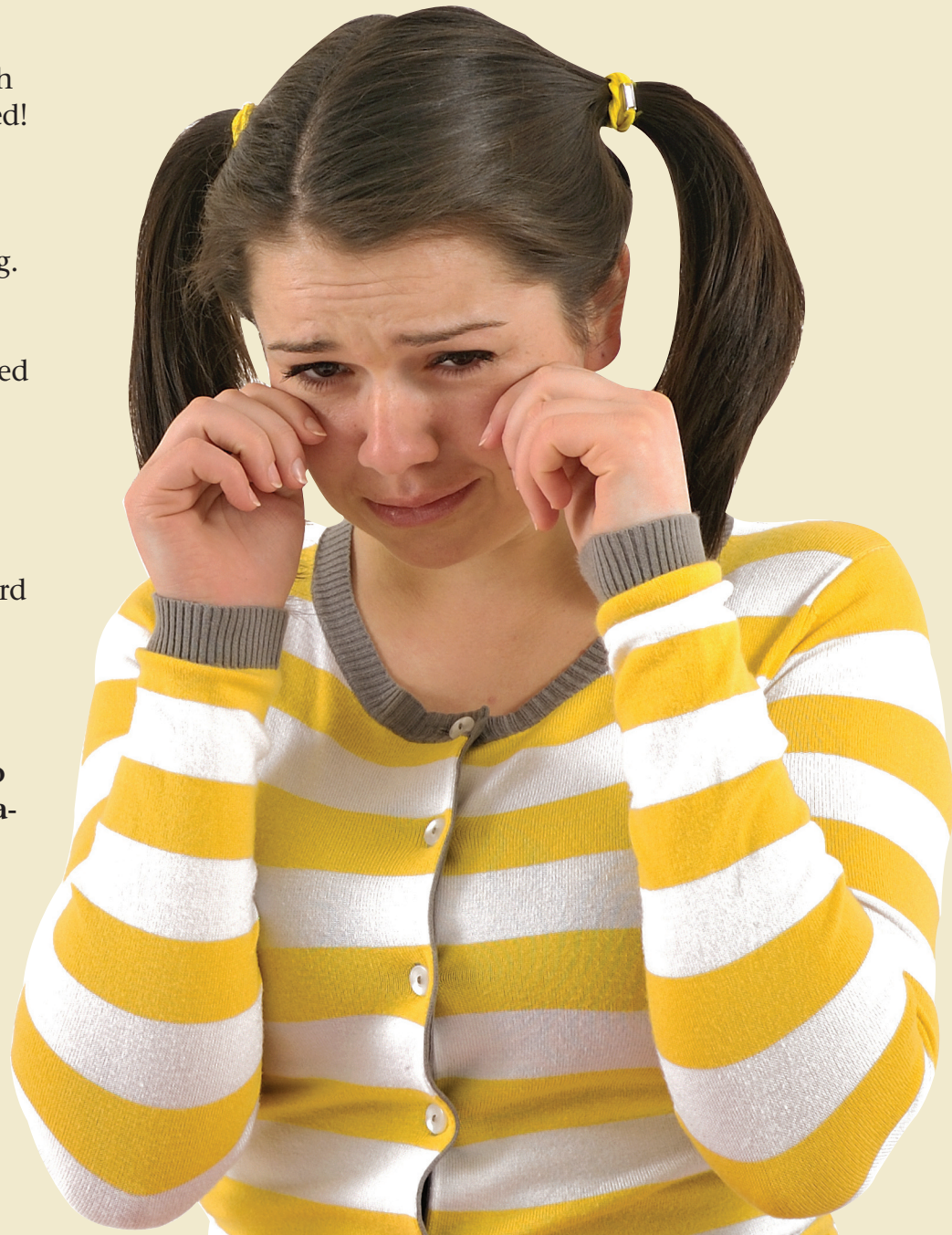
Then the day arrives, and you wake up in the morning and see that it is raining. When you get to school, your teacher tells you that the picnic has been cancelled and that it is class as usual. How disappointing!

Handling disappointment isn't easy. Believe it or not, even many adults have a hard time when something they had been looking forward to is changed or cancelled. **Handling disappointment means that a person has to deal with unexpected situations in a flexible way.**

Think of your brain as a rubber band. In order for a rubber band to do its job, it stretches in many different directions.

Just like a rubber band, our brains need to be flexible when something happens that disappoints us. When our brains are flexible, we are

able to think about more than just what is disappointing us and focus on what we can do to make ourselves feel better.



Here are some things you can do to stay flexible when facing disappointing situations.

- 1. Stop and take three deep breaths.** This will help you relax and help your brain stretch like that rubber band.
- 2. Think about the situation and stick with the facts!** When something disappointing happens, we tend to think mainly about the bad parts. Don't forget to think about the positives, too! Most unexpected situations happen for a reason.
- 3. Come up with at least two possible solutions.** This may make that disappointing situation not so disappointing!

4. Choose a solution that makes everyone happy. You may need to have an adult help you with this.

Now let's put these steps into action. When your teacher tells you that the class picnic has been cancelled, close your eyes and take three deep breaths. That was the easy part, right?

Now, let's stick to the facts. A class picnic would not be much fun in the rain. Everyone would have to carry around umbrellas or wear bulky raincoats. Plus, riding your bike would not be as fun in pouring rain.

Let's come up with a few options. One idea would be to reschedule the picnic. You could check the weather forecast and suggest a few different dates. Another idea would be to have an indoor class picnic.

It's time to share these ideas with your teacher and leave it to her to decide what to do. That is the final step in the process.

Handling disappointment is not easy. It is important to practice these tips ahead of time. Try to handle disappointing situations by being flexible; you will probably find that they don't seem so bad after all.

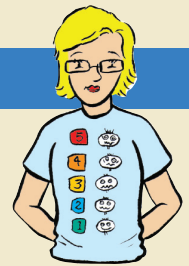
Remember:

- Close your eyes and take 3 deep breaths
- Flex your brain
- Think of at least one good thing about the situation
- Think of 2 possible solutions

TRY IT!

Think of a time when you were really upset about a change. Can you think of two things that might have helped you deal with your disappointment?





RATING THE SIZE OF YOUR PROBLEMS

We all have problems from time to time. Sometimes the problem is really more of an inconvenience, but sometimes the problem is big enough to tell an adult about.

A good problem-solving skill is being able to rate the severity of the problem quickly so that we don't overreact or underreact. If the problem is little, you might not need to talk to someone about it, but if it is a big problem, always talk to a trusted person who can help you solve it.

Here is a problem scale that you could use to think about your problems and whether or not they are small or really big.

The Problem Scale

5	A serious problem. This might be like a stranger offering you a ride in his car. Talk to a trusted adult right away.
4	An angry situation. This might be like a big schedule change. Talk to an adult about this.
3	A problem worthy of help but not an emergency. This might be like a school assignment that is confusing. It is a good idea to ask for help from a teacher or parent. Be sure to talk to your parents about things that are scary for you.
2	An inconvenience. This might be like a bus being late. This is a good time to practice slow breathing, listen to music, or read a good book. An inconvenience can usually be easily fixed.
1	An irritation. This might be like another student breaking a small rule. You can use some deep breathing, or you can create a journal of things that irritate you. Then when something feels irritating, add it to your journal. Sometimes just writing it down helps.



A 1,200-pound horse eats about seven times its own weight each year.

TRY IT!

Think about something you are looking forward to right now. Imagine that for some reason it won't happen.

Take a couple of slow, deep breaths and think of one thing you could do to help you not get too disappointed and frustrated.

“EYE NOISE”



Just like trying to listen to a lot of different things at the same time can get frustrating, looking at too many things at the same time can be frustrating, too.

When there are too many things to look at, it can be hard to figure out what is important and what isn't that important to pay attention to. You might be a person who notices every little detail in a room. This can be stressful! Hallways at school can be full of people rushing by in all directions. Classrooms can be loaded with posters, bulletin boards, decorations, mobiles and other things hanging from the ceiling.

If this kind of thing makes your head spin, ask

your teacher if you can sit somewhere in the room where there is less to look at. The front of the class might be a good option. Sometimes teachers will give permission to wear a hat if they know that it will help you tune out the distracting stuff. You could also make a special agreement with your teacher so that you can leave a little earlier or later from your class so that there aren't so many people in the hallway if that's the kind of situation that bothers you.

If you feel stressed out by all the visual things in the classroom, the commotion in the hallways, etc., it is important to talk to your teacher and come up with a plan for how to deal with it.

Face to Face

Study these faces very carefully. Each face is expressing an emotion. Three of the faces are expressing the same emotion. Can you find the face that's different? Can you name the emotions? How did you figure out which faces are expressing the same emotion?



A cow gives nearly 200,000 glasses of milk in her lifetime.

©jupiterimages



Dear Roger,

The other day I ran into someone who knew me, but I had no idea who she was. It was a weird feeling, because I couldn't remember this girl's name. She told me how good it was to see me and how she was still working on her "project." I didn't know what she was talking about, so I just smiled and nodded, and told her that it was nice seeing her.

I worry that maybe she could tell I was clueless. Did I do the right thing? My mom thinks I should have been more honest and told her I didn't remember her, but I think that would be embarrassing both for me and for the other person.

– Speechless in St. Paul

Dear Speechless,

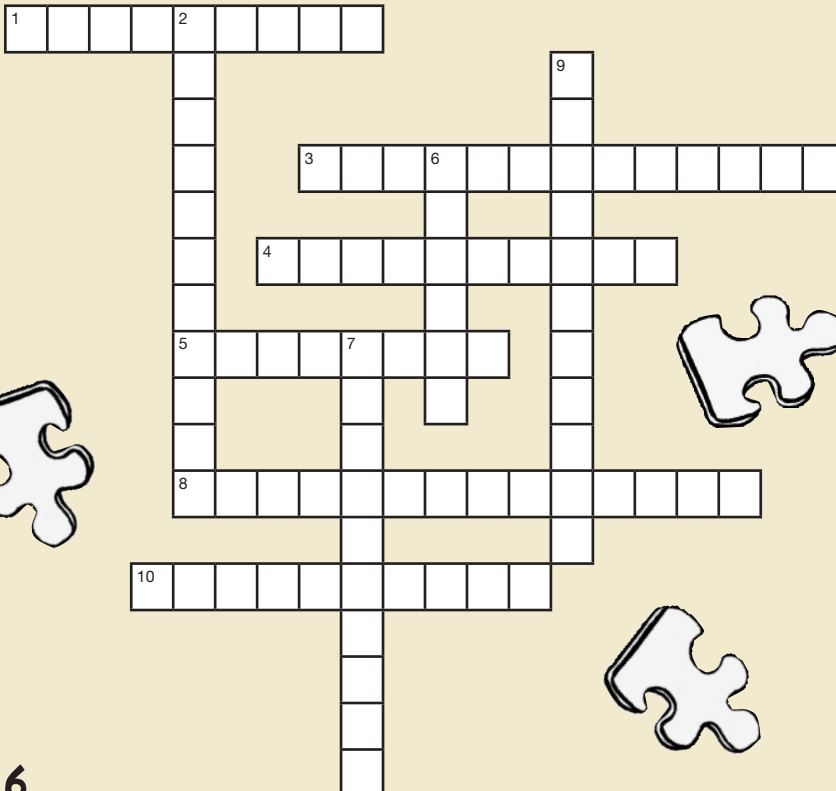
I think your mom is right on this one. Meeting someone and not recognizing them or remembering their name happens all the time to almost everyone. Since it happens to everyone, you don't need to feel embarrassed about it.

The next time you run into someone who obviously knows you but whom you don't remember, I recommend that you simply say, "I'm sorry, but could you remind me of your name again?" Then just let the conversation go on from there. No need to apologize beyond that.

– Roger Gets-It



Puzzle Time

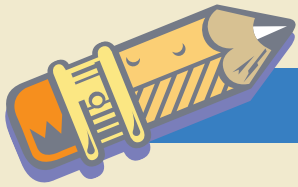


ACROSS

- 1) ended; stopped for some reason
- 3) something that gets in your way or makes it harder to do what you want
- 4) a small worry or thought
- 5) an answer to a problem
- 8) the way you feel when something doesn't go as you were expecting
- 10) something you do to calm your body and mind

DOWN

- 2) a way you might feel if you think other people are thinking bad things about you
- 6) an alternative
- 7) something that makes it hard to resist
- 9) the ability to move in many directions and think in new ways



Puzzle Time

B Q Y S F N N P P N G G Q M R Q J Z T B K O I R G E M G R O
 U D T T F T P K A A M Z X Q W I N K Y P Y V F I H C E M I Q
 S R N C Y L D N Y S I V J K G O T Z M G R Q N C J D E W Z K
 I H I A Z Q S I T O T Q M U G Z K N P X D D Z E Y F L M C P
 T Y A F N U Q H E D T Z R W H J H B O F J E D U I Q B H X P
 N L R R S B G Y Y D K Z B P I A J F J E D L T V N D X E L C
 E O B Q U H F J E Y Q X W V Y U T E P A K A O C R A L Q A R
 M R P X Q B B P O V S I G I U E Z C J H P D E B E W M S X H
 T E C B J N B M M A I N X X T F M D O I U V S X L P P F Y I
 N J O C X A B E S D A T V X T R N S W C T I X M S Y X L N X
 I F L G O S B Z R J T S I J W A K H X K B W D Z W T W E D E
 O F P B S N Z X U B T V F S N X N Q T F C V O P M P N X N Q
 P W Z K O O J O X P A L T W O M Z W A I H A V Z F T N I K U
 P X V T L I E G S Z M N L D D P O A I Y N Q E F G Z O B W R
 A G A L B T P M Q L G L D F X O E G S E B Z K A A Q I L Y N
 S Y C L C P L X C R I R G B W S G O T Y M P I T U Y T E Q I
 I C H O Y O A X U L D K K E S F T J S B S K V Q J W U M L I
 D R G A P B Q C E V H E C L V W A L K U P F O J X P L J R W
 L H L J C G L X T N S K V B S L B Z E T Z R W H C B O G G V
 J W C D R Y O U W P M O N P M H Z S S E G P N O Y J S A Z L

Word Bank: BRAIN, DISAPPOINTMENT, FACTS, FLEXIBLE, OPTIONS, POSITIVE, RUBBERBAND, SOLUTION, UNEXPECTED

**A bird requires more food
in proportion to its size
than a baby or
a cat.**

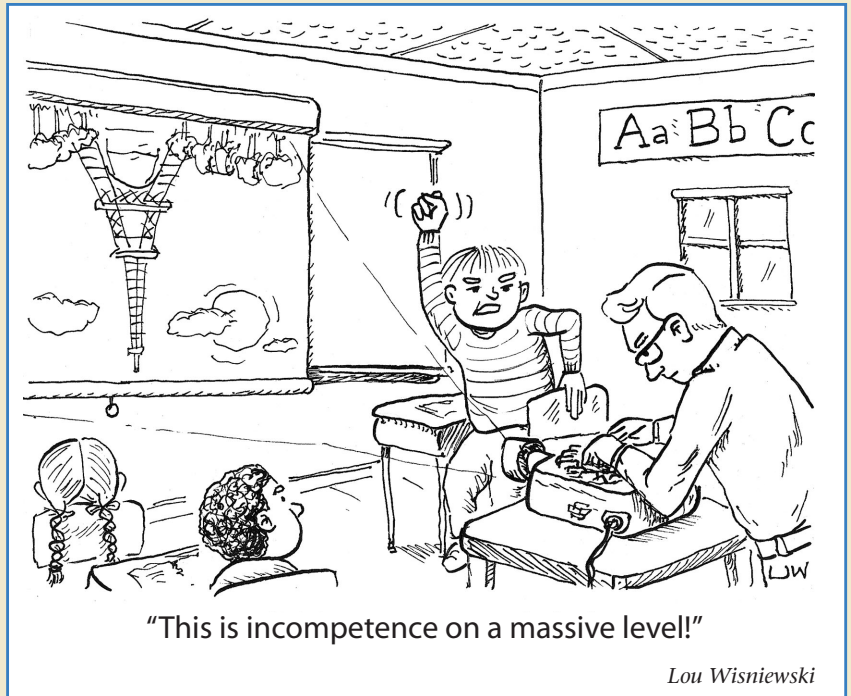


WEATHER FACTOID

**Greatest rainfall in a day: 73.62 inches
(Røunion, Indian Ocean; March 15, 1952)**

When I was 10 years old, I had a friend whose mother used to put out a candy dish in their living room. My mother hardly ever gave us candy, let alone set out a whole dish full of candy! My friend's mother usually put jelly beans in the candy dish, so every time I was at their house, I took some. It seemed to me that the point of setting out a candy dish was for people to help themselves.

Well, one day there were M&Ms in the candy dish. I loved M&Ms! So every time I walked through the living room, I took a handful out of the candy dish. Nobody seemed to notice. And, like I said, I figured it was O.K. because the M&Ms were in a candy dish, left out on the coffee table for the entire world to see.



Lou Wisniewski

The next time I went over to my friend's house, the candy dish was gone. I looked around to see if maybe it was sitting on a different table in the living room or maybe had been moved to the kitchen. No luck! The candy dish was gone. Later when I was in my friend's room, I asked her about it. She told me that her mother decided to hide it whenever I came over.

I was so embarrassed. I didn't mean to break the rules; I didn't even know there **were** rules. I wondered: Did all of my friends know about this? Was everyone laughing behind my back? I decided to talk to my mother about it. She gave me a hug and told me not to worry. She said that my friend's mom probably expected people to take a few candies but not five handfuls in one visit. She also told me that if I was embarrassed, the best thing would be for me to tell my friend's mom that I was sorry and explain that I didn't know about candy dish rules because I had never been around a candy dish.

It was hard to do, but that is what I did. After I apologized, my friend's mother smiled at me and said that sometimes she forgot what a big temptation M&Ms could be. I felt better, and I think she did, too.

Created by Kari Dunn Buron. Her writings include *The Incredible 5-Point Scale*, *Adalyn's Clare*, *A "5" Could Make Me Lose Control!*, *A 5 Is Against the Law!* and *When My Worries Get Too Big*.