



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

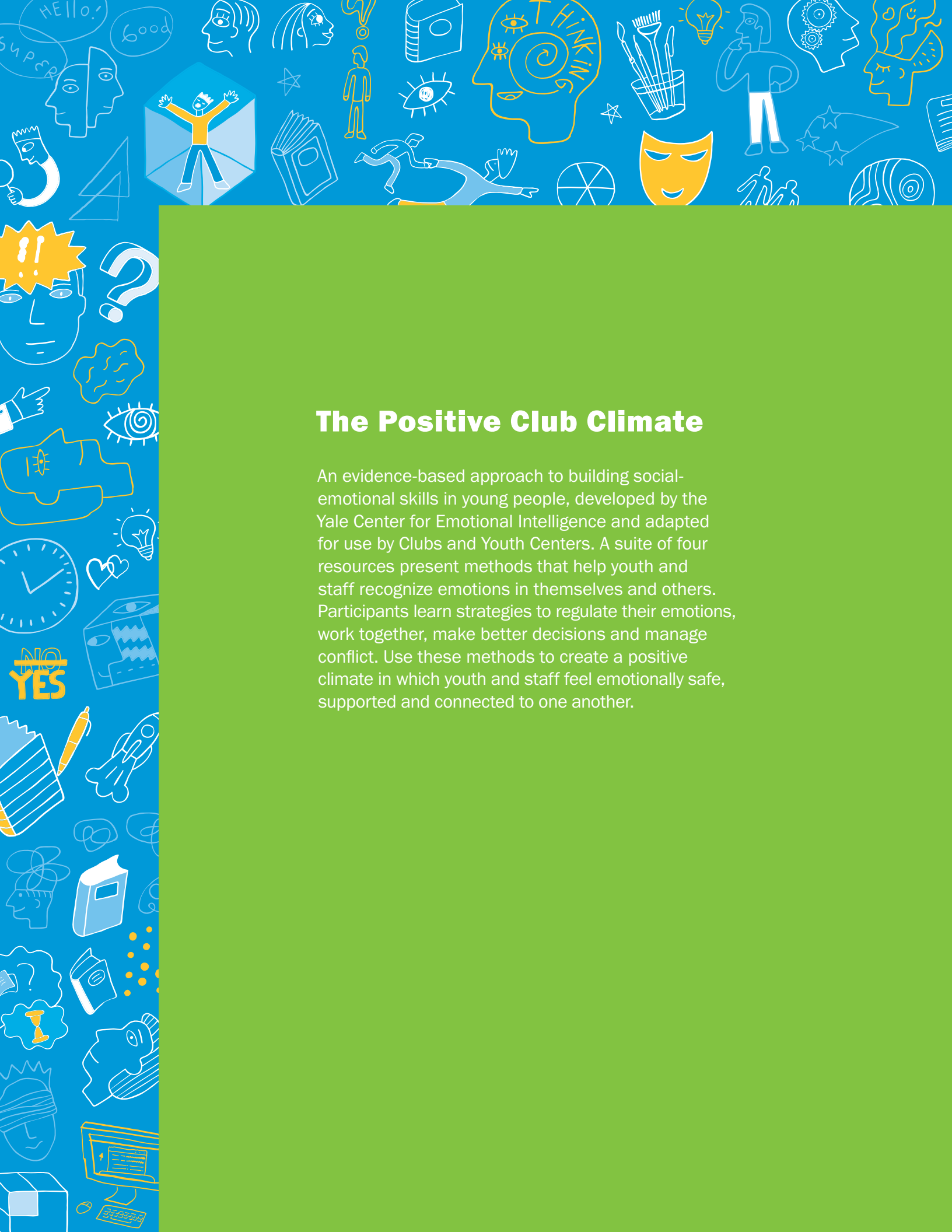
Resource Guide

A Positive Club Climate Guide to handling strong emotions, the Meta-Moment outlines five sessions in which youth learn to pause and take stock before reacting to a stressful situation.

Positive
Club
Climate

Meta-Moment

THINKING



The Positive Club Climate

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Introduction



Introduction

As youth development professionals, an essential part of our work is supporting young people's social-emotional development. The benefits of providing youth with opportunities to learn and practice social-emotional skills include improved academic performance, decreased emotional distress, decreased behavior problems, and increases in positive attitudes about both school and pro-social behavior.

That's why BGCA has partnered with the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. The center's RULER method is an evidence-based approach focused on five skills for building emotional intelligence in young people:

- **Recognizing** emotions in oneself and others
- **Understanding** the cause and consequences of emotions
- **Labeling** emotions with a nuanced vocabulary
- **Expressing** emotions in accordance with cultural norms and social context
- **Regulating** emotions with helpful strategies

What Is the Positive Club Climate?

Using this approach in the Club or Youth Center can help you create a positive climate in which staff and youth feel connected and supported, respected and valued, inspired and excited, and emotionally safe and comfortable. When youth feel supported, respected and safe, they are more likely to engage in impactful Club activities and positive peer interactions.

Working with the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, BGCA adapted four tools for building a positive Club climate:

- **Emotional Check-Ins** are designed to help participants recognize emotions in themselves and others and develop strategies for regulating or managing emotions.
- **Group Agreements** are a shared vision created by participants in order to build an emotionally supportive environment.
- **The Meta-Moment** helps participants handle strong emotions to make better decisions for themselves and their community.
- **The Restorative Roadmap** helps participants manage conflicts and their aftermath.

Why the Positive Club Climate?

Clubs strive to provide **Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development**.

When these elements are in place, they enable youth to participate meaningfully in their Club experience and help their boost positive outcomes:

1. A safe, positive environment
2. Fun
3. Supportive relationships
4. Opportunities and expectations
5. Recognition

The Five Key Elements lay the foundation for effective programming. When used, these elements help young people build core physical, cognitive and social-emotional skills.

The Positive Club Climate methods support important aspects of the Five Key Elements. They help youth development professionals and youth work to maintain a sense of emotional safety in the Club; using them creates opportunities for young people to learn and practice important social-emotional skills.

Group Agreements, for example, are based on input from youth, engaging them in the creation of behavioral **expectations** that promote positive peer relationships. **Supportive relationships** of all types – staff-to-staff, staff-to-youth and youth-to-youth – are facilitated through Emotional Check-Ins, Group Agreements, the Meta-Moment and the Restorative Roadmap.

This approach creates ongoing and consistent **opportunities** for participants to share what they are feeling. By using these methods, youth development professionals and youth work to build a culture of understanding, appreciation and support in all interactions.

Social-Emotional Skill Development

In addition to facilitating youth and adult connections, as well as inclusion, the Positive Club Climate tools were designed to promote the following social-emotional skills:

Self-Awareness	Recognizing one's feelings, needs, thoughts and influence on behavior
Empathy	Ability to understand and share the feelings of others
Perspective Taking	Ability to see things from others' point of view
Identifying Emotions	Recognizing and expressing feelings
Conflict Management	Responding to conflict
Conflict Resolution	Developing solutions to conflict
Communication	Communicating clearly verbally and non-verbally, listening well to others
Impulse Control	Controlling the desire to react immediately

Youth Development Professionals' Role in the Positive Club Climate

Club professionals are critical to developing a positive Club climate. Depending on their role in the Club, staff may:

- Train other staff members to use the Positive Club Climate tools
- Practice using the tools with each other
- Model the use of the tools in front of youth
- Teach young people to use the tools
- Incorporate the tools into daily routines with youth

Practice Positive Youth Development to Create Inclusive Clubs

Inclusion is another core component for building a safe, positive environment in your Club or Youth Center. Youth will feel physically and emotionally secure when everyone is focused on making sure ALL youth feel included. By creating inclusive environments at the Club, we improve the overall experience for all young people. When staff use positive youth development practices, they help ensure all youth:

- Feel represented
- Have a sense of belonging
- Can meaningfully participate in programming

Consider strategies that help youth feel affirmed, safe and engaged with Club experiences. For more information on building and sustaining an inclusive environment, download the Program Basics BLUEprint at [BGCA.net](https://www.bgca.net).

How to Use Positive Club Climate Resources

The Positive Club Climate tools are intended to create a cultural shift in your organization by building emotionally safe, inclusive and supportive environments for both youth and staff. The four guides to these tools are intended to be used sequentially, providing progressive learning and skill-development opportunities for participants.

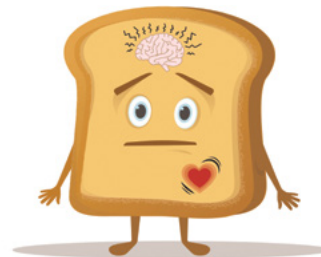
Club professionals should learn and practice each Positive Club Climate tool as a team before using it with youth. The Emotional Check-Ins and Group Agreements guides include staff training resources. Consider holding learning sessions during weekly staff meetings or at a routine training event. Training content for the Meta-Moment and Restorative Roadmap can be accessed separately. For more information, see [BGCA.net/page/clubclimate](https://www.bgca.net/page/clubclimate).

Positive Club Climate Resources At-a-Glance		
	What is it?	How to use it:
Emotional Check-Ins	Emotional Check-Ins are designed to help participants learn to recognize emotions in ourselves and others, and to develop strategies for regulating or managing those emotions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use Emotional Check-Ins at staff meetings. 2. Use Emotional Check-Ins at the beginning and end of every program. 3. Use Emotional Check-Ins at various points throughout the Club day. 4. Use Emotional Check-Ins when working with youth who are feeling strong emotions.
Group Agreements	Group Agreements are a shared vision created by participants in order to build an emotionally supportive environment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create Group Agreements with youth development professionals at a staff meeting; revisit them routinely to update them as needed. 2. Create Club-wide Group Agreements to showcase your Club vision. 3. Create Group Agreements with youth for specific program areas or when you begin a new program; revisit them daily and change them as needed.
Meta-Moment	The Meta-Moment helps participants handle strong emotions so they can make better decisions for themselves and their community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth development professionals can take a Meta-Moment before approaching a tense situation with youth to prepare themselves to react calmly. 2. Youth can use the Meta-Moment to guide their interactions with staff and peers when they are feeling big emotions. 3. Staff can encourage youth to use the Meta-Moment as a way to positively guide behavior choices.
Restorative Roadmap	The Restorative Roadmap helps participants manage conflict effectively.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth development professionals can use the Restorative Roadmap for reflection with youth after a conflict occurs. 2. Club leaders can use the Restorative Roadmap for reflection with youth development professionals after a conflict occurs.

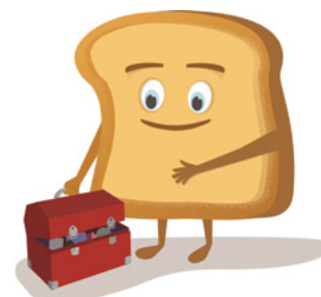
How to Use the Meta-Moment

The Meta-Moment is a tool that participants can use to expand the time between their initial reaction to a situation and their response. Everyone, at one point or another, has responded to a stressful situation in a way that made it worse. Often, we react to an intense situation without thinking (e.g., snapping back at youth with a quick-witted response to criticism; yelling at youth for walking out of the program, etc.). Our automatic response to these situations has the potential to have a negative impact on our lives – weakening relationships, disrupting our work, and setting a poor example for Club youth. For this reason, it is important to develop strategies and skills to slow things down and give ourselves time to consider our responses. This is true for Club directors, youth development professionals and Club youth.

Stressful situation



Meta-Moment

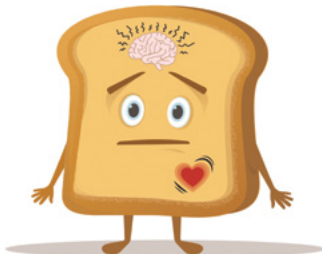


Successful Response

The Meta-Moment has four steps:

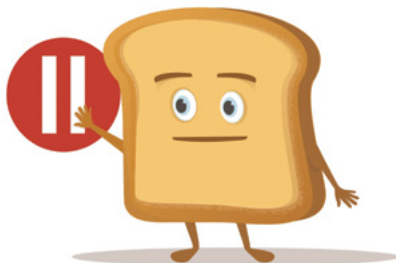
Step 1

Sense the change in your thoughts, body or behavior.



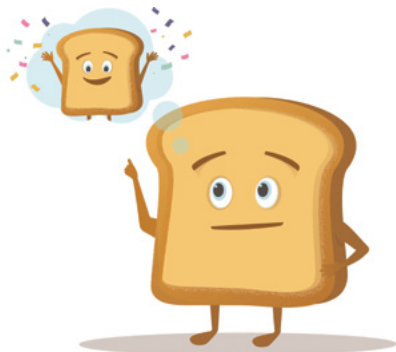
Step 2

Pause and breathe, in order to calm down.



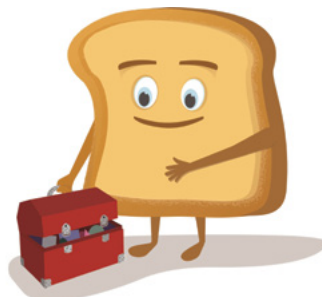
Step 3

See your best self.



Step 4

Choose a response your best self might use.



The Meta-Moment Steps

Important Note About Safety:

Be an active listener during this process. Pay attention to red flags that could indicate safety issues. Be sure to follow your Club's policy for mandated reporting if a youth discloses anything related to abuse, neglect or threats to their personal safety while sharing.

Step 1: Sense

Imagine you have just finished a successful art project. All youth were engaged and their projects reflected their unique personalities – just what you had hoped for. However, when you ask youth to clean up, they ignore you and start to talk in groups while running around the room. You think to yourself, “Here we go again.” Your body starts to respond – shortened breath, racing heart, tight jaw, furrowed eyebrow and clenched fists. You yell at the group to stop talking and listen to your directions.

Can you relate? We have all been there. When in a situation like this, it is important to notice changes in your thinking, body and behavior. These changes are like warning bells telling you it's a good time to take a Meta-Moment before responding.

Step 2: Pause

Before responding to a difficult situation, it is important to pause for a moment. This way, your response is thoughtful and not automatic. The easiest way to do this is to take slow, deep breaths. Taking just three deep breaths can help you feel calmer and clear your mind to think more clearly before responding. This will give your brain something else to focus on besides your emotions.

Step 3: See Your Best Self

Imagine your best possible self. Your best self includes your own version of who you want to be and how you want to feel in addition to how you want others to see you. To explore this, consider the following:

- What personal characteristics and values does your best self have?
- How do others view you when you are your best self?
- Use the idea of your best self to help shape your response to the situation. Ask yourself, “Does my response to this situation align with my best self?”

Step 4: Choose and Use

After imagining your best self, choose and use an emotional regulation strategy to help you act in a way that aligns with your best self. This means using a strategy to help your body and mind feel calmer, and then responding to the stressful situation.

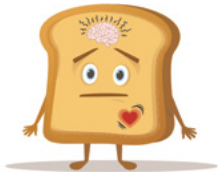
Emotional regulation strategies, or coping strategies, are learned ways to respond to your feelings to support your wellbeing and your relationships with others. The goal of coping strategies is to either feel less or more of a particular emotion. There are two kinds of strategies we can use to regulate our emotions. The first strategy involves our thoughts, which are things we think about to regulate our emotions. The second strategy involves our actions, which is what we do to regulate our emotions.

Because everyone is different, everyone will prefer to use different coping strategies when they are feeling strong emotions. Use some of the following coping strategies:

- **Positive self-talk:** supportive, encouraging and motivating things you say to yourself to make you feel happy and help you to continue moving forward.
 - › Example: “I am smart, I am capable, and I can do this!”
- **Positive reframing:** putting a positive spin on things or telling yourself a more positive “story” about the situation.
 - › Example: Say, “He seems like he is angry, maybe he had a bad day,” rather than “He is a jerk!”
- **Mindfulness practices:** giving attention to your body, your feelings and your surroundings to calm your mind and body during a stressful situation.
 - › Examples: Mindful breathing, mindful grounding, mindful imagery
- **Taking space:** physically creating space between you and the stressful situation.
 - › Example: Ask a coworker to cover your room for a moment while you go for a short walk down the hall to give yourself space from a stressful situation.
- **Breathing:** taking a moment to breath intentionally during a stressful situation.
 - › Example: Belly breathing, 4-7-8 breathing, deep breathing
- **Talk it out:** talking with someone you trust about how you are feeling.
 - › Example: Find a friend or youth development professional to talk about what happened and how to respond.

Putting it all together

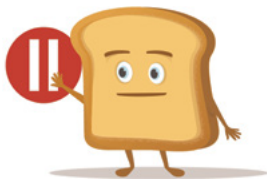
Let's put the steps of the Meta-Moment together using an example that may happen at your Club. For this example, pretend that you are the Club director and a new part time youth development professional has just walked in the door late for the second time.



Sense

You notice that something has changed in your thoughts, body or behavior.

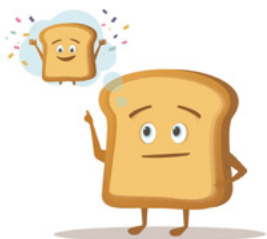
Example: Take a deep breath to release the tension from your shoulders and relax your face.



Pause

Pause and breathe in order to calm down and avoid responding in an unhelpful manner.

Example: Take a deep breath to release the tension from your shoulders and relax your face.

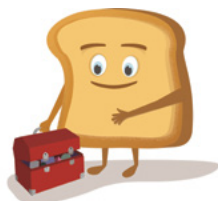


See Your Best Self

Imagine your best possible self, which helps you choose a strategy that makes a situation better instead of a strategy that makes a situation worse.

Example: Imagine the kind of Club director you want to be, and want to be seen as.

Consider how you might react in ways that allow you to be seen as a facilitator and coach, rather than just a manager.



Choose and Use

Choose and then use an emotion regulation strategy that aligns with your best self.

Example: Decide to assume the best intentions about the reasons a person was late. Do this by using positive reframing.

Greet the new youth development professional with a smile as you normally would, and find time later in the day to discuss the situation and identify strategies they can use to arrive on time.



Teaching the Meta-Moment to Youth

Use these sessions to teach youth each of the four steps and how to put them together in a powerful strategy for handling big emotions.

**TIME**

60 minutes

**SIZE**

5-25

**HANDOUTS**

Pages 16-17

Supplies Needed

- Butcher paper
- Writing supplies
- Markers/crayons/colored pencils

Links to Resources

None

Social-Emotional Skills

- Identifying Emotions
- Self-Awareness

Key Term

Identifying emotions: recognizing how you and others feel in various situations

Session 1: Sense

Session Objective: Youth will be able to recognize the way that emotions feel in their body.

Preparation

- Before facilitating, **complete** the required Meta-Moment staff training. (See [BGCA.net/page/clubclimate](https://bgca.net/page/clubclimate).)
- **Set up** the room with space for the group to work on the floor.
- **Review** the entire Meta-Moment Guide before completing this activity.
- **Cut** pieces of butcher block paper to hand out (one per group).
- **Gather** the coloring supplies and make them accessible to participants.
- Recommended: **Play** quiet, calming music or nature sounds in the background while youth work.

1**Warm Welcome (2 minutes)**

Greet youth by name as they enter your program area. Engage in meaningful conversation.

2**Community Builder: Food Moods (7 minutes)**

- **Ask** youth to form a circle.
- **Ask** youth to say their name and list their favorite food. This could include a special dish that is made by their family, a meal at their favorite restaurant, or just their favorite type of food.
- **Say**, “Think about how you’re feeling today. Now, think about what kind of food this is most like. For example, are you feeling like spaghetti noodles because you’re feeling a bit sad and droopy, or are you feeling like popcorn because you’re bursting with energy?”
- **Give** youth 15 seconds to think about their food mood.
- **Ask** youth to go around the room and share their food moods with the large group.

3**Main Activity: How Your Emotions Feel (40 minutes)****Introduction to Emotions:**

- **Show** youth the Meta-Moment handout and read each of the four steps out loud.

Session 1

Ages 6-9

- **Say**, “This is called a Meta-Moment. It is a tool you can use when you are having a strong emotion. This tool will help you pause, feel calmer and make positive decisions. Today we are going to learn about the first step of the Meta-Moment, which is ‘Sense.’ Does anyone have any guesses what sense means?”
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for sharing.
- **Say**, “The first step of the Meta-Moment is to sense that you are feeling changes in your thoughts, body or behavior because of a strong emotion. To help us practice sensing these changes, we are going to talk about how emotions actually feel in our bodies. For example, when I feel mad, I clench my fists and teeth, my face feels hot, and I feel like I have to get up and move.”
- **Ask** youth to close their eyes while you read the following scenario.
- **Say**, “Imagine you are in the gamesroom. You have been waiting for your turn to play for what feels like forever. The staff finally tells you it’s your turn to play. As you walk over to join the group playing, someone refuses to give up their spot and won’t let you join the game.”
- **Say**, “Open your eyes. How would you feel if this happened to you?”
 - › Examples: sad, frustrated, angry, stressed
- **Allow** youth to answer and thank them for participating.
- **Say**, “Where do you feel that emotion in your body? How does it feel?”
 - › Examples: tight chest, fast heart, racing thoughts, sweaty hands, clenched teeth, warm face
- **Repeat** this with each emotion they shared.
- **Allow** youth to answer and then thank them for participating.
- **Say**, “Knowing how our emotions feel in our bodies helps us know when we are feeling a strong emotion. Why do you think this might be helpful?”
- **Allow** youth to answer and then thank them for participating.
- **Say**, “Knowing how our emotions feel in our bodies is important because it helps us know when we are feeling an emotion. When we start to feel strong emotions, we can then take a break or get help if we need to. This helps us feel better and make positive choices.”

Activity Variation: For younger youth, consider using the Body Labeling handout to complete the activity individually. For older youth, consider using the How Would I Feel? handout to supplement the session.

Session 1

Ages 6-9

Important Note About Safety:

Be an active listener during this process. Pay attention to red flags that could indicate safety issues. Be sure to follow your Club's policy for mandated reporting if a youth discloses anything related to abuse, neglect or threats to their personal safety while sharing.

Step-by-Step Directions (40 minutes)**Step 1: Body Labeling**

- **Divide** youth into small groups of two to three to work on the activity using a grouper from the YDToolbox app.
- **Give** each group one piece of butcher block paper and coloring supplies.
- **Ask** them to sit on the floor with their supplies.
- **Instruct** the groups to draw the outline of a person on their butcher block paper. Provide the Body Labeling handout to each group for reference.
- **Ask**, "How does your body feel when you feel mad?"
 - › Examples: hot face, fast heart, swirling thoughts, sweaty hands.
- **Give** youth time to share and draw or label their responses on the butcher block paper.
- **Continue** by asking youth how their bodies feel when they feel the following emotions and give them time to respond and draw before moving onto the next emotion.

› Sad	› Calm	› Confused
› Happy	› Excited	
› Worried	› Scared	

Step 2: Discuss

- **Ask** youth to share their completed creations with the group.
- **Remind** youth that they do not have to share if they do not feel comfortable.
- **Discuss** the following with the group:
 - › What are some of the similarities?
 - › What are the some of the differences?
 - › Why do you think it is important to know how your emotions feel?
- **Summarize** by saying, "Knowing how our emotions feel in our bodies is important because it helps us know when we are feeling an emotion. When we start to sense a change in our bodies, thoughts or behavior it's our bodies way of telling us that something is wrong. This is like the alarm system in your body saying, 'Hey! I don't like this!' When you start to feel these alarm bells going off, it's good time to take a Meta-Moment, which we will learn more about later."
- **Ask**, "Does everyone understand? Does anyone have any questions?"
- **Answer** any follow-up questions.

Session 1

Ages 6-9

4

Reflection (8 minutes)

- **What?** – What did you learn about how your emotions feel?
- **So What?** – Why is it important to know how our emotions feel in our body?
- **Now What?** – How can you use this information at the Club? At home? At school? With friends?

5

Recognition (3 minutes)

- **Ask** youth to stand in a circle.
- **Allow** one youth to speak at time.
- **Let** youth choose one of the following prompts to provide recognition:
 - › **Say** something POSITIVE about someone in the group.
 - › **Give** ENCOURAGEMENT to someone in the group.
 - › **Say** THANK YOU to someone in the group for something they did.

6

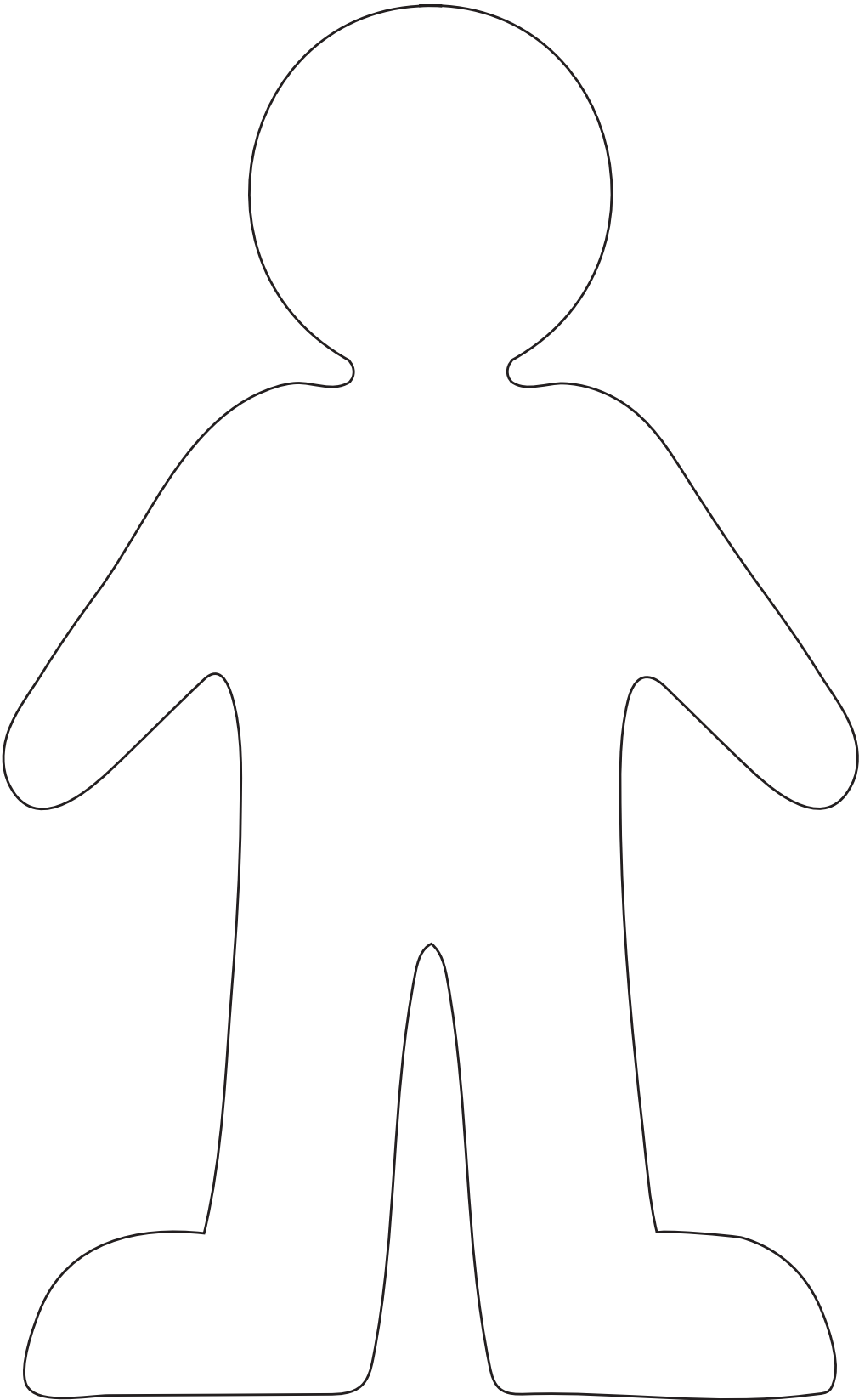
Closing and Transition (2 minutes)

- **Ask** youth to clean up the space and put all the materials in designated spaces.
- **Provide** youth with clear instructions for the transition to their next program area or activity.
- **Follow up** with any youth who seem like they are feeling dysregulated (mad, sad, scared or worried) to ensure their emotional safety. Provide them with an empathetic listening ear and space to self-regulate.

Session 1

Ages 6-9

Session 1 Handout: Body Labeling



Session 1 Handout: How Would You Feel?

Scenario 1

Your best friend spends half the time you're together texting other friends. You were really excited to hang out, and now they will not put their phone down to pay attention to you!

How would you feel?

What changes would you feel in your body?

What are some thoughts you might have?

Scenario 2

You couldn't sleep last night and aren't feeling very well. Your parent/caregiver makes you go to school anyway. During math class you put your head down to rest. The teacher yells at you.

How would you feel?

What changes would you feel in your body?

What are some thoughts you might have?

Scenario 3

Your friend bailed on going to the movies with you by saying they were sick. Later you find out this was a lie and they actually went to hang out with someone else.

How would you feel?

What changes would you feel in your body?

What are some thoughts you might have?

**TIME**

50 minutes

**SIZE**

5-25

**HANDOUTS**

Page 23

Supplies Needed

- Butcher paper
- Writing supplies
- Markers/crayons/colored pencils

Links to Resources

None

Social-Emotional Skills

- Identifying Emotions
- Self-Awareness
- Impulse Control
- Stress Management

Key Term

Identifying emotions: recognizing how you and others feel in various situations

Session 2: Pause

Session Objective: Youth will learn deep breathing exercises to help them pause when they feel strong emotions.

Preparation

- Before facilitating, **complete** the required Meta-Moment staff training. (See BGCA.net/page/clubclimate)
- **Set up** the room with space for the group to work on the floor.
- **Review** the entire Meta-Moment Guide before completing this activity.
- Recommended: **Play** quiet, calming music or nature sounds in the background while youth work.

1**Warm Welcome (2 minutes)**

Greet youth by name as they enter your program area. Engage in meaningful conversation.

2**Community Builder: Fist of Five (10 minutes)**

- **Ask** youth to sit in a circle and introduce themselves.
- **Say**, “We are going start off today with a quick check-in to see how everyone is feeling.”
- **Tell** youth that holding up a different number of fingers represents a different emotion:
 - › “Five fingers means you’re having a super, awesome or amazing day!”
 - › “Three fingers means you’re having an OK day. It’s not good, but it’s not bad.”
 - › “One finger means you’re having a not so great day.”
 - › “So the more fingers you’re holding, the more you are enjoying your day.”
- **Allow** kids to practice matching the number of fingers to each emotion by holding up different amounts of fingers and allowing kids to call out the associated feeling.
- **Allow** youth to share how they feel today as a group by saying, “At the same time, let’s hold up the number of fingers that represents how we feel today. It’s OK to look at each other’s hands.”
- **Say**, “If you’d like, share why you decided to hold up that many fingers today.”
- **Allow** a few youth to share.

Session 2

Ages 6-18

19

3

Group Agreements Review (2 minutes)

Reference the Group Agreements for your program area to remind youth of their commitment to one another. Use the following prompts to review the Agreements with your group:

- **Ask**, “Does everyone commit to our Agreements today?”
- **Ask**, “Is there anything we need to add?”
 - › Youth who joined later can also add their ideas or sign their name to the Group Agreements.

4

Main Activity: Pausing to Breathe (25 minutes)**Introduction to Pausing:**

- **Ask** youth to review what they learned during the last session:
 - › Meta-Moment Step 1: Sense
- **Show** youth the Meta-Moment handout read each of the four steps out loud.
- **Say**, “Today we are going to learn about the second step of the Meta-Moment, which is ‘Pause.’ Can anyone guess what pause means in the Meta-Moment?”
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for sharing.
- **Say**, “The second step of the Meta-Moment is to pause and breathe when we are feeling a strong emotion. This helps us clear our minds and calm our bodies. Today we are going to learn different breathing activities you can do after you sense you are feeling a strong emotion. This will help us practice pausing. Pausing to breathe helps you slow down and think before acting.”
- **Ask** youth to provide examples of strong emotions. Ask them when they have felt these emotions.
 - › Examples: mad, sad, frustrated, worried, angry, disappointed, excited, surprised.

Step-by-Step Directions (25 minutes)**Step 1: Belly Breathing**

- **Say**, “Taking deep, slow breaths when you feel strong emotions is the easiest way to help you pause before reacting. We are going to learn about something called belly breathing. Has anyone heard of belly breathing or tried it before?”
- **Allow** youth to answer and thank them for sharing.
- **Ask** youth to stand up and spread out around the room.
- **Instruct** them to do one of the following exercises:
 - › Run in place for 60 seconds
 - › 30 jumping jacks
 - › Any other physical activity that will raise heart rates

Session 2

Ages 6-18

Important Note About Emotional Safety:

To ensure that all youth feel comfortable and safe during this portion of the program, it is essential that youth are given choices about their physical positioning during the breathing exercise. Specifically, youth should choose whether they want to lie down or close their eyes. Giving youth options to participate in ways they feel safe is an important trauma-informed approach.

- **Ask** youth to notice what their bodies are feeling after the exercise.
- Examples: out of breath, heart pounding, hot, sweaty
- **Instruct** youth to find a comfortable spot to sit or lie down on the floor. If youth are not able to use the floor, a chair is a recommended adaptation. Allow them to close their eyes or keep them open, whichever is more comfortable for them.
- **Ask** youth to place their hands on their stomachs and breathe in and out slowly by inhaling through their nose and out through their mouth. As they breathe, they can use their hands as a visual reminder to breathe deeply enough so that their hands move with their breath.
- **Read** the script in a slow, calm voice:
 - › “Start to take slow, deep breaths.” (Pause.)
 - › “Breathe in through your nose as you silently count to three (audible inhale) and breathe out through your mouth as you silently count to three (audible exhale).”
 - › “Focus on your breath (audible inhale, audible exhale).”
 - › “Your hands should rise and fall with your belly. The up-and-down motion should match the depth of your breathing.”
 - › “Keep breathing slowly in (pause), and slowly out (pause).”
- **Pause** for 30 seconds to give youth time to do this silently on their own.
- **Say**, “Watch your hands slowly go up and down as you breathe. If your mind starts to wander away from your breathing, watch your hands to bring your attention back to your breath.”
- **Instruct** youth to slowly sit up if they were lying down.
- **Say**, “When you’re feeling a strong emotion, it can be helpful to do this type of breathing to feel calmer.”
- **Ask** the youth to go around the circle and share how they are feeling after the activity.
 - › Examples: calmer, slower heart, more relaxed

Session 2

Ages 6-18

Step 2: Practice and Teach

- **Divide** youth into four groups.
- **Give** each group a different breathing exercise from the Breathing Activity handout.
- **Instruct** the groups to practice learning their assigned breathing exercise together for two to three minutes.
- **Use** an attention getter from the YDToolbox app to get everyone's attention.
- **Ask** each small group to teach the large group their breathing strategy.
- **Practice** each strategy together.

Activity Variation: For younger participants, choose two of the strategies from the Breathing Activity handout and teach them to the large group. Then consider breaking into small groups so that participants can work together to create their own deep-breathing routine to teach the group.

Step 3: Discuss

- **Discuss** the following with the group:
 - › What was your favorite breathing strategy?
 - › How did you feel before that strategy?
 - › How did your body feel after that strategy?
- **Summarize** by saying, "It's important to pause to breath when you sense you are feeling a strong emotion. This helps your mind and body calm down before making decisions about your actions. When we start to sense a change in our bodies, thoughts or behavior, our bodies are telling us that something is wrong and that it's time to pause and breath. This is the second step of the Meta-Moment."
- **Ask**, "Does everyone understand? Does anyone have any questions?"
- **Answer** any follow up questions.

5 **Reflection** (10 minutes)

- **What?** – What are some other ways you could pause when you are feeling a strong emotion?
- **So What?** – Why do you think it is important to pause when you are having a strong emotion?
- **Now What?** – How can you practice pausing when at the Club? At home? At school? With friends?

6 **Recognition** (3 minutes)

- **Ask** youth to stand in a circle.
- **Allow** one youth to speak at time.
- **Allow** youth to choose one of the following prompts to provide recognition:
 - › **Say** something POSITIVE about someone in the group.
 - › **Give** ENCOURAGEMENT to someone in the group.
 - › **Say** THANK YOU to someone in the group for something they did.

7 **Closing and Transition** (1 minute)

- **Ask** youth to clean up the space and put all the materials in designated spaces.
- **Provide** youth with clear instructions for the transition to their next program area or activity.
- **Follow up** with any youth who seem like they are feeling dysregulated (mad, sad, scared or worried) to ensure their emotional safety. Provide them with an empathetic listening ear and space to self-regulate.

Session 2

Ages 6-18

Session 2 Handout: Breathing Activity

Instructions: Copy and cut the exercises below into strips. Assign one to each small group to practice and teach to the larger group.



Finger Breathing:

- Place your hand flat on the table with your fingers spread wide.
- Slowly breathe in and use your pointer finger of your other hand to trace up the side of your pinky finger.
- Slowly breath out and use your pointer finger to trace down the other side of your pinky finger.
- Repeat this slowly with each finger.

Left and Right Breathing:

- Use your fingers to squeeze your left nostril closed and slowly breath in.
- Use your fingers to squeeze your right nostril closed and slowly breath out.
- Repeat three times.
- Use your fingers to squeeze your right nostril closed and slowly breath in.
- Use your fingers to squeeze your left nostril closed and slowly breath out.
- Repeat three times.

Square Breathing:

- Pretend to draw a big square on the table with your finger.
- Slowly breath in as you draw the top.
- Slowly breath out as you draw the side.
- Slowly breath in as you draw the bottom.
- Slowly breath out as you draw the other side.
- Repeat three times.

10-Count Breathing:

- Slowly breath in through your nose, count to one.
- Slowly breath out through your mouth, count to two.
- Slowly breath in through your nose, count to three.
- Slowly breath out through your mouth, count to four.
- Repeat until you reach 10.



TIME

50 minutes



SIZE

5-25



HANDOUTS

Pages 29-30

Supplies Needed

- Blank paper (1 per youth)
- Supplies for drawing

Links to Resources

None

Social-Emotional Skills

Self-Awareness

Key Term

Best self: Acting in a way that fits with the person you want to be and how you want to be seen by others

Session 3: Who Is My Best Self?

Session Objective: Youth will be able to use the idea of their best self to inform positive behavior choices.

Preparation

- Before facilitating, **complete** the required Meta-Moment staff training. (See BGCA.net/page/clubclimate.)
- **Complete** Session 1 and 2 of the youth activities.
- **Review** the entire activity prior to the session.
- **Set up** the room with space for youth to work independently at tables.
- Recommended: **Play** quiet, calming music or nature sounds in the background while youth work.

1

Warm Welcome (2 minutes)

Greet youth by name as they enter your program area. Engage in meaningful conversation.

2

Community Builder: Rose, Bud and Thorn (10 minutes)

- **Ask** youth to think of their Rose, Bud and Thorn of the day using the following directions:
 - › Rose = the best part of the day
 - › Bud = something they are looking forward to
 - › Thorn = something they wish would have gone better
- **Give** everyone a chance to think, then ask them to share with the group.
- **Allow** youth to explain and elaborate on their day. Ask them to include their feelings.
- **Say**, “Talking about your day and your feelings is a way to help your brain slow down and better understand them. This is important and helpful to do, especially when you had a tough day, or are feeling really strong emotions.”

Session 3

Ages 6-18

3

Group Agreements Review (2 minutes)

Reference the Group Agreements for your program area to remind youth of their commitment to one another. Use the following prompts to review the Agreements with your group:

- **Ask**, “Does everyone commit to our Agreements today?”
- **Ask**, “Is there anything we need to add?”
 - › Youth who joined later can also add their ideas or sign their name to the Group Agreements.

4

Main Activity: Who is My Best Self? (25 minutes)**Introduction to Best Self:**

- **Ask** youth to review what they learned during the last session:
 - › Meta-Moment Step 1: Sense
 - › Meta-Moment Step 2: Pause and Breathe
- **Show** youth the Meta-Moment handout and read each of the four steps out loud.
- **Say**, “Today we are going to learn about the third step of the Meta-Moment, which is See Your Best Self. Does anyone have any guesses what this means in the Meta-Moment?”
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for sharing.
- **Say**, “After you have paused when you are feeling a strong emotion, the third step of the Meta-Moment is to see your best self. This will help you to choose to act in a way that your best self would act. To help us practice seeing our best self, we are going to do an activity to learn more about who your best self is.”

Step-by-Step Directions (25 minutes)**Step 1: What Does Best Self Mean?**

- **Say**, “Who knows what it means to feel proud?”
- **Allow** time for responses.
- **Provide** the following definition:
 - › Proud: Having good feelings about who you are, the choices you made or something you accomplished.
 - › Example: I feel proud when I get good grades.
- **Say**, “What are some examples of times you have been proud?”
 - › Examples: Helping your teacher without being asked, being friendly to someone new in school, getting good grades on a test, cleaning your room without being asked.

Session 3

Ages 6-18

- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for participating.
- **Explain** that when they feel proud, or good about their choices, this is an example of them being their best self.
- **Refer** to your Group Agreements (Part 2) and review the words youth want to feel while at the Club.
- **Ask** youth to share their ideas about what someone who follows the Group Agreements would be like?
 - › Examples: kind, caring, helpful, accepting, honest, friendly, etc.
- **Say**, “If you had to choose three words to describe your best self, what words would you choose?”
 - › Examples: brave, smart, helpful.
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for participating.
- **Ask** youth to think of a time when they were their best self at the Club.
 - › What did they do?
 - › Who were they with?
 - › How did they feel?
- **Ask** youth to think of a time when they were their best self at the school.
 - › What did they do?
 - › Who were they with?
 - › How did they feel?
- **Ask** youth to think of a time when they were their best self at home.
 - › What did they do?
 - › Who were they with?
 - › How did they feel?

Activity Variation: For younger youth, consider providing the My Best Self handout to guide their work. For older youth, consider using the See Your Best Self handout to supplement this activity and deepen understanding.

Session 3

Ages 6-18

Step 2: Draw Your Best Self

- **Pass out** blank paper and drawing supplies to each youth.
- **Ask** youth to draw a picture that shows them being their best self.
- **Provide** youth with 10 minutes to draw their best self-portrait.
- **Ask** for volunteers to share their drawings with the group.
 - › What images did they include in their portrait of their best self?
 - › Why did they include those things?

Step 3: Discuss

- **Divide** youth into small groups of two to three using a grouper from the YDToolbox app.
- **Assign** one question per group to discuss:
 - › How does your best self speak to others?
 - › How does your best self treat youth who are upset?
 - › How does your best self treat Club staff?
 - › What does your best self do when someone is mean to you?
 - › How can you use your best self to help you make decisions?
- **Ask** for volunteers from each group to share what they discussed.
- **Summarize** by saying, “Seeing your best self is helpful so that you can choose to act in a way that your best self would act and make positive choices about your behavior. If we sense a change in our bodies, thoughts or behavior, it’s time to pause to breathe. After pausing, it’s helpful to see your best self before making a choice about how you will act. Next time we will learn more about ways you can choose to act when you are feeling a strong emotion.”
- **Ask**, “Does everyone understand? Does anyone have any questions?”
- **Answer** any follow-up questions.

5**Reflection (10 minutes)**

- **What?** – Why is it important to think about your best self?
- **So What?** – How does thinking about your best self make you feel?
- **Now What?** – How can you practice being your best self at the Club? At home? At school? With friends?

Session 3

Ages 6-18

6

Recognition (3 minutes)

- **Ask** youth to stand in a circle.
- **Allow** one youth to speak at time.
- **Allow** youth to choose one of the following prompts to provide recognition:
 - › **Say** something POSITIVE about someone in the group.
 - › **Give** ENCOURAGEMENT to someone in the group.
 - › **Say** THANK YOU to someone in the group for something they did.

7

Closing and Transition (1 minute)

- **Ask** youth to clean up the space and put all the materials in designated spaces.
- **Provide** youth with clear instructions for the transition to their next program area or activity.
- **Follow up** with any youth who seem like they are feeling dysregulated (mad, sad, scared or worried) to ensure their emotional safety. Provide them with an empathetic listening ear and space to self-regulate.

Session 3

Ages 6-18

Session 3 Handout: My Best Self (Younger Youth)

Three words that describe my best self:

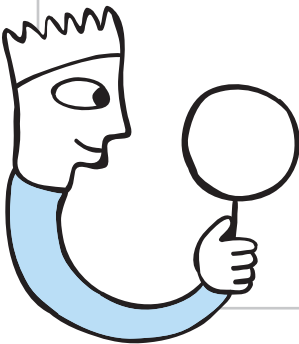
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

When I am my best self, I ...

This is what my best self looks like:



Session 3 Handout: See Your Best Self (Older Youth)

List three words that describe how you want to act when you are your best self.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List three words that describe how you want others to see you when you are your best self.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Describe what your best self would be like in each of the following situations:

1. You are at the Club and someone you don't get along with shows up.

2. You are at school and you forgot your homework.

3. You are at home and your parent/caregiver asks you for help.

4. You are interviewing for a job.

5. You and your friend don't agree on something.



Session 4:

Choose and Use Coping Strategies



TIME
60 minutes



SIZE
5-25



HANDOUTS
Pages 38-42

Session Objective: Youth will demonstrate positive self-talk and positive reframing as coping strategies.

Preparation

- Before facilitating, **complete** the required Meta-Moment staff training. (See BGCA.net/page/clubclimate.)
- **Complete** Sessions 1-3 of the youth activities.
- **Review** the entire activity prior to the session.
- **Print** the handout and cut the scenarios into slips.
- **Fold** each scenario in half and place the “Reframing Scenarios” in one container, the “Negative Self-Talk Scenarios” in another container.
- **Set up** the room with space for youth to work independently at tables.
- Recommended: **Play** quiet, calming music or nature sounds in the background while youth work.

1

Warm Welcome (2 minutes)

Greet youth by name as they enter your program area. Engage in meaningful conversation.

2

Community Builder: Fist of Five (10 minutes)

- **Ask** each youth how many pieces of candy they would like. If you have a limited quantity, ask each youth how many pieces they would like up to a certain number. For example, “You may have up to five pieces of candy. How many pieces would you like?”
- **Distribute** candy to youth.
- **Ask** the youth to sit in a circle.
- **Say**, “We are going to start off today by checking in on how everyone is feeling. Emotions are like colors, there are many different kinds.”
- **Write** the following on the board for youth to see and read it out loud:
 - › Red = Happy
 - › Purple = Angry
 - › Yellow = Worried
 - › Blue = Sad
 - › Green = Calm

Supplies Needed

- Whiteboard/chalkboard/flipchart paper
- Writing supplies
- 2 containers

Links to Resources

None

Social-Emotional Skills

- Self-Awareness
- Identifying Emotions
- Communication
- Stress Management

Key Terms

- **Coping strategies:** learned ways that you respond to your emotions to feel more or less of a certain emotion
- **Positive self-talk:** supportive, encouraging and motivating things you say to make yourself feel happy and continue moving forward
- **Positive reframing:** putting a positive spin on things or telling yourself a more positive “story” about the situation

Session 4

Ages 6-18

32

- **Explain** the directions for the activity to the youth:
 - › One youth will share at a time.
 - › We will share by going around the circle.
 - › First, share how you are feeling today.
 - › Then, choose two candy pieces.
 - › Think about a time that you experienced the emotion assigned to the candy color you selected.
 - › Share with the group.
- **Let** youth share their experiences by going around the circle.

3**Group Agreements Review (2 minutes)**

Reference the Group Agreements for your program area to remind youth of their commitment to one another. Use the following prompts to review the Agreements with your group:

- **Ask**, “Does everyone commit to our Agreements today?”
- **Ask**, “Is there anything we need to add?”
 - › Youth who joined later can also add their ideas or sign their name to the Group Agreements.

4**Main Activity: Pausing to Breathe (25 minutes)****Introduction to Choose and Use:**

- **Ask** youth to review what they learned in the last session:
 - › Meta-Moment Step 1: Sense
 - › Meta-Moment Step 2: Pause and Breathe
 - › Meta-Moment Step 3: See Your Best Self
- **Show** youth the Meta-Moment handout read each of the four steps out loud.
- **Say**, “Today we are going to learn about the fourth step of the Meta-Moment, which is Choose and Use. Does anyone have any guesses to what this means in the Meta-Moment?”
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for sharing.
- **Say**, “The fourth step is to choose and use a coping strategy and act in a way that your best self would act. To help us practice this, we are going to learn more about coping strategies and which ones work best for you.”
- **Ask** youth to provide examples of strong emotions. Ask them when they have felt these emotions.
 - › Examples: mad, sad, frustrated, worried, angry, disappointed, excited, surprised

Session 4

Ages 6-18

Step-by-Step Directions: (40 minutes)**Step 1: Coping Strategies**

- **Say**, “Does anyone know what coping strategies are?”
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for sharing.
- **Say**, “Coping strategies are ways that you help your mind and body feel calmer and more relaxed when you are facing a challenge and feeling a strong emotion. Once you feel your body experiencing a strong emotion, use a coping strategy to help you pause, think and make a positive choice.”
- **Say**, “We have already learned a few coping strategies. Slow, deep breathing, like belly breathing, or 4-7-8 breathing are both examples of coping strategies that you can do in the moment when you are feeling a strong emotion. Let’s practice our belly breathing right now to remind us how to do it.”
- **Lead** the group through belly breathing for 30 seconds.

Step 2: Positive Self-Talk

- **Say**, “There are many different coping strategies that you can use. Today we are going to learn two coping strategies to help us feel better when we are feeling a strong emotion. The first is called positive self-talk. Does anyone know what this is?”
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for sharing.
- **Ask** youth to think about a situation at the Club when something was really difficult for them.
 - › Where were they?
 - › What was happening?
 - › Who was there?
 - › What did their body feel like?
- **Allow** two to three volunteers to share.
- **Ask** youth to think back to what they said to themselves in their heads when this happened.
- **Allow** volunteers to share.
- **Write** their answers on the board for youth to see. List the negative things in a column on the left and the positive things in a column on the right.
 - › Example:

Negative	Positive
“I’m not smart enough.”	“It’s OK. I will do better next time.”

Important Note About Emotional Safety:

To ensure that all youth feel comfortable and safe during this portion of the program, it is essential that youth are given choices about their physical positioning during the breathing exercise. Specifically, youth should choose whether they want to lie down or close their eyes. Giving youth options to participate in ways they feel safe is an important trauma-informed approach.

Session 4

Ages 6-18

Important Note About Emotional Safety:

To ensure that all youth feel comfortable and safe during this portion of the program, it is essential that youth are given choices about their physical positioning during the breathing exercise. Specifically, youth should choose whether they want to lie down or close their eyes. Giving youth options to participate in ways they feel safe is an important trauma-informed approach.

- **Reflect** as a group on the responses by asking, “How does it make you feel to see all of these negative things we say about ourselves?”
- **Allow** volunteers to share.
- **Ask** youth what it feels like when someone gives them a compliment or says something nice to them.
- **Say**, “Getting compliments or being told nice things feels nice! It makes us feel good about ourselves. You also have the power to say something nice and kind to yourself to make yourself feel good. This is called positive self-talk.”
- **Ask** for volunteers to share examples of positive self-talk.
 - › Refer to the positive column of the chart you created for examples.
- **Ask** youth to share why they think using positive self-talk will make a difference when they are having a tough time.
 - › Examples: “I feel will better about myself,” or “It will help me handle the situation better.”
- **Say**, “Positive self-talk can be really helpful when things are not going your way, or you are having a bad day. It can help build you back up and keep you moving forward!”

Step 3: Positive Reframing

- **Say**, “The second thinking coping strategy is called positive reframing. Does anyone know what this is?”
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for sharing.
- **Say**, “Positive reframing is when we put a positive spin on something that happened. For example, if someone is mean to you at school, think, “Wow, that person must be having a bad day! I wonder what’s going on?” instead of, “Wow, that person is so mean!”
- **Practice** this by asking youth to think about a situation when they felt angry with a friend.
- **Ask** for volunteers to share an example and thank them for sharing.
- **Say**, “Now think about what might have happened in that friend’s day that could help explain their behavior. What else might be going on for them?”
- **Ask** for volunteers to share an example and thank them for sharing.
- **Say**, “Does thinking about what else might be going on in your friend’s life make you feel differently? If so, how?”
 - › Example: “Yes, I feel less mad at them because I know they had a bad day.”

Session 4

Ages 6-18

- **Allow** youth to share and thank them for their participation.
- **Say**, “When something happens that makes us angry or upset, we often jump to conclusions. But sometimes there is more to the story. Telling ourselves this story is called “positive reframing” and can help us manage our emotions. Even if we don’t know the full story, thinking about the other things that might be going on and telling ourselves a more positive story can help us respond to situations in a kinder way.”
- **Discuss** the following scenarios as a group by asking the youth to come up with a positive spin for each one:
 - › A friend doesn’t sit with you at lunch.
 - › A sibling rips your favorite book.
 - › A friend doesn’t return a jacket they borrowed.

Step 4: Practice!

- **Say**, “Now that we know what positive self-talk and positive reframing are, we are going to practice using these coping skills by playing a game!”
- **Divide** youth into two teams using a grouper from the YDToolbox app.
- **Instruct** them to line up in two long lines facing each other, as if they were going to play tug of war.
- **Show** the teams the two containers holding the scenarios.
- **Explain** that one container holds scenarios that will help them practice positive self-talk, and the other container holds scenarios that will help them practice positive reframing. Read the following rules:
 - › The first player in each line will go first.
 - › One player will draw a scenario and read it out loud, and the other person will attempt to “beat it” by using positive reframing or positive self-talk coping strategies.
 - › The player drawing the scenario gets to choose if they would like to challenge the other player with a reframing scenario, or a negative self-talk scenario.
 - › The player attempting to beat the scenario will have 10 seconds to do it. If they succeed, the team will be awarded a point.
 - › The next two players will step up, and start the process all over again.
- **Demonstrate** how to play by asking for a volunteer to do a practice scenario with you in front of the group.
- **Check** for understanding and answer any questions.

Session 4

Ages 6-18

Important Note About Emotional Safety:

To ensure that all youth feel comfortable and safe during this portion of the program, it is essential that youth are given choices about their physical positioning during the breathing exercise. Specifically, youth should choose whether they want to lie down or close their eyes. Giving youth options to participate in ways they feel safe is an important trauma-informed approach.

- Repeat the game until everyone has had a chance to go at least once.
- **Consider** awarding prizes to the team with the most points.

Activity Variation: For younger youth, consider completing the *Positive Self-Talk* handout and *Positive Reframing Scenarios* as a large group. For older youth, consider allowing them to create their own scenarios and self-talk examples.

Step 5: Discuss

- **Divide** youth into small groups of three to four to discuss the following questions:
 - › What was your favorite coping strategy you learned today?
 - › What are some other coping strategies that you have used in the past?
- **Ask** for volunteers from each group to share what they discussed.
- **Summarize** by saying, “When you sense changes in your mind, body and behavior, and your alarm system tells you that you are feeling a strong emotion, it’s time to pause, breath, see your best self and choose to use a coping strategy that helps you act in a way that your best self would act. Coping strategies like positive self-talk, and positive reframing are two ways that you can choose to do the last step of the Meta-Moment when you are feeling a strong emotion.”
- **Ask**, “Does everyone understand? Does anyone have any questions?”
- **Answer** any follow-up questions.

5

Reflection (10 minutes)

- **What?** – What are some coping strategies you can use when you are feeling strong emotions?
- **So What?** – Why do you think it is important to use coping strategies?
- **Now What?** – How can you practice coping strategies at the Club? At home? At school? With friends?

Session 4

Ages 6-18

6

Recognition (3 minutes)

- **Ask** youth to stand in a circle.
- **Allow** one youth to speak at time.
- **Allow** youth to choose one of the following prompts to provide recognition:
 - › **Say** something POSITIVE about someone in the group.
 - › **Give** ENCOURAGEMENT to someone in the group.
 - › **Say** THANK YOU to someone in the group for something they did.

7

Closing and Transition (1 minute)

- **Ask** youth to clean up the space and put all the materials in designated spaces.
- **Provide** youth with clear instructions for the transition to their next program area or activity.
- **Follow up** with any youth who seem like they are feeling dysregulated (mad, sad, scared or worried) to ensure their emotional safety. Provide them with an empathetic listening ear and space to self-regulate.

Session 4

Ages 6-18

Session 4 Handout: Positive Reframing and Self-Talk Scenarios

Directions: Print and cut out the squares below. Use blank squares to write your own (or participants') examples.



<p style="text-align: center;">Scenario</p> <p>Your friend arrives at the Club and you say, "Hi!" Even though you know they saw you, they ignore you and don't say "hi" back.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Self-Talk</p> <p>I can't do this.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Scenario</p> <p>You were working on your school project in the education room and left it out to take a break with some friends. A staff member at the Club throws your school project in the trash.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Self-Talk</p> <p>I'm not good enough.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Scenario</p> <p>Your parent/caregiver is 30 minutes late to pick you up from the Club. They always forget about you!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Self-Talk</p> <p>No one cares how I do.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Scenario</p> <p>You are in line waiting for a snack and someone cuts in front of you.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Self-Talk</p> <p>I'm bad at this.</p>

Session 4 Handout: Positive Reframing and Self-Talk Scenarios

Scenario	Self-Talk
<p>During free time, all the good sports equipment is taken and you don't have anything you want to play with.</p>	<p>I will just embarrass myself if I try.</p>
<p>A staff member keeps asking you if you are O.K. and you don't understand why — it's getting annoying.</p>	<p>This is too hard!</p>
<p>You're on a Club field trip and two of your friends don't show up like they promised.</p>	<p>I'll never be good at this.</p>
<p>Scenario</p>	<p>Self-Talk</p>
<p>It's time to go home, but the person who is supposed to pick you up from the Club hasn't shown up yet.</p>	<p>I should just give up.</p>

Session 4 Handout: Positive Reframing and Self-Talk Scenarios

Directions: Print and cut out the squares below. Use blank squares to write your own (or participants') examples.



<p>Scenario</p> <p>Someone runs into you but doesn't say, "Sorry."</p>	<p>Self-Talk</p> <p>I'm going to mess up.</p>
<p>Scenario</p> <p>Your favorite Club staff doesn't say, "Hello" when you walk into the Club.</p>	<p>Self-Talk</p> <p>No one likes me.</p>
<p>Scenario</p> <p>You ask some other kids if you can join their basketball game, but they say, "No."</p>	<p>Self-Talk</p> <p>Everyone will make fun of me.</p>
<p>Scenario</p> <p>While you and your friend are working on a gardening project, you overhear someone say, "I can't stand it here!"</p>	<p>Self-Talk</p> <p>I'll never figure this out.</p>

Session 4 Handout: Positive Reframing and Self-Talk Scenarios

<p>Scenario</p> <p>You see a group of kids huddled in a corner and a few of them keep looking at you.</p>	<p>Self-Talk</p> <p>I'm not smart enough.</p>
<p>Scenario</p> <p>While you are trying to tell one of your friends about your day, you notice they keep looking away from you.</p>	<p>Self-Talk</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Scenario</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Self-Talk</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Scenario</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Self-Talk</p> <p>_____</p>

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<div>Scenario</div> <div></div>	<div>Self-Talk</div> <div></div>
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Session 5: Meta-Moment



TIME
60 minutes



SIZE
5-25



HANDOUTS
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Session Objective: Youth will be able to use the Meta-Moment in times of strong emotions.

Preparation

- Before facilitating, **complete** the required Meta-Moment staff training. (See [BGCA.net/page/clubclimate](https://bgca.net/page/clubclimate).)
- **Review** the entire activity prior to the session.
- **Set up** the room with space for youth to sit in a circle on the floor.
- Recommended: **Play** quiet, calming music or nature sounds in the background while youth work.

1

Warm Welcome (2 minutes)

Greet youth by name as they enter your program area. Engage in meaningful conversation.

2

Community Builder: Fist of Five (10 minutes)

- **Ask** youth to think of their Rose, Bud and Thorn of the day using the following directions:
 - › Rose = the best part of the day
 - › Bud = something they are looking forward to
 - › Thorn = something they wish would have gone better
- **Give** everyone a chance to think, then ask them to share with the group.
- **Allow** youth to explain and elaborate on their day and feelings, or pass.

3

Group Agreements Review (2 minutes)

Reference the Group Agreements for your program area to remind youth of their commitment to one another. Use the following prompts to review the Agreements with your group:

- **Ask**, “Does everyone commit to our Agreements today?”
- **Ask**, “Is there anything we need to add?”
 - › Youth who joined later can also add their ideas or sign their name to the Group Agreements.

Supplies Needed

None

Links to Resources

None

Social-Emotional Skills

- Self-Awareness
- Identifying Emotions
- Communication
- Stress Management

Key Terms

None

Session 5

Ages 6-18

4

Main Activity: Meta-Moment (45 minutes)**Introducing the Meta-Moment:**

- **Review** as a group what was learned in the last sessions:
 - › Sensing your feelings
 - › Pausing when you feel strong emotions
 - › Seeing your best self
 - › Using positive self-talk and positive reframing
- **Pass out** a copy of the Meta-Moment handout to each youth.
- **Say**, “All of the things we have learned so far about our feelings, calming our bodies and minds, and our best-self, are part of the Meta-Moment. The Meta-Moment is a tool that you can use to help you pause, choose a coping strategy, and make positive choices when things get tough.”

Step-by-Step Directions (30 minutes)**Step 1: Review “Sense”**

- **Hold** up your copy of the Meta-Moment for youth to see and point to step one.
- **Say**, “The Meta-Moment has four steps. The first step is sensing that your body is starting to feel a strong emotion. Can anyone remember how to know when your body is feeling a strong emotion?”
 - › Examples: fast heart beat, feeling hot, clenched fists, tight jaw
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for their participation.

Step 2: Review “Pause”

- **Hold** up your copy of the Meta-Moment for youth to see and point to step two.
- **Say**, “The second step is to pause after you sense that your body is starting to feel stress. Can anyone remember how we can pause to help our bodies feel calmer?”
 - › Examples: belly breathing
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for their participation.

Step 3: Review “See Your Best Self”

- **Hold** up your copy of the Meta-Moment for youth to see and point to step three.
- **Say**, “The third step of the Meta-Moment is to picture your best self. Can anyone remember what your best self would be like?”
 - › Examples: nice, responsible, helpful, kind
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for their participation.

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45

Step 4: Review “Choose and Use”

- **Hold** up your copy of the Meta-Moment for youth to see and point to Step 4.
- **Say**, “The final step of the Meta-Moment is to choose and use a coping strategy that will help you be your best self. For example, if you are feeling really mad because someone cheated in a game you were playing, you ask yourself, ‘What would my best self do?’ Thinking of your best self, what would you do in that situation?”
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for their participation.

Step 5: Practicing the Meta-Moment

- **Say**, “Who can remember what all the steps of the Meta-Moment are?”
 - › Answers: Sense, Pause, See Your Best Self, Choose.
- **Allow** youth to respond and thank them for their participation.
- **Say**, “Say it with me ‘Sense, Pause, Best Self, Choose!’”
- **Repeat** this until they have the steps memorized.
- **Say**, “Now we are going to practice using the Meta-Moment.”
- **Explain** to the group that you are going to read a scenario and they will be asked to act out the steps of the Meta-Moment.
- **Read** the following scenario to the group:
 - › Scenario 1: You just arrived at the Club after a long day at school. As you are walking in, someone accidentally bumps into you and you drop all your things.
- **Say**, “Using the Meta-Moment, what do you do first?”
- **Allow** volunteers to respond and thank them for their answers.
- **Say**, “Using the Meta-Moment, what do you do second?”
- **Allow** volunteers to respond and thank them for their answers.
- **Say**, “Using the Meta-Moment, what do you do third?”
- **Allow** volunteers to respond and thank them for their answers.
- **Say**, “Using the Meta-Moment, how do you choose to respond?”
- **Allow** volunteers to respond and thank them for their answers.
- **Say**, “Now we are going to have a little more fun with it!”
- **Label** each corner of the room with the “Sense, Pause, Best Self, Choose” signs.
- **Divide** the youth into two teams using a grouper from the YDToolbox app.

Important Note About Emotional Safety:

To ensure that all youth feel comfortable and safe during this portion of the program, it is essential that youth are given choices about their physical positioning during the breathing exercise. Specifically, youth should choose whether they want to lie down or close their eyes. Giving youth options to participate in ways they feel safe is an important trauma-informed approach.

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- **Explain** the rules of the game:
 - › You will read the scenario out loud to the group using the Meta-Moment Scenario handout.
 - › Each team will have 20 seconds to decide which team member will complete which step of the Meta-Moment and get to the sign before the time is up!
 - › Example: one member per team per sign
 - › One by one you will ask the representatives from each team to act out or describe their step.
 - › Award points for correct responses, creativity and teamwork!

Activity Variation: For younger youth, consider completing the scenarios as a large group to provide assistance and support when necessary. For older youth, consider allowing them to create their own scenarios.

5

Reflection (10 minutes)

- **What?** – What are the steps of the Meta-Moment?
- **So What?** – Why is using a Meta-Moment important and useful?
- **Now What?** – How can you use the Meta-Moment at the Club? At home? At school? With friends?

6

Recognition (3 minutes)

- **Ask** youth to stand in a circle.
- **Allow** one youth to speak at time.
- **Allow** youth to choose one of the following prompts to provide recognition:
 - › **Say** something POSITIVE about someone in the group.
 - › **Give** ENCOURAGEMENT to someone in the group.
 - › **Say** THANK YOU to someone in the group for something they did.

7

Closing and Transition (1 minute)

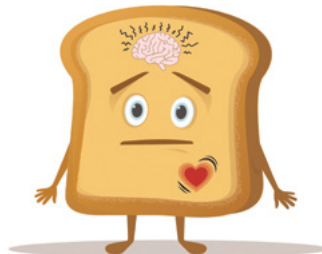
- **Ask** youth to clean up the space and put all the materials in designated spaces.
- **Provide** youth with clear instructions for the transition to their next program area or activity.
- **Follow up** with any youth who seem like they are feeling dysregulated (mad, sad, scared or worried) to ensure their emotional safety. Provide them with an empathetic listening ear and space to self-regulate.

Session 5

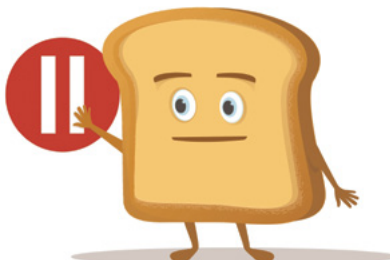
Ages 6-18

Session 5 Handout: The Meta-Moment**Step 1****Sense**

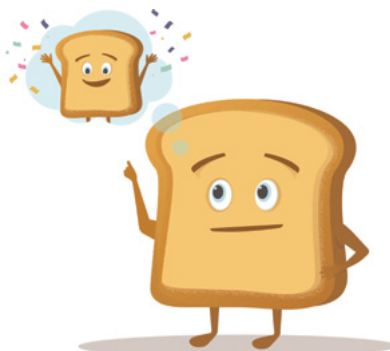
Notice that you are starting to feel a big emotion.

**Step 2****Pause**

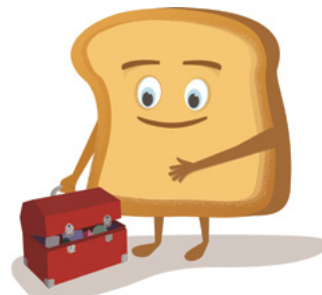
Pause and breathe to calm your body and mind.

**Step 3****See Your Best Self**

Imagine your best possible self.

**Step 4****Choose**

Choose to respond in a way that helps you be your best self.



Session 5 Handout: Meta-Moment Scenarios

1. You are playing a game in the gamesroom and someone cheated.
2. A staff member yells at you to go back to the program as you are walking to the bathroom.
3. You forgot your homework.
4. Your friend is mad at you about something that wasn't your fault.
5. Your sibling broke your phone.
6. You find out your friends are talking about you behind your back.
7. Someone steals something from your backpack.
8. Your milk got knocked over at dinner and you got yelled at.

9. _____
- _____
10. _____
- _____

