



# Leadership Lessons

## Personal Development



### Topic 2 of 5: **Handling Disappointment**

#### **Level 1**

Emotions and safe actions

#### **Level 2**

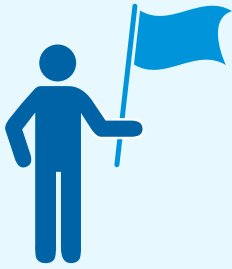
What to do when  
you feel disappointed

#### **Level 3**

Accepting who you are



# Welcome!



**If this is your first time going through any of the Personal Development lessons**, before you begin please make sure you download and read through the “Getting Started” Overview on the website: <https://resources.specialolympics.org/pd>.

**If you have already read through the “Getting Started” Overview or completed one of the other Personal Development lessons**, proceed with the lessons in this workbook that you would like to complete.

Remember that this topic and the other 4 topics in this suite of resources can be downloaded on the website:  
<https://resources.specialolympics.org/pd>.

Keep in mind that you can complete any of the 5 topics in the Personal Development suite of resources in any order.

If you have any questions, contact your local Program or Regional staff.

# Topic descriptions and what you should expect

In total, there are **5 different handbooks** covering **5 different topics**. Each topic will have **3 different lessons** in it.

The 5 topics and the 3 lessons within those 5 topics are listed below.



## Topic 2: Handling Disappointment (THIS HANDBOOK)



**Level 1**  
Emotions and Safe  
Actions  
Page 4

Learning how to handle your emotions is important.

Here is what you will learn in this lesson:

- ➔ Safe and unsafe ways to handle difficult emotions
- ➔ Tips to help you when you have difficult emotions



**Level 2**  
What to do when you  
feel disappointed  
Page 18

An emotion that can be challenging is disappointment. Disappointment can happen when you want something to happen and it does not happen. It can also happen when you expect someone to do something and they do not do it.

Here is what you will learn in this lesson:

- ➔ Examples of disappointment
- ➔ What are “expectations” and how do we handle them?
- ➔ What to do when you feel disappointed



**Level 3**  
Accepting who  
you are  
Page 31

It is important to practice self-acceptance, especially when facing disappointment. This lesson will help you handle and cope with disappointments in a positive way.

Here is what you will learn in this lesson:

- ➔ How to use self-acceptance to deal with disappointment
- ➔ The importance of positive self-talk
- ➔ Specific strategies for managing emotions / self-acceptance

Leadership Lessons

# Handling Disappointment



**Level 1:**

Emotions and Safe Actions



**Level 1**

# Handling disappointment

## Emotions and Safe Actions



**Think about these questions:**

1. What are emotions that can be difficult to handle?
2. What are safe ways to express your emotions?

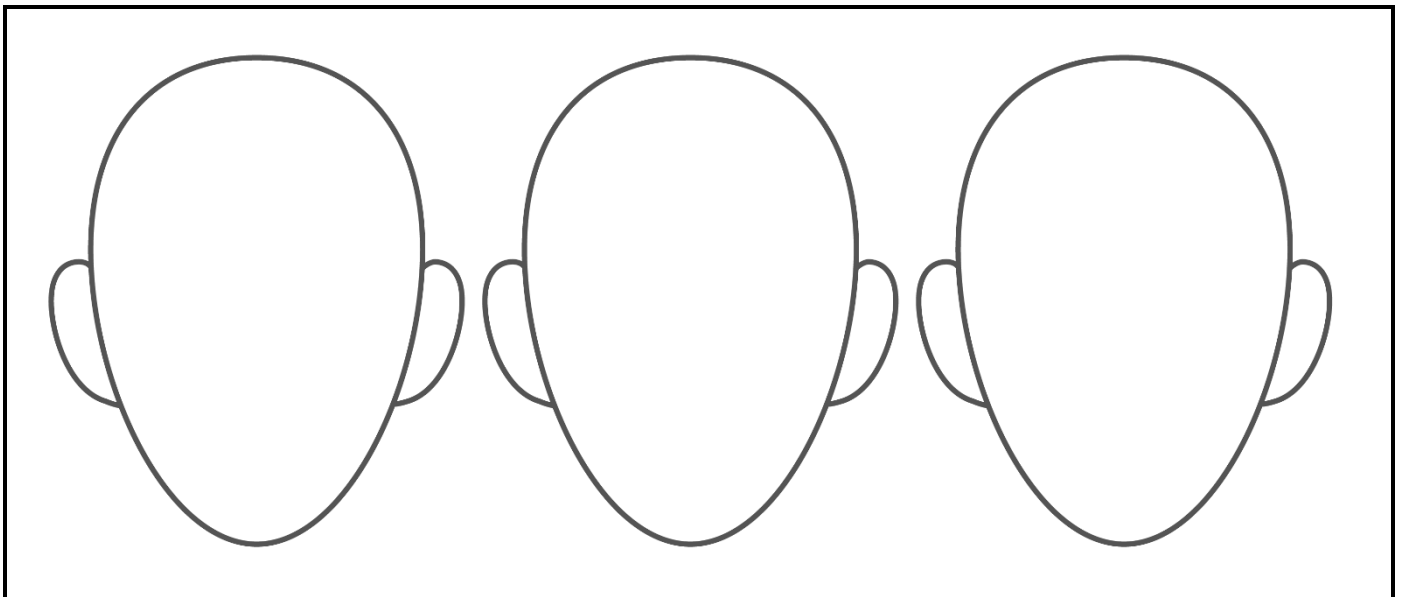
If you do not know yet, do not worry! This lesson will teach you all about emotions and how to handle them safely!

**Emotions are the different ways we feel inside. They help us understand how we are feeling about things happening around us!**



**Draw yourself showing 3 different emotions!**

Pick 3: Excited, frustrated, disappointed, worried, happy, sad, scared



**LEARN****Everybody has emotions!**

It is important to learn how to handle and express our emotions because it helps us solve problems and make our relationships healthy!

**Sometimes, certain emotions can feel too strong or overwhelming.  
Strong feelings are okay, even if they are hard to talk about!**



**Think about a time when you were frustrated or disappointed.**

Write or draw what happened.

Possible answers: lost a game, made a mistake, did not get what you wanted, got in a fight with someone...



How did you show your emotions? Write or draw your answer.

Possible answers: yelled, cried, threw something, hit myself or someone else, ran away, took deep breaths, said how you felt, went outside...



**Discuss!**

**Ask a mentor about a time they were frustrated or disappointed and how they handled their emotions.**



Write or draw about what happened below.

**There are many ways to handle your emotions.  
Let us learn some together!**

## Part 1: Express your emotions

It is good to express (let out) your emotions instead of holding them inside!

To express them safely you need a **strategy**. A strategy is another word for a “plan.”

Next time you feel a strong emotion inside, start by asking yourself these 3 questions:

### 1 What emotion do I feel?



Angry



Sad



Nervous



Disappointed

### 2 What is the reason I feel this emotion?



### 3 What strategy will work for me?



Deep breaths



Walk away



Say how you feel

Thinking about these questions can help you make a safe choice.



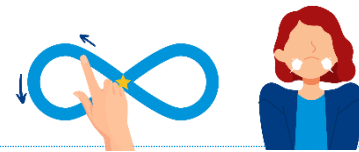
 **Strategies**

Thinking about our breathing can help! Try the strategy using the graphic below.

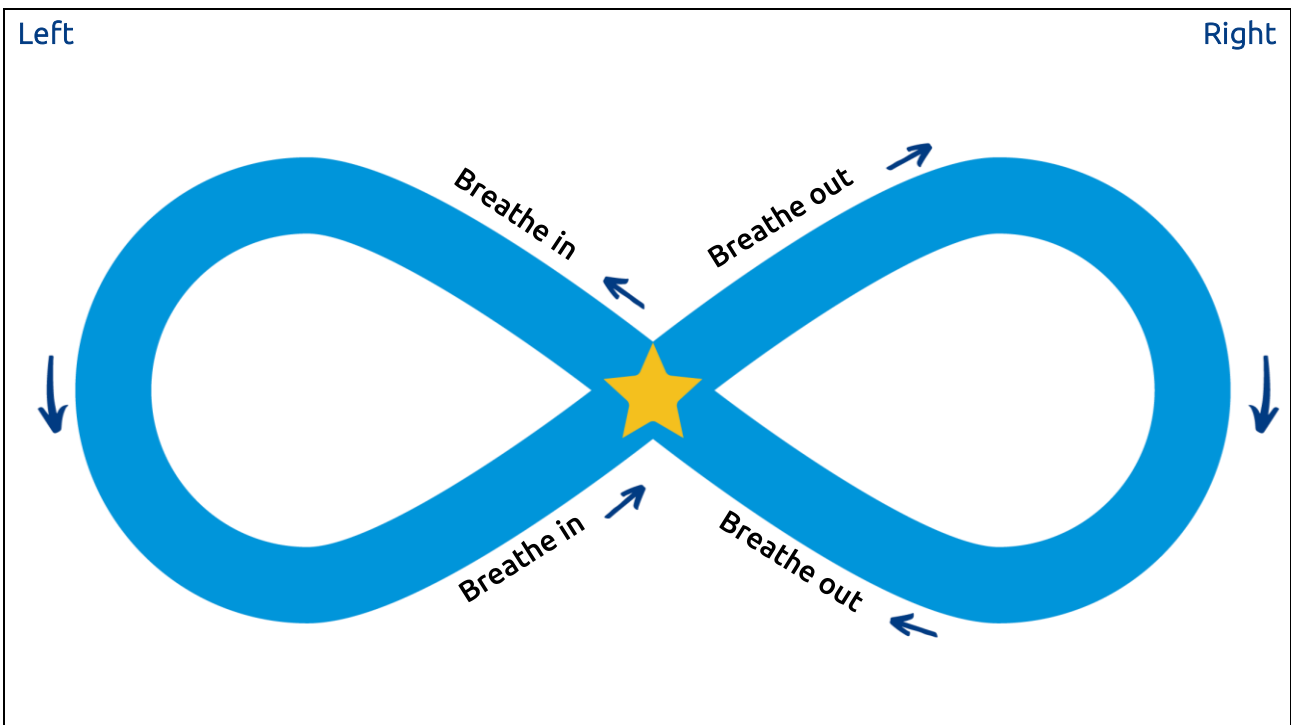
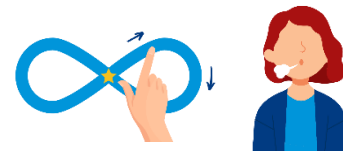
1. Put your finger on the star.



2. Move your finger to trace the line while breathing in.





3. When you get back to the star, breathe out and trace.




 Choose one


Did you like this breathing strategy?

Did it help you feel calm?

	
YES	NO
YES	NO


 Look at the pictures below. Circle any other strategies that help you handle your emotions! If you are not sure, that is ok. Circle things you would like to try.

 Deep breathing	 Write a letter	 Imagine a quiet place	 Child pose	 Drink water	 Noise-cancelling headphones
 Play with pets	 Squeeze something like a stress ball	 Listen to music	<b>...5, 4, 3, 2, 1</b> Count backwards	 Explore nature	 Press and release palms together
 Warm bath	 Run	 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding technique	 Hug someone you care about	 Paint	

 Draw or write your own ideas below!

 **Safe or unsafe**

If we do not think about our emotions first, we do or say things that we do not mean to do. When we do that, sometimes our actions may be unsafe.

 Next to each picture, write one of the symbols showing if the action is safe or unsafe.



**Safe**



**Unsafe**



**Not sure**



Exercise



Run away



Yell at someone



Cry



Read



Play with a pet



Fight



Throw things

 **Discuss!**

Talk to 2 other people and ask them what they do to handle their emotions safely. In the space below, write down what they said that you would like to try.

Answers



Safe



Unsafe



Not sure



Exercise



Run away



Yell at someone



Cry



Read



Play with a pet



Fight



Throw things



**Lesson Checkpoint**

Check-in with yourself to see what you might need next.

- ➔ Any of these choices are okay! It is healthy to make a choice that is best for YOU!
- ➔ Circle what you are going to do next!



Take a break



Ask for help



Come back to this another day



Try another level



Keep going

You made the right choice! You are AWESOME!

## Part 2: Practice with a story

### Story



Jill is on a cheerleading team and really wants to be the person on the top of the pyramid, but Jill's coach picked someone else to be at the top.



Jill starts to feel a strong emotion inside. Her face feels hot and she has tears in her eyes.

### Think about your emotions.

Jill asks herself the 3 questions:

#### 1 What emotion do I feel?

*I feel so disappointed.*

#### 2 What is the reason I feel this emotion?

*I feel disappointed because I really want to be at the top.*

#### 3 What strategy will work for me?

*I do not want to yell at my coach because that would not be kind. Before I yell, I am going to walk away and take a 5-minute break.*



Jill calmed down and went back up to her coach. She asked:

*Coach, I am really disappointed. Is there a time when it will be my turn?*

Jill did a great job choosing a strategy and expressing her emotions!

Let us see what would have happened if Jill did not practice a strategy.



Jill screams at her coach:

*It is not fair! you are so mean! I quit!*

Jill did not use a strategy, which means her emotions got stronger and took over. She did not express her emotions the right way because yelling is not kind.

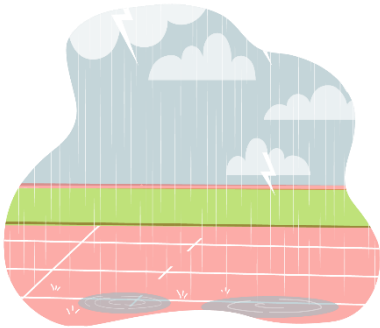


Write or draw another ending of the story where Jill chooses a different strategy!



**Draw or Act!**

Read each story and either draw or act out what you could do to handle or express your emotions!



The track event was canceled because of the rain. You are disappointed.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing or acting out the scenario.

You tried so hard in the track event but you came in last place. You are mad.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing or acting out the scenario.



**REFLECT**



Write or draw what you have learned about in this lesson!



Write or draw what a strategy you will do next time your emotions feel too strong.



## Lesson Summary

- ❑ Emotions can be overwhelming and that is okay!
- ❑ It is important to express emotions in a safe way and not keep them inside.
- ❑ There are many strategies you can use to handle and express your emotions.

Leadership Lessons

# Handling Disappointment



**Level 2:**

What to do when you  
feel disappointed





### Check-in

Welcome to Level 2! Before you begin this lesson, see if you can answer a few of the questions below. If these questions are challenging, go to Level 1 and complete those lessons before starting this level. If you already completed Level 1 and still do not know the answers below, it may be a good idea to go back and review them before continuing with Level 2.

What emotions could you feel when you lose a game?

1	
2	

What are 3 strategies for managing your emotions?

1	
2	
3	

!

### Check your answers

What emotions could you feel when you lose a game?

Answers could include:

Frustrated  
Sad  
Upset  
Disappointed  
Mad  
Furious

What are 3 strategies for managing your emotions?

Answers could include:

- Taking a deep breath
- Thinking of something happy
- Positive affirmation
- Taking a walk
- Listening to music

If you were able to answer these two questions, continue with Level 2. If you did not know how to answer them, go to Level 1 to learn all about how to control your emotions!

## Level 2

# Handling disappointment

## What to do when you feel disappointed

An emotion that can be challenging is **disappointment**. Disappointment can happen when you want something to happen and it does not happen. It can also happen when you expect someone to do something and they do not do what you thought they would.

In this lesson we are going to talk about:

- ➔ Examples of disappointment
- ➔ Expectations: What they are and how we handle them
- ➔ What to do when you feel disappointed

Disappointment is when you feel sad or angry because something didn't happen how you wanted it to.

It's okay to feel disappointed sometimes. We are going to learn how to respond in a good way when you feel disappointed.

## Part 1: Understanding Disappointment

Let's look at some pictures and think about what could be disappointing.



Think about what is happening in this picture. **Write why you think this child might be disappointed.**



In this picture, the child looks disappointed that they lost the soccer game. Maybe they are disappointed because their coach did not put them in the game. Or they could be disappointed because they did not score a goal.



**Let's try another one!**

Think about what is happening in this picture. Write why you think this child might be disappointed.



This child looks disappointed because it is raining. Maybe they had fun plans to do something outside and they cannot do those plans anymore because of the rain.

**Let's try another one!**

Think about what is happening in this picture. Write why you think this person might be disappointed.



There are a variety of reasons that this person could be disappointed. They maybe didn't get invited to a party or they found out that he didn't make the team. Maybe they were bullied by the group of people behind him.

When you are disappointed, you might feel:



Sad



Upset



Mad



Angry



Frustrated

It is okay to feel these emotions! It is **disappointing** when expectations are not met. Knowing expectations for yourself and others can help you not be disappointed.

## Part 2: What are expectations?

An expectation is a belief that something will happen in the future.

There are many places that have expectations of the people who are there. Think about your time in school. There were expectations of you in school, right?



Match the school expectation with the picture by drawing a line to connect the phrase with the picture.

Walk in the hallway, do not run



Raise your hand if you want to speak



Keep your hands to yourself



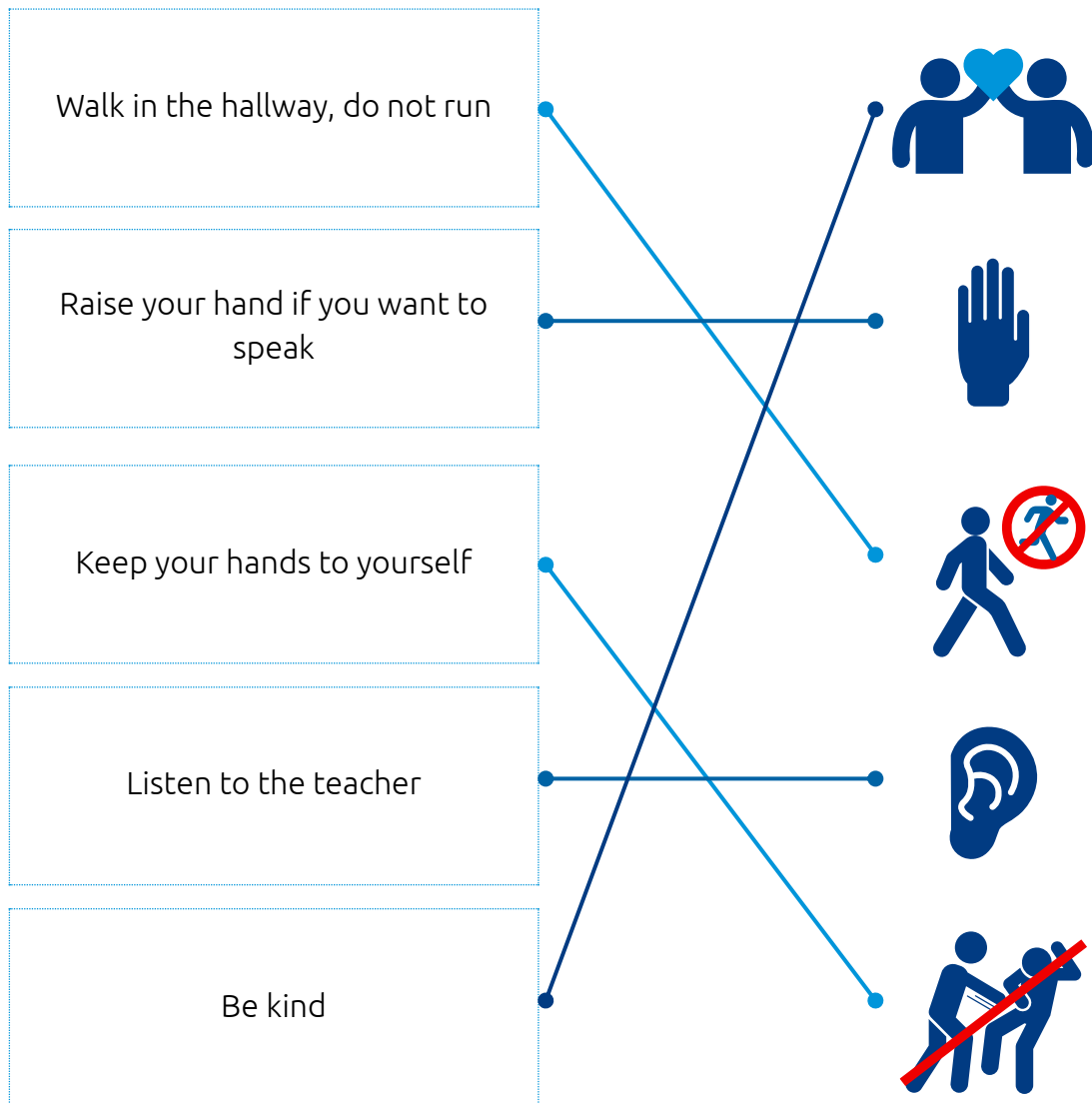
Listen to the teacher



Be kind





**Check your answers**

These expectations at school are to help keep you and others safe and ready to learn. If you do not follow these expectations, there may be consequences, something that happens because of an action or choice, which could be disappointing.

**We will now talk about other areas where you may have expectations.**

When you are part of a sports team, such as a basketball team, there are expectations on how to be a good teammate.

Here are some expectations that your coach and other teammates might have of you:

- ➔ Play by the rules
- ➔ Do your best
- ➔ Help others

- ➔ Listen to the coaches
- ➔ Have fun



Can you think of other expectations your teammates might have of you?



A big expectation for sports is that you will win. Sometimes you will not win, and that can be disappointing!

### **We will now talk about what you can do when you lose a game.**

Here are a few phrases that can help you if you lose. You can think or say these words to yourself, your teammates, or to the other team:

- ➔ That is okay, I might win next time!
- ➔ It is just a game.
- ➔ Congratulations, you did a good job!
- ➔ I enjoyed playing the game.
- ➔ I can keep practicing to get better.
- ➔ I still like to play games, even when I lose.

When you lose, it is important to still be thoughtful and kind. Here are some things you can do when you lose. You can:

- ➔ Tell the winner, "Congratulations"
- ➔ Give the winner a high-five or shake their hand
- ➔ Take a break if you are angry or upset and come back when you are ready to talk about your emotions with others



### Lesson Checkpoint

Check-in with yourself to see what you might need next.

- ➔ Any of these choices are okay! It is healthy to make a choice that is best for YOU!
- ➔ Circle what you are going to do next!



Take a break



Ask for help



Come back to this another day



Try another level



Keep going

You made the right choice! You are AWESOME!

## Part 3: Practice responses

Use the next activity to help you practice responding when you lose.  
Use the boxes below to help you brainstorm responses to write in each blank box.



Thanks for playing with me

We should play another game


Great job! You are good at this game!

Maybe next game I will win

I am frustrated that I lost, so I am going to take a break.

Congratulations (give a high-five)

Now your turn!

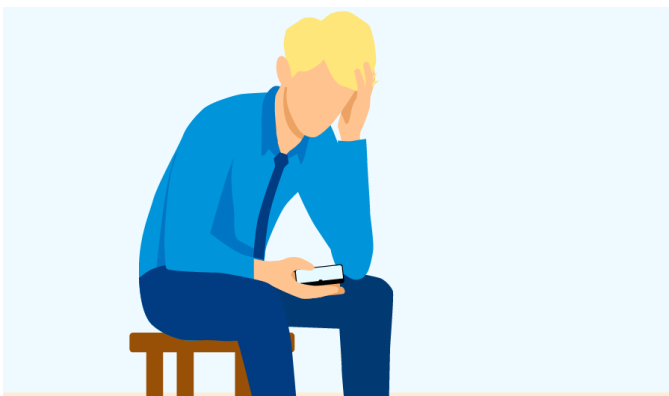
 Use the ideas above or come up with your own to write the words in the empty box to practice what you could say to yourself or your teammates if you lost.



Now we will try another one!



 Think about how you could respond to these disappointments.



You did not get the job that you interviewed for.

Try one more!



You go to the movie theater, but you missed the start time for the movie you wanted to see.

Think of a time that you lost a game. If you can't think of a time, draw a picture of what it would look like if you lost playing your favorite game.



**Write some words that you could say if you lost.**

### Connection time

Find a friend or family member and ask them these questions below. Write their answers in the spaces below.

1. When was a time you were disappointed?

2. What did you say or do at that moment?

3. Share a time where you were disappointed in something I said or did?  
How did you handle it?

## Lesson Summary

Disappointment is when you feel sad or angry because something didn't happen how you wanted it to. It's okay to feel disappointed sometimes.

In this lesson we learned:

- Examples of disappointment
- How to know and handle expectations
- What to do when you feel disappointed

Leadership Lessons

# Handling Disappointment



**Level 3:**

Accepting Me





### Check-in

Welcome to Level 3! Before you begin this lesson, see if you can answer a few of the questions below. If these questions are challenging, go to Level 1 or Level 2 and complete those lessons before starting this level. If you already completed Level 1 and Level 2 and still do not know the answers below, it may be a good idea to go back and review them before continuing with Level 3.

What is an example of a time you were disappointed?

What are expectations and how do we handle them?

What do you do when you feel disappointed?



Check in

### Check your answers

#### What is an example of a time you were disappointed?

**Answers could include:**

Losing a game, missing a goal, plans changing, weather not being good to do what you wanted to do, friends canceling on you.

#### What are expectations and how do we handle them?

**Answers could include:**

An expectation is a belief that something will happen in the future. Knowing expectations for a situation before going into the situation will help you prepare to not be disappointed. There are different expectations for different events. Asking what the expectations are or thinking about them ahead of time can be a great way to avoid disappointment.

#### What do you do when you feel disappointed?

**Answers could include:**

Appropriate responses to feeling disappointment are telling someone else that you are disappointed and need some time by yourself, being able to congratulate someone else if they won and you lost, taking a deep breath and being thankful for the opportunity.

If you could answer these three questions, continue with Level 3. If you did not know how to answer them, go to Level 2 to learn all about handling disappointment!

**Level 3****Handling disappointment****Accepting me**

Workbook Activity Time

**15 minutes**

On Your Own Practice Time

**10 minutes**

It is important to practice self-acceptance, especially when facing disappointment. This lesson will help you handle and cope with disappointments in a positive way.

Here's what you will learn in this lesson:

- ➔ How to use self-acceptance to deal with disappointment
- ➔ The importance of positive self-talk
- ➔ Specific strategies for managing emotions / self- acceptance

## Part 1: How have you dealt with disappointment?

This lesson is about using “self-acceptance” as a way to deal with disappointment. We will explain what we mean by self-acceptance later, but first we want to know about your experience with disappointment.

Examples of disappointment may include: not getting a job you wanted, your friend having other plans, not getting to play in the final 2 minutes of a game, someone else being chosen over you to serve on a committee.



Think about a time you were disappointed.

What happened?

How did you feel?

What did you do to feel better about the disappointment?

There are many effective strategies to deal with disappointment, such as: **talking about it with someone, writing about it in a journal or blog, listening to music, going for a walk, and many others.**

In this lesson, we will explore self-acceptance as a way to deal with disappointment. What do we mean by “self-acceptance”?

**Self-Acceptance is:**

- ➔ Accepting all your physical and mental habits, traits, personality, and abilities.
- ➔ Accepting the parts of you that you think are negative or not likeable.
- ➔ Celebrating yourself, no matter how small the accomplishment.

## Part 2: Accepting me with positive self-talk

### Positive Self-Talk

Positive self-talk will help with self-acceptance. **Positive self-talk** is when we say positive things to ourselves!

**Using positive self-talk can:**

- ➔ Improve how we feel about ourselves
- ➔ Help us face a difficult challenge
- ➔ Help us deal with disappointment
- ➔ Help us stay calm when faced with problems or obstacles

### Question

Which of the below examples of positive self-talk would you like to try saying to yourself?



Put a checkmark beside each positive self-talk statement listed below that you would like to try.



Then in the final two spots, write down two positive self-talk statements you have tried and had success with or would like to try.

- I can do it.
- I am strong.
- I am good enough.
- It is okay if I make a mistake.
- I deserve this and I deserve to be happy.
- 
-

## Speak, Post, Listen, Read

Everyone learns differently. So, it makes sense that people also like to use positive self-talk differently.

Below are some ways that you can communicate positive messages to yourself

### Speak it...

Pick your favorite positive self-talk statements and say them to yourself whenever you feel it is needed. Saying them in a mirror or on your phone in selfie mode could help!

For example:

- I can do this.
- I am strong.
- I am good enough.

You may pick different statements depending on the situation. You might rotate your statements depending on how useful they are to you!

### Post it...

Create and write your favorite positive self-talk statements on a poster, sticky note, or paper, and post or place them in places where you will see them. You could do it on a door you pass as you are leaving for work, in a bag you carry with you, or on your mirror where you get dressed each day.

You don't need to be a great writer to practice this skill. You are the only one who needs to see these, so write out whatever will motivate you!

Positive self-talk is saying positive things to ourselves, especially when things are not going well, and others are telling us that we cannot do it or that they do not believe in us.

Examples of Positive Self Talk:

- I can do it.
- I am good enough.
- It's ok if I make a mistake. I will learn from it and do better next time!
- I deserve this and I deserve to be happy.

 **Listen to it...**

Create recordings or a voice note on your mobile phone, tablet, or other device of positive self-talk statements that you personally like, so you can listen back to them whenever you feel they are needed.

 **Read it!**

Create a journal of positive self-talk statements so that you have multiple options for whatever challenge or disappointment comes your way. When you find a statement, quote, or positive saying that you like, write it in your journal.



### Lesson Checkpoint

Check-in with yourself to see what you might need next.

- ➔ Any of these choices are okay! It is healthy to make a choice that is best for YOU!
- ➔ Circle what you are going to do next!



Take a break



Ask for help



Come back to  
this another day



Try another level



Keep going

You made the right choice! You are AWESOME!

## Part 3: Accepting me with relaxation & meditation

### Why Relaxation?

In order to accept ourselves, we need to begin by slowing down, calming down, and taking a deep breath when faced with disappointment. Why?

Well, often when we are disappointed we are so angry or sad or frustrated that we practice unhealthy habits that are not good for us. Like saying bad things to ourselves (“*I cannot do anything right*”, “*I fail at everything*”), shouting at others, eating unhealthily, missing practice, hurting ourselves or others, or not seeking out supportive and trusted friends and adults.

These are **not** what we need after disappointment and these unhealthy behaviors are **not helpful** to us and will not fix the situation.

So, after a disappointment, we need to learn to STOP, slow down, and calm ourselves.

Stop

Slow down

Calm ourselves

### Questions

1. In the past, have you tried to calm yourself after experiencing anger, sadness, or frustration from being disappointed? **Circle one:**

Yes

No

2. If yes, how did you try to calm yourself or feel better? **Write two ways:**

---

---

3. Did these ways work? Were you able to slow down and calm yourself? **Circle one:**

Yes

No

4. Were these healthy ways to calm yourself? **Circle one:**

Yes

No

5. What made this approach feel healthy?

6. What else could you have done to deal with the feelings of disappointment in a positive and healthy way? **Write down two ideas:**



#### Here are some ideas from other athlete leaders

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a walk        | <input type="checkbox"/> Practice deep breathing                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to a friend   | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Draw or make art   | <input type="checkbox"/> Dance  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work in the garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to free podcasts or meditation playlists on Spotify |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meditation         |   |

### Meditation: What is it?

Meditation has been practiced for thousands of years. It is an activity that involves focusing on clearing and calming your mind. There are many physical and mental techniques to practice meditation to calm the mind and relax.

Here are some examples:



#### Walking meditation

Play quiet music and with your eyes open walk around a safe space without touching anything or making any noise. The goal of the walking meditation is to walk slowly and focus on the movement of your body, breath, and nothing else.





## Breathing meditation

1. Sit or lie comfortably with your eyes closed or just look down. Take a few deep breaths and let your body and muscles relax. Feel yourself letting go of any tension you are holding in your body. Let your muscles relax and your breathing slow.
2. Focus on your breath for several minutes. Slowly Inhale and then exhale. Inhale and then exhale.
3. After a few minutes, begin to take deeper breaths. Slowly bring movement to your body, by wiggling your toes, fingers, gently turn your head side to side. If you are lying down, slowly roll onto one side and slowly make your way up to seated.
4. Slowly open your eyes. Take a deep breath in and sigh it out. One more breath in and sigh it out.

From: [https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/sports-essentials/fitness-model-resources/SOfit\\_Manual\\_UPDATED2017.pdf](https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/sports-essentials/fitness-model-resources/SOfit_Manual_UPDATED2017.pdf)



## Guided meditation

In guided meditation, you listen to and follow another person's voice, typically through a recording. Listening to someone else's voice guide you through meditation might keep you more focused on relaxation and keep your mind from wandering.

Here are some guided imagery resources to try:

Click or scan      Or type in a browser:

### [Belonging](#)



<https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/health/disciplines/strongminds/mindfulness-recordings/Strong-Minds-Belonging.mp3>

### [Leadership](#)



<https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/health/disciplines/strongminds/mindfulness-recordings/Strong-Minds-Leadership.mp3>

**Wellness**

<https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/health/disciplines/strongminds/mindfulness-recordings/Strong-Minds-Wellness.mp3>

## Part 4: Self-acceptance – You try!

### Activity – Positive Self-Talk

Pick one way that you would like to try to increase self-acceptance.

Because people like to receive positive self-talk differently, in Step 2, we offered different ways you can communicate positive messages to yourself. Pick one and try it for one week. Then when you are done using that one for a week, come back to this page and the next one to take notes on what worked with that strategy and what did not work with that strategy. Then be sure to try one of the others. Do that until you have tried all four!

#### Speak it...

Pick your favorite positive self-talk statements and say them to yourself whenever you feel it is needed.



I tried this strategy, and it was helpful because:



This strategy did not really work for me, because:

---



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#### Post it...

Create and write your favorite positive self-talk statements on a poster, sticky notes, or paper, and post or place them in places where you will see them.



I tried this strategy, and it was helpful because:



This strategy did not really work for me, because:

---



---



---



---

Listen to it...

Create recordings or a voice note on your mobile phone, tablet, or other device of positive self-talk statements that you personally like, so you can listen back to them whenever you feel they are needed.



I tried this strategy, and it was helpful because:



This strategy did not really work for me, because:

---



---



---



---

Read it!

Create a journal of positive self-talk statements. When you find a statement, quote, or positive saying that you like, write it in your journal.



I tried this strategy, and it was helpful because:



This strategy did not really work for me, because:

---



---



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Keep practicing. Like anything else, self-acceptance takes practice.

## Lesson Summary

In this lesson we learned:

- ❑ How to deal with disappointment using the concept of self-acceptance.
- ❑ The importance of positive self-talk and how it can improve your self-esteem and ability to deal with things that do not go your way.
- ❑ Techniques for practicing meditation and relaxation to manage your emotions and foster self-acceptance.



**Congratulations on completing a lesson on Personal Development!**

If you completed all 3 Levels on this topic, please take a 5-minute survey using this link or this QR code. Your feedback will help us improve lessons for the future and help us decide what topic or subject we should create next!

Click or scan



Or type in your browser

<https://bit.ly/3H5v1NU>

Do not forget that we have **4 other subjects** on **Personal Development** that you can complete. If you do not know where to find them, email your Special Olympics Program staff member and they can help you.

Again, congratulations for completing this lesson. We hope that you learned a lot and will use it to become a better leader within your community and within the Special Olympics movement.