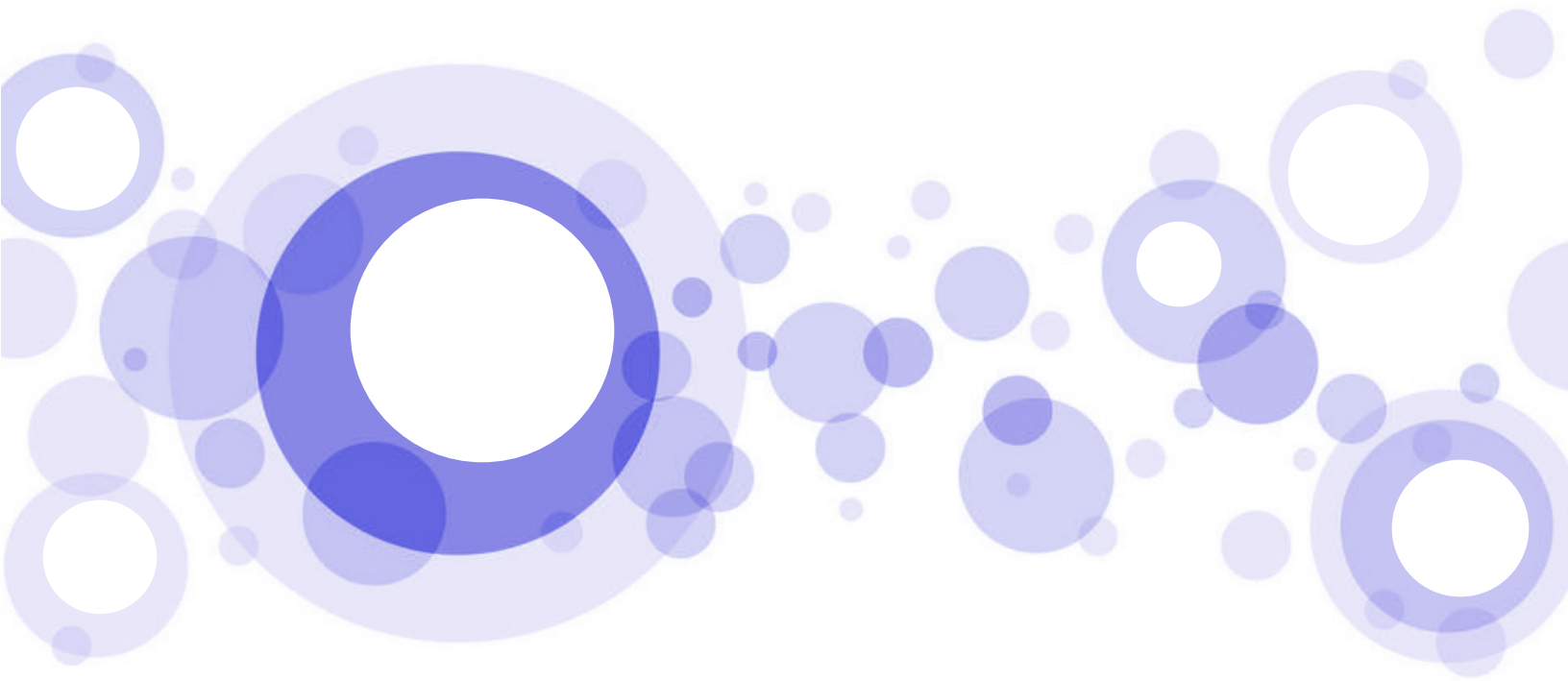


# Parent Viewing Guide for the Pixar Movie Inside Out

Engaging in Conversations with Kids about Emotions and Feelings



*Created by the National Mental Health Innovation Center and Partners*

# Viewing Guide for the Pixar Movie Inside Out

Engaging in Conversations with Kids about Emotions and Feelings

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## Viewing Guide Overview & Purpose

The movie *Inside Out* by Pixar provides an opportunity to normalize a range of emotions that kids (and adults!) may experience especially when life is difficult. *Inside Out* follows a young girl named Riley as she experiences a range of emotions through change and stress. You learn about joy, sadness, fear, anger and disgust. *Inside Out* was created for school-age children, but all ages can enjoy and appreciate the movie.

This guide was originally developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, it contains a broad list of questions to ask your child that promote conversations about emotions or responding to trying circumstances. Scenes with questions that specifically relate to COVID-19 are denoted with a virus-exclamation icon ( 🦠 ) next to the question.

You can pause the movie at certain points to discuss as many questions as you choose, or you can wait until after the movie to prompt your child with questions about their experience. Questions and activities range in complexity and are generally for ages 5 to 14. However, you are the expert on your child and know which questions or activities are best suited to their age and maturity level. The purpose of watching *Inside Out* is to have fun together and discuss some of the emotions they are experiencing related to the current life changes.

## Tips for Supporting Your Child

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions outlined through this guide. Most importantly, this is a time to provide space for you and your child to discuss emotions. There are few things to keep in mind when talking with your child or children:

- 1) It is important to completely and actively listen to your child while they are speaking. You can look them in the eyes and nod your head as they share their experience.
- 2) Give your child enough time to speak — it is important not interrupt your child.
- 3) Once they are finished answering a question, you can repeat back what you heard. You can also say “thank you for sharing that.”
- 4) It is also ok for your child to respond with “I don’t know” when you ask a question.
- 5) There is no wrong answer! You are taking the time to watch the movie and listen to your child, which conveys that you care. Sometimes questions can be overwhelming for children, so by framing the question through your own thoughts with a follow up of “What do you think?” can help your child discuss their experience. Example: “Wow, I can tell Riley is sad because she is crying. What do you think?”
- 6) Remember every child is different – what works for one may not work for another.
- 7) Some children can easily talk about their experience and others do better combining these conversations with other activities, like walks, board games, puzzles, art, or dinner. You can always ask these questions after the movie while doing another activity.

# Introduction to Riley's Emotions – Moving to San Francisco & Starting a New School

## Scene Time & Description


## Purpose & Prompts

4:30 minutes

Viewers meet Riley's different emotions  
Joy, Fear, Disgust, Anger, and Sadness.





### **Talk about different emotions your child experiences...**

- Which of Riley's emotions do you have?
- Can you tell me a memory where you felt like (choose an emotion) was at your control panel?
- What is your behavior like when you feel (choose an emotion)?
- How do you know if someone is feeling (choose an emotion)?
-  What emotions have you been feeling during COVID-19?

5:00 minutes

Joy describes Riley's core memories –  
these are really important memories.


### **Talk about how emotions and memories are related...**

- What do you think are the super important times in your life?
- What core memories do you have in your head?
- What feelings are part of those core memories?
- What are some of your core memories that shape the different parts of you and who you are?
-  Do you think COVID-19 may become a core memory?
-  What emotions do you think will be part of your memory?

6:40 minutes

Viewers learn how core memories create  
different personality islands.



### **Talk about the parts of your child's personality...**

- Riley had goofy island, friendship island, family island, and truth island – which ones do you think are most important?
- What are your personality islands that make up who you are?
- Can you describe the favorite personality trait you have?
-  What personality islands do you want to work on and build during COVID-19?

8:00 minutes

Riley and her family suddenly move to  
San Francisco. Riley imagines her new  
room, but the moving van is delayed  
with all their furniture and belongings.

### **Talk about the different emotions that occur with sudden changes and unexpected events...**


- Can you think of something in your life that changed suddenly in the past and how you felt?
- What can you do when you feel sad or lonely?
-  What are things you like or don't like with the sudden changes that have occurred because of COVID-19?
-  How does your fear or other emotions keep you safe while staying home during COVID-19?

---

16:00 minutes

Riley goes to tell her parents that she is going to bed. She overhears her dad on the phone talking about work and he sounds upset.

**Talk about the emotions your child experiences when they see different emotions in other people...**



- How do you feel when mom or dad can't be around?
- How do you feel when mom or dad is (choose an emotion)?
- What emotions do you feel when someone you know is upset?
-  What emotions take over your control panel when you hear something about COVID-19?

---

17:00 minutes

Riley's mom talks to her before going to bed. She talks to Riley about the delayed moving van, and thanks her for being happy and positive during the situation.

**Talk about the different emotions that show up when sudden changes or unexpected events occur...**

- If you were Riley, what emotion would you respond with or how would you feel about the moving van being delayed?
- How would you feel if your mom or dad thanked you for staying positive during an unexpected change?
- Has there ever been a time where you put on a brave face, when you were truly feeling another emotion?
-  Do you ever feel like one emotion tries to take over the one you want – have you experienced this during COVID-19?
-  How did you feel when an event or activity is cancelled because of COVID-19?

---

23:30 minutes

Riley introduces herself in front of her new class at school. She starts to get sad and cries when she talks about playing hockey every weekend before the move.

**Talk about difficult moments your child has in response to changes or new situations...**

- Why do you think Joy is upset right now?
- Why do you think Sadness keeps touching memories?
- What emotions do you think Riley is feeling as she introduces herself to the class?
- Have you ever experienced a time when you felt sad but didn't want others knowing you felt that way?

**Journey into Long-Term Memory –  
Meeting Bing Bong and Finding the Train of Thought**

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Scene Time & Description

Purpose & Prompts

24:30 minutes

Riley loses all of her core memories and the personality islands shut down.

**Talk about emotions your child experiences during times of loss or difficult times...**



- How do you think Riley felt losing all her core memories?
- Can you think of a time you have felt lost and confused?

- 
- What do you think could have helped Riley as she was losing her connection to core memories?
  - Has there been a time when you can't feel emotions or you felt lost or shutdown?
- 

31:00 minutes

Riley gets angry at dinner and her dad sends her to her room. Her dad then follows Riley and starts acting silly to cheer her up, but she won't look at him.




### **Talk about about the different things that cheer up your child or help them when they are upset...**

- Have you ever felt like Riley and don't feel like being silly?
  - When that happens, what way can I/we best support you?
  - How might you be able to tell us that you don't want to be silly?
  - What helps you feel better when you feel (choose an emotion)?
  -  Has it been more difficult to be silly during COVID-19?
  -  Are there ways that we can bring some silliness or laughter into our daily life right now? Do you have a suggestion?
- 

36:50 minutes

Riley is talking with a friend from her old hockey team on the computer. She ends the call when she starts to get upset, and Riley's friendship island collapses.

### **Talk about different things that change friendships...**

- Have you ever been upset with a friend?
  - Do you think Riley's friend knew that she was upset?
  - Do you feel comfortable telling your friends if they upset you?
  -  How do you feel about not seeing your friends right now, or what has it been like trying to stay connected to friends?
  -  Do you feel connected to your friends or family when you see them over a video chat or talk to them on the phone?
  -  What are things we can do to hang out and stay connected with friends or family during COVID-19?
- 

40:00 minutes

Viewers meet Riley's imaginary friend Bing Bong, and Joy, Sadness, and Bing Bong go to Imagination Land.

### **Talk about the the importance of imagination...**

- What is in your imagination?
- Did you or do you have an imaginary friend (and describe them)?
- What would be your favorite place in Imagination Land?
- What can we do so your imagination continues to grow?

**Note for the Parent** – You can share your imagination land with your child, and what were you like as a child.

---

40:00 minutes

Bing Bong takes Joy and Sadness to the catch the Train of Thought through imagination land back to headquarters.

### **Talk about thoughts your child notices going through their mind and how they process or organize them...**

- Where does your Train of Thought jump to a lot?
- What emotions do you feel when you have those thoughts?

- 
- Have you ever been surprised by old memories popping up unexpectedly, or thoughts of something when you least expect it?



Do you notice any different thoughts about COVID-19?

---

47:00 minutes

Riley tries out for a new hockey team in San Francisco. She falls down when trying to take a shot at the goal and gets upset.

### **Talk about emotions your child experiences when things do not go the way they expected...**

- Why do you think Riley got angry during the hockey tryout?
  - Can you think of a time you got upset or struggled doing an activity you usually enjoy?
  - What emotions do you feel when someone tells you that everything will be alright?
  - What emotions do you feel when things do not go your way?
- 

49:00 minutes

Bing Bong comments on all the changes in imagination land, and starts to run after his (and Riley's rocket) getting thrown away. He is not fast enough and the rocket falls in off the cliff.

### **Talk about unexpected loss and different emotions that your child might feel when they lose something...**

- Have you ever lost something or someone that made you feel like Bing Bong felt when he lost his rocket?
  - Why do you think Joy can't cheer Bing Bong up?
  - What did Sadness do that helped Bing Bong feel better?
  - What things do you do when you notice that you feel sad?
  - What ways do you like to be supported when you feel upset?
- 

54:00 minutes

Joy, Sadness, and Bing Bong go to Dreamland to try and wake Riley up because the Train of Thought stops running when Riley is asleep.

### **Talk about dreams your child has and how emotions impact them when they sleep...**

- Why do you think we have dreams?
- What do you dream about when you are asleep?
- How do you think it felt for Riley when she lost her teeth and had no pants on in front of her class in her dream?



Are your dreams different right now (during COVID-19)?

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61:00 minutes

After failing to wake Riley up, Joy and Sadness rescue Bing Bong from jail in Dreamland. They wake up a scary clown that turns Riley's dream into a nightmare.

### **Talk about how fear can impact your child's dreams...**

- What do you think are the reasons we have nightmares?
- Have you ever had a nightmare that scared you awake?
- What helps you feel better after having a nightmare?
- How does your body physically feel when you are scared?

## Lost in the Abyss of Forgotten Memories –

Riley Runs Away & Joy and Bing Bong Fall into the Abyss

### Scene Time & Description

### Purpose & Prompts

66:30 minutes

Anger, Disgust, and Fear decide to give Riley the idea to run away. Riley takes money from her mom's purse to buy a bus ticket to go back to Minnesota.

#### **Talk about how emotions can influence our actions and healthy ways to react to different emotions...**

- What are some reasons Riley is running away?
- What do you think of Anger's bright idea to run away?
- Do you think Riley should have talked to her parents about how she was feeling before running away?
- What do you think Riley's parents could have done to make her feel better or support her when she was sad?
- Can you think of a time you were upset and just wanted to run away from the situation? What did you do?
- Why do you think running away can make you feel better at first, but does not help you feel better in the long-term?

70:00 minutes

Joy and Bing Bong have fallen into the abyss where memories are forgotten. Joy watches Riley's memory of losing an important hockey game.

#### **Talk about the importance of expressing sadness...**

- Why did Riley's team come over and carry her on their shoulders when she felt sad?
- Can you think of a time when someone saw that you were sad and they were able to help you feel better?
- How do you think feeling or expressing sadness helps Riley?
- How do you know when you are sad or when others are sad?

72:30 minutes

Joy and Bing Bong find the rocket that was thrown away and use it to try get out of the abyss. After multiple failed attempts Bing Bong jumps out of the rocket so Joy can get out of the abyss.

#### **Talk about the importance of helping others...**

- What do you think about Bing Bong jumping out of the wagon to help save Joy from the abyss?
- Why do you think Bing Bong is happy even though he did not make it to the top?
- What do you notice about Joy's feelings when she realizes that Bing Bong stayed in the abyss?
- How does helping others make you feel?

80:00 minutes

Riley's control panel starts to break and shut down when she runs away. Joy and Sadness make it back to Headquarters, and Joy tells Sadness that Riley needs her, and Sadness takes the lightbulb out.

#### **Talk about a situation that can impact your child's emotions control panel may make it shut down...**

- Why do you think Riley's emotions control panel started to break?
- What do you think Riley was feeling when her emotions control panel shut down, and have you ever felt that way?



- Why do you think Joy believed Sadness could save the day and get Riley’s emotions control panel working again?



Has there been any point during COVID-19 where you felt like your emotions control panel has shut down?

## Return to Riley Headquarters – Riley Returns Home & Joy and Sadness Make it Back

### Scene Time & Description

### Purpose & Prompts

84:00 minutes

Joy hands Sadness Riley’s core memories and they turn blue. Riley returns home and her parents comfort her. Viewers see the times that Riley has felt more than one emotion at a time.

#### **Talk about how your child can experience more than one emotion at the same time...**

- When Riley shared her sadness with her parents, what emotion did her parents share back with her?
- How do you think Riley’s parents helped comfort her?
- What do you think it means that Riley’s core memories are now filled with lots of colors?
- Have you ever had a memory change emotions over time?
- Can you think of a time when you felt multiple emotions?



Have you felt more than one emotion at once about COVID-19? Tell me about that.

84:30 minutes

Riley gets a new control panel that has more features. Viewers see the Riley’s emotions expand their knowledge.

#### **Talk about how emotions change as you grow up...**

- What emotions do you think get added to Riley’s upgraded emotion control panel?
- Why do you think your emotions control panel need to be upgraded when you get older?

## Movie Credits Bonus Scene – Animals has emotions too...

### Scene Time & Description

### Purpose & Prompts

87:00 minutes

During the credits, viewers see that the animals all have different emotions too.


#### **Talk about how animals experience emotions too...**

- In the credits, did you notice that animals have feelings too?
- What feelings did you observe in the cat and the dog?
- What feelings do you see in your own pets?




# Post-Movie Discussion Questions

## Additional Conversation Starters with Your Child


### Emotions Control Panel

- What do you call it when your emotions control panel stops working?
- How do you know when your emotions control panel stops working?  
*(Sometimes it might be difficult to notice or it may happen without you noticing)*
- How can we do a good job to make sure to keep our emotions control panel working?
- How do emotions (joy, fear, sadness, anger, disgust) make your body physically feel?
- Which emotion do you think typically runs your emotion control panel?  
*(For Riley, Joy was running the control panel through most of the movie)*
-  What emotions have you been having during COVID-19?



### Importance of Emotions

- In the movie we learned each feeling has a job, do you remember the job of each feeling?
- What do you want to remember to help you with feelings of anger, sadness, and disgust?
- What are some of your deep fears and how do you deal with your fears?
-  Do you know that feeling angry, scared, tired are all OK to experience right now with COVID-19?
-  What do you think you should you do when you feel these emotions during COVID-19?
-  What can we do as a family to help keep the emotions control panel working well during COVID-19?

### Expressing Emotions

- Is one emotion more important than others?
- What emotions do you have right now, and what are they saying?
- What are ways to help you share and work through different emotions?
- When did you feel each emotion while watching the movie?
  - Fear** – Example: When Joy and Sadness get sucked into long term memory.
  - Joy** – Example: When Joy, Sadness, and Bing Bong walk through Imagination Land.
  - Sadness** – Example: When the Personality Islands start to fall in the abyss.
  - Anger** – Example: When Riley was sent to her room when she was upset.
-  How can I help you express the emotions you may feel during COVID-19?

### Personalities | Dreams

- What makes up who you are, and what make up your personality islands?
- How can we continue to help you make your personality islands stronger?
-  Have your dreams changed recently during COVID-19?
-  Why do you think your dreams might have changed right now?

## Post-Movie Activities

### Artistic Activities to do with Your Child

Provided below are different activity ideas that can be done as a family after watching the movie. All activities can be done with crayon, colored pencils, or markers and paper but you can add material to get more creative too!

### Tips for Parents for Activities

- 1) There is no right and wrong way for kids to create art. Support their creativity by encouraging them and showing them that you are paying attention. You can make observations and statements about what you notice that they are doing:

*"I notice you are really focused on creating your artwork."*

*"I noticed you used a lot of (insert color)."*

*"I noticed this activity seemed to make you frustrated.  
Can you help me understand what was challenging you?"*

- 2) Some children enjoy when parents are just paying attention to their creative process, and other children (especially as they get older) benefit from you making art beside them. You can ask or offer support in statements such as:

*"Would you like me to do this activity with you, or would you like me to watch you as you create your images?"*

*"I like seeing you draw! It makes me happy to see you having fun and being creative."*

- 3) Use the art created in play or build on their creations through bringing it back up in conversation:

*"Hmm... I wonder what emotion is leading your control panel right?"*

*"I wonder what (insert an emotion) is saying in response to (choose an event)."*

- 4) Avoid labelling too much of their art (e.g. "I see you drew a sad face"). Ask open-ended questions instead – this tells the child that you are interested and allows them to go into detail about what they created. Some example statements include:

*"Tell me about what you created!"*

*"Wow, this part of the drawing has a lot of color. Can you tell me more about it?"*

- 5) Avoid judgmental language or statements. If you find yourself criticizing their work or asking them to make changes, try to adopt a curious mindset. Ask questions about what they are creating instead.

Activities are written where family members create their own individual art together, which is suggested so there is sharing between parent and children. Alternatively, you can draw the same image as your child and ask them for suggestions or help with the drawing. Activities can also be completed by just the children.

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## Personality Islands –

### Create images of what your different Personality Islands are.

- Tell me about your different personality islands.
- What Core Memories make your Personality Islands?
- Are there any other Personality Islands you want to add to the picture, and continue to help grow right now?



Have your Personality Islands changed with COVID-19?

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## Emotion Puppets –

### Create puppets or drawings of your different emotions.

- What are your different emotions saying right now?
- I am noticing a lot of different emotions right now. Tell about them...
- Let's use our puppets to play out conversations our emotions are having.

**Note for the Parent** – if you have popsicle sticks, glue, and cardboard, you can create drawings, glue them to the cardboard, then attach the sticks to make a puppet. This is a great activity for parents to participate in or create as well, and then you can play emotion puppets and share with your child how you are feeling too!

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## Emotion Recipes –

### Write out 'recipes' for what creates different feelings or emotions.

**Note for the Parent** – For this activity you can use scenarios such as the first day of virtual school, or not having a birthday party. Identify the emotions that occurred in different scenarios and talk about what things or factors created that emotion.

Recipes can be represented in a drawing as a circle with colored wedges that are different sizes representing emotions. Talk as a family about how much of the different emotions (e.g. loneliness, calm, focused, etc.) you experienced for each scenario.

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## Imagination Land –

### Create an image of a safe or calm place in your Imagination Land.

- Tell me about your safe or calm imagination place.
- What are the things that make it feel safe or calm?
- What is your favorite part of this place?
- How can you/we go here when you feel fear/anger/sadness?

**Note for the Parent** – everyone can share their place and discuss it as a family. When a child is feeling overwhelmed you can encourage them to go to their safe/calm space and use the art they created to help them reimagine it. You can also make an imagination land where they feel fear/sadness/anger and compare how they look or feel different.

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**Inside Out Items –**

**Identify or draw things that can be inside out in your world or draw how things would look if they were upside down.**

- **Inside Out Example:** A sock that just came out of the dryer or
- **Upside Down Example:** A swing set built upside down
- Do you feel inside out or upside down right now?
- Do the things that we thought of that are inside out or upside down still work when they are like this? Why or why not?

---

**Help Like Bing Bong –**

**Create a sign or encouraging drawing to hang in the window and show support for others to see.**

- Do you want to help someone, just like Bing Bong helped Joy?
- How does it make you feel when you help someone else?
- What are other ways we can help support family or friends?

***Note for the Parent** – you and your child can alternatively create a card or drawing to send to someone you know who is living alone right now (e.g. a grandparent or elderly neighbor).*

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**Control Panel –**

**Draw your emotion control panel, including the buttons or different ways to express or influence each emotion.**

***Note for the Parent** – You can discuss with your children what they can do, think, or say in response to emotions that they are uncertain about or that they do not want to feel. For example, “I can remind myself that everyone feels these emotions sometimes or sometimes it is helpful to feel sad for a little bit, but it won’t last forever.”*

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**Pixar Flower Pin –**

**Draw the flower pin that Bing Bong wears and write emotions on the petals that you have felt since COVID-19 changes started.**

***Note for the Parent** – Encourage creativity and decorate or color the petals to represent each emotion (e.g. blue teardrops on a sadness petal). As a family share what people put on their pins and discuss why each person chose to decorate or color it that way.*

---

**Music Playlist –**

**Create a playlist that fits the different emotions you often feel.**

- What emotions does (choose a song) express for you?
- What songs would you put in (choose an emotion) playlist?
- 🎧 What songs would be good for your COVID-19 playlist?

***Note for the Parent** – You can also create a playlist as a family that everyone can listen to while staying at home.*

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**Musical Emotions –****Use household objects to make the sounds for different emotions.**

***Note for the Parent** – Examples of objects include clanking pots or pans, crinkling a plastic bottle, or tapping on hollow object. You can use prompts such as, “Find objects to play sounds that represent the emotions you are experiencing with COVID-19 (or another event).”*

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**Time Machine –****Build a time machine with objects around the house.**

***Note for the Parent** – Examples of items that can be used to build a time machine are legos, blocks, or cardboard. Use the time machine to visit different parts of time in your child’s life and have them talk through the emotions they were experiencing then. For discussing COVID-19, the time machine could travel from the future and give you tips on going back to school or seeing friends again.*

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**Ally Relaxation –****Read the *Your Ally* relaxation activity to your child.**

***Note for the Parent** – After reading help your child identify an ally to connect with as a tool help with emotions – you can reference how Sadness was Bing Bongs ally when he was sad during the relaxation.*

***(The *Your Ally* reading is located in the Appendix on page 14.)***

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Please let us know your thoughts and feedback about this viewing guide!

<https://bit.ly/nmhc-insideout>

***Disclaimer** – This guide is not affiliated with Pixar Animation Studios or the Walt Disney Corporation, and was created independently by the National Mental Health Innovation Center and partner organizations as a community resource.*

## Appendix

### Your Ally – Relaxation Reading Activity

In this activity, you are going to think about a situation and imagine an ally by your side supporting you. An ally is someone who joins with you and helps you in a time of need. Your ally can be a friend, a teacher, an animal or imaginary friend like Bing Bong!

Begin by getting comfortable. You can sit in a chair or lie on the floor. Start to take a few breaths. Breathing in and out slowly. When you are ready, go ahead and close your eyes.

Let your mind travel to a time when you felt excited and happy. It doesn't matter when this happened – maybe it was yesterday, a year ago, or when you were younger. Picture it in your mind. Why do you feel excited and happy? Where are you? What time of day is it? What is going through your mind? What do you need right now? Once you are there, imagine your ally joining you and offering you what you need. You might be jumping around, celebrating, hugging (just like when Joy hugged Sadness), or your ally is giving you a look of approval and support. You know that they truly see your strengths!

Now think about a time that you felt worried or lonely. Again, it does not matter when it happened. Let your mind travel to that time. Why do you feel worried or lonely? Where are you? School, home, at a friend's house? What is going through your mind? What do you need right now? Once you can picture the room you were in and what was happening—imagine your ally joining you. It does not matter if your ally was there at the time. It just matters that your ally is here today as you imagine the time you felt worried or alone.

They are there for you and make you feel stronger and more confident. What does your ally say to you? Do they give you a hug? Do they give you advice? Imagine it now and know that your ally gave you something that helped you feel more strong, confident and relaxed. Your ally does not have magic powers that will make the situation go away, but they are there with you no matter what happens and can sit with you and the feelings that you have.

Now, pay attention to your breath again. Breathing in and out slowly. I am going to count down from 3. When I say the number 1, you can slowly allow your eyes to open. Remember that your ally is always with you and you can turn to them whenever you need them. Your allies are inside you just like an imaginary friend—and you might have multiple allies you can turn to.

3...2...1. Notice if you feel more awake, alert and calm when you open your eyes.