LENS Project
Making Me

Ages       All Ages!
LENS Skill  Sense of Self
Why?       When I acknowledge my emotions and understand how to manage them, I can be more successful both in and out of school.
Materials  Blank paper
           Crayons, colored pencils
           Markers
           Gingerbread shape printout (optional)
           Emotions list (optional)

Summary
In this visual art activity, participants will reflect their Sense of Self by exploring and expressing their emotions through coloring and drawing. By using colors and shapes, each person will illustrate their own feelings and emotions, as well as images that convey how they work to manage those emotions.

Directions
1.) Visual Art Warm-up
   Have everyone take a blank piece of paper and a crayon or colored pencil. Participants will have one minute to scribble while the leader or facilitator calls out different emotions. Scribbling means we aren't trying to draw anything on purpose. Let the emotions called out be the only thing affecting how you scribble. (e.g. maybe “tired” slows down your scribbling, maybe “angry” prompts you to scribble sharper shapes). You can use the list of emotions below or brainstorm your own!
   - If you want an extra challenge, each participant can take turns calling out emotions so everyone can have the opportunity to select and call an emotion.

   Emotions list:
   - Excited
   - Sad
   - Frustrated
   - Tired
   - Grumpy
   - Worried
   - Proud
   - Guilty
   - Disappointed
   - Scared
   - Embarrassed
   - Hopeful

2.) Brainstorm/Discuss
   Take some time to brainstorm using the following questions. You can start with individuals brainstorming on their own or go straight to a group discussion. Challenge yourself or your group to go through these questions multiple times focusing on more than one emotion.
   - What emotions do I feel? And where in my body do I feel each emotion?
   - What color and/or shape visually represents each emotion for me?

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Example: I sometimes feel stressed. When I feel stressed, I feel it in my shoulders. Stress makes me think of red, sharp shapes.

3.) Color in your Emotions
Use the gingerbread shape printout or freehand a human outline on a blank piece of paper. Utilizing crayons or colored pencils, add color and shapes within the outline to represent your emotions and where you may feel them in your body. Refer to the questions and your responses from Step 2 as you fill in the outline.

Example: I’ll use a red crayon to draw sharp lines or shapes on the shoulder area of the gingerbread outline to reflect what it feels like to be stressed.

4.) Draw your Strategies
Next, consider strategies you use to manage your emotions. Utilizing markers, draw images to reflect the emotion management techniques you use. These drawings can be added inside or outside the gingerbread or human outline.

Example: To help manage my stress I take deep breaths or I do puzzles, so I might draw a mouth and lines to reflect deep breathing, and draw a puzzle piece near the hands.

5.) Sharing
When everyone is finished, take some time to share your “Making Me” with the rest of the group, selecting 3-4 specific emotions and emotion management techniques to present. Take time to celebrate each participant when they share (e.g. clapping, finger snapping, giving a thumbs up, etc.). Think about where you can display each creation (e.g. on the fridge, in your bedroom, take a photo of it, etc.)

6.) Reflect
Discuss and/or write your thoughts about the following reflection questions.
- How did it feel using shapes/colors to reflect your emotions?
- Which emotions were easy or difficult to add to your drawing? Why?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- How did it feel to share your emotions and your management techniques?
- What emotion management techniques did you learn that you can try?

Other ways to Play:
1. Consider using a virtual platform to share your drawing with friends or family members.
2. You could incorporate collage materials to create your “Making Me”. Pull colors and images from magazines, cards, stickers, etc. and glue them to your drawing.
3. Consider creating your piece in a digital medium such as Publisher, Canva, etc.
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