

RULER Anchor Tools Overview

The RULER Anchor Tools help us to practice the skills of emotional intelligence every day. This handout discusses each of the four Anchor Tools and how families can use them.

The Family Charter

The Family Charter establishes agreed upon norms and guidelines, rather than rules, to help create a more contented, emotionally safe environment at home. Everyone in the family has a voice and responsibility for developing the Charter and for upholding it. It is a commitment all family members make to themselves and to one another. The Charter poses three questions: The first question is “How do we want to *feel* as a family in our home?” The next question explores what behaviors each member would need to exhibit in order to have those feelings. The third question is an agreement about how conflict will be handled. Upon completion, everyone in the family signs the Charter as their way to commit to keeping the Charter alive. When fully integrated into family life, the Charter can be a powerful tool to encourage personal and social responsibility at home, create more harmony, and to build trusting relationships.



The Mood Meter



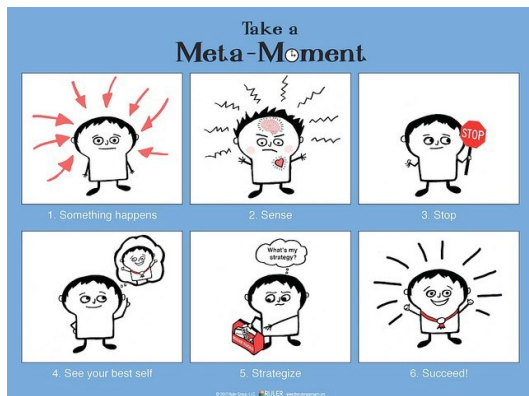
Our emotions provide us with valuable information. When we pay attention to how we feel and understand and develop strategies for managing our emotions, we make wiser choices and better decisions. The Mood Meter tool is an opportunity to build emotional awareness, which is foundational for developing the skills of emotional intelligence. Everyone in the family can grow personally by agreeing to check in regularly with themselves and each other on the Mood Meter.

Checking in on the Mood Meter has several steps. First, you plot your feeling in one of the four quadrants. Second, you label how you are feeling as accurately as possible. Third, you reflect on what is causing you to feel how you are feeling and then consider. The last step is to select a useful strategy to maintain your current mood if it is helpful or to shift your mood if it is not. When you share your feelings, understandings and strategies together with your family, you open up opportunities to grow together and feel closer.

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The Meta-Moment



Have you ever been “hijacked” by the power of your emotions and wished that you’d handled things differently? Take a Meta-Moment! This 6- step process helps us manage intense emotions “in the moment” so that we have more satisfying outcomes. The Meta-Moment teaches us how to “prolong the space in time” between feeling emotionally triggered by something or someone and our reaction time. When we take a Meta-

Moment, instead of simply “reacting,” we can choose how we want to respond and be more skillful. The Meta-Moment also helps each of us to build character by invoking an image of our Best Self. By identifying and reflecting on what “triggers” us, and what we are like when we are our Best Selves, we can be proactive about developing thought and action strategies that align with our values and meet our larger goals. In short, it helps us be the people we want to be.

The Blueprint

The Blueprint is a tool for helping family members to develop empathy and perspective taking. Using questions anchored in the skills of emotional intelligence, the Blueprint encourages both children and adults to understand and consider one another’s thoughts and feelings when resolving conflicts or differences, and to identify constructive solutions. The Blueprint can also be a self-reflection tool. Used effectively, the Blueprint builds compassionate conversations within the family and engenders greater optimism in the challenging moments of everyday family life.

**Solve problems with
The Blueprint**

Describe	What happened?	
RULER Skill	Me	Other Person
Recognize & Label	How did I feel?	How did ____ feel?
Understand	What caused my feelings?	What caused ____'s feelings?
Express & Regulate	How did I express and regulate my feelings?	How did ____ express and regulate his/her feelings?
Reflect & Plan	What could I have done to handle the situation better? What can I do now?	

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