

NURTURING LITTLE MINDS

Abby Krauss '23
Course: Psychotherapy with Children
Faculty Advisor: Jim Martin, Professor Emeritus
Field Site: EBS Children's Institute of West Chester
Field Supervisor: Cristine Cappel, M.A., LPC, LBS, NCC, AAT

BACKGROUND

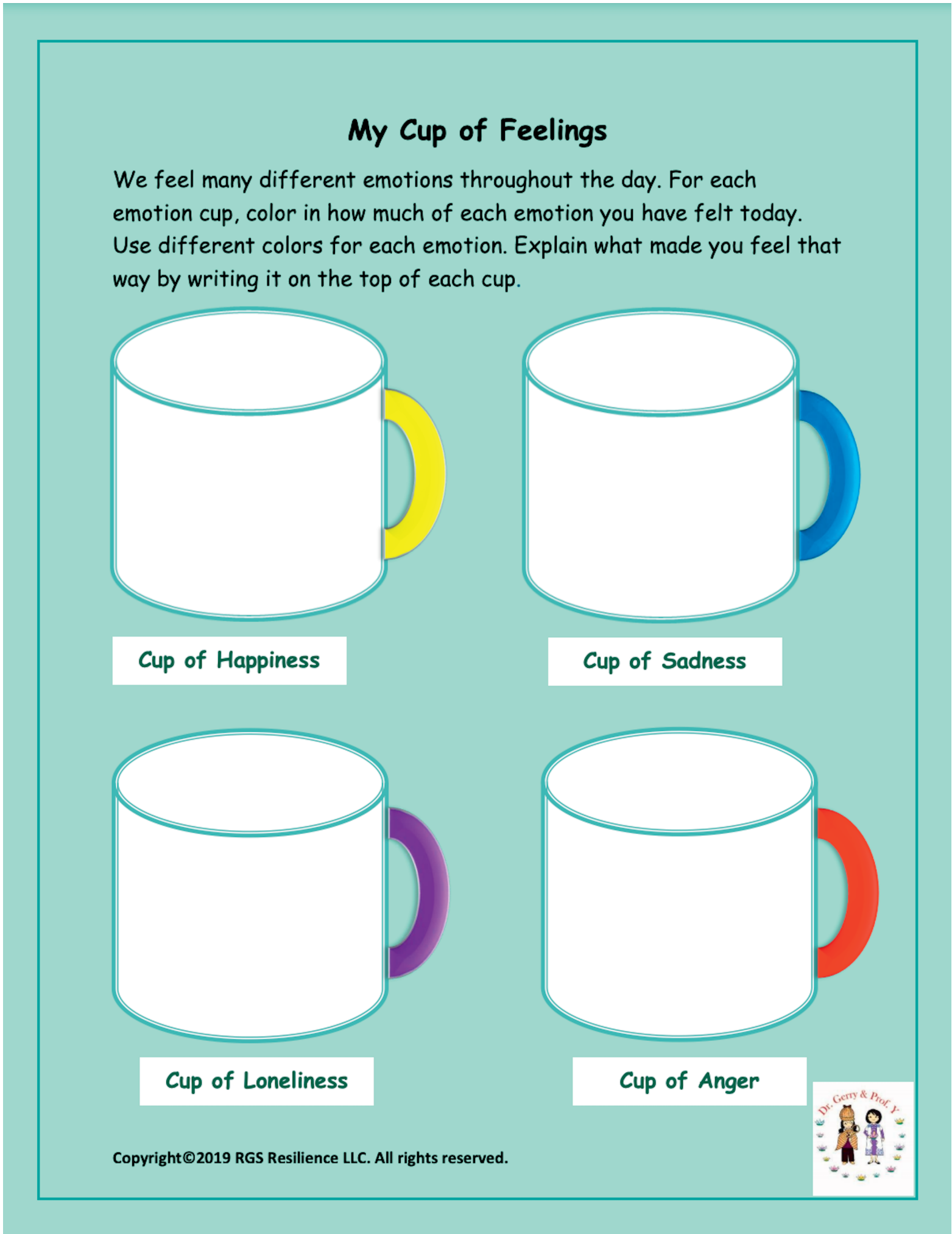
The EBS Children’s Institute of West Chester is a multidisciplinary clinic that provides psychotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, feeding therapy, and physical therapy to children. I interned in the Child Psychology and Counseling Department.

MY ROLES AT EBS

- Observe and participate in sessions with patients and parents under the supervision of Cristine Cappel, a licensed professional counselor and the psychotherapy program coordinator at EBS
- Help determine objectives and plan activities for sessions

PIS COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To learn more about the therapeutic process when working with children, such as the development of a relationship with the child in a clinical context and how to approach psychoeducational work with children.
- To strengthen my overall understanding of the expression of psychological disorders in children, including an understanding of symptoms presented by children at this clinic.
- To develop a greater understanding of the barriers to clinical care such as SES, the effect of stigma, and familial situations like divorce.



note: there are five other emotions in this series

MY WORK WITH MARY

About Mary:

- Seven-year-old girl
- Intermittent explosive disorder-like episodes (e.g., struggles with regulating emotions)
- Sometimes physically aggressive towards younger sister
- Self-deprecating thoughts and statements when dysregulated
- Emotional inflexibility and trouble completing routines

Sessions with Mary:

- Teach Mary about anger - how to control anger, identify her triggers, notice warning signs, and learn coping skills
- Help her get through important tasks
- Suggest and practice cool-down activities to help keep her calm when triggered

Typical	Mary
Starting to individuate, but still very attached to parents	Has always been quite individual, does not show interest in bonding with parents, especially mom
Increased self-consciousness, wants to be liked and accepted by friends	Is set on maintaining friendships with people she is upset with/who hurt her feelings because she wants to remain liked
Can have strong emotional reactions as emotional development is happening	Explosive emotional reactions at home to events disproportionate to reaction
Develop more emotional control in public settings	Behavior is good in school, but can get out of hand in settings with her family
Tend to complain, and feel guilt and shame	Normal complaining, unsure about guilt after actions in explosive episodes
Better at taking directions, having more responsibility	Responsibilities are met with resistance and anger
Better at accepting differences in opinion	Good in this area outside of her family
Can dress themselves, brush their own teeth, bathe with minimal help	Has difficulty completing hygiene related tasks on her own

TAKEAWAYS

My experiences at EBS helped me reach my learning objectives and informed my future academic/career goals.

I was able to...

- Establish a therapeutic relationship with children at the clinic
- Gain a greater understanding of the expression of psychological disorders in children
- Witness the complexities of providing psychological care in this setting
- Gain a greater understanding of some of the barriers there can be to treatment