LISTENING TO MY BODY
A DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY GUIDE
by Gabi Garcia

By Gabi Garcia
Illustrated by Ying Hui Tan
Whether you are a parent, teacher or counselor, my hope is that you will find *Listening to My Body* and the accompanying resources to be useful tools for your child.

Helping children identify and bring mindful awareness to their sensory experiences (are they tired, hungry, thirsty, squirmy, etc.?) is the foundation for self-regulation. Learning to pay attention to their sensations helps children to be better able to identify what they need (rest, food, water, etc.), so that they can better care for themselves.

A hungry child may also be a grumpy or cranky child. A tired child may be squirmy and unfocused. A nervous child may feel their belly tighten or have shortness of breath. As the responsive parent, teacher, or counselor, you may often be the one to notice what is happening and proceed to help your child slow down, identify what they are experiencing, and help them figure out what they need. But through practice, children can also learn to move through this process.

It is equally important for children to learn to tune in when their bodies feel relaxed, calm, safe, etc., so that they can also begin to figure out what it is that helps them feel this way. Additionally, an angry, frustrated or upset child can begin internalizing and understanding that sensations and feelings are always changing, and they won’t feel upset forever (or even that long). The practice of “listening” to their bodies will empower children to respond with care and kindness for themselves, even when they are experiencing difficult emotions.

There are many ways to help your child continue to pay attention to sensations that they notice in their bodies. You can:
- Build a sensation vocabulary. Start with the list of sensations found in the book and build from there.
- Help them further connect their sensations and feelings. When they are able to identify how they are feeling, you can ask questions like: How does your body tell you that you are happy, excited, angry, etc.? Where in your body do you notice the calm, nervous, sad, etc., feelings?
- Model the process of “listening” to your body and showing care and kindness for yourself.
- Use and discuss the worksheets included below.

Warmly,
Gabi
LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

Pause & check-in with yourself.
You can pay attention to:

Your Heartbeat
- gentle
- pounding
- fast
- slow

Your Energy
- Ants in my pants
- Energized
- Alert
- Calm
- Relaxed
- Shaky
- Tired
- Sleepy
- Squirmy
- Still
- Tingly
- Buzzing
- Wiggly
- Rested

Your breath
- Long/Short
- Deep/Shallow
- Breathless
- Slow/fast

Your muscles/Belly
- Butterflies
- Tight
- Tense
- Soft
- Hard
- Strong
- Weak
- Heavy
- Light

Your Temperature
- Hot/Cold
- Warm/Cool
- Icy/Burning
- Sweaty

Something Else
- Hungry
- Thirsty
- Comfortable
- Full

There are many different sensations. What sensations do you notice right now?

_____________________________

_____________________________
LISTEN TO YOUR BODY
Pay attention to:

- Your breath
- Your heart beat
- The temperature of your skin
- Your muscles & belly
- Your energy

What sensations do you notice?
We all have feelings. Our feelings are not good or bad. They are something that we all experience. Paying attention to how we are feeling can help us figure out what we need. Below are 2 lists of feelings found in this book.

These are some feelings we experience when our needs are taken care of. Can you add any other feelings to this list?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awesome</th>
<th>Happy</th>
<th>Safe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Peaceful</td>
<td>Silly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curious</td>
<td>Playful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excited</td>
<td>Proud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are feelings we experience when our needs are not taken care of. Can you add any other feelings to this list?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Angry</th>
<th>Grumpy</th>
<th>Overwhelmed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confused</td>
<td>Hurt</td>
<td>Sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranky</td>
<td>Lonely</td>
<td>Upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do you feel right now? __________________________
What do you need?

When we don’t feel the way we want to feel, that’s a **BIG** sign that we’re not getting something we need. Examples of things we all need include: **food, water, rest, shelter, safety, movement, love, play, friends, respect and expressing ourselves.** When we get what we need, we feel at our best!

Below are activities found in this book that may be helpful, especially when you’re feeling upset. Think about how your feel when you do these activities. What other things that you can add to this list that help you feel calm, relaxed or safe?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eat a snack</th>
<th>Drink water</th>
<th>Rest</th>
<th>Take a deep breath</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sing a song</td>
<td>Sit in a quiet place</td>
<td>Go outside</td>
<td>Blow horse lips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jump around</td>
<td>Color/Draw</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Give yourself a hug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to music</td>
<td>Cuddle with a pet</td>
<td>Hang around someone I love</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pause. Take a deep breath. Notice. What do you need right now?
Draw of picture of yourself doing something that makes you feel calm, safe or loved.
I can show care & kindness for myself.

Draw of picture of yourself doing something that shows care and kindness for yourself.
Hi!

I hope you have found these resources helpful to you in your home or classroom. If you’ve read Listening to My Body (or any of my books) and found it useful, I would sincerely appreciate a few minutes of your time so that you can leave an honest Amazon review.

You can stay connected by signing up for my newsletter on my website, or via social media. I’m @gabigarciabooks on Instagram and Facebook.

With gratitude,

Gabi

OTHER BOOKS YOU MAY FIND USEFUL

All titles are available in Spanish
I create these free activity guides to accompany my books because I want the concepts to be taught to as many children as possible, regardless of whether a book was purchased. Please follow the guidelines below.

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- Copy the contents of this resource for use with your students.

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- Copy the contents of this resource and pass them off as your own.
- Alter this resource in any way.
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