



Visual Supports Beyond Childhood



PrAACtical AAC

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Growing up isn't easy. There are nuances to social situations, school experiences, life at home, and relationships in the workplaces that may be difficult to understand.

In this packet, we share visual supports that we've used to help people with AAC needs better cope with some of the challenging issues that they have faced. We often generate these together with the learner, then make visuals that we can keep in visible during the session and a separate copy that goes home with them.

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Handling Disappointment

1. Take some **deep breaths**. Remember, you can choose how to respond.
2. Tell yourself, "*This isn't as bad as it seems. I can handle it.*"
 - "*Things don't always go my way, but I can choose to be calm about it.*"
 - "*Part of growing up is accepting disappointment. I can practice responding in a calm way.*"
 - "*If I have a meltdown, I'll feel bad about it later. I don't like being embarrassed.*"
3. Think of something that makes you happy until you feel calmer.
4. Take a moment to feel proud of yourself. Staying calm when you are upset is a real achievement!

Things to Do When People Ignore Us

1. Remember, we all ignore people sometimes.
2. Sometimes people ignore us for a good reason.
3. You can:
 - Repeat what you said.
 - Say it louder.
 - Say "*Excuse me. I need to tell you something.*"
 - Use their name. "*Ellie, I have something to say.*"
 - Wait until later, then tell them what happened & how you felt about it.
4. Get help from a teacher or someone else.
 - Explain. "*We have a problem.*"
 - Use an 'I' statement. "*I feel ___ when ___.*"
 - Ask for support. "*Can you help us work it out?*"
5. Show appreciation. Say "*Thank you.*"

Taking Personal Responsibility

1. Remember, everyone has to do things they don't really want to do.
2. No one likes when other people tell us what to do, boss us around, or nag us. If you do the work on your own, you can avoid those things.
3. Part of growing up is taking responsibility for doing things that need to be done.
4. You can:
 - Use notes, lists, & calendars to remind yourself what to you have do.
 - Do a little bit at a time. Work on it for 15 minutes, then take a break & come back to it later.
 - Find ways to reward yourself for doing what needs to be done.
5. Take a minute to feel proud of yourself. Taking responsibility for what you do is a positive step!

Saying the Same Thing Over & Over

1. People often find it annoying when we say the same exact thing several times in a row.
2. Remember, you can **choose** how to respond.
3. Think about **why** you want to say it over.
 - If they didn't hear you, it's okay to say it again.
 - If you need more information, say so or ask a different question.
 - If you don't like their response, make a comment about your concern.
 - If you are upset or worried, talk about your feelings.
 - If you just want to talk about the subject some more, make a comment or ask a different question.
4. Be proud that you are challenging yourself to grow in new ways.

Taking Another Person's Perspective

1. To get along, make friends, & succeed at school or work, we can't just think about ourselves.
2. If we just do what is best for us, people may think we are rude or selfish. They may not want to hang out with us or work with us.
3. Think about the impact of what you do or say on other people. Sometimes it helps to:
 - Think about what other people are going through.
 - Ask yourself, "*What if everyone did that?*"
 - Decide if things would work out better if you said or did something different.
4. It isn't easy thinking about how our actions affect other people but it is part of growing up.

When Things Seem Unfair

1. Successful people understand that not everything in life is fair. Part of growing up is handling those situations in a mature way.
2. Ask someone else about it. Sometimes, it isn't as unfair as we think. Getting someone else's opinion can be helpful.
3. It is normal to feel angry or resentful when something is unfair. But if we spend too much time and energy being angry, things will probably not improve. We will just get angrier and angrier.
4. Ask yourself, "What can I do to improve the situation?" Sometimes, there are positive steps that we can take. Other times, we have to just accept an unfair situation.
5. Think about the strategies you use to handle disappointment or frustration. It may be helpful to use those.
6. It seems like fairness should apply to every situation. When it doesn't, it is good to know that you can deal with that in a mature way.