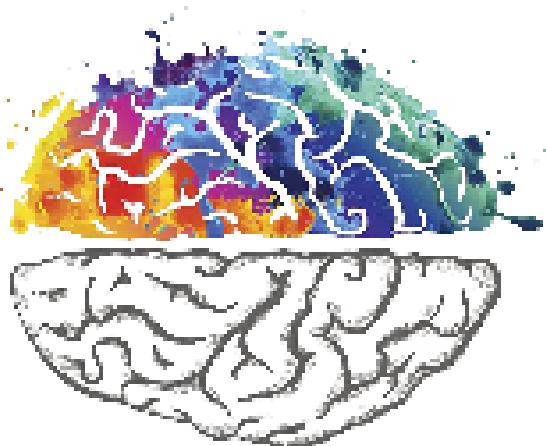




# LEXI

## Emotion Language Builder

# USER GUIDE



# INTRODUCTION

Scientific discovery by Lisa Feldman Barrett in her 'theory of constructed emotions' has revealed; communicating and encouraging our kids to understand their precise emotions can be highly beneficial. We as carers can help them correctly identify how they feel, enabling them to seek their own solutions to overcome unpleasant emotions. This will lead them to be more emotionally resilient as they go through life.

Each distinctive emotion can be associated with a different plan for the child to manage their unpleasant state. By helping them be more specific regarding the emotion they are feeling, we can enhance their ability to problem solve. They will develop learned pathways that can resolve their big emotions in a positive way.

Lexi, Emotion Language Builder is a proactive and reactive conversation starter designed to help educate our kids on the differences of each distinctive emotion. This is done through shared experiences with us as the carers. The purpose is to build on the child's own experiences and emotional awareness. To allow them to find their own solutions to their problems.

# LEXI

## EMOTION LANGUAGE BUILDER



**Lexi**, short for lexicon, **emotion language builder** uses redirection tactics in order to gently move a child's behaviour, attention or thought process from maladaptive thoughts or behaviours to more adaptive ones. Maladaptive is where a child is not adjusting adequately or appropriately to the environment or situation (i.e. tantrums).

### The Emotion Loop

When a person has a reaction to something in their environment, there's a 90 second chemical process that happens in the body; after that any remaining emotional response is just the person choosing to stay in that emotional loop.

**Redirection breaks them out of the emotional loop.**

# LEXI's three core objectives

## Improve Vocabulary

Improve a child's lexicon of emotions with over 100 emotion words. Each emotion has been specifically placed and categorised using the following scales;

## VALANCE

unpleasant - pleasant

## IMPACT

obstructive - supportive  
(unhelpful - helpful)

## CONTROL

low control - high control

## INTENSITY

passive - active



## **Shared Experiences**

Share your own personal experiences with a child to help them develop new emotional concepts as this will aid their ability to self regulate their emotions. Setting them on the path to become well balanced and emotionally resilient.

## **Recatagories Emotions**

Rather than kids lumping all emotion into a select few (happy, sad, angry, disgust, fear). Help your child develop their emotional granularity by recategorising emotions to ones more fitting and hopefully more positive. For example; when you experience the feeling of your heart racing, palms sweating and butterflies in your stomach, just before they do something a little risky. You may catagorised the emotion as anxiety or excitement. Both fall under the broader category of anticipation, with the former being a concerned anticipation and the latter being an optimistic anticipation. If you can encourage your child to recategories their unpleasant emotions to pleasant ones, they will grow up more fulfilled and happy.

# HOW TO GUIDE: Reactive

## Step one PICK (Redirection)

Encourage a child to pick a word from the word cloud. Then say that word out loud and ask them to repeat it “Can you say that word?”. Inquire whether they already know what that emotion is “what do you think that means?” “have you felt that before?”. Finish up by sharing your understanding or the word.

## Step two SEARCH

Now flip the place-mat over to the LEXI side. Ask them to search for the word they picked earlier. If they point to the wrong word, simply say the word out loud, and ask them if it sounds like the right word. They will likely reply “no” and continue searching. If they ask for your help, you can assist by getting them to notice the colour of the earlier word. Now they can search by colours rather than the words. When they pick the correct word, make sure to celebrate with a ‘high five’. This is important, because little victories can go a long way, for building their self-esteem.

## Step three DISCUSS (Core objectives)

Now it is time to share experiences. For instance; if they chose the word ‘angry’, share the last time you felt angry. Talk to them about what made you angry. This will show them that it is normal to have unpleasant emotions.

Next and more importantly you must share with them what you did to overcome the unpleasant emotion. It might be that you went for a walk, went somewhere quiet, or took 5 deep breaths.

Finally, invite them to share their own experience. Do they recall a time they felt: angry; jealous; frustrated? Ask what they do to calm themselves down. You’ll be surprised at their ability to problem solve once they are given the opportunity to do so.

# GAME SUGGESTIONS: Proactive

## Game one Lexi Says...

Similar to Simon says, but this time you start with “Lexi says...” “Find a word beginning with (pick a letter, colour or description)”. You may assist by narrowing down the parameters (this word make you feel good, thus eliminating all negative emotions).

Next, encourage your child to take a turn being Lexi.

## Game two This is when...

Start by saying “this is when... (describe how the selected emotion might make you feel)”. For example, ‘this is when your sister gets a new toy that you really want to play with’ (Jealousy). The child will begin to guess the emotion you’re describing.

This will provide an opportunity to introduce them to new emotion concepts and explore various situations where that particular emotion would be acceptable or unacceptable.

## Game three 'Rock' or 'Diamond'

'Rock' refers to all unpleasant emotions and 'Diamond' refers to all pleasant emotions.

Pick a word from the card and ask the child to choose either 'Rock' or 'Diamond'. If the emotion can be found on the side they chose then they got it right, however if it wasn't then share more information about that emotion and ask if they wish to change their answer.

## Game four Be creative

Ask the student to create their own games with Lexi - The Emotion Language Builder. The idea here is that regular engagement with Lexi will lead to each child developing their emotional granularity, and ultimately build resilience.

# THEORY OF CONSTRUCTED EMOTIONS

- Emotions are not hard-wired in an ancient, "reptilian" part of the brain
- Emotions cannot be detected through facial expressions or any other physiological measurement
- There are no "universal" emotions across people, nations, or cultures
- There are no distinct parts of the brain dedicated to specific emotions (such as the amygdala for fear)
- Emotions are not "reactions" to external events

The Theory of Constructed Emotion takes its name from its central premise: that emotions are concepts that are constructed by the brain.

Consider your brain for a moment. It's sitting there in your skull, receiving all sorts of data from your eyes, ears, nose, skin, and mouth. This data is informative, but also ambiguous. It has to be interpreted.

source: Book; How Emotions Are Made - Lisa Feldman Barrett  
summary: [www.praxis.fortelabs.co/how-emotions-are-made](http://www.praxis.fortelabs.co/how-emotions-are-made)

# Constructionalist Model

## Technical explanation

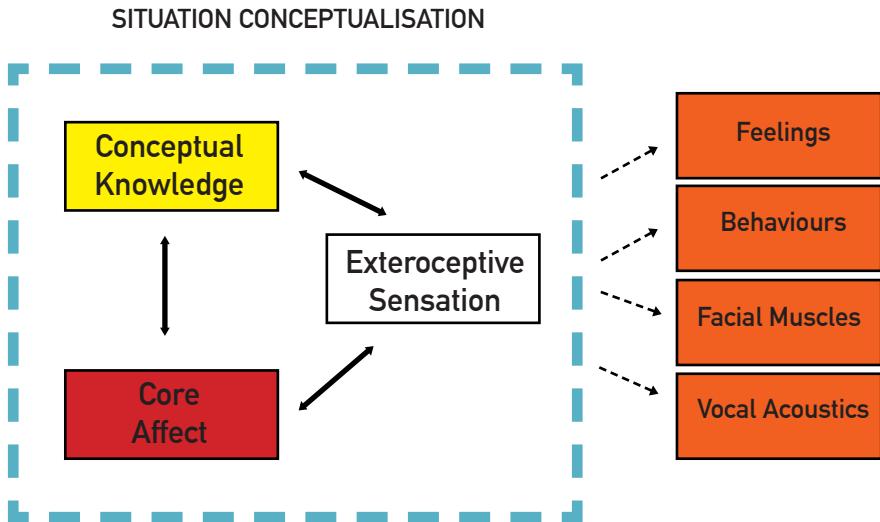
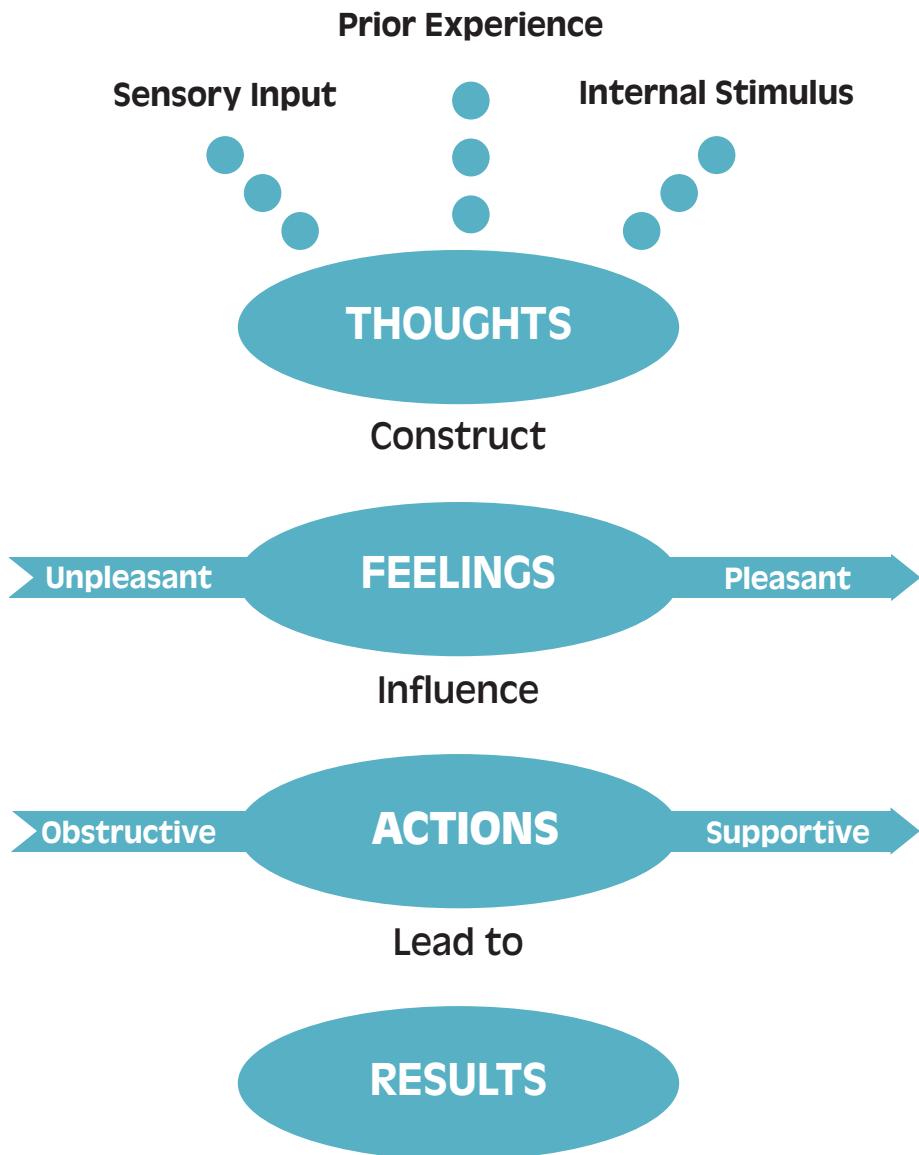


Figure adapted from Lindquist, Wager, Bliss-Moreau, Kober & Barrett (2012). Our constructionist model hypothesizes that information from the body (core affect; red), sensory input from the world (exteroceptive sensation; white) and representations of prior experiences that are supported in part by language (conceptual knowledge; yellow) mutually constrain one another to produce an emergent emotion that can be measured as a series of causal indicators (orange). In a given instance of emotion (e.g., anger at a spouse), the causal indicators will form one pattern, and in another instance (e.g., anger at an injustice), they will form a different pattern.

# Constructionalist Model Simplified



**Watch Lisa Feldman Barrett author of  
how emotions are made explain the  
theory on YouTube**

**1**

**Cartoon Science**

**3**

**Core Systems**

**5**

**Making Emotions**

**4**

**7**

**Degeneracy**

**6**

**Emotions In the Media**

**9**

**Implications**

**8**

**Simulations**

source:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6-7AZE0gs\\_rOesz-feJtEDVgNAXSmdQ6](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6-7AZE0gs_rOesz-feJtEDVgNAXSmdQ6)



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