

MOVIE REVIEW



INSIDE OUT 2

Whether you are a child, adolescent or adult, *Inside Out 2* offers another great look into explaining our emotions. Regardless of your age, you can relate to the new characters of Anxiety, Embarrassment, Envy, Ennui (boredom), and even Deep Dark Secret and Nostalgia in addition to the original characters of Joy, Sadness, Fear, Disgust, and Anger. There are several messages built into this animated movie including the fact that we all have these emotions in us. They never go away. This is reflected not only in the main character, Riley, but also in her parents and how they prepared for having a teenager. Even though we all have those emotions, we have the CHOICE to decide the role that our emotions play in our lives. The film explores panic attacks and the use of deep breathing to help us learn to control those emotions when they get out hand. It also reflects the need for balance to maintain a healthy mental state.

Another message is the topic of our belief system. During the movie, Joy wants to only keep the “happy” memories of Riley and get rid of her memories where things did not go as well. However, this is not practical.

Often who we become, and our belief / value system comes from the mistakes or bad memories we have. We learn from our mistakes and things that happen to us. If all we ever had were happy memories, would we really grow and have a belief system? Part of Riley's belief system includes a childhood cartoon she watched named Bloofy and Pouchy as well as an anime character from one of her video games named Lance Slashblade whom Riley has a crush on. Even those memories that do not seem as important help to create who we are and the way that we navigate the world around us.

The movie focuses on the changes of puberty by showing the "emotions control panel" having a big red button labeled "puberty". Some of the changes Riley experiences include mood swings, trying to fit in with different groups of friends, being the new kid, choosing between our selfish wants and thinking of how it affects others as well as discovering who we are. Ennui is one of the newest characters that reflects the "typical" attitude of many adolescents where they are really not interested in anything.

Inside Out 2 delves into the more complicated emotions that we all experience and having the opportunity to externalize those emotions can help one to feel they have more ability to control them. Anxiety can be scary and overwhelming but by educating your children about what anxiety is, we can put a face to the emotion and then learn to balance that emotion with our other emotions. We can never truly eliminate our emotions but we can learn to keep them in balance so they can co-exist together. Also helping kids to understand how choices form our belief system can help them to make wiser choices for who they really want to be in this world. When we can model balanced mental health for our children, we give them one of life's most valuable gifts.

**By: Amy Maturen,
LMFT, LMHC**

