

“Inside Out” starring Amy Poehler, Bill Hader, Lewis Black, 2015, PG, 95 minutes

Major themes:

- Emotions
- Joy
- Fear
- Anger
- Disgust
- Sadness
- Loss
- Sacrifice
- Growth
- Personality
- Memories

Major characters:

- Riley
- Mom
- Dad
- Joy
- Sadness
- Fear
- Anger
- Disgust
- Bing Bong
- Jangles

Movie Nights for Thinkers and Seekers

Background info:

- This film's taglines are: *"Meet the little voices inside your head"* and *"A Major Emotion Picture."*
- It took 5 years to make this film.
- The writers considered up to 27 different emotions, but settled on five (Joy, Sadness, Disgust, Fear, and Anger) to make it less complicated. Some of the major emotions that ended up being cut included Surprise, Pride, and Trust. According to director Pete Docter, each emotion is based on a shape: a star for Joy, a teardrop for Sadness, a fire brick for Anger, a raw nerve for Fear, and broccoli for Disgust.
- PIXAR invited American psychologist Paul Ekman to instruct the crew on emotions. He is a professor emeritus at UCSF and a pioneer in the study of emotions and their relation to facial expressions. He created an *"atlas of emotions"* with more than 10,000 facial expressions and has gained a reputation as the best human lie detector in the world.
- Depending on the country of release, Riley's father daydreams about either hockey or football (soccer).
- In Riley's classroom, a map at the back of the room has pins plotted at different places all over the world. They are references to where all the Pixar movies are set.
- In the middle of the control console, the top three buttons form Mickey Mouse, otherwise known as a hidden Mickey.
- A113 is an *"Easter egg"* (inside joke, hidden message / image, or secret feature) in media created by alumni of the California Institute of the Arts (room A113 is the classroom used by graphic design and character animation students). Riley's classroom is number A113; the train has a boxcar labeled with an A on the front and 113 on the back.

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Scriptures:

John 16:20-23 (The Message) – *“You’re going to be in deep mourning while the godless world throws a party. You’ll be sad, very sad, but your sadness will develop into gladness. When a woman gives birth, she has a hard time, there’s no getting around it. But when the baby is born, there is joy in the birth. This new life in the world wipes out memory of the pain. The sadness you have right now is similar to that pain, but the coming joy is also similar. When I see you again, you’ll be full of joy, and it will be a joy no one can rob from you.”*

Psalms 9:1-2 (The Message) – *“I’m thanking you, God, from a full heart, I’m writing the book on your wonders. I’m whistling, laughing, and jumping for joy; I’m singing your song, High God.”*

1 John 4:16-18 (NLT) – *“We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world. Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love.”*

James 1:19-21 (The Message) – *“Post this at all the intersections, dear friends: Lead with your ears, follow up with your tongue, and let anger straggle along in the rear. God’s righteousness doesn’t grow from human anger. So throw all spoiled virtue and cancerous evil in the garbage. In simple humility, let our gardener, God, landscape you with the Word, making a salvation-garden of your life.”*

Proverbs 15:9 (The Message) – *“A life frittered away disgusts God; he loves those who run straight for the finish line.”*

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Discussion points:

1. This film shows some of what can happen when we make happiness an explicit goal in life. What goal(s) would be more emotionally healthy?
2. Describe your true feelings about Hawaiian pizza and Broccoli pizza.
3. What are some “core memories” that you can identify in your life?
4. What are some healthy ways to express emotions?
5. What are some of the dangers of stuffing emotions?
6. What would it look like for you to embrace sadness today?
7. Which “emotion” character do you most relate to in this film?
8. Which emotion do you have the most trouble accepting in your own life?
9. What’s the best lesson you learned from this film?