



FAMILIES

TACKLING TOUGH TIMES

TOGETHER



FAMILY

YOUNG ADULTS

We Tell Each Other the Truth! Clear, Consistent Messages

There are any number of reasons we might have been holding in our emotions during the pandemic – wanting to keep the peace, trying to be positive, or maybe flat out denial. But research has shown time and again that there are many reasons we should not hold them in but rather how helpful it is that we share and name our emotions. Based on research, we recommend “unlatching the cage and letting those emotional birds fly free”! (Beck, 2015). But how do we do that effectively, especially in times such as these when our own and others’ emotions might be running especially high?

Sharing Emotions

- **Start a conversation about your feelings with others.** Sometimes you focus so much on your actions that you overlook your feelings, so set aside time to intentionally talk about your feelings.
- **Use “I” statements.** When you’re talking to others about your feelings, use “I” statements such as “I feel...” Using these types of statements makes it easier for others to hear you.
- **Label your emotions.** Research has shown that naming your emotions, particularly fears or anxieties, can be useful for reducing the physiological response that those stressors can cause you.
- **Be just as good a listener as you are a talker.** Feeling truly heard by another person can be so rewarding, so make sure you’re also making time and space to listen to how others are feeling as well.

Video Resources

- [The Gift and Power of Emotional Courage](#)
- [The Benefits of Expressing Your Emotions \(Constructively\)](#)

Internal Actions

Focus on your positive emotions as well as your negative ones. Sometimes it’s easier to pay attention to your negative feelings and overlook your positive ones, but positive feelings are equally important!

External Actions

Send those positive vibes out into the world! Participate in and forward along some of the social media challenges, memes or videos that capture the humor of things that are going on.

To learn more about the science behind sharing and labeling emotions, you may wish to read the below research:

- [Feelings into words: contributions of language to exposure therapy](#)
- [The costs of repression: a meta-analysis on the relation between repressive coping and somatic diseases](#)