

COMMUNICATING EMOTIONS

Men may find it difficult to be vulnerable because of society's perceptions of what it means to be masculine. On one hand, society deems it "ok" for men to express *anger* or *happiness*, but on the other hand "not ok" to express other emotions such as sadness or loneliness. In fact, vulnerability is something many men are taught means that they are "weak" and "that's not what men are supposed to do."

Video – Brene Brown: Vulnerability, not oversharing

"Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they're never weakness."

- Brene Brown, *Daring Greatly*

"A man is at his strongest when he is willing to accept his vulnerability."

— Paulo Coelho

What do these quotes and/or video mean to you?

Anger Iceberg

The **Anger Iceberg** represents the idea that, although anger is what is showing up on the top of the water, other emotions may be hidden beneath the surface. These feelings—such as sadness, fear, or guilt—might cause a person to feel vulnerable. By exploring what's beneath the surface, you can gain insight into their anger and develop coping strategies.

Think of a situation in which you were recently angry. What was actually "beneath the surface?"

STEPS TO COMMUNICATING EMOTIONS

Find your Support

Use your best judgment in deciding who you would want to be vulnerable with. Not everyone is appropriate for you to openly share with. However, there may be people or situations in your life already that may be safe places for you to be more emotionally open.

Who are some of the people or what are situations you would feel would support you when you are vulnerable?

What are ways I can “practice” vulnerability in certain situations?

Developing Emotional Vocabulary/I statements

The Emotion Wheel was created by Robert Plutchik to help patients identify core emotions. He theorized that for every core emotion, there was a polar opposite (for example fear and anger.)

The use of “I” Statements in combination with the feelings wheel can be a good starting place in communicating emotions. “I” statement helps you to take responsibility for your feelings while describe the reason for the feeling.

An “I” Statement looks like this:

“I feel emotion word when explanation.”

Examples:

“I feel hurt when you go so long without calling. I’m afraid you don’t care.

“I feel appreciated when you help me with a task to help make my day easier.”

What is an “I” statement you can use to describe a recent situation in your life? How would you say it out loud if you had to say it to another person?

