



ONE MINUTE SERIES #5

Dear First Responder, Medical & Mental Health Professional,

Among the most important skills a person can develop for self-care is **the ability to identify what emotion they feel** when things are tough.

The ability to **skillfully name emotions** is sometimes called "Affect Labeling".

Our **emotions serve an important purpose**, being like indicator lights to tell us when action needs to be taken. They encourage us to be heard, seek protection or assurance, find help, and other adaptive tasks that help us survive and thrive.

Ignoring our emotions can have adverse consequences. By not attending to our emotions we miss out on important information that is needed to adapt function properly in the various areas of health, whether in the social, emotional, physical, or other life domains.

The first step to take in **getting in touch with our emotions** is to try to pause and look inwards to notice our feelings as we are having them.

Next, try to **name the emotion** you are feeling. What word best describes the emotion you are feeling right now? Sadness? Fear? Loneliness? Loss?

Think of the variety of **words that can be used to describe challenging emotions.** For example, a person can feel annoyed or angry or enraged. Expanding our **emotional vocabulary** can be invaluable, allowing us to more accurately express what emotions we are feeling when things are tough.

By taking a moment to **stop & notice our feelings** and **naming them** as accurately as possible we will be closer than ever to knowing what actions take to help ourselves **heal and succeed.**

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