

# Quick Connect: Understanding Your Emotions (5 minutes)

## Learning Objectives:

- Learn and internalize five basic feelings
- Learn and practice emotional regulation strategies. Awareness leads to regulation.

### Part 1: Opening Connection (1 minute)

Supportive Opening: "Hey, I know things are really tough right now. Let's take just a few minutes to figure out some ways to help you handle these intense feelings. Everything you're feeling is valid – we just want to make sure you have tools to manage them."

### Part 2: Coping Tools (2 minutes)

Share this simple framework: "When emotions feel too big, remember this quick tool. It's called 'PAC':

P – Pause & Breathe

A – Acknowledge Feelings and Accept them

C – Choose a Healthy Coping Mechanism

Let's practice the "pause" breathing part together right now:

- Breathe through your nose while I count to 4
- Hold for 4 counts
- Exhale from your mouth while I count to 4
- Hold for 4 counts

### Part 3: Quick Emotional Check-In (1 minute)

Gentle prompt:

- "If you had to name a feeling today, what would it be?" [Listen and validate their response]
- "That feeling lives in your body somewhere – maybe your chest, stomach, or shoulders. Where do you feel it most?" [Let them identify the physical sensation]

'The Five Basic Feelings,' happiness, sadness, fear, anger, and shame. Each of these feelings serves a purpose and tells us something important. Everyone feels them, and most of the time, everything we're feeling can be described by one of these five basic feelings. It is a normal human response to feel these, all humans feel these feelings, they aren't 'good' or 'bad'. When you have a feeling, it doesn't mean you are the feeling forever (I feel sad vs. I am a sad person). Feelings exist in our bodies. Our body usually knows what we're feeling even before our minds do. Feelings can be confusing too, right? Sometimes I'm feeling so many things at once, it's hard for me to figure out what I'm feeling and when. Sometimes I have a hard time telling someone else exactly how I'm feeling. Feelings are messages of information, they tell you something. Labeling a feeling can often decrease how intense the feeling is. Emotions are how you express those feelings, the outward communication of the feeling.

### Part 4: Closing Support (1 minute)

Create a Quick Safety Plan: "Before we finish, let's do two quick things:

1. What's one thing you can do in the next hour to stay calm? [Help them identify something simple and achievable]
2. Let's put these numbers in your phone right now:
  - Someone you trust: [Help them identify and save the contact]
  - Crisis hotline: 988

Remember: You don't have to handle big feelings alone. Reaching out is brave."

**Facilitator Notes:**

- Check back within 24 hours if possible
- If they're open to it, schedule a longer session to build more skills
- Ensure they have the crisis numbers saved before they leave