



# **Becoming Your Loved One's Emotion Coach**

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# A little who I am

- A clinical therapist in North Vancouver
- Over 10 years of experience with children, teens and family in clinical, hospital and treatment facility settings
- Fell in love with EFFT almost 4 years ago and got my advanced certification
- Actively practice EFFT, EMDR, IFS, and client centered therapy

*Remember, love is the compass that guides you through the challenges of complex care*

# Caregiver Burnout

**A state of complete emotional, physical and psychological exhaustion**

- Easily irritated
- Exhausted all the time
- Depressed, anxious
- Avoiding people
- Loss of interest in life and activities
- Not an exhaustive list-other symptoms are present



## Please...Not another self care talk

My take on self care:

It's not about making the situation better, it is about staying above water.

Self care won't necessarily make you feel better, but it will help you stay baseline and increase your resiliency

# Biggest Barriers to Self Care

- Time
- Energy Reserves
- Demand
- Medical Emergencies
- Finances
- Emotional Blocks

# NOW WHAT?!

With all these barriers in place, how can you expect me to take care of myself???

Oxygen Mask

Glimmers

Mindfulness

Expectations

Long Term  
Management and  
Planning

# Introduction to Emotion Coaching

*The skill you didn't know you needed*

# Those BIG Feelings

The top emotions that caregivers can experience:

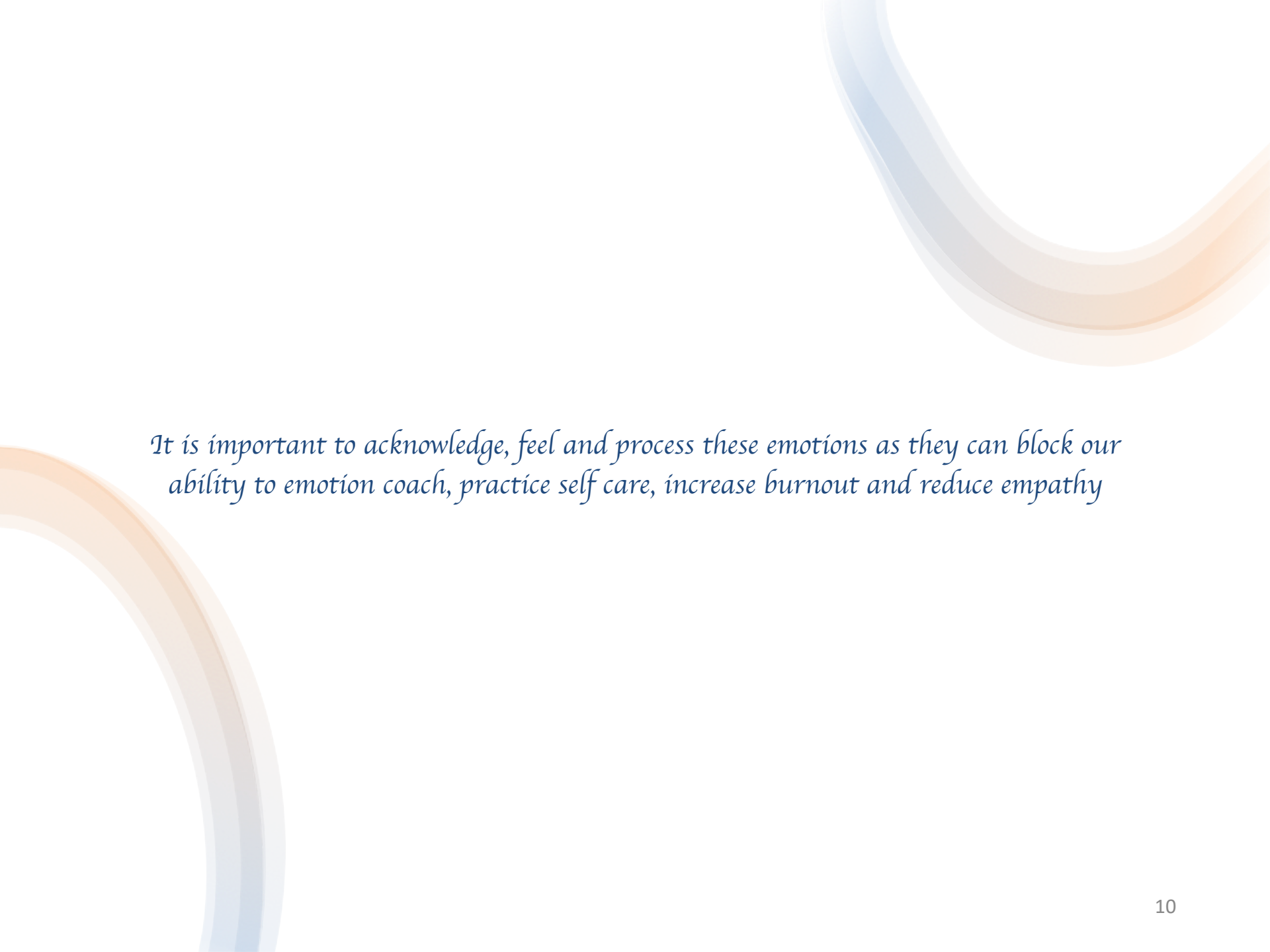
**Grief:** the anticipated and/or current loss of someone (physically, emotionally, psychologically)

**Shame:** the belief that you are not good

**Resentment:** anger at the perceived idea of being wronged

**Anger:** At yourself, at your loved one, at the situation

**Sadness:** The weight of the situation, for yourself, for them, for everyone

The slide features decorative curved lines in blue and orange. One set of lines is in the top right corner, curving downwards. Another set is in the bottom left corner, curving upwards. The text is centered in the middle of the slide.

*It is important to acknowledge, feel and process these emotions as they can block our ability to emotion coach, practice self care, increase burnout and reduce empathy*



# 1 Degree Effect

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# Core Skill - Emotion Coaching (Advanced Communication Skills)

- Emotion/resistance is like an elevator and the door to reason, logic & problem-solving is on the ground floor. Emotion coaching can be a way down to the ground floor (or closer to it).
- It is considered an evidence-based strategy to promote cooperation, engagement and most importantly, flexibility.

*“Not doing it didn’t lead you here, but doing it can get you out”*

# Key Outcomes

## In the moment:

- Increase in cooperation
- Avoidance of escalation
- De-escalation
- Regulation

## Over time:

- Internalization of self-regulation capacities

# Evolving Together with EC: Validate & Support

## Step 1- Validate.

Make an effort to convey understanding of their experience & “show your effort” with 3 because statements

## Step 2 – Support.

Provide emotional support

Provide practical support

# What can you validate/ support?

- Emotions & Emotional States
  - Sad, mad, shame, loneliness, etc
- Attitudes
  - There's no point; This is stupid
- Urges
  - I want to quit /not go to appointments/leave
- Behaviours
  - Disruptive behaviors / aggression
- Silence




First: What's your socially conditioned impulse?

- I'm worried.
- I'm mad.
- I can't do this.
- I don't want to do this.

# Know your go-to: I don't want to...

- Reassuring
- Problem-solving
- Rationalization (using logic)
- Distracting
- Asking questions
- Cheerleading
- Focusing on the bright side
- Others?




Next, recognize  
another socially  
conditioned  
impulse...

I can understand/imagine that you  
might feel/think/want \_\_\_\_\_,

PAUSE!

Which 3-letter word,  
are you now tempted to utter?

**BUT**




**Core Skill:  
Moving From  
BUT to  
BECAUSE...**

“I can understand/imagine that you might feel/think/want \_\_\_\_\_, but...”

**is transformed into:**

“I can understand/imagine that you might feel/think/want (\_\_\_\_\_) because \_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_”



## Other sample sentence starters...

- I could understand you...
- I could imagine you...
- No wonder you...
- It would make sense that you...
- I could never understand what you are experiencing. When I try to put myself in your shoes, I can imagine that maybe you...

# Validation is NOT:

- Cheerleading
- Reassurance
- Problem Solving
- Agreeing with
- Condoning
- Logic Based Reasoning



A vertical image on the left side of the slide shows a hand holding a glowing, golden orb. The background is a soft, warm sunset or sunrise with a blurred horizon. The lighting is warm and golden, creating a sense of hope and positivity.

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## Maximizing impact of because-statements...

Guides to create optimal because statements:

- They are rooted in compassion, love and understanding.
- They are tentative in nature.
- When we use this formula AND it's rooted in compassion that the loved one can feel, the brain responds in a positive way.
- It won't fix everything, but it can create space between them to figure things out more easily.

# How does it work?

We want your loved one to feel seen  
and heard...

# Next - feel the difference validation makes: I don't want to...

Make your body into a resistant state & feel the difference in your body (increased or decreased tension)

A = typical approach vs ...

B = emotion-focused approach

## Step 1- Validate.

I can imagine why you might not want to because \_\_\_\_\_ because  
\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

# EC - Brief: General Skill

## **Step 1- Validate.**

A. Make an effort to convey understanding of their experience & “show your effort” with 3 because statements

I can understand/imagine that you might feel/think/want \_\_\_\_\_,

## **Step 2 – Support.**

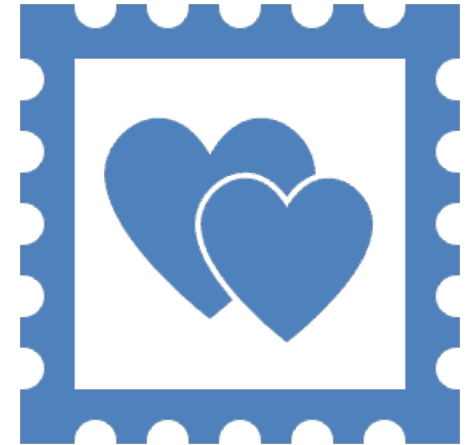
A. Emotional support sentences

B. Practical support suggestions

## Step 2: Support: Order of Operations!

- Emotional Support: comfort, communication of belief in the other, togetherness, reassurance, positive regard, etc
- Practical support: problem-solving, setting limits, helping them get back on task using practical techniques

Basically, it's what some would say or do as a first impulse as a culturally conditioned member of our Western society when rested, well-fed and in a positive head-space



# Step 2a. Emotional Support Sentences

**“I can understand/imagine that you might feel/think/want (\_\_\_\_\_) because...” x 3 +....**

\*Comfort (a hand, a hug  
or loving words)

Reassurance (“It’s going  
to be ok”)

Communication of  
positive regard (“I know  
you are doing the best  
you can right now”)

Communication of  
belief in the other (“I  
believe in you; “I  
believe you can do  
this”)

Communication of  
togetherness (“We’re in  
this together”; “I want  
the best for you too”)

Information (“I can  
share with you that...”)

# Step 2b. Practical Support Suggestions

**“I can understand/imagine that you might feel/think/want ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) because...” x 3 + emotional support sentences + ...**

“Why don’t I/we/  
you...”

Suggest a distraction  
activity (walk, movie,  
music, etc.)

Redirect to another  
thought or activity

Share skills (e.g.  
exposure to the  
anxiety-provoking  
stimulus in a gradual  
way and with support)

Offer solutions to solve  
the practical problem  
or take over to solve  
the problem

Set a limit

Other behavioral  
interventions

N/A (sometimes, once  
the other is validated  
and supported  
emotionally, no more is  
required)

Let's  
Practice!

# Let's Practice!


- “I am not going to see that doctor!”
- “I am not taking my meds!”
- “I can't live like this anymore”
- “Stop treating me like a child”
- “I'm so tired”

Logic, reassurance & redirection sans validation?



# Practical Tips

1. Validation is critical but it's a 2-step process – don't forget support (and in that order).
2. It is also a targeted “strategy” with heart.
3. Use tentative language grounded in sincerity (best guesses can be more effective than questions)
4. Work towards approaching non-verbals for maximum effectiveness (tone, volume, facial expression, body language)
5. Need to practice – or your brain will default to your go-to



Most  
importantly:  
What if you  
make mistakes?

- Breaks and repairs lead to a stronger bond (like muscle fibre and bones!)
- If you make a mistake, or misstep or miss an opportunity – simply go back. It's the opposite of avoidance and it can be very powerful:
  - Remember when you said \_\_\_\_ and I said this \_\_\_\_\_. I was thinking about it, and I wish I would have said....
- When emotion coaching:  
***it's not what happens, it's what happens NEXT!***



# Thank you!

Including on behalf of your loved ones...