

**Week 4**

# The World of Feelings and Male Nurturance



## **Program Objectives - Week 4**

- To accept feelings as a normal aspect of human experience and to reflect on our ability to experience and express a wide range of feelings.
- To identify guidelines for relating to other people's feelings in a nurturing way.
- To define the nurturing characteristics that are shared by both fathers/males and mothers/females.
- To identify the nurturing characteristics that exemplify the father/male style of parenting. ex-

# Relating to My Feelings

This worksheet shows different feelings. Each feeling is represented by two bars:

A. FEEL: *How easy or difficult is it to feel or experience that feeling?*

B. EXPRESS: *How easy or difficult is it to express or show that feeling to others?*

Put a mark in each bar to show how easy or difficult it is to feel and to express the following feelings:

	HAPPY	SAD	ANGRY
Easy			
Difficult			
	HAPPY	SAD	ANGRY

	AFRAID	EXCITED	JEALOUS
Easy			
Difficult			
	AFRAID	EXCITED	JEALOUS



# My Feelings

Which feelings are the easiest . . .

to feel? \_\_\_\_\_

to express? \_\_\_\_\_

Which feelings are the most difficult . . .

to feel? \_\_\_\_\_

to express? \_\_\_\_\_

What I remember being taught about feelings:

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Are men taught different values regarding feelings than women?

anger: \_\_\_\_\_

sadness: \_\_\_\_\_

fear: \_\_\_\_\_

(other feelings): \_\_\_\_\_

What do I want my son(s)/daughter(s) to learn about feelings?

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Feelings and their appropriate expressions connect me to people and experiences. They are part of the world of intimacy and nurturing.

## Relating to Others' Feelings

**D**o not deny or judge another person's feelings. Feelings come from deep within the self. To deny or criticize someone's feelings is to deny part of who they are.

**A**ccept people's feelings. (Remember, you can help another person express or act out their feelings differently, without denying their feelings.)

**I**dentify a feeling by its name. "Are you sad?"  
"You seem angry."

**H**elp another person express their feelings (in ways that do not hurt themselves or others). Let them talk.

**L**et people display their feelings (e.g., crying).  
Ask the other person what they need.

**B**eing with another person and their feelings is part of intimacy and nurturing fathering.



# The World of Male Nurturance

The following are characteristics of nurturing, and they are common to both males/fathers and females/mothers (add to the list):

- Expressing love \_\_\_\_\_
- Encouraging \_\_\_\_\_
- Nonsexual touching (hugging) \_\_\_\_\_
- Limit setting \_\_\_\_\_
- Listening \_\_\_\_\_

The following characteristics of nurturing tend to be more common to males/fathers (add to the list):

- Focusing on doing
- Emphasizing performance and competence
- Encouraging risk taking
- Focusing on boundaries/ rules/standards
- Fostering independence
- Focusing on justice/fairness
- Role modeling maleness/ fathering

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The following characteristics of nurturing tend to be more common to females/mothers (add to the list):

- Focusing on being
- Emphasizing acceptance and safety
- Protecting
- Being emotionally attuned
  
- Fostering relatedness
- Being forgiving
- Role modeling femaleness/ mothering

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All nurturing characteristics and practices are to be encouraged. And if we, as fathers, identify with some of the male nurturing qualities listed above . . . Honor and cultivate them!

**C**hildren love to please their father.

**Y**our positive attention and recognition are a great gift to your son(s) and daughter(s). They help to build self-esteem and self-confidence.

**G**ive them your undivided attention.

**P**raise effort and attempts.

**N**otice progress and improvement.

**L**et them know you believe in them.

### **AVOID:**

**P**erfectionism: "Anything less than perfect isn't good enough."  
(translates into "I'm not good enough")

**C**riticism: "You make too many mistakes."  
(translates into "I can't")



# Home Activities: Week 4

- 1.** Complete "My Feelings" (*page 30, A Nurturing Father's Journal*).
- 2.** Complete "Fathering Practices" (*page 34, A Nurturing Father's Journal*) for use in group next week.

## Thoughts for the week:

Feelings, and their appropriate expressions, connect me to people and experiences. They are part of the world of intimacy and nurturing.

Both men and women, boys and girls, have the capacity to feel and express the full range of feelings. It is part of being human.

**The child's lateness was not yet resistance to adult demands. He had merely forgotten time and would be reminded by the hands of his father who waited, so deep in his own story of terror and loss that even the angry beating of his heart was fear. When he saw the boy he joined the ends of his belt in his hand and rushed to join his child down the street before resistance on either part.**

– Jason Sommer  
from *Joining the Story*