

INTENSE EMOTIONS IN THE FACE OF BAD NEWS

Tips for Parents of Children with
Special Healthcare Needs



Life is not always going to be easy. It's a fact that the world will not always bend to fit the story that our brain tells us about the future.

Sometimes that means receiving bad news— like a new diagnosis for your child. It's normal when faced with this type of situation; a situation that does not fit the way your subconscious mind feels that things should be, to have a surge of intense negative emotion.

As humans, we only have two ways to handle our emotions: avoid experiencing them, or experience them.

Avoiding our emotions means repressing them in a variety of different ways— we react to them by acting out rather than actually feeling them or building defenses against our negative emotions with other activities that distract us or make us “feel better” like eating or checking social media (or overworking).

Our brains will do almost anything to avoid feeling negative emotions. Our subconscious mind wants to avoid pain of any sort— but in avoiding the experience of these negative emotions, we continue to carry them around long-term and we close ourselves off to self-compassion, sharpening self-judgment and increasing our pain.



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By becoming more associated — by sitting quietly and exploring how you feel about bad news — you can prevent this sort of pain.

Questions that can help you stay associated in the process include:

- What am I feeling emotionally right now?
- What am I feeling physically right now, & in what parts of my body?
- How do I want to react right now?
- Where is it located in my body?
- Is it partially outside of my body?
- What color is this feeling?
- Is it hard or soft?
- Is it moving? Swirling? Vibrating?
- Does it have a texture? Is it sharp? Rough? Smooth? Spiky?
- Why am I feeling this?
- What memories is it bringing up?
- What images is it evoking?

Many people have found that writing the answers to these questions down has been helpful in this process.



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By associating with these negative emotions, you can teach your subconscious mind that strong emotions, even strong negative emotions, are something that does not have to be avoided. And by experiencing negative emotions, positive emotions become even more positive and joyous in contrast.

It's a fact that the world will not always bend to fit the story that our brain tells us about the future. The good news is: we get to decide how we want to feel about that fact, and we get to experience those feelings and lean into being fully human.



Want more free resources? You can find other tips at www.stellakevansmd.com.

It's my mission to support parents of children with special healthcare needs through life coaching. Schedule a free consultation with me at <https://stellakevansmd.as.me/>, or



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