

For Individuals & Loved Ones

You want to understand your emotions better, communicate without shame, and show up in a more grounded way for yourself and the people you care about.

How to Talk About Your Feelings Without Feeling “Too Much”

A lot of people grew up hearing they were “too sensitive,” “too dramatic,” or “too emotional.” Talking about feelings can bring up shame, fear of burdening others, or a strong urge to downplay what you need.

Try this simple structure:

1. Name your internal state: “I’ve been feeling... (anxious / overwhelmed / shut down).”
2. Give just enough context: “It’s been building up because... (short reason).”
3. Name what you need right now: “Right now I’m needing... (to be heard / a hug / a bit of space / help with a plan).”

Sample phrases

- “I’m feeling really overwhelmed today, and I don’t totally know what I need yet—but I didn’t want to go quiet and pretend I’m fine.”
- “I’ve been anxious about a few things and it’s sitting heavy in my body. Would you be open to just listening for a few minutes while I talk it out?”
- “I’m worried I’m going to sound like ‘too much,’ but I care about our relationship and I want to be honest about how I’m feeling.”

How to Support Someone with Anxiety, Shutdown, or Emotional Overwhelm

You can’t fix someone else’s nervous system, but you can be a calming, respectful presence as they move through anxiety, shutdown, or overwhelm.

When they’re anxious or activated

- Focus on steady, calm tone more than the perfect words.
- Ask before offering advice: “Do you want ideas, or just someone to listen?”
- Try grounding together: notice five things in the room, or take a few slower breaths.

When they’re shut down or numb

- Don’t take the shutdown personally; it’s a nervous system response, not a verdict on you.
- Offer gentle options: “Would you like quiet company, a distraction, or space on your own?”
- Keep the door open: “I’m here when you’re ready. No pressure.”

Helpful phrases

- “This is a lot, and it makes sense that you feel overwhelmed. I’m here with you.”
- “You don’t have to figure everything out right now. Let’s just focus on the next small step.”
- “Would it help to talk it through, or should we just sit together for a bit?”

To go deeper, visit the [Helping Those Close to You](#) page for more tools, scripts, and printable supports.