

VALIDATE THE EMOTION IN YOUR TEEN

- A. Put yourself in their shoes and show understanding of their experience
- B. Accept/allow/validate emotions that are different from what you may have expected or that may be hard for you to understand
- C. Resist going to “the bright side” by using logic
- D. Move away from using BUT, instead use BECAUSE i.e., “I get how you would feel that way because...(not but)”
- E. Validation is not about explaining, advising, or justifying your behaviors/choices

VALIDATION SCRIPT

1) Make a statement of understanding your child’s feelings:

- “I can imagine why you might feel (state emotion)”
- “I get why you would feel (state emotion) because...(insert 2-3 reasons)”
- “I can see how that might make you feel (state emotion) because...(insert 2-3 reasons)”
- “It makes sense that you’re feeling this way because...(insert 2-3 reasons)”
- “I can only imagine how difficult this must be for you because...(insert 2-3 reasons)”
- “No wonder you’re feeling (state emotion) because...(insert 2-3 reasons)”
- “I can understand why you might feel this way because...(insert 2-3 reasons)”
- “I don't know what to say exactly but I want you to know that I'm here for you.”
- “I just want to let you know that I hear what you’re saying and I can imagine it’s really hard.”
- “I’m here for you and I believe in you.”

2) List 3 reasons why your child is feeling that way using “because”

“I can imagine why you might feel (state emotion)...

1. **BECAUSE**....(possible reason 1)...
2. **BECAUSE**...(possible reason 2) and...
3. **BECAUSE** (possible reason 3).”

VALIDATION SCRIPT

1. VALIDATE EMOTION - **“I can imagine why you might feel (state emotion)...**
2. POSSIBLE REASON 1 - **BECAUSE...**
3. POSSIBLE REASON 2 - **BECAUSE...**
4. POSSIBLE REASON 3 - **BECAUSE...**

EXAMPLES:

1) Statement to validate: **“I only got 57 on my last test!”**

- *“I can imagine why you might feel (disappointed)”*
- (possible reason 1) *“because your grades are important to you”*
- (possible reason 2) *“and because your trying to brig your history grade up”*
- (possible reason 3) *“and because you studied hard for the test”*

2) Statement to validate: **“You don’t get it!”**

- *“I can imagine why you might feel (misunderstood)”*
- (possible reason 1) *“because your trying to explain how your feeling and I’m not fully understanding what you mean”*
- (possible reason 2) *“and because I don’t really get what it is like to be in your shoes”*
- (possible reason 3) *“and because I keep asking questions about the situation”*

3) Statement to validate: **“You love my brother more than me! You always have.”**

- *“I can imagine why you might feel (left out) ”*
- (possible reason 1) *“because your brother is younger than you and needs more attention”*
- (possible reason 2) *“and because I spend a lot of time with your brother going to baseball”*
- (possible reason 3) *“and because it seems there are more rules and boundaries placed on you since you started driving”*

4) Statement to validate: **“Your only saying that because you're my parent.”**

- *“I can imagine why you might feel (distrustful)”*
- (possible reason 1) *“because I’m your parent and I have to say nice things about you”*
- (possible reason 2) *“and because it feels like I am lying, so your feelings aren’t hurt”*
- (possible reason 3) *“and because it can seem inauthentic coming form me”*

5) Statement to validate: **“I have no friends! No one at school likes me.”**

- *“I can imagine why you might feel (lonely)”*
- (possible reason 1) *“because your friends don’t always include you in everything they do”*
- (possible reason 2) *“and because your trying really hard to be a good friend”*
- (possible reason 3) *“and because making or maintaining friends can be difficult”*