



FAN as a Grounding Tool in Uncertain Times

Resource #3: Feelings

- **Everyone is in feelings. We are experiencing our own while holding others.**
 - Feelings are not voluntary! You may be surprised at how quickly you can go from calm, optimistic, and creative to upset and impatient or sad and discouraged.
 - Our bodies can't sustain strong affect for long. Emotions come in waves. With upset staff during a phone supervision, think, "I can ride this wave. Just keep listening. It will lessen." When your own feelings arise, "I'm so mad right now," take a deep breath with a long exhale, "This won't last forever." And another deep breath and another because this is not easy.
 - FAN language can help you ask for what you need. "I need more time to just feel this way" or "It would help me now if we dive into work."
- **While we may need relief from feelings, listening with acceptance is still the place to start.**
 - You may have "Feelings Fatigue" and think: "I can't go there. It won't help. We'll all sink." Sometimes saying "*I hear you*" is enough.
 - "If it's mentionable, it's manageable" teaches Mr. Rogers. Some days it *is* a terrible day in the neighborhood and it's ok to say it.
 - Everyone is navigating personal challenges. We are in a "for you" world. Each person experiences the pandemic differently, and each day has new challenges. Asking "What's it been like *for you*?" is a compassionate way to connect.
- **It's ok to bridge from feelings and it can help.**
 - Timing is key. It's tempting to move away from feelings too quickly given the overload you may feel. But if it seems helpful, offer a bridge and watch the response: "I hear how hard this is. How can I be helpful to you now?"
- **Positive feelings may be our best first aid. Share humor wherever you find it!**
 - They said wearing a mask and gloves would be enough but when I went to the grocery store, everyone had clothes on! It helps to have someone to blame so come up with a fictitious character and blame him/her/ it for just everything. And remember the introverts are waiting for everyone to leave the house....
- **Embrace self-compassion by avoiding the Second Arrow.**
 - The first arrow comes from pain or suffering sent from the outside. In Buddhist teachings, this sets off a cascade of second arrows, the ones we shoot at our self: "How could I have done that." "Now they know the real me." "If only I were..."
 - Welcome your feelings as they are and through kind thoughts and caring self-talk avoid the Second Arrow: "I'm ok. I can feel this. All is well and getting better."

We are experiencing a collective trauma.

We aren't supposed to be our best. We can be kind to ourselves.