

# TOGETHER IN WELLNESS: A GUIDE FOR LEADERS AND WELLNESS CHAMPIONS

## ALL THE FEELS

### HOW MANY EMOTIONS DO WE HAVE?

The research varies, but some experts suggest we have seven basic emotions while others say there may be as many as up to 34 distinct emotional states. Quite often, it seems like our feelings can be summed up as happy, angry or sad. At other times, it's harder to imagine there's a limit to the emotional subtleties and moods that define different circumstances and parts of our lives.

Some emotions and moods, like happy, inspired or awesome, make those around us feel comfortable and are viewed as positive.

While other feelings, such as cranky, irritated or sad, can make people feel uncomfortable and so we often avoid talking about them. Then there are the fallbacks, the polite responses such as okay, fine or good—they don't reveal much so when we hear them, it's easy to acknowledge them and move on.

We all have a variety of emotions and it's not uncommon to experience a range of feelings during the day. What's important is that we acknowledge each feeling so we can better understand ourselves and others.

In the workplace, the ability to read emotion on someone's face is as important as listening to their words and how they express them. But, how do you know if you're understanding the non-verbal message they are conveying through their facial expressions? One way to help reduce misinterpretation is by taking your team through an adaptation of the [Saving Face](#) exercise.

### TEAM ACTIVITY

#### How to prepare:

Encourage your team to review [All the Feels](#) in our Together in Wellness Planner. Pay special attention to the tips in 'All Emotions Have a Place':

A way to better understand your emotions and how you express them is by observing people's facial expressions. Here are a few ideas to reflect on when having a conversation with someone:

**Eyebrows:** Eyebrows not only help frame the face, they also frame your emotion. Are they up in surprise, furrowed in sadness or frustration, or are they relaxed in contentment? A single, raised eyebrow might signify that someone is feeling perplexed.

**Eyes:** The eyes tell no lies. Are the person's eyes 'smiling'? How quickly or slowly are they blinking? Are they tearing up? Does the emotional story of the eyes align with the rest of the facial expression?

**Mouth:** A lot can be said about the mouth. A big smile shows happiness or joy and pursed lips could show anger or frustration. And one side raised could show skepticism.

While you're observing other people's facial expressions consider the emotional message you are sending and if that's the message you want to convey.

Don't wear your  
emotions on your  
sleeve, wear them  
on your face!

### How to include your team:

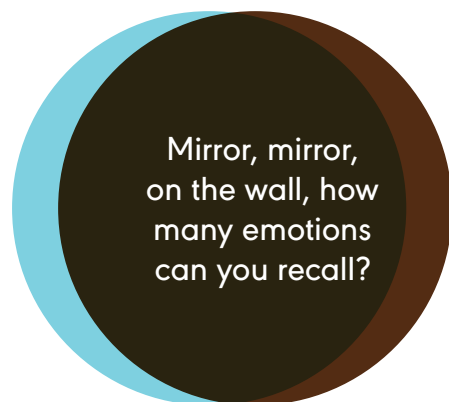
1. Share copies of [All the Feels](#). This can be done prior to or during the meeting.
2. Print out enough emotion cards on the following page for everyone in attendance.
3. Ask people to split into groups of three, four or five.
4. Distribute the cards asking everyone not to share what is on their card.
5. Next, ask people to take turns displaying their assigned emotion on their face while the other members of their group try to guess. Allow a couple of minutes per person.



### How to debrief:

Once everyone has a chance to display their emotion, ask them to share how they knew what emotion was being demonstrated by their colleagues.

Next, ask the team how these different emotions affected their mood and if their mood changed through the exercise.



### How to continue:

Send everyone off with the [Saving Face activity](#) to complete over the next couple of weeks. Ask everyone to try and do at least one self-check in. Bonus points if they do a check in with someone else to see if they are indeed a good emotional facial transmitter!



Visit [TheWellnessSandbox.ca](http://TheWellnessSandbox.ca) to discover more great ideas and connect with wellness champions from across Alberta.

**ANGRY**

**SAD**

**MAD**

**HAPPY**

**EXCITED**

**SURPRISED**

**DISGUSTED**

**ANXIOUS**

**SCARED**

**FRUSTRATED**

**SATISFIED**

**ASHAMED**

**TIRED**

**CONFUSED**

**BORED**

**DISTRACTED**

**HORRIFIED**

**FLAT**

**GRATEFUL**

**UNCOMFORTABLE**

**DETACHED**

**DISAPPOINTED**

**CURIOUS**

**CALM**