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## **Be Emotional!**

In a world of constant stimulation, increased awareness of global issues, and a struggling sense of individualism, the complexity of the human mind is on full display like never before. However, just as betrayal is born out of trust, just as heartbreak only springs from love, with the complexity of the human mind comes some of the most difficult obstacles to overcome.

Every day, I see ads for mental health, campaigns for mental health week, and a neverending list of medical health professionals ready to help. At school, the library, classrooms, and website are plastered with the school counseling department. In the new normal for a student, mental health professionals are accessible with the click of a button, yet the overwhelming effects of mental health have seen little regression. For a student in this era, the ordeals of mental health have little to do with accessibility and much to do with will.

The problem is instilled within our society. The use of these services fundamentally present, ironically, a huge contributing factor to their little use. Today, most sources encouraging seeking help use the example of those from lives torn apart by unforeseen tragedies or those experiencing clinically classified mental illness. For most, this is unrelatable.

To truly reach all those who need help, it is vital to create a culture in which it's encouraged to reach out for help because of seemingly small things. Even if you're just finding it hard to get motivated, haven't been feeling yourself, or had an argument with a friend, it needs to be known that you deserve to and should seek help.

Everyone needs and deserves help. Contrary to popular belief, it takes a stronger will to accept rather than deny this. No matter how strong, mature or masculine one is, it is vital to realize the respect involved in openly needing help. In one of the roughest moments of my life, with my shirt sticking to my back from cold sweat, I watched my dad cry. He was, and still is, a beacon of traditional chinese masculinity, responsibility, and self-respect to me. Experiencing this degree of emotion from my role model was a

learning experience that many are not lucky enough to have. It made me respect and relate to him more. Most importantly, it showed me that emotions can break even the strongest of people, and that this isn't a cause for shame.

For adults, it is important that you demonstrate how to healthily express emotion. This ensures that the youth don't "express emotion" via harm or acting irrationally. We need to learn to express our emotions by talking with a professional, discussing them with our whānau, or even just letting them out in tears. Adults can openly use services like lifeline (0800 543 354) in front of their children to demonstrate how easy and normal it is to use these services.

For the youth, we must unite to overcome the obstacles of our own emotions. We may be the first generation to master their emotions, and the only way we do that is by confronting them healthily, not bottling them up and accidentally releasing them negatively. Like offering a mate a bandaid for a cut and being comfortable with them doing the same for you, it should not be seen as weak or unordinary to ask for help.

The beauty of humanity comes from our complex minds. As a consequence, we are subject to our own irrational emotions. Ironically, to overcome these ordeals, the best thing to do is to be emotional!