

and teach courses on the topic. Although their speech may be extremely disfluent, they are often selected for these professional roles over fluent speakers. These individuals take the opportunity to honor and teach their students and clients how to openly acknowledge familiar painful emotions and struggles surrounding their stuttering.

ACCEPTING THE FULL RANGE OF EMOTIONS

Ben-Shahar (2010) says that all emotions flow through the same emotional pipeline. Without giving ourselves permission to feel our uncomfortable, difficult, or negative emotions, we block the pathway for positive ones like love, gratitude, joy, and awe. Accepting our full range of emotions is how we achieve self-acceptance and self-love, crucial goals for our work. Until this is achieved, we will not be able to get down to the business of problem solving with our clients or ourselves.

Experiencing our emotions has healing properties. Yet most of us feel like there must be something wrong or defective within us when negative emotions occur. Our clients most likely feel similarly for their own reasons; nevertheless, when we avoid and suppress uncomfortable emotions, it gives these feelings more power (Ben-Shahar, 2010). In reality, our emotions or feelings are just feelings; they are neither good nor bad, they just *are* (Burns, 1999). We cannot change a feeling by snapping our fingers, whether the feeling is our own or someone else's. We can simply hear it, be with it, and try our best to understand it. At the same time, feeling our painful emotions does not imply we passively resign to them; it is about accepting them (Box 3-2).

Box 3-2

I (CSR) recall a story about my teenage son. His new kitten was dying, and he expressed great fear. I remember feeling somewhat confused about why he expressed fright rather than sadness. When I asked him why he felt scared, he replied, "I'm scared of how sad I'm going to feel when Nala dies." My son's profound admission went straight to my heart and taught me a great deal about accessing, processing, and verbalizing emotions. My son, in his reaction, also highlighted for me how much we, as adults, avoid talking about the unpleasant stuff. This experience became an inspiration for me as I trained and taught my students.

As we work with and learn to love and respect (at least to be okay with) all the parts of ourselves, we can extend that compassion and understanding outward to others. This is the love that the clinician shows the client, the unconditional acceptance of him with his full range of emotions—the good, the bad, and the ugly (Box 3-3).