

Boys Cut Too: The Feelings Permission Kit

5 pages for men who were told not to have feelings

The Wall You Built

Somewhere in childhood, you learned the rules: don't cry. Don't be soft. Don't need comfort. Don't be a 'burden.' So you built a wall – and it worked. It kept the feelings in and the world out.

But walls don't just keep things in. They keep you from being held. This kit isn't about tearing the wall down in a day. It's about opening a door in it – and giving yourself permission to step through, at your own pace.

8 Feelings You Were Told to Hide

- **Tears:** 'Real men don't cry' ? Your tears are a voice, not a weakness. Crying releases stress hormones – it's literally a body regulation system
- **Fear:** 'Man up' ? Being scared means you're aware of danger, not less of a man
- **Tenderness:** 'Boys don't hug like that' ? Gentleness with people you love is the whole point of being alive
- **Sadness:** 'Stop being so dramatic' ? Sadness is how your brain processes loss. It has a job to do
- **Need:** 'Don't be needy' ? Needing help is a human need, not a failing
- **Exhaustion:** 'You can sleep when you're dead' ? Rest is the baseline of being a person, not a reward
- **Play:** 'Act your age' ? Joy and play are not childish – they're how humans recharge
- **Love:** 'Don't be soft' ? Loving openly is the bravest thing a person can do. The men who taught you otherwise were scared

Script 1: To the Friend Who Jokes About 'Being a Girl'

"I know you're joking – and I'm going to say this anyway, because it mattered to me once: being told my feelings were 'girly' is why it took me years to say 'I'm struggling' out loud. I don't want to laugh about that anymore."

Script 2: To the Dad Who Taught You to Hide

"I know you did what you were taught. I'm not angry at you. I'm telling you I'm unlearning it – because the wall you built to protect me also kept me from being held. I'm opening a door in it. You're welcome to join me."

Script 3: To a Friend Who Actually Needs to Hear 'How Are You?'

"Hey – we don't do this enough. How are you, actually? Not the quick version. The real one. I've got time."

Script 4: To Yourself When the Wall Cracks

"It's okay that I'm feeling something. This doesn't make me weak. It makes me human – and the men who told me otherwise were just passing down a wound they never got to heal."

Script 5: The Permission Slip, Read Out Loud

"I am allowed to have feelings. I am allowed to show them. My softness was never a flaw – it was a part of me someone told me to bury. I am unburying it now, one honest moment at a time."

3 'Strength Is Softness' Cards

Keep one in your wallet, one on your desk, one on your phone's lock screen. They're reminders, not armor.

Strength Card 1

The old belief: Men don't need comfort

The truth: Every human needs comfort. Asking for it is the brave part

The move: "I'm having a rough one. Can we just sit together?" – that's strength

Strength Card 2

The old belief: Crying is for women

The truth: Crying is for humans. It's how the body releases what words can't hold

The move: Let the tear fall without judging it. That's a regulation, not a defeat

Strength Card 3

The old belief: Softness makes you weak

The truth: Softness is the reason love works. Hardness protects; softness connects

The move: Do one tender thing today – a hug without a joke, a compliment, a 'I love you' said plainly

These cards are not a cure. They're a door you can open when you're ready.

The 'I Need a Hug, Actually' Dialogue Tree

The hardest sentence a man can say is the softest one. Here's the path – every branch keeps you honest and intact.

You (internally): I need support. But the old voice says that's weakness.

- Say it directly ? +Brave

You: "I need a hug, actually. Can we just sit quietly for a minute?"

- They say yes ? +Held

You (after): You asked for comfort and you got it. That's not weakness – that's connection. +Held.

- Ask for presence first ? +Safe

You: "I don't need to talk. I just need you here for a bit. Can we watch something dumb together?"

- They stay ? +Quiet

You (after): You let someone be present with you without performing strength. That's a big step. +Quiet.

- Text it instead ? +Manageable

You (text): "Rough one. Don't need you to fix it – just knowing you're around helps."

- They reply with warmth ? +Seen

You (after): You reached out instead of disappearing. That's the bravest move in the book. +Seen.

There's no wrong branch. Every branch ends with you being a little more honest.

The Door in the Wall

You don't have to tear down the wall today. You just have to know the door exists – and that the feelings behind it were always human, never weakness. The men who wrote these essays are living proof: softness isn't the end of strength. It's the beginning of being whole. From The Unadulging Society · sfwagere.com