LAKESHORE COUNSELING

From Feeling *to Choice*

A feeling can arrive in an instant. What I do with it can take a little longer, and that space is where my choices live.

NOT MY CHOICE

1 A feeling shows up

I don't pick which feelings arrive, how strong they hit at first, or how long they stay. Other people's words and moods, and what's already happened, are outside my control too.

MY CHOICE

2 I notice and name it

Where do I feel it in my body? What would I call it? "I'm feeling hurt and a little embarrassed." Naming it helps me stand beside the feeling instead of inside it.

MY CHOICE

3 I pause

Before I respond, I give myself a moment: one slow breath, a count to ten, or "Let me think about that and get back to you."

MY CHOICE

4 I steady my body

A longer out-breath, a short walk, stretching, or a glass of water helps the wave settle so I can think clearly.

MY CHOICE

5 I choose my next step

I ask, "What do I want to happen here?" Then I decide: say how I feel, ask for what I need, reach out to someone, take a break, or let it go for now.

Every feeling is welcome. *Every action is a choice.*

✂ Cut out and keep in your wallet or phone case

My Pause Plan

NOTICE · PAUSE · STEADY · CHOOSE

The feeling isn't my choice. The next step is.

When a feeling hits

1. Name it: "I'm feeling ____."
2. Breathe in for 4, out for 6.
3. Ask: "What do I want to happen?"
4. Choose one next step.

In crisis? Call or text 988.

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