



Tyrome Launderville was one of the original Community Ambassadors with the DD Council and Iowa's UCEDD. The ambassadors share stories of their lived experience with moving out of facilities and into community homes. They participated in storytelling, leadership, and public speaking workshops and received ongoing support. They have been sharing their stories at conferences and with people living in facilities. Tyrome serves on the National Steering Committee for the Link Center. The goal of the committee is to provide input on how to improve the lives of people with I/DD and mental health. Tyrome wants people who may be experiencing similar life experiences as him to know that they should "never give up!"

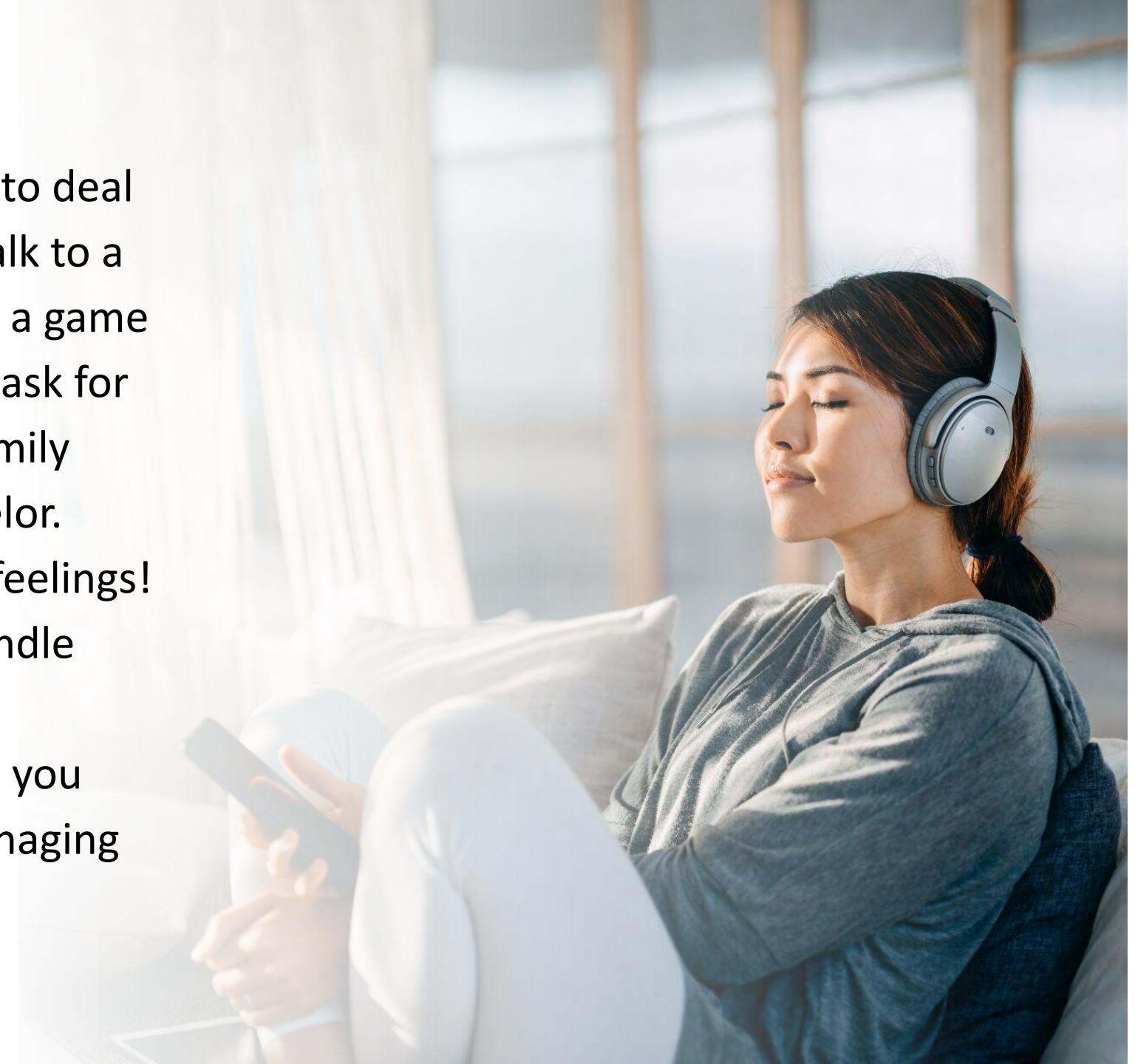
Everyone feels strong emotions like anger, sadness, or stress sometimes. Learning how to manage those feelings is called *emotional regulation*. It's like figuring out how to calm yourself down when things feel overwhelming. For example, if you're really upset, you might take deep breaths, count to ten, or walk away for a minute to cool off. These small steps help you think clearly instead of reacting in ways you might regret.



# Coping Means ...

*Coping* means finding healthy ways to deal with tough situations. Maybe you talk to a friend, draw, listen to music, or play a game to distract yourself. It's also okay to ask for help from others you trust, like a family member, support person, or counselor.

Remember: It's normal to have big feelings! What matters is learning how to handle them in ways that keep you—and others—safe and healthy. The more you practice, the better you'll get at managing tough moments!



## Ways to Cope and Take Care of Yourself

- **Notice your feelings** – pay attention to your emotions.
- **Avoid distractions** – try to stay focused on the present.
- **Use grounding techniques:**
  - Name 5 things you see
  - Name 4 things you can touch
  - Name 3 things you hear
  - Name 2 things you smell
  - Name 1 thing you taste
- **Hold something strong to the senses** – like an ice cube in your hand.
- **Practice deep breathing** – slow, steady breaths can help you calm down.
- **Express your feelings in a healthy way** – talk, write, or create.
- **Problem-solve** – ask yourself: *Will this still matter a year from now?*
- **Reach out for support** – talk with a friend, family member, or helper.
- **Take care of yourself** – follow healthy routines like rest, exercise, and good meals.