

OUR EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS AS WAYS OF BEING

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Our emotional reactions and feelings point us to our ways of being and ways we relate with our-selves, with others, and situations. They provide us with clues to **how** situations affect us and **how** we deal with situations. Attending to our emotions and feelings as aspects of our-selves which we bring to situations, could help us make connections between our-selves as contributors to our emotional responses to situations. Our emotional responses and feelings can be considered as reactions based on our values and beliefs; our worldviews; what's important to us; what we find worthwhile; our ethical and other standards; our hopes and dreams, expectations and fears, likes, dislikes, the ways we think about things, and so on. How we feel about things could tell us more about our-selves than about things. Knowing about our-selves as 'contributors' provides us with a time-binding start toward improving our relationships and anything we do. Awareness of how we are being can help us be otherwise.

Thinking of "feelings" not as noun but as verb and adverb—**something we are doing**, a particular way of responding—we can be more responsible: We can **strive todo-respond differently**. Thinking and feelings are closely related: The way we think about things determines how we feel—and our 'feelings' express our 'thinking'. We can start to understand our feelings by exploring their foundations (thinking-belief-values-expectations-etc.). When we change the way we think we change how we feel. We benefit when we critically-and-creatively modify, seek to improve, or abandon habitual emotional and other responses that do not work for us. To consciously change or improve our responses we have first to catch our-selves—notice, be aware that we are responding and how we are responding. We can expand our understanding of our-selves; and improve relationships with our-selves and with others through being aware of our habitual patterns of emotional behaviors. Below are terms representing some of our ways of being, relating and reacting. See how many you recognize. (Please keep in mind our emotions and feelings are often mixed and are not represented by our usual simple labels.)

We can feel: at peace, at home, abandoned, alone, **abused**, amused, **admiration, admired, agreeable, adored, adorable, appreciation**, appreciated, **affectionate**, awed, awful, apologetic, awkward, amazed, annoyed, angry, afraid, aggravated, ashamed, anxious, anticipation, attractive, astonished, alive, antagonistic, ambitious, adventurous...

beautiful, bewildered, bored, brave... calm, caring, cared for, compassionate, 'confused', certain, challenged, charitable, **charming**, critical, criticized, curious, creative, concerned, cocksure, cocky, confident, confrontational, contemptuous, clever, clueless, comfortable, contented, controlled, cynical, crushed, crotchety, cornered, confronted, courageous...

delighted, dependent, discomfort, discontented, disdain, defiant, disagreeable, dissatisfied, dishonored, devastated, determined, dislike, disliked, distressed, distrusted, distrustful, desired, dumbfounded...

desire, despair, disappointed, demotivated, discouraged, disinterested, disgusted, disgruntled, disrespected, disrespectful, disturbed, doubtful, doubted, depleted, depressed, distracted, desirous, dread, dumb, disregarded, disdain...

energized, entertained, embarrassed, empty, enthusiastic, envious, ecstatic, eager, enthralled, excited... failure, friendly, fatigued, frightened, fearful, feared, forgiving, forgiven, frustrated,

fantastic, furious, foolish... great, gorgeous, graceful, generous, glad, guilty, grief, gloomy... happy, **harried, harassed, haughty, horrible, happy, hateful, hated, helpless, helpful, hopeless, hopeful, hostile, honored, hesitant...** inspired, independent, in decisive, inferior, impatient, interested, irritable, irritated, indignant, insecure, ignored, important, insensitive, inflexible, inquisitive, insistent... **joyful, jubilant, justified, judgmental, judged...** keen, kindly...

loving, loved, liked, left out, lucky, lustful, lazy... motivated, **malicious, mischievous**, mistreated, misunderstood, meritorious, maligned, manipulated, **miserable, magnanimous, marginalized, meditative... nostalgic; nosey, naive... O ut oFs orts**, odd, old fashion, out of place... **productive, pleased, powerful, proud, protected, protective, pUZZleD, passionate, persistent...** quarellsome, quiet...

reverence, rage, remorse, relief, **rejected**, repugnance, regretful, resentful, resented, resolved, rested, rushed, restrained, reluctant, reflective, repudiated, rebellious, rejuvenated...

spirited, satisfied, so-so, safe, sad, silly, smug, **surprised**, skilled, successful, **sorrowful, startled**, suspicious, spaced-out, stressed out, sick, self-conscious, superior, sexy, sympathetic, seduced, screwed, stupid... thankful, threatened, terrified, terrible, tenderness, trusting, tired; used, uncomfortable, unfriendly, unimportant, unsuited, **useful, useless**, unconcerned, unwanted, unsure, unappreciated, **upset, unhappy... victimized, vacillate, validated...** weak., **wishful, wonder, wonderful, wronged, worried**; worthless, weary... zany... And in the spirit of “non-allness”, others you have experienced.

Changing Thinking Changes Feelings

I invite the reader for practice, to do some ‘mind-exercise’ and expand the structures of the following examples and others feelings and emotions. As many of our feelings and emotions involve judgments and assumptions—ways we usually non-consciously map or structure situations—We can expand our emotional intelligences in remembering that “We can, self-consciously, map, structure, and explore a ‘relationship’ territory in many more ways than our usual spontaneous—but reflexive reactions.”

On being disappointed: If things aren’t going well for us, it’s up to us to find ways to go well with things. As we often contribute to our disappointments, it suits us to keep in mind the part we play... Our non-conscious expectations and beliefs are hidden from others: Lacking this information makes it difficult for others to act as we expect—And we sometimes ask from others what they do not have to give... two examples of ways we contribute to our disappointments.

Disappointments and failures provide us with opportunities to be creative—Making up as many theories as we can as to what might have happened could be a valuable learning exercise. Feelings of failure and disappointments provide us with valuable information—many time-binding opportunities to learn about how things **do** work—and what we might think of not doing next time: Disappointments and failures provide us with opportunities to wise-up. Well managed failures can lead to successes.

On Judgments: We cannot help making judgments: Our ‘survival’ and everyday living depend on judgments we make. Better judgments usually lead to higher levels of satisfaction. It might help to remember that: Judgments we make (things we assume, believe, feel-think, say, ‘do’ about anyone or anything) tell us a great deal about our-selves—our values, standards, expectations, training, beliefs, etc. that we bring to situations. Our judgments also depend on how much information we have; how relevant, how up-to-date, how accurate—among other variables. We can practice catching our-selves judging and be amused at how often we are mistaken. Applying general semantics principles of “non-identity” and “non-allness”, we remind our-selves that we do not know all that’s going on—not even within our-selves.

General Semantics as “Advanced Thinking” incorporates psychological tools based on the approach and methods of science and mathematics that we can apply towards improvements in any area. For more on general semantics life-skills tools and principles read Alfred Korzybski’s “Science And Sanity”, and visit <miltondawes.com>