



Hurt doesn't go away simply because we don't acknowledge it. In fact, left unchecked it festers, grows, and leads to behaviors that are completely out of line with who we want to be... that can sabotage our relationships and careers."

- Brene Brown, PhD

EMOTIONAL HEALTH SKILLS

LEARN THE LANGUAGE OF EMOTIONS. BUILD EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

Emotions are direct links to the way you perceive yourself and the world around you; messengers that tell you how you're feeling, who and what is important to you, your passions, values, expectations, boundaries, desires, etc. They are as REAL as it gets in terms of providing you with genuine self-connection. Build your emotional health skills to realize the profound benefits of working with your emotions, instead of negating or attempting to avoid them.

SUMMARY OF WHAT EMOTIONS DO FOR YOU



Motivate for Action and Behaviors

- Get us to act ASAP! Ignite Fight/Flight response to protect us and save our lives!
- Strong emotions help us overcome obstacles and THREATS
- Emotions are also the driving force to SAVE, HEAL and OVERCOME



Connect Socially & Communicate with Others

- Emotions connect us, attract us, bond us, create LOVE and BELONGING
- Allow for feelings of love, care, joy, excitement in relationships!
- Emotions are communicated in every moment - facial expressions, body language, tone, instinctual cues, overall vibe, demeanor, etc.
- Lack of emotional awareness may be giving off mixed signals, a "fake," disingenuous, confusing vibe (the opposite of safety and attractiveness)



Connect Internally & Communicate with Ourselves

- Emotional reactions give us important information that need our attention
- Gut feelings are insight to something important about a situation
- Windows to our unique passions, needs, boundaries, and desires

WHAT YOU GAIN FROM EMOTIONAL HEALTH SKILLS

1. Realize what emotions do for you as an essential as part of your existence
2. Understand how emotional attunement is essential for healthy relationships
3. Decrease frequency of unwanted emotions and INCREASE desirable emotions
4. Connect with your sense or purpose, interests, desires and passions in life
5. Increase emotional resilience = ability to navigate extreme emotions so you don't make things worse

Emotions are ever-flowing in each moment. They don't 'go away' and come back now and then. They exist at all times, much like the weather. You may be so out-of-touch with your emotionality that you only notice them when they are overwhelming. Emotional intelligence is a skill you can improve upon with practice. Continue to be mindful and empower your emotions. Build your knowledge and ability to be emotionally attuned. The benefits are REAL.

BUILD STRONG EMOTIONAL HEALTH 'MUSCLES'



LIVE DISCONNECTED FROM EMOTIONS, LIKE A LIZARD SIMPLY SURVIVING

Being cut off from your emotions sets you up to living in a threat-versus-reward default (cookie-cutter) programming and is literally living more like a lizard, in survival mode, as reptiles do not have emotional capacity like mammals do.

OR



LIVE CONNECTED TO EMOTIONS THRIVING AS A HUMAN-BEING

Build emotional health skills and awareness of your emotions. Regain access to the infinite array of complex feelings we humans ingeniously generate in each moment. Understand the language of emotions, and realize emotional attunement, more connected relationships, and overall balance.

HOW YOUR EMOTIONS WORK EMOTIONS ARE 'ENERGY IN MOTION' AND EMOTIONS ARE INFORMATION

Emotions can be triggered automatically from **IMMEDIATE REAL THREATS**.

Example: slamming on breaks when cut-off in traffic. Emotions can drive an automatic reaction in 100 milliseconds.

Situation --> Emotion --> Act BASED ON AUTOMATIC REACTIVITY

Emotions can be set off by **THOUGHTS and INTERPRETATION** of events (not by actuality).

Example, jealousy due to believing spouse is flirting with someone even though they are just talking.

Situation --> Thoughts/Beliefs/Inner Dialogue --> Emotion

Emotions have an impact on our thoughts and events, and **DRIVE URGES AND ACTIONS**

Example, jealousy triggered anger and beliefs of not being attractive enough, so you yell at spouse.

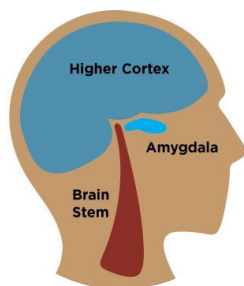
Emotion --> Thoughts/Beliefs/Inner Dialogue --> Act (this may not be ideal and can result in another Situation)

Emotions provide **INFORMATION** if valued and calmed in order to access the more rational areas of your brain.

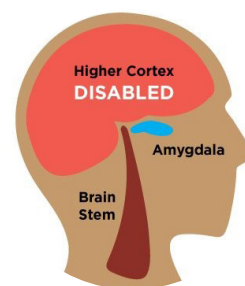
Pause, connect and understand your emotions. Access your higher intelligence in the moment and respond ideally.

Situation --> Emotion --> Pause & Identify --> Understand --> Work With --> Act or Not

BASED ON MINDFULNESS AND CALM IN ORDER TO ACCESS PREFRONTAL CORTEX



MINDFUL CONNECTION WITH EMOTIONS
EMPOWERING EMOTIONS PRACTICES
RESPONSE BASED ON HIGHER INTELLIGENCE



DISCONNECTED FROM EMOTIONS
UNWARENESS AND AMYGDALA HIJACK
REACTION BASED ON SURVIVAL THREAT

For REAL THREATS, you need to react automatically (slamming brakes)! For most situations however you will likely want to use emotional health practices. Many of today's emotional responses are due to internal stressors, such as lack of self-worth, toxic stress, and relational pressures, rather than actual immediate threats, like a tiger attack. Without emotional health skills you may be living in reactivity without even knowing it. With emotional health skills you begin living a fuller, more satisfying life with clarity, more fulfilling relationships with yourself and others.

IDENTIFY YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT EMOTIONS

There is a right way to feel in every situation

Emotions should always be trusted as if they are facts

Other people make me feel a certain way

I am not 100% responsible for my feelings

If someone else hurts my feelings, I need them to understand what they did to me

Emotions can happen for no reason

I must share or express how I feel to someone else in order to process my emotions and feel better

I need other people to understand me and validate why I feel the way I do, otherwise I feel alone and lost

If others don't approve of my feelings, I obviously shouldn't feel the way I do

Painful emotions are not important and should be ignored, refused, or shamed

Feeling sad or depressed is the result of a bad or weak attitude

Some emotions are stupid or worthless, or a huge barrier to what I want in life

Having an intense emotional state means I'm out of control and crazy

Negative feelings are bad and destructive

Sharing my feelings with my partner and friends is weakness

If I could make my emotions go away completely I would, especially anxiety and sadness

Emotions need to be quickly avoided otherwise they will overwhelm me

Acting on "gut instinct" is better than taking the time to feel through and understand my emotions

People should do whatever they feel like doing

It is inauthentic to try to evaluate and honor my emotions and a waste of time

Ignoring my emotions will ensure I am rational and intelligent

If no one else understands why I feel the way I do, I must be wrong or crazy

If others can't validate and understand my emotions, they don't care about me.

Avoiding emotions and feelings is a fine way to live since so many people do it

Emotions show up once in a while, but are rare for me actually

Anger needs to be avoided at all costs

People chose what emotions they have and its strong to make yourself feel good

The more boxes you checked above, the more you are denying yourself the capacity to live life to the fullest, as you lack emotional literacy skills. This is not to shame you. It is to provide awareness. You can learn to work with your emotions and gain more emotional attunement.

KEYS TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

1. Welcome All of Your Emotions Equally

- Even though, we tend to discriminate against our emotions, emotions themselves are not good or bad
- In fact, it is the SHAMING and attempts to AVOID and/or RESIST emotions that stir up reactivity and intensity
- The way you work with your emotions can have positive or negative outcomes. Yet, all emotions are necessary and can help you understand your reality within.

2. Understand Emotional Intensities and Bodily Sensations (Soft, Medium, Intense)

- Emotions arise at different intensity levels. When they are SOFT, you may not even notice
- When they intensify in a MEDIUM state (or "mood") you likely become aware of the feelings and thoughts associated
- At an INTENSE state they are obvious and also detectable to those around you, whether you want them to be or not!
- Mindfulness provides consistent awareness during SOFT intensity so you are connected and attuned, allowing you to be proactive instead of reaction, and guide yourself from MEDIUM and INTENSE states back down to a sense of calm

3. Identify Multiple Emotions

- Emotions are multifaceted, and they typically blend together into pairs and groups. For example, crying with joy
- Jealousy, for example, is cognitively organized as a blended emotion. It shares features with anger, sadness, and fear
- The more awareness you gain, the more skilled you become in identifying these states and therefore, realize the most ideal ways to work with each of them

4. Learn Mindful Awareness & Understanding of Emotions

- Instead of only expressing or repressing your emotions, you will learn to EXPERIENCE, ACCEPT, HONOR, UNDERSTAND, AND WORK WITH THEM INTENTIONALLY
- Gain access to more and richer choices, abundant self-awareness, self-compassion and well-being

CAUTION: The stronger the emotion, the stronger we BELIEVE it is based on fact. However this isn't true. **EXAMPLES:** "If I am afraid there must be immediate danger" (panic), "I love him, so he must be good for me," "I am painfully lonely," so I must avoid pain and reach out to an ex, emotionally over-eat, over-drink, etc. **IN FACT:** The stronger your emotions are, the MORE YOUR SELF NEEDS YOUR ATTENTION TO ACCEPT, FEEL and NAVIGATE EMOTIONS of the situation! It is likely from prior unmet emotional connection.

WHAT MAKES EMOTIONAL HEALTH SO DIFFICULT

- **Alexithymia:** subclinical inability to identify and describe emotions in the self
- Emotions **aren't always comfortable** at first and takes new skills to process
- **Faulty thinking** gets in the way of understanding emotions
- Requires mindfulness, awareness and perhaps new ways of thinking. **It's work!**
- **Toxic stress** makes it hard to experience emotions, due to Flight/Fight/Freeze mode
- **Ruminating and looping** thoughts block us from fully feeling our emotions
- **Lack of emotional attunement** in childhood (extremely common in our society, estimated at 36% of the population)
- **Myths** about emotions (seeing them as weak, annoying, scary, barriers, etc.)
- **Fear** of emotions due to past experiences of panic, shame attacks, and depression
- **Over-thinking, over-analyzing, and over-sharing** blocks processing emotions
- Emotions are essentially **spontaneous**, 'childish,' and irrational by definition (they don't process through the 'rational' cerebral cortex) so they require you to have a strong sense of 'Self' to essentially 'parent' and lead your emotions in a compassionate, disciplined, balanced way