

# EMOTIONS

Counseling Guide

**DBU**  
COUNSELING CENTER  
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# WHAT IS AN EMOTION?

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**Simple Definition** - A strong feeling (such as love, anger, joy, hate, or fear).

**Full Definition** - A conscious mental reaction (as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as strong feeling usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body.

**Nine basic emotions**- Anger, fear, happiness, sadness, guilt, shame, safety, hurt, and loneliness. Each of these emotions can be broken down into secondary and tertiary emotions.

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT EMOTIONS?

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**ANGER:** “Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.” (Ephesians 4:26 ESV)

**FEAR:** “When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.” (Psalm 56:3 NIV)

**HAPPINESS:** “Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure.” (Psalm 16:9 ESV)

**SADNESS:** “Even in laughter, the heart may ache, and the end of joy may be grief.” (Proverbs 14:13 ESV)

**GUILT:** “For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.” (2 Corinthians 7:10 ESV)

**SHAME:** “Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.” (1 John 2:28 NASB)

**SAFETY:** “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.” (Proverbs 18:10 ESV)

**HURT:** “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33 ESV)

**LONELINESS:** “Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’” (Genesis 2:18 ESV)

# PURPOSE OF EMOTIONS

**E**ach emotion serves a purpose in our lives. Most people are naturally more comfortable with the “good” emotions than with the “negative” emotions (i.e. anxiety, anger, sadness, etc.). However, there is no such thing as a “good” or “bad” emotion. The problem emerges when we get so good at avoiding our emotions, we lose the access to the important function they serve.

EMOTION	ACTION TENDENCY	COMMUNICATION	NEED INDICATED
Anger	Attack/Assert	“This is not fair!” “Someone is disrespecting me.”	Protect Create boundaries
Fear	Avoid Flee Fight	“This is threatening!” “There is danger!”	Safety
Happiness	Continue More of the same	“This is good!” “I want more of this!”	Satisfaction
Sadness	Slow down Withdraw	“There has been a loss!”	Grieving
Guilt	Make amends Apologize Repent Solve the problem	“I have done something wrong to you.” “I have hurt you.”	Correction Self-respect
Shame	Hide Cover-up Set Limits	“There is something wrong with me.”	Approval Social Acceptance
Safety	Protection Flee from danger	“I am not in danger.”	Community Safety
Hurt	Relational Distancing	“I am in pain.” “I need to heal.”	Healing
Loneliness	Seek Community	“Stay close” “I have no one I can connect with.”	Connection Relationship

Emotions often take the form of a physical feeling. Read the physical responses below and see if you can identify each emotion.

**ANGER:** Clenching fists, headache, grinding teeth, upset stomach, flushing, sweating, rapid heart rate, shaking, tense muscles, feeling as if one's "blood is boiling." It may slowly build up or it may feel like a flood of emotions.

**FEAR:** Fight or flight response. Increased heartrate, labored breathing, tightness in chest, stomach ache. It is a sense of impending doom or of being threatened in some way.

**HAPPINESS:** A suppression of worrisome or negative feelings. An increase in energy and exhilaration. An adrenaline boost, which makes one feel warm all over. It enhances one's sense of self.

**SADNESS:** A feeling as though one's heart is "broken." Tightness in the chest and throat. Loss of appetite. Decrease in energy level, feeling tired.

**GUILT:** A sense of being wrong or inflicting pain on another. Feels weighted down from a heavy burden which causes us to act to correct some real or imagined wrong.

**SHAME:** A healthy embarrassment or a toxic brokenness. Felt in the lower gut and encompasses our entire perspective. It is a feeling of being broken, defective, unworthy, unlovable, stupid, ugly, dirty, awful, bad, evil, crazy, or worthless.

**SAFETY:** A feeling of being protected which lets one know that they are safe. There is a sense of being free from danger or harm which puts a person at ease and encourages relaxation.

**HURT:** A feeling of being punched in the stomach or having the wind knocked out of you.

**LONELINESS:** Feeling alone, disconnected, without companions, closed off, separated and empty.

# I FEEL...



EXHAUSTED



CONFUSED



ECSTATIC



GUILTY



SUSPICIOUS



ANGRY



HYSTERICAL



FRUSTRATED



SAD



CONFIDENT



EMBARRASSED



HAPPY



MISCHIEVOUS



DISGUSTED



FRIGHTENED



ENRAGED



ASHAMED



CAUTIOUS



SMUG



DEPRESSED



OVERWHELMED



HOPEFUL



LONELY



LOVESTRUCK



JEALOUS



BORED



SURPRISED



ANXIOUS



SHOCKED



SHY

# FEELINGS JOURNAL

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At this moment, I feel \_\_\_\_\_

I know I feel \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

Being aware that I feel \_\_\_\_\_ helps me to understand \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ about myself.

Feeling \_\_\_\_\_ is difficult to express because \_\_\_\_\_

I know this emotion is created because of certain thoughts I have about myself, others, God and/or the events in my life. What are those specific thoughts? \_\_\_\_\_

Other thoughts and feelings that I have had today: \_\_\_\_\_



Emotion. (n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2016, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/emotion>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/hide-and-seek/201601/what-are-basic-emotions>

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lara-fielding/finding-your-authentic-pu\\_b\\_8342280.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lara-fielding/finding-your-authentic-pu_b_8342280.html)