

Every emotion is activating. Emotions are hard-wired in our biology. They get us ready to act. Here are some examples:

- › **Thirst:** tells us that we need to hydrate; activates us to drink water
- › **Hunger:** tells us that we need to give our body fuel; activates us to eat
- › **Fatigue:** tells us that we need rest; activates us to sleep

*The 3 emotions listed above are helpful for our survival; but the following emotions require thought before we act...*

- › **Anger:** gets us ready to attack; activates us to attack or defend
- › **Fear:** gets us ready to run or hide; activates us to escape danger
- › **Depression:** gets us ready to be inactive; activates us to avoid contact
- › **Disgust:** gets us ready to reject or distance ourselves; activates us to avoid
- › **Guilt:** gets us ready to repair violations; activates us to seek forgiveness
- › **Shame:** gets us ready to hide; activates us to isolate

## Reminder

- › If we want an emotion to stick around or increase, continue to engage in the action as stated above
- › If we want an emotion to go away or become less uncomfortable, do the opposite action listed below
- › If you want this skill to work, you must use opposite action all the way and believe that it will work

## Opposite Actions

- › **Opposite of Anger:** show kindness/concern or walk away
- › **Opposite of Shame:** raise your head up, give eye contact, shoulders back
- › **Opposite of Fear:** go towards, stay involved in it, build courage
- › **Opposite of Disgust:** push through and get through situation
- › **Opposite of Guilt:** apologize and mean what we say
- › **Opposite of Depression:** get active

## Practice

**Instructions:** Over the next few days, practice the Opposite Action skill. Find situations wherein your emotions seem to be in charge. Stop and think about the situation, and then use the skill to change the unpleasantness of the situation.

### Situation 1:

What event occurred to trigger your emotion?

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*Continue to the next page...*



What emotion did you experience?

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What action would be biologically wired for the emotion you experienced?

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What action did you choose to decrease the unpleasant emotion?

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What did you observe? What changed?

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## Situation 2:

What event occurred to trigger your emotion?

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What emotion did you experience?

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What action would be biologically wired for the emotion you experienced?

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What action did you choose to decrease the unpleasant emotion?

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What did you observe? What changed?

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