

Feelings

What generates them?

From ***Facing Codependence*** by Pia Mellody, Andrea Miller, & J. Keith Miller

- The four areas of **REALITY**
 - **BODY:**
 - Our five senses bring input from outer world to our inner world
 - **THINKING:**
 - We interpret, draw conclusions, and give meaning to the sensory input
 - **FEELING:**
 - Physiological response to our thoughts (also called emotions)
 - Uses up energy in our body
 - **BEHAVIOR:**
 - What we choose to do (or not do) as a result of our feelings
- Our belief system (based on our history and values) affects the way we think, feel, and behave
- How we process our thoughts impacts where our feelings go (positive or negative) & intensity of them
 - What we feel is what we feel – cannot change our feelings
 - We can change our thoughts
- We learn to acknowledge it so we can process it
 - Denied feelings are a trigger for inappropriate behavior
 - Unprocessed feelings are stored in our bodies, they don't just disappear because we choose not to process them

Automatic Negative Thoughts

from ***Change Your Brain Change Your Life*** by Daniel Amen

- Negative thoughts invade your mind like ants at a picnic
 - When you notice an ANT enter your mind, acknowledge it and talk back to it
 - When you hear your self talk use an ANT, stop and correct yourself
- All or Nothing
 - Everything is all good or all bad; same as black and white thinking
 - One event/moment doesn't define the entirety
- Always Thinking
 - Overgeneralize: using words like "always" or "never"
 - Helplessness that you do not have control over your behavior/self
- Focusing on the Negative
 - Only see the negative aspect of a situation regardless of the positives
 - Hopelessness or wanting to "give up"
- Thinking with your Feelings
 - Assuming our feeling is correct versus questioning it; feelings can lie
 - Use the True – Not True – Questionable Tool
- Guilt Beating
 - Using guilt to control our behavior or using negative control on others
 - When we feel pushed to do something, our natural tendency is to push back
- Labeling
 - Calling yourself (or another) a negative term or name
 - Worthlessness, helplessness, and hopelessness; giving up before trying
- Fortune-Telling (**RED ANT**)
 - Predicting the worse even though you don't know what will happen
- Mind Reading (**RED ANT**)
 - Assuming you know what another is thinking
- Blame (**RED ANT**)
 - Blaming others and not taking responsibility for ourselves
 - Powerless to change our own behavior

Feelings Chart

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Feeling (Reality)	Gift (Our Feelings)	Challenge (Induced or Carried Feelings)
Joy	Hope / Peace	
Pain	Change / Healing	Hopelessness / Depression
Anger	Energy / Power	Rage / Devalue
Fear	Protection / Wisdom	Panic / Paranoia / Helplessness
Guilt	Values / Integrity	False Guilt / Prolonged Guilt
Shame	Accountability / Fallibility (Limits)	Carried Shame / Shame Bound

Pain

from **The Language of Letting Go** by Melody Beattie

- Many sources of pain: history, current events, transitions or “life events”
- Our choice to
 - Let pain lead and guide us to a positive outcome (healthy choices/behaviors)
 - Stop or avoid pain (addictions, focus on others, denial/repression)
- Takes courage to stay still and feel - it will only hurt for awhile and then it will heal
- Can be confused with Anger

Anger

from **Good ‘n’ Angry: How to Handle Your Anger Positively** by Les Carter

- Three general ways people handle anger
- Repressed (denial)
 - If I ignore it, it will go away
 - Pushing from conscious to subconscious leads to it worsening
- Expressed (outwardly communicated)
 - Assertive: respects the dignity/value of another
 - Aggressive: without regard for other person’s worth/value
- Released (let it go)
 - Making the conscious decision that anger is no longer needed
 - Must first be able to assertively express anger

- Can be confused with Pain

Fear

from ***Feel the Fear & Do It Anyway*** by Susan Jeffers

- Fear is a part of life
 - Wings: It can be a companion on this journey of life and we take flight
 - Anchor: It can become an anchor and we become frozen (in fear)
- By confronting a situation or "doing something"
 - Fear gradually decreases
 - Self-confidence and self-worth increase
- Fear does not equal isolation
- Fearing fear is worse than facing fear (helplessness)

Guilt

from ***Mind Over Emotions*** by Les Carter

- Communicates that something is amiss in our thinking and behavior
- True Guilt
 - Inner voice to live a moral, responsible life
- False Guilt
 - Feeling of remorse that is judgmental toward oneself
 - Decreases value/self-worth and increases fear of being "found out" and punished
- Creates a sense of isolation
- Usually is accompanied by Shame

Shame

from ***Letting Go of Shame*** by Ronald and Patricia Potter-Efron

- Represents a person's identity
- Defense mechanisms: denial, perfectionism, arrogance, exhibitionism, rage
- Become aware of your shame and examine it even though we want to hide from it
 - Where does your shame come from? (society, family, significant other, yourself)
- Shame heals when shared with another
- Set positive goals and take responsibility for reforming your thoughts and changing your behaviors
- Usually is accompanied by Shame

Tools for Feelings

- Allow yourself to feel them
 - Let them be as big (or little) and overwhelming/confusing (ugly) as they really are
- Find the truth
 - What/who is the source (external or internal)?
 - Is there an event that triggered it?
 - Use the True – Not True – Questionable Tool to separate the feelings from the thoughts
- Talk them out with a safe person
- Purge them
 - Journal? Art?
 - Physical: clean the house, beat up a pillow, break dishes, throw darts at a picture
 - Express them in a way that does not harm you, others, or valuable property