

Chapter One

Learning to Feel Your Feelings



Are feelings and emotions important? Need we look any further than the shipwrecks of many persons' lives? Who hasn't heard of anxiety, depression, addiction, stress, broken relationships, and failed aspirations?

Avoiding feelings, being unable to feel feelings and express feelings, and having no way to make them less intense, painful, or attention grabbing can create major havoc in our lives. At the heart of anxiety, depression, problematic anger, mind-body illnesses, addictions, severe stress, broken relationships, and failed aspirations is often our inability to feel, accept, express, and decipher our feelings. Next to having food, air, and shelter, feelings are a necessity for survival, health, and well-being. Frequently many of us are inexperienced in the area of feelings and emotions. This is the reason why *Your Emotional Power* is now in your hands.

Why emotions & feelings are valuable

Let's examine why emotions and feelings are valuable. What exactly do our emotions do?

- ❖ **Biological messengers.** Emotions carry very important intuitive messages about: (1) What's going on inside us. (2) The world around us. (3) What we believe at that moment in time. (4) What we better do. (5) Whether there may be physical danger. (6) Whether we're feeling ill. (7) Whether we're feeling up, down, aroused, off balance, jovial, like laughing, or like arguing with someone about the importance of emotions. Failure to pay attention to these simple intuitive messages can create havoc in someone's life. It can put them in danger, turn their personal and family relationships upside down, put them out of touch with themselves, lead to intense and enduring emotions, and stress related disorders. Without getting our messages we'll be at a loss about when to adjust our behavior. A human being would be very ineffective without being privy to these messages.
- ❖ **Organize and alert us to take action.** The instant some emotions turn on, our body is alerted for action. Anxiety and fear trigger adrenaline, fearful thoughts, set the stage for us to fight like a tiger or flee. Security and safety are the focus. Anger raises our heart rate and makes us alert and primed for aggression
- ❖ **Conduits to deeper intuition and our unconscious processes.** Emotions, besides being our biological information service, are stepping stones into intuition and our creative and unconscious processes. Getting an overall felt sense of a feeling can open a telephone line into our bio-computer and its neural networks. Deeper level intuition is a very important computational and wisdom system. The quality of our lives depends on this open telephone line.
- ❖ **Stimulate bodily communication and gestures.** Human beings communicate with more than words. We communicate with gestures, body language, facial expressions, and vocal intonation. Anyone who's seen a mime or a silent film actor knows what I'm talking about. Emotion helps create and shape these elements. The use of bodily communications and gestures makes us more effective speakers. We touch the emotions of others this way. When we speak from the heart our bodies come alive. We know the effects of seeing tears in another's eyes. A voice thundering across a massed throng. A dictator pounding his chest and his eyes focused dramatically skyward while he speaks of blood and fatherland.
- ❖ **Emotional intelligence.** The idea of emotional intelligence is becoming more widely known. The quality of our lives and

our ability to meet our goals depends very much on our being able to read and understand our and other folks' emotions. We need to know how to communicate, manage, and harness our emotions.

- ❖ **Motivation.** Emotions arouse us to action. Love moves us to form a bond with another. Empathy will draw us to listen to and come to bat for someone else. Powerful emotions can carry us past formidable obstacles.
- ❖ **Provide a sense of meaning.** Without emotions and feelings there can be no meaning. Meaning and importance can only exist if we feel them.
- ❖ **Combines with reason to provide balance in our decision making process.** We require both emotion and reason to operate well if we are to make sound decisions. Emotion lets us know how we feel about something while reason provides a set of logical evaluations and tests.
- ❖ **Sets boundaries with others.** Our emotions alert us when we feel disturbed by another's behavior. When we trust our emotional responses and intuition and can assert ourselves, we can tell someone we don't like what they're doing. Having emotional boundaries protects us.
- ❖ **Helps record emotional memories.** Various kinds of memory systems exist in our brain. One kind of memory records events and facts while another kind of memory records emotional experiences. The emotionally based one is often unconscious. We may feel a certain way in a given circumstance and may recall having felt in a similar way previously, yet we may not readily recall events where this emotion showed up in the past unless we probe.
- ❖ **Forms a part of our guidance system.** Consider all the previous mentioned values and you will notice, that put together, they all form part of our human guidance system.
- ❖ **Helps with survival.** Emotions warn of us of danger and set off bodily responses that put us on alert. They also affect our health which in turn effects our survival.
- ❖ **Stimulates our hormonal systems, heart rate, blood flow, our parasympathetic response (Relaxation), and widens our visual field.** Our emotions physiologically turn on and off various biological systems throughout our body. These affect our health and survival.

- ❖ **Builds bridges between people.** Without our emotions there can be no emotional bonds or connections between people. Parents couldn't emotionally bond with their children. Couples couldn't emotionally bond without emotions. Without emotions there would be no empathy.
- ❖ **Makes our beliefs believable.** Without our feelings and emotions supporting our beliefs, our beliefs would not feel believable.

Learning to feel our feelings

In learning to feel our feelings we will be bringing our awareness to our feelings and noting what happens in our inner world. The major challenge facing folks in knowing their feelings is that we simply don't put time aside to experience our inner natures. We may have other responsibilities, work, families, education, relationships, and hobbies. Many of us are externally oriented rather than inner-directed. We miss our interior life because of this and feelings get brushed aside. We often don't become aware of our feelings until the emergency calls us and we start to become conscious of feeling overwhelmed or stressed. Feelings were long ignored and out of awareness. Being unaware of our feelings went on too long. It's usually during crisis when we become aware of our emotions and feelings. Addictions. Anxiety. Depression. Stress related disorders. These painful areas may be our first introductions to our inner world of feelings.

Our feelings, emotions, and beliefs require our priority if we wish to live meaningful, stimulating, and enjoyable lives.

What stands in the way of feeling feelings? Avoidance. Not putting time aside to be with them. Our attention drifts elsewhere. Not putting feelings on our priority list. Impatience. Denial. Sometimes even believing we're selfish for paying any attention to our inner life.

For folks with strong negative self-views, looking inside may ask for courage and patience. It isn't easy being with intense and painful feelings. What this book and its methods provide are approaches for emotional exploration and growth that can be accomplished with a minimum of pain and overwhelm.

How important are feelings and beliefs in your life? What priority do you assign them? If you've ever had a major emotional crisis you likely give feelings and beliefs high priority.

Attending to your feelings

Generally we notice feelings in relationship to events. When we recall events we often get an emotional reaction. The stronger the emotion, the higher the probability that our feelings are being resisted and kept from awareness.

Let's look at some of the basic kinds of feelings:

- ❖ Physical sensations such a pain and numbness.
- ❖ Emotions like anger, anxiety, joy, depression, sadness, guilt, and shame.

Close cousins of emotions:

- ❖ Compulsive activities where we feel compelled or driven to do repetitive, often frivolous and time wasting actions to distract ourselves from anxiety, fear, and overwhelm.
- ❖ Desires or wants.
- ❖ Moods.

It probably isn't all that important we have scientific sounding names for our feelings. Anxiety and depression can just as well be called feelings or even hurt. What is important is we fully feel our feelings with no intention of getting rid of them or keeping them. When we do this in an attentive and accepting way we get their emotional insights and emotions become less intense, more comfortable, and far less attention grabbing. An emotion that's become less intense, less enduring, less attention grabbing, and more comfortable we call "integrated". When we avoid or suppress feelings, we miss emotional information, become stressed, lose awareness, and can develop stress-related health and emotional problems.

After we process or integrate feelings we soon discover more feelings are there. As we explore our inner world, we realize our feelings are more based on our views of events than the events themselves.

Thoughts and feelings come hand in hand. Emotions are stimulated by beliefs. Beliefs are influenced by feelings. When feelings are integrated or desensitized they lose their intensity, enduringness, discomfort, and attention grabbing abilities. Our stress and tension levels reduce and our moods often brighten. Physical sensations may be pain, hunger, fatigue, sensations of alertness.

Emotions are filtered and stimulated by beliefs. Because we believe someone should not have thrown trash in our yard and are slob, we become angry due to their going against our rules. Examples of emotions are: anxiety, depression, anger, joy, rage, sadness, guilt, shame, and embarrassment.

Compulsions are repetitive actions that occur when we are overwhelmed and anxious. Compulsions keep our awareness from un-felt anxiety and overwhelm. Compulsions defend us, but in doing so they create problems like addiction and workaholism. Compulsions start with an impulse to do something we're compelled or driven to do. They feel choice less even though we can choose to do something else. Impulses are related to unconscious motivations. We feel the sudden prompting to do something or say something. Moods are vague overall feelings. They can be negative and distressing or they can be positive and uplifting. Even neutral moods exist. Moods can be witnessed in a sense of dissatisfaction, loneliness, and insecurity.

Feelings ask for our attention. If we spend sometime each day feeling them we can enhance our lives. Unintegrated feelings can create emotional overload, tension, and stress. We also get out of contact with ourselves when we don't feel our feelings. When we integrate feelings and emotions we have more energy, feel more alive, have access to our intuition and internal guidance system, and think about life in a clearer and less distorted fashion.

A major area in emotional well-being is learning to feel our feelings, accept them, and experience them grow less intense and intrusive. In learning to use Emoclear emotional techniques we learn to fully feel our feelings and allow them to be there with no intention of getting rid of them or keeping them. This approach puts us in full contact with ourselves and allows us to naturally integrate or desensitize our feelings. This integration leads to more clearly seeing ourselves, others, and the world without the distortion created by intense and enduring emotions. Feeling and integrating are keys to aliveness and emotional well-being. Feeling and integrating our feelings stands at the middle way between avoiding our feelings and over-identifying with our feelings. Feeling and integrating is basically a non-interfering approach to our feelings. This approach does not judge or evaluate our emotions and feelings. We experience our feelings with acceptance.

In noting that feeling and integrating resides between avoiding and over-identification, we recognize that avoiding is when a feeling emerges and we attempt to ignore it, deny it, medicate it away, repress it, tense up, distract ourselves, intellectualize it away, or get lost in

daydreams. Over-identification is when we are caught up in our feelings. Here we are so immersed in a feeling we can't see the separation between ourselves and the feeling. We feel like we've become the feeling.

Allowing ourselves to feel feelings brings relief and greatly lessens symptoms, habits, compulsions, stuckness, panic, depression, anxiety, and moodiness. Feeling and integrating feelings operates on the observation that when feelings are resisted or negatively judged they intensify and persist. Yet when feelings are fully experienced and accepted they integrate and lose their emotional intensity and attention grabbing power. This is our nature. Resistance and over identification create challenges in our lives. We don't receive our feelings important information. Emotions hang on and on holding our attention and making our tension and stress grow.

Anita learns to feel her feelings

Anita came to Emoclear Forums on the recommendation of her physician who believed her Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) may be caused in large part by her being out of contact with her feelings. Anita, who worked as a bank auditor and often took part time second jobs, knew she wasn't the most feelings-oriented person. She sensed there might be something to the connection between her feelings and IBS.

When Anita first arrived at the Emoclear Forums and started to learn to feel her feelings she felt dissociated and numbly remote from them. Getting in contact with feelings was a battle at the outset. She spent much of her first days just noticing what a feeling was and how quickly it disappeared from awareness. She was committed to learning how to feel.

Sometimes she struggled with even finding a feeling and became frustrated with her inability to locate one. In the forums she learned that frustration counted as a feeling. She soon discovered that blankness, numbness, a feeling of no feeling also counted as feelings. Gradually her confidence grew in being able to feel even if it was only for short periods the first week.

In her second week she learned how to relax into a feeling so it sustained longer in her awareness. She added left nasal dominance breathing where she gently pinched her right nostril shut. This style of breath made it easier for Anita to feel. She noticed her frustration dissolving as the second week passed by. She was staying longer in her feelings and learning how to intensify them with attention.

Every time her attention drifted into thoughts and reveries, she whispered “thought” and returned her attention to the feeling. Her attention stayed longer and longer now and she took some pride in this accomplishment.

After three weeks passed she became more conscious of emotional insights arriving from her feelings contact. She was thrilled with her increasing progress. These were large steps for someone who considered herself dissociated and in her head. She felt increasingly connected to her feelings now. They were no longer those strangers “over there”. She felt them.

As Anita assimilated more of the Emoclear approach to feeling feelings she experienced her first integrations. Some tension, through steady attention, became less intense, enduring, uncomfortable, and attention grabbing. She was beaming from her first integration efforts and shared her new integration experiences with her boyfriend. At work she was starting to feel less stressed out and fatigued. She fully felt her feelings and allowed them to be there without intending to get rid of them or keep them. She breathed into them and observed them. She felt the tension diminishing in strength as she accepted it. It no longer pulled at her attention. Another step was reached in her learning to feel feelings. She integrated her first sensations.

As the weeks sped by Anita mastered her ability to find emotions and integrate them. This feelings work helped her get in contact with suppressed feelings and conflicts. Her Irritable Bowel Syndrome began to clear up. Other symptoms like acid reflux also vanished. Anita was glad she listened to her physician’s ideas about feeling feelings.

Tips on feeling our feelings

Here are some tips on the practice of feeling feelings.

- ❖ You need not give your feelings traditional names like anxiety or happy or depression or anger. In some of our feelings exercises we call them “Those sensations”. This labeling can reduce some of our aversion to feeling and can give us an outside perspective.
- ❖ Welcome and experience appreciation toward your feelings. When you begin to tune into a feeling and really allow yourself to feel feelings, say hi to your feeling. This greeting both acknowledges your feeling and lessens resistance to it. Recognizing what good service your feelings perform will also limit resistance.

Your feelings always perform the valuable task of giving you feedback about yourself, others, and the world around you. Feelings let you know how you feel about something and what to do. Feelings also perform many other valuable services as well. At the beginning of this chapter I describe some of the many important functions emotions do for us.

- ❖ Dialogue with feelings by asking your feelings what valuable and good things they do. By giving heartfelt gratitude or thanks to your feelings, you further remove aversion to your feelings. In short greet your feelings, see what good things they do, and sincerely thank them for their services. Done with sincerity these three gestures will greatly reduce aversion to your feelings.
- ❖ If you have hostile or fearful judgments toward your feelings, write the judgments out. This can bring them out into awareness where these judgments will fade in power.
- ❖ Always allow your feelings to be there with no intention of getting rid of them or keeping them.
- ❖ A semi-relaxed body can open us to our feelings. This semi-relaxation can be brought about by left nasal dominance breathing, by relaxing our tongue, and filling our mouth with warm saliva, so our tongue is covered. These maneuvers make for less resistance to feelings.
- ❖ Feelings can often be easier to access when our breathing comes through our left nasal passage. In left nasal dominance breathing we breathe moderately and deeply through our left nostril only. Our right nostril is gently pinched shut. Exhale is free and relaxed. About 12 inhalations and exhalations work fine.
- ❖ Experience feelings in different ways:
 - (1) Intensify them or exaggerate them.
 - (2) Tune into them and allow them to migrate to other areas of your body. Then allow them to return.
 - (3) Notice the opposite feelings of the feelings you're having. Shift back and forth between these opposites several times. What do you notice?
- ❖ Observe how talking about your feelings is not the same as fully feeling them. Talking about feelings abstracts them. Feel a feeling, and then talk about it. What do you notice about the difference between feeling a feeling and talking about a feeling?
- ❖ Notice the size and shape of a feeling. Notice its outline. Notice its location. Notice its surrounding space. What did you experience?

- ❖ Are there feelings beneath your feelings? Pay full attention to your feeling. Ask if there is a feeling beneath that feeling. Wait and see if something appears. After the feeling appears wait for an overall sense of the feeling to emerge and fully feel it.
- ❖ Allow yourself to fully feel your feelings. If some seem overwhelming and intense, that's okay. The longer you feel them with no intention of getting rid of them or keeping them, the less intense they will be. You can also get an outside perspective on them by simply labeling them "those sensations".
- ❖ Even in the most intense and overwhelming panic symptoms and painful trauma flashbacks, it's not the feeling that overwhelms us; it's our intense aversion or resistance to these feelings that get us to flee. It's our intolerance to feeling that fires us up. These are the beliefs like: "I can't stand it", "it's too much", "it's overwhelming". These evaluations are the bedrock of aversion. By standing our frustration intolerance and feeling it, the frustration intolerance dies down. Fear never chases us away—its partner frustration intolerance does. Folks take off from something fearful because they feel overwhelmed and believe they "can't stand" their fear. Practice frequently with aversion beliefs like: "I can't stand it" and "it's overwhelming me" etc. These beliefs lose their trance like spell over us when we stand and stay in these overwhelming situations.
- ❖ Dissociation or a seeming lack of feeling, sometimes to the point you feel outside your body, is a strong reaction to feeling overwhelmed. Focus on your dissociation and allow your feelings to return to your body where you can feel them again. If you are working with dissociation, have someone trusted nearby or better yet work with a therapist grounded in feeling and integration processes. Also placing your palm on your heartbeat area can assist with bringing feelings back into your body and feeling them. Relaxing can help ease up some dissociation too.
- ❖ Lack of feeling, numbness, blankness, dead feeling, and feeling frustrated about not being able to feel, or even no feelings are all feelings. Allow yourself to fully feel them with no intention of getting rid of them or keeping them.
- ❖ If you experience compulsions, addictions, and obsessive thoughts, then locate the feelings being blocked by compulsions, addictions, and obsessive thoughts. When the feelings of overwhelm that run compulsions and addictions are fully experienced

and accepted, our compulsions and addictions lose their power and fade out.

- ❖ Keep up your breathing. Halted breathing makes feelings stick.
- ❖ If thoughts intrude—that’s okay. Simply say: “Thought” and bring your attention gently back to your feeling.
- ❖ Notice those feelings when you want or need something. Notice those feelings you attempt to push away or avoid.
- ❖ Placing your palm on your heartbeat region can assist in feeling. This is the seat of intuition. The heartbeat area is a 40,000 neuron “second” brain.
- ❖ After you have a good handle on fully feeling feelings, you can also focus on physical sensations, pain, and ill feelings.
- ❖ When integration of feelings comes about, changes in belief and emotion take place. Muscle tension vanishes. The emotion is no longer intense. It’s doesn’t keep pulling your attention.
- ❖ Feelings may give way to other feelings or even bring back memories. Pay full attention. The majority of feelings tend to cluster in the torso, yet they can be found in every part of the body.
- ❖ As you get more tuned into feeling a feeling you will notice the separation between yourself and the feeling. This separation is subtle. This feeling is not quite you. Pay attention to this separation and feel it.
- ❖ Feelings have starts, middles, and ends. Feelings arise and pass away.
- ❖ We may have intuitive dialogues with our feelings.
 - a. You can employ your feelings to know what you want. You can ask your feelings directly: “Feeling old buddy—what do you want?” Don’t hurry an answer, just wait patiently.
 - b. Feelings can provide answers in felt senses, pictures, sounds. Other questions might be: What brings you here? What good things are you doing for me?
 - c. Overwhelming emotions always have something important to tell us. Ask what they want. You might even ask them how they might help to make you whole and complete. What can I learn from you that might bring serenity or even power? Remember feelings are not facts and truths—they can be misleading. Distorted thinking could be creating them.
 - d. Ask your heartbeat area what might be holding you back or blocking you. And what might you do? You are going straight to the heart of intuition by asking your heartbeat area about your feelings.

- e. Feelings provide an opportunity to listen non judgmentally and really hear what our feelings have to say. Treat a feeling like a buddy.
 - f. Ask your feelings if they require distance. If they answer back yes, then permit them distance. Experience them now as “Those feelings over there” “That feeling” “My feelings beside me” This slight distancing alters our relationship with them and allows us to access them easily and feel less swept up by them.
 - g. Feel a sensation, and then ask what it is. Feelings and sensations can provide useful information. However if your answers come back with “I think” or “I believe” they are not coming from an intuitive place.
 - h. Ask your feeling to let you know what it would be like to experience wholeness, serenity, power, or love again.
 - i. Avoid questioning feelings with “why” questions. Why questions will take you quickly out of the feeling mode and into thinking.
- ❖ If you’re feeling doubtful about your feelings, then return to them and experience them.
 - ❖ Notice any sense of impatience or pushing. Relax and pay full attention with a sense of allowing.
 - ❖ Many times when you become experienced with feeling feelings, you will experience spontaneous integrations or times when your feelings suddenly lose their intensity, discomfort, and ability to grip your attention for long periods.
 - ❖ Sometimes we may experience two or more feelings at the same time. Feel both at once or naturally let yourself gravitate to the one tugging your attention.
 - ❖ Keep slightly warm during integration sessions. This helps feeling.
 - ❖ You can always return to a feeling you felt previously.
 - ❖ A common block to feeling feelings is simple performance anxiety. Here we wonder if we’re doing it right. Or do we have a feeling? Sometimes we might experience confusion. Keep bringing your attention back to your feeling. The performance anxiety, doubt, and confusion all lift.
 - ❖ If you’ve decided to work on a particular feeling and your body had another feeling in mind, guess who wins? Your body. You can ask your body if it’s okay to proceed with this other feeling,

but if it says otherwise, pay attention and work with what it provides.

- ❖ If a feeling abruptly vanishes, this might hint you have intentions to hurry up and make it go away.
- ❖ Sometimes you might feel good and miss feeling those feelings because you expect to feel really bad.
- ❖ Some newcomers have to learn how to experience their feelings for the first time instead of avoiding them. If some emotions have never much been felt, expect some uncomfortable overwhelm. It dies down.
- ❖ Getting rid of emotions and feelings or making them unwanted creates challenges for us. Some folks miss our basic Emoclear message of fully feeling feelings and allowing them to be there without trying to get rid of them or keep them. Don't get rid of them—allow them to be there. Find out about the many good things feelings do for us. All feelings do good things for us even the painful and uncomfortable ones. It's also important to know those so-called “unwanted feelings”, we mistakenly struggle to rid ourselves of, stick harder. Resisted and avoided feelings have tremendous staying power. They also tend to intensify.
- ❖ Demanding instant gratification and pushing hard. Behind these are resistance and low frustration tolerance. New York was not built in a day. Beginners are best off giving themselves time when they are learning a new process and using it. Pressuring ourselves tends to slow learning down.
- ❖ Expecting instant results because of the hype advertising that promote the nonsense expectations that change processes should be simple, easy, and fast acting like taking a pill. Maybe after you've mastered processing, but not at the start when many have to put in their time learning how any emotional process works and set time aside to run them.
- ❖ Anxiety driven “trying to figure things out”, “thinking about whether you're doing it right,” and other forms internalized chatter best be set aside so we can work at the feeling level. Doubts are sometimes part of the terra firma of feelings work.
- ❖ Going after huge targets upon learning a process. Some people pick some of the most highly resisted targets imaginable. I'm not joking. I've heard of persons going after intense phobias and traumatic conditions with a process just out of the box. No small wonder the process groaned and sputtered. Some people have blown out phobias their first time at bat if they used one

of the processes correctly. Many times new persons will take on a highly resisted target with little knowledge about what to do when x, y, and z occur.

- ❖ Trying to use a process without having mastered each step or segment first. Do each segment until it feels comfortable. Then put all of the process together. Pick an easier, less resisted target first and don't push yourself to get rid of the target. Some beginners will pick a very difficult target or an inappropriate advanced target with the idea of getting rid of it. They'll do it the first time they ever attempt the process which they never learned to run in sequence. Then they quit after 10 minutes of going nowhere and tell themselves processing isn't for them.
- ❖ An emotional target may have aspects or different scenes involved. Without experiencing these different aspects or scenes, the process seems to be crazy glued to the floor. Learning to recognize multiple aspects is an important part of learning. Some targets have multiple parts. Slow or stalled progress is frequently unnoticed aspects.
- ❖ Not knowing how to deal with everyday confusion involved with learning. Some folks, with performance anxiety, will experience confusion trances which initially make learning difficult. There are several basic ways to deal with everyday confusion when it arises:
 1. Plain old persistence without self-pressuring lets confusion die out.
 2. Getting a feel of the confusion and playing with it. Shrinking it. Expanding it. Move it elsewhere.
 3. A favorite way of dealing with confusion is to feel the confusion, label it "That confusion" and step back from it before you dialogue with it and respectfully ask it what it wants.
- ❖ Not taking the time to get the very important emotional bio-message or "felt knowing". Some people, still wishing to hurry through and get rid of their feelings, will give lip service to getting that important intuitive communication from our feelings. This communication is valuable. It let's us know what's going on and what to do. It's not thinking or self-talk. Ignoring the bio-communication generally means the issue will soon land back on our plates. Learn from our emotional stuckness. It's got a message for us. Once we've mastered message getting, it's a very rapid process. You don't need to put it into words. All you need to do is "know" it viscerally. Like someone driving a car

they “know” when to turn or when to apply the brakes or speed up. They don’t think about it. They “know” and follow that felt knowing.

- ❖ Targeting the untargetable. This is where someone with a neurological anomaly or biologically based mood problem tries to integrate it with a process. The mood stays put. Better the mood gets dialogued with and asked where it’s coming from. Sometimes other interventions, like altering diet, sunlight, dealing with allergies, getting enough sleep etc. will be better suited. Infrequently an actual medical condition like a hormonal problem may be the culprit. Time to visit a medical doctor.
- ❖ Going directly after compulsions instead of the feelings beneath them. This is a common challenge. Taking on a compulsion by feeling it and trying to directly integrate it may give temporary relief. However that compulsion or one like it will jump right back in the breach. It’s being stimulated by unfelt and undigested overwhelm. That’s the real target that newcomers miss. Instead they will become involved in tail chasing.
- ❖ Not recognizing a conflict between parts. You integrate one side of the conflict and the other side grows the integrated part back. Here both sides better be addressed.
- ❖ Giving up in the face of low frustration tolerance. This is the “I can’t stand it-itis” and “It’s too much” kind of trancey and emotionally charged thinking that makes some quit. Low frustration tolerance, frustration, and impatience are all viable targets if they appear during the learning process. If they jump in line ahead of your target, go for them. Feel them into integration.

Underlying principles of healing and emotional integration

There appears to be basic principles that underlie healing and emotional integration. These principles of healing and emotional integration are:

- ❖ At some point in both healing and integration our unconscious processes have to be involved. Our unconscious contains all the controls for physical healing like immune response, the control of blood flow and pressure, and wound repair etc. Our unconscious also contains key ingredients in the makeup of emotional charge which is at the heart of our emotional, feeling, and

physical sensation response. Our unconscious contains the integrative patterns which lead to the emotional charges dissolving and our very important intuitive emotional insight.

- ❖ In physical healing we have to reconnect with our unconscious, spirit, deeper creative resources, the force, our essential being, God, or any other of the “thousand names” we call this vital life force. This vital life force knows what to do.
- ❖ In the integration of emotional charge the feeling target has to be fully felt and experienced. The feeling at some point has to be allowed to be there without trying to get rid of it or attempting to grasp it. In short the emotion, feeling, or physical sensation is NOT resisted.
- ❖ For the emotional charge (what makes for intensity, fixation/stuckness, discomfort, enduringness) to be integrated, the emotion has to be met at the intuitive/unconscious level. This comes about through an open, relaxed, and absorbed focus of attention. Getting the intuitive emotional insight or feeling message ensures the intuitive/unconscious level of experience.
- ❖ Another route to emotional integration is repetitive exposure and desensitization. This is seen in event reviews and the steady feeling of emotion or event in methods like the Emotional Writing Process or the Event Reviewer. In these styles of desensitization the intuitive emotional insight or intuitive knowing arrives toward the end of the process. This is due to the ending of resistance.
- ❖ In integrators and efficient emotional processes dis-identification occurs which gives us an observer position on the target. This can occur through labeling, breathing, or as a natural response from being in steady contact with a feeling. This outside or wider-view sense of the feeling reduces feeling’s intensity, turns on our intuitive processes, and opens the door for acceptance or love to do their transforming magic.
- ❖ For permanence in integration the intuitive messages have to be received. Otherwise the target’s emotional charge will likely reform and the issue will return. The issue (An emotionally similar event) tends to return because the important intuitive message went unheard and without a response. The phone was never picked up. No action was taken.

- ❖ The emotional target is viewed in accepting or loving awareness. It is in this non-resisting and fully receptive awareness that emotional charge unbinds and dissolves.

Learning to appreciate your feelings

- ❖ Engaging the spectrum of feelings in light reverie and noting how they've been helpful, even though painful in the past, can lead to an underlying sense of appreciation. Someone can recall feelings' yeomen like duty in various situations. If someone wants to daydream about their emotional past they can do so while allowing the all seeing eye of their unconscious to review the small miracles and wonders our feelings performed. Our unconscious is stocked with all kinds of memories and resources it can link to our emotions and feelings.
- ❖ Someone could go emotion by emotion and feel them through recalling or imagining situations where the feelings became intense and held their ground for our resisting attention. Then when a feeling is in full view, we pop the magic question to them. "After I have gained an appreciation and acceptance of you, how will I feel? What good and valuable things will I have noticed about you?"
- ❖ Here's how to measure your progress with a SUD Scale (Subjective Units of Distress). Bring your attention to any distressful emotions, feelings, or sensations you are having. When you have a good sense of the distress level, rate your distress from 0 to 10 with 0 being nothing happening and 10 being overwhelming. You don't have to be very accurate—you just want to have rough idea about how you are progressing. You will perform another SUD Scale at the completion of each cycle of your process. This will help you see how far along you are in lowering your distress. When you get to 0, stop.

Subjective Units of Distress Scale

0. No distress at all. Feeling okay and calm.
1. Feeling little if any stress. Not quite fully calm.
2. Faint tension or mild stress.
3. Feeling slightly unpleasant or uncomfortable.
4. Growing distress or discomfort. Mildly agitated.
5. Verging on becoming very uncomfortable and distressed.

6. Very uncomfortable—affecting my attention.
7. Emotionally painful—becoming severe.
8. The emotional pain is taking over my attention.
9. The emotional discomfort is almost unbearable.
10. The emotional pain is overwhelming me—the worst possible

Some tips for doing Subjective Units of Distress scale

- ❖ Place your right palm on your heartbeat region for the duration of the exercise and do some left nasal dominance breath work prior to doing the scale. Simply pinch your right nostril shut and breathe deeply and fully through your left nostril only for 12 inhalations and exhalations. When you've concluded this left nasal dominance breathing, then remove your finger and return to regular breathing.
- ❖ Make sure you are properly hydrated prior to this exercise.
- ❖ Closing your eyes can help in tuning into each emotion. Use each of your five senses in evoking memories or imagery to stimulate your emotional reaction. Hear what happened. See what happened. Feel what happened. Taste what happened. Smell what happened.
- ❖ Fully feel your feelings and allow them to be there without attempting to get rid of them or keep them.

Handling stuckness with acceptance

When a belief, feeling, or physical sensation exhibits staying power or stuckness this is usually due to a lack of acceptance. Likely we are trapped in a strong judgment about our belief, feeling, or physical sensation. We may hate it or fear it. This judgment puts us out of contact with our emotion, feeling, or physical sensation. And with little or no contact with our challenge we can't fully experience it or naturally process it.

The most powerful antidote to stuckness is our natural ability to accept.

What is acceptance? Acceptance, our viewing reality as clearly as possible, helps us live fully and see our world without judgment or absolute or extreme evaluation. Not meaning we are pleased with our situation or resigned to it, acceptance is viewing ourselves, events, feelings, thoughts, impulses, others, and the world with uncritical eyes, observing without demanding ourselves or the world be anything other than what we are or it is.

How do we accept things? One way is by altering the way we perceive and think about ourselves, others, and the world. If our perceptions and thoughts are clouded by absolutistic and judgmental attitudes, our view of ourselves, others, and the world will be distorted.

Acknowledging reality as it “stands” is important to our happiness and survival. When we accept reality, we cope with it better. Our beliefs, feelings, and physical sensations integrate easier—they are no longer stuck. Acceptance leads to less enduring and intense negative emotions. Acceptance creates a clearer and more focused mind leading to constructive and positive actions. We see what is—we know what better be done. And we act in our long-term best interests and feel better.

Besides stuckness, what are some of the hints that we are not accepting reality? Rage, panic, depression, anger, anxiety, hostility, guilt, impatience, judgmentalness, shame, and an array of self-defeating behaviors.

Tips on acceptance

- ❖ Accept your negative feelings. Whatever you are feeling, you really should be feeling because those feelings are flavored by your beliefs about them.
- ❖ Denying, ignoring, and rationalizing away reality blocks acceptance. Sometimes we don’t want to accept reality because we believe it’s too painful. People can accept emotional pain by accepting and experiencing their feelings.
- ❖ Acceptance does not rule out committing yourself to changing your circumstances if you can.
- ❖ Clarity and acceptance are directly related. You increase one and the other increases.
- ❖ Do you ask: “Why me or why did it occur?” Why is often another way of saying: “It should not.” Better ask: “Why not?”
- ❖ How did you accept painful reality in the past? Did the acceptance come in stages? Did you deny reality at first by not believing it? Did you blame someone or something for reality happening? Sometimes denial, disbelief, anger, and depression occur in stages before acceptance is reached. Grieving sometimes happens this way. Some or all of the mentioned stages may not be present in the grieving process due to our varying perspectives and beliefs about reality.

- ❖ Blow your misfortunes out of proportion and employ humor. If you lost your wallet—tell yourself you lost your entire life savings, right to social security, Medicare, and your identity. Laughing at your situation shows you've likely accepted it.
- ❖ Having taboo subjects demonstrates you don't want to hear about or view certain segments of reality. Glossing over, fibbing, or not admitting your mistakes are other active methods of non-acceptance.
- ❖ Often the expression: "I don't believe it!" is non-acceptance.
- ❖ Blaming and fault finding equal non-acceptance.
- ❖ Beware of ironclad rules and demandingness. These are cues that you're on the path to non-acceptance.
- ❖ If you can't change a situation—ask yourself how you can accept it. What beliefs hold you back?
- ❖ Own your own behavior—you are responsible for it unless someone physically forced you or your judgment was impaired by brain injury.
- ❖ Uncertainty and the unknown are parts of life. To demand certainty is to avoid reality.
- ❖ Awful, horrible, and terrible strongly hint we are not clearly experiencing reality or accepting it.
- ❖ Imagine how you might accept a deadly disease, a handicap, pain and death, losing your life savings, deaths of close friends or spouse, being fired, or your home burns down.