



# Awareness of our Emotions

In our journey toward restoration of our souls, it is essential that we come to know the quality and direction of our own emotions, our feelings, and our attitudes about them. We must know what is going on inside of ourselves.

Emotions are very accurate indicators of what we really believe; they reveal the source and root of our faulty belief systems (lies). Emotions come from our beliefs. They match what we believe. So when we focus on healing the wounds in your soul, we might identify the emotion you feel in that wound and what it is you believe that is creating that emotion.

## **Emotions exert powerful influence on our lives**

Our emotions cloud our thinking, govern our actions, and influence our relationships. Studies indicate that deficient *emotional skills* may be the reason why more than half of all marriages end in divorce. The way we express or withhold our feelings of affection can affect the future of our relationships. In fact, without emotion, people cannot relate or connect to others.

Negative emotions block ability to take in pleasure and love. They can also paralyze and debilitate us because they produce an unhealthy spiritual and mental condition. Fear, resentment, anxiety, guilt, tension, jealousy, anger, hate, ill-will, and despair are disintegrating enemies of human personality. They clog up normal sources of emotional, spiritual and intellectual power. When we are bogged down by negative feelings, these emotional ills turn in upon our personalities and sap our energy.

And when these negative emotions accumulate to a certain weight, the personality can't support them and it gives way. Hence, we say: "I'm going to pieces, falling apart, getting upset, flying to pieces." These phrases describe a threatened state of imbalance and disintegration. Unable to rid ourselves of these anxieties, we enter into a state of disease and fall open to many forms of ill health.

They also clog up and cut off the flow of God's energy with in us. The roar of emotions easily overpowers the small, delicate, keen motions of the spirit and gradually the accumulation of negative emotions can cut off the flow of life.

Human beings can be emotionally fragile. Even the tiniest thing can toss us about, like somebody not saying hello or good-bye to us. In English we often say phrases like 'caught in my emotions,' in the 'grip of fear', 'overwhelmed by sadness', or 'captured by love.' These phrases remind us of how powerful our emotions really are.



## Concept of “Emotional Intelligence”

New brain research suggests that emotional intelligence, not IQ, may be the true measure of human intelligence.

### **Emotional intelligence (EQ) refers to qualities like being able to**

1. Understand our own feelings; i.e., self-awareness.
2. Become responsible for our emotions—stop blaming others for them.
3. Empathize for the feelings of others.
4. Consciously choose and regulate your emotions in a way that enhances your living, not letting the emotions control or use you.
5. Able to read a social situation (emotional cues)—90% of emotional communication is nonverbal.

## *The four A's of emotional intelligence*

### **#1 Awareness**

The cornerstone to emotional intelligence is a sense of self-awareness, of being conscious of what we feel. It is the ability to pull back and recognize that “what I’m feeling is anger, or sorrow, or shame.” Awareness allows you to give what you feel a name. Awareness is most important because it allows us to exercise some self-control—to manage our emotions so we can process information, allow our emotions to motivate us, and use them to make our goals.

Once an emotional response comes into awareness—or, physiologically, is processed through the neocortex—the chances of handling it appropriately improves. Being aware of your emotional-physical self means understanding that you have a choice about the way you feel. God has invested deep within us the ability to govern our own emotions. We can even maintain them in silence when we want or need to.

### **#2 Acceptance**

Acceptance of our emotions enables us to feel the emotion and acknowledge it without fear or judgment of it. And we are able to understand the biological process taking place in our body and brain and accept it, to make peace with it.

### **#3 Attitude**

Discovering the relationship of your attitudes to emotions enables you to see which attitude is no longer valid or is lie-based. We hold certain “beliefs” about emotions which are not up for discussion. “That’s just the way I am.” They are beliefs that grew out of experiencing pain or pleasure. People who believe “anger is dangerous” have been hurt or threatened by someone both angry and powerful. Thus, they have a faulty understanding of the survival-based emotions. The problem is in the meaning we give to the emotion, not the word or feeling itself.



Most meaning is believed as if it was "absolute truth". We believe according to our experience; whatever happened when you were tiny and your parents had to deal with these emotions, and set the stage for what happens in you today.

For example, anger has many threatening and dangerous meanings, according to what happened to you when anger came up in your childhood and infancy. Anger has as many meanings as there are people, and most of them are negative. Righteous anger is an emotion for making things right, but we associate anger with bad. *If I am angry then you are to blame. I am angry because you have done something wrong. If I am angry, then I am bad.* Sometimes when we are afraid, we become angry. So we don't recognize our fear, but only our anger.

#### **#4 Action**

When we become aware of our emotions and attitudes then we can make them work for us. We can choose actions based on attitude and emotions that will increase our self-esteem and lead to more pleasure in life – and ultimately give us the ability to keep ourselves healthy.

### *The importance of emotions*

To be “emotionally intelligent” we need to recognize how far more positive and necessary emotions are to life than we normally assume. Here are some ways that emotions help us.

1. Vocalize the inner working of our souls. Emotions are the language of the soul; they are the cry that gives the heart a voice.
2. Link our internal and external worlds: They help us become aware of what is going on within us and around us.
3. Help us feel alive, express ourselves, respond to the world around us.
4. Help us react to warnings or anger in other people.
5. Help us feel regret or shame about something we have done that hurt us, so we wouldn't repeat those mistakes again.
6. We need our emotional responses in order to make decisions, to help us know how we feel about certain things. We unconsciously assign emotional values to some of our choices – these emotions help us make decisions.



## Understanding Emotions

### *Some different opinions about emotions*

1. Emotions are neither right or wrong, they simply are. Most people work hard not to feel what is unpleasant. They pretend, deny, or distort what they are feeling.
2. Emotions are amoral, neutral, judgment free. It is what we do with them that is either constructive or destructive.
3. Emotions are essentially pure and good.
4. Emotions are not amoral – they vocalize the inner working of our souls and are as tainted as any other portion of our personality, polluted by our inherited Adamic nature.

### **Some definitions**

1. Emotion— those human experiences in which inner attitudes are combined with a physiological response on the part of the body; affection, desire, & feeling; any specific feeling, any of various complex reactions such as love, hate, fear, or anger.
2. Feeling – an awareness of an emotional arousal to something or somebody.
3. Affect – an emotion, feeling, or mood as a factor in behavior.

### **Characteristics of emotions**

1. Emotions are evanescent, fragile and powerful.
2. Emotions change as feeling changes.
3. Emotions often display a reactionary motion – a swing from polarity; they vacillate and are undependable. Few matters in the world are as changeable as our feelings and emotions.
4. Emotions are like colors. Some are simple, whereas others are blends or mixed. Some are intense while others are mild.

### *Three dimensions of emotion*

#### **Biological dimension – physiological changes**

When a person has a strong emotion, many bodily changes occur. For example, fear drives the blood into the large muscles, causes an increased heartbeat, a rise in blood pressure, an increase in adrenaline secretions, an elevated blood sugar level, a slowing of digestion, and a dilation of pupils. Paying attention to our bodies may help us become aware of our feelings.

#### **Behavior & appearance – nonverbal reactions**

Feelings are often apparent by observable changes. Some of these changes involve our appearance or behavior – blushing, sweating, a distinctive facial expression, posture, gestures, different vocal tone and rate, etc. Surprise triggers the eyebrows to rise,



allowing the eyes to widen their view. Disgust wrinkles up the face and closes the nostrils to keep out foul smells.

### **Cognitive dimension – mental thoughts & attitudes**

What we think has a great effect on our emotions and our bodies. For instance, say to yourself, *“I’m such a shy person.”* Then say, *“Well I’m a bit shaky here, but that’s to be expected.”* Did you notice any differences in your feelings? in your body? Try another one: say, *“I’m unhappy”*. Now say, *“I’m very happy”*. Can you feel any difference in your emotions or body? Can you see the relationship between your thoughts and your emotions and body?

### ***Effect of emotions on our health***

The realms of the physical, psychological, & spiritual are often so deeply interrelated that there is often no clearly defined dividing line. Researchers argue whether emotions are in the body or the brain, but no one questions that the effects of emotions are in the body. All agree that the body acts up when we become emotionally upset. When we grieve our hearts hurt, when we are afraid, the pits of our stomachs goes cold, and we have difficulty breathing. Fear increases the heartbeat, raises the blood pressure, increases adrenaline secretions, elevates the blood sugar level, slows digestion, and dilates the pupils.

Every emotion involves a complex interplay between body and heart. We do not merely experience anger in our minds, we feel it in our bodies. Emotional disturbances decrease blood circulation and glandular secretions. Grief and disappointment uses up more energy than any other emotion. Long-termed submerged anger and/or fear leads to eating disorders, submerged grief leads to heart attacks, submerged shame and/or guilt lead to pre-menstrual problems. It does not matter if these emotions are justified or if we have been made to feel them unfairly, our bodies are affected in the same way.

### **Splinting reflex**

The body reacts to sudden physical pain by contracting tightly around it. Called the ‘splinting reflex’ because it causes the flesh around the broken bone to stiffen, it prevents the sharp bone from damaging the flesh. In the same way, the body responds to emotional pain. Notice how a crying child has great difficulty breathing. Each in-breath expands the pain of sadness and the pain causes the chest to contract, leaving the child sobbing in gasps.

When held for a long time, these contractions can interfere with the body’s internal organs. It is hypothesized that long-term contractions are responsible for a number of disorders, often labeled ‘psychosomatic’ by interfering with the flow of blood and other biochemicals. Without the proper flow of blood and the other biochemicals, the body’s internal organs could only function poorly or unevenly. Over time, the painful tensions these emotions produce can begin to influence how our physical organs function. It is



estimated that over two-thirds of hospital beds are occupied by patients who are put there because of their inability to organize and discipline their emotions.

### **Some areas in our bodies where emotional energy goes**

*Fear* – throat; stomach

*Excitement* – stomach

*Anger* – stomach, head

*Mortal terror* – bowels, genitals

*Pleasure* – genitals

*Love* – heart

*Sadness, grief* – heart, chest

*Shame, confidence* – bowels, lower abdomen

### ***Twelve categories of emotions***

1. Anger – rage, hostility, mad, hatred
2. Sadness – pain, disappointment, grief,
3. Afraid – fear, terror, distress, anxiety, horror, apprehensive, fright, dread
4. Glad – pleasure, happiness, amusement, joy
5. Disgust – revulsion, loathing, repugnance
6. Surprise – astonishment, amazement, shock
7. Contempt – disdain, dislike, disapproval, disrespect, scorn, derision
8. Excitement – enthusiasm, eagerness, enjoyment, anticipation, delight, thrill
9. Awe – adoration, surprise, wonder, worship
10. Desire – interest, wish, craving, want, yearning
11. Shame – disgrace, embarrassment, dishonor, humiliation
12. Guilt – guiltiness, remorse, fault

### **Some emotions need different treatment**

1. Grief, loss, sad
2. Anger, rage, resentment, kill, vindictiveness, revenge
3. Emotions rooted in lies or faulty belief systems
4. True guilt and shame
5. Reactions of flesh

### **Jesus was an example of an emotionally whole person**

The whole range of His emotions were available to Him. He knew how to do each of the above emotional categories very well. He felt anger, fear, joy, sad, and love. He was emotionally honest and knew how to use all of His emotions in life-giving ways.

#### ***Jesus was not emotionally blocked.***

- Accept love
- Give love
- Receive anger
- Express anger