Manage Your Emotions

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Brain References
1. Emotions are often ignored, misidentified, misread, or mismanaged – usually to the person’s detriment

2. The process of raising your Emotional Intelligence can be jump-started when you understand the difference between emotions and feelings – two biochemically different states – and are committed to managing both appropriately
There is no dedicated *Brain Emotion Center*

Emotions are diffuse – arise simultaneously in cells throughout brain and body

Emotional impulses arise in the 2nd brain layer
There are potentially 100 times more connections between the right hemisphere of the brain and the emotional 2nd layer.

- People whose innate brain-energy advantage is in the right hemisphere may be more aware of and in touch with emotion in themselves and in others.
Purpose of Emotions

Fast-acting cellular signals that are triggered by an internal or external stimulus and are designed to:

1. Get your attention
2. Provide you with information
3. Connect the conscious with the subconscious
4. Give you energy to take action
Each emotion comes with differing gestures, postures, behavioral patterns, memories, and facial expressions.

Create physiological markers that involve a wide range of bodily changes (e.g., rapid heart rate, sweaty palms, butterflies in the stomach, flushed or pale face, changes in breathing, triggering of substances such as hormones and neuropeptides).
When in the grip of a strong emotion, you are in a biochemically-altered state

Both the brain and body are part of the subconscious, faithfully recording and reporting chemical processes that enter our conscious awareness only as we recognize them as emotions

—Candace Pert PhD
Without an energy source, the hands of a watch would fail to move.

Humans would be “motionless” without emotions to give them information and energy.

You can experience every emotion and get the information it is designed to give you without emoting (e.g., expressing the emotion).
All emotions are positive and some are also protective – each is designed to help you become aware of specific sensory stimuli and to manage specific situations appropriately.

Note: The feelings and behaviors related to emotions are often mismanaged, however, and this can result in negative outcomes.
Clear scientific evidence exists that facial expressions registering at least joy, anger, fear, and sadness are inborn and may be seen on fetal faces during gestation.
Euphoria (awe, elation) is a signal that something very pleasurable or exciting is happening.

Euphoria provides energy to experience special moments at an intense level – is not designed to be sustained for long periods of time.
Without euphoria you may miss or under-appreciate special moments, and your life may lack appropriate spice and excitement.

When unmanaged, euphoria can lead to a search for activities that provide a continual high (e.g., addictive behaviors) through direct or indirect self-medication that alters your neurochemistry.
Joy (Contentment)

Joy provides energy to live life to its fullness – is the only emotion that doesn’t result in negative outcomes when maintained over time.

Joy is a natural state of anti-depression that is hard wired into the brain; it is a signal that life is basically going well.

Joy provides energy to live life to its fullness – is the only emotion that doesn’t result in negative outcomes when maintained over time.
Without joy you may be unable to become the balanced, contented, productive individual you were intended to be.

Pseudo joy or false joy can lead to obsessions, compulsions, addictions, a sense of unreality, frustration, and even depression.
Anger

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Anger signals that your boundaries have been invaded (e.g., physical, emotional, sexual, spiritual, social, financial…)

Anger provides energy to create and implement appropriate personal limits
Without anger you may lack the motivation to take needed corrective action, or may begin to tolerate the intolerable.

When unmanaged, anger can lead to bitterness, illness, injury, and even death.
Fear

Fear provides energy to take appropriate protective action for you and/or for others

Fear is a signal that you are in some type of danger (unless it is an imaginary type of fear)
Without fear you may be unable to protect yourself or your loved ones adequately.

When unmanaged, fear can kill ideas, undermine confidence, and escalate into phobias and/or immobilization.
Sadness
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Sadness is a signal that you have experienced some type of loss.

Sadness provides energy to grieve losses, heal past woundedness, and recover (feel better).
Sadness, Cont’d

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Without sadness you may fail to recover from your losses and/or grieve successfully.

When unmanaged, sadness can suppress immune system function, may decrease levels of serotonin, and can lead to depression and/or immobility (even apathy).
Apathy

People rarely commit suicide when in a state of apathy – they don’t have enough energy!

Unmanaged emotions can result in emotional overwhelm that can, in turn, lead to a state of apathy.
Motivators / Interrupters

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In addition to at least joy, anger, fear, and sadness, there are some emotional assistants

- **Motivators - Surprise and Disgust** (may surface in combination with a core emotion)

- **Interrupters - Shame and Guilt** (are likely learned reactions; may be helpful or false and unhealthy / unhelpful)
A specific neuropeptide may be associated with each emotion so you can only experience one core emotion at a time – Candace Pert PhD

Think of your brain as a stage and each emotion as an actor. Only one actor (emotion) can take center stage at a time, although you may experience a number of emotions in rapid succession.
Emotions and feelings are mediated by two distinct neuronal systems – The Lancet Neurology, March 2004

When an emotion arise you create the feelings you maintain based on your brain’s subjective interpretation – the brain tries to make sense of what just happened (physiological changes in your body) and what the emotion is trying to tell you.
Emotional signals appear to be interpreted into feelings in the frontal lobes of the third brain layer.

The pre-frontal areas help to moderate emotional expression.
Really hungry for some chicken is not a feeling . . .
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Little Farguart learned to hang a sign around his neck with a “feeling” label on it.

Use different words for feelings to help differentiate them from emotional signals:

- Anger surfaced – I feel mad
- Fear surfaced – I feel scared
- Sadness surfaced – I feel bad-sad
- Joy surfaced – I feel glad
- Euphoria surfaced – Wow! How exciting!
You are not responsible for every emotion that surfaces – the emotion may have arisen due to your own thoughts but it may have been triggered by external sources.

Since your brain creates your “feelings” (your interpretation of what the emotion is trying to tell you), you are responsible for the feelings you hang onto over time . . .
Live at joy and move up and down the staircase for *brief* periods of time as appropriate –

Live at joy!