



EMOTIONAL LITERACY 101

WAYS TO DESCRIBE AND IDENTIFY EMOTIONS

Understanding and regulating our emotions requires a crucial first step:

IDENTIFYING AND LABELING THEM.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

When we aim to convey our emotions to others, accurately recognizing and naming what we feel ensures effective communication.

Scientific evidence suggests that assigning emotions a name can actually reduce negative experiences. In moments of overwhelming emotions, simply acknowledging and verbalizing our feelings can provide much-needed relief. Dr. Daniel Siegel coined the phrase "name it to tame it" as a memorable reminder of this practice.

If we desire to transform our emotions, accurately identifying them becomes a vital step towards achieving this goal.

This handout/worksheet offers examples of 10 fundamental emotions to help you better recognize and understand your own emotional experiences. Following that, you will be guided to describe your encounters with these 10 basic emotions. It's important to note that your experiences may differ, and these examples are meant to serve as a helpful reference.



EMOTIONS 101 - COMMON EXPERIENCES OF EMOTIONS

ANGER

Other ways to describe anger

- furious
- grumpy
- irritable
- bitter
- rageful
- hostile
- indignant
- frustrated
- exasperated
- annoyed
- aggravated

Events that can prompt anger

- having a goal blocked
- you or someone you care about is being threatened or attacked
- being disrespected
- not having things turn out as you expected

Thoughts

- “It shouldn’t be this way.”
- “It’s their fault.”
- “That’s unfair.”
- “I am right and that’s it.”
- “That’s just wrong.”

Sensations

- face turning red or feeling hot
- clenched jaw
- pressure in head
- muscles tightening
- seating or shaking
- tight shoulders
- clenched fists

Urges

- wanting to physically or verbally attack
- throwing or breaking things
- using a loud or sarcastic voice
- stomping, slamming doors
- walking out of the situation
- criticizing or complaining

DISGUST

Other ways to describe disgust

- aversion
- contempt
- disdain
- loathing
- hate
- revolted
- sickened
- repugnance
- eww
- ick

Events that can prompt disgust

- something may damage health or wellbeing
- seeing or smelling waste products
- someone acting in ways that violate your values
- observing or hearing about cruel acts

Thoughts

- “That’s toxic.”
- “That’s ugly.”
- “That person is scum.”
- “I could be contaminated.”
- “I totally disapprove of my actions.”
- “He is deeply immoral.”

Sensations

- feeling nauseated
- gagging
- loss of appetite
- throat closing
- shuddering
- scrunching of face (eww face)
- feeling unclean or contaminated

Urges

- wanting to vomit
- wanting to destroy, get away from the person or item
- want to take a shower
- treating the person, animal or item with disdain or disrespect

HAPPINESS

Other ways to describe happiness

- joy
- bliss
- cheerful
- contentment
- excitement
- delight
- euphoria
- ecstasy
- elation
- enthusiasm
- satisfied
- enjoyment

Events that can prompt happiness

- receiving affection
- belonging
- doing things that are pleasurable
- achieving a desirable outcome
- receiving a pleasant surprise
- reality exceeding your expectations

Thoughts

- “This is soooo great.”
- “I like this.”
- “Yay!”
- “So much fun!”

Sensations

- feeling energetic
- active
- smiling
- feeling of lightness, soft jaw, relaxed shoulders
- open hearted
- easier breath

Urges

- wanting to share the feeling
- showing affection
- saying positive things
- keep doing what creates the feeling

FEAR

Other ways to describe fear

- anxiety
- dread
- horror
- nervous
- uneasy
- overwhelmed
- jumpy
- edgy
- tense
- shock
- terror
- worried
- panic

Events that can prompt fear

- having your well-being threatened
- beginning in a similar situation where you have been hurt or threatened
- new or unfamiliar situations
- having to perform in front of others
- being in the dark or in crowds

Thoughts

- “I am in danger.”
- “That feels threatening.”
- “They might judge me.”
- “I am going to embarrass myself.”
- “I am incompetent, I am going to fail.”

Sensations

- breathlessness
- rapid heartbeat
- feeling cold or clammy
- “butterflies” in stomach
- trembling or shaking
- sweating
- tightness of muscles
- shaky voice
- crying

Urges

- wanting to run away or hide
- wanting to avoid
- to talk too much or not enough
- to plead for help
- to be hypervigilant and look for danger or threat

ENVY

Other ways to describe envy

- dissatisfied
- greed
- longing
- covetous
- craving

Events that can prompt envy

- others getting credit for something that you have done
- others having something you really need or want
- others getting recognition and you don’t
- being left out of the “in” crowd

Thoughts

- “I deserve it, not him.”
- “Why do they have more than me?”
- “I am unlucky in life.”
- “I wish I had that.”
- “No one appreciates me.”
- “Others are treated differently.”

Sensations

- muscles tightening
- teeth clenching
- mouth tightening
- pain in the pit of stomach
- face flushing or feeling hot

Urges

- wanting to hate the other person
- wanting to hurt or get even with others
- attacking or criticizing those who have what you want
- feeling motivated to improve yourself
- working harder to improve your situation



MY EXPERIENCE OF EMOTIONS

ANGER

Words I use for Anger

Events that can prompt my anger

Thoughts I have that can trigger anger

DISGUST

Words I use for Disgust

Events that can prompt my disgust

Thoughts I have that can trigger disgust

HAPPINESS

Word I use for Happiness

Events that can prompt my happiness

Thoughts I have that can trigger happiness

FEAR

Word I use for Fear

Events that can prompt my fear

Thoughts I have that can trigger fear

ENVY

Words I use for Envy

Events that can prompt my envy

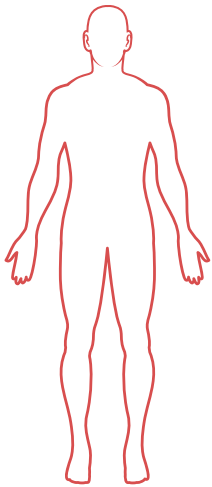
Thoughts I have that can trigger envy



MY EXPERIENCE OF EMOTIONS

ANGER

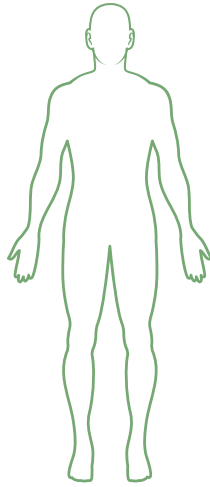
Sensations I feel when I feel anger



Urges I have when I feel anger

DISGUST

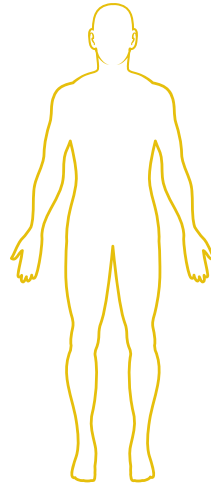
Sensations I feel when I feel disgust



Urges I have when I feel disgust

HAPPINESS

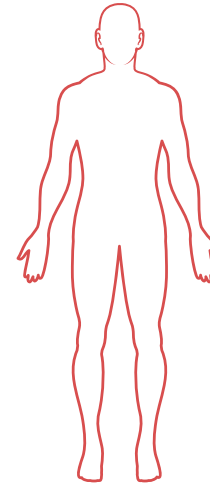
Sensations I feel when I feel happiness



Urges I have when I feel happiness

FEAR

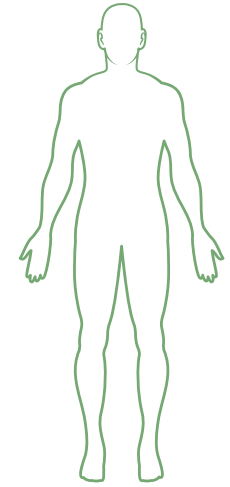
Sensations I feel when I feel fear



Urges I have when I feel fear

ENVY

Sensations I feel when I feel envy



Urges I have when I feel envy



EMOTIONS 101 - COMMON EXPERIENCES OF EMOTIONS

JEALOUSY

Other ways to describe jealousy

- fear of losing someone or something
- suspicious
- watchful
- possessive
- mistrustful

Events that can prompt jealousy

- fear of losing an important relationship
- someone could take something from you
- feeling unimportant to a person close to you
- partner wants space or flirts with others

Thoughts

"I am going to be abandoned."
"I deserve more than this."
"I think my partner is cheating."
"They don't care about me anymore."

Sensations

- breathlessness
- rapid heartbeat
- muscles tensing
- teeth clenching
- being hypervigilant
- feeling clingy

Urges

- wanting to control the person you are afraid of losing
- accusing partner of unfaithfulness or disloyalty
- wanting to spy
- desire to interrogate

LOVE

Other ways to describe love

- tenderness
- warmth
- passion
- affection
- fondness
- infatuation
- liking
- caring
- adoration
- longing

Events that can prompt love

- believing that someone genuinely loves, values, or cherishes your presence
- finding someone appealing or attractive
- trusting that someone will always be there for you

Thoughts

"They really get me."
"I admire him."
"He has my back, I can always count on him."
"I am so into her."
"He truly cares for me."

Sensations

- wanting physical closeness
- a calm feeling of trust and security
- feeling of lightness
- open-hearted
- euphoria
- rapid heartbeat
- butterflies in stomach

Urges

- wanting to express positive feelings
- urge to share time and experiences
- urges to do things to provide what the other person wants or needs
- urges for physical closeness or intimacy

SADNESS

Other ways to describe sadness

- hurt
- grief
- defeat
- loneliness
- disappointment
- dejection
- depression
- unhappiness
- despair
- sorrow

Events that can prompt sadness

- losing something or someone
- being separated from someone you care about
- being rejected
- hearing about troubles of others
- things not being how you would like them to be

Thoughts

"I miss her."
"I am worthless."
"No one cares for me."
"I am alone."
"The world is full of pain."
"I am so sorry for my friend."
"I can't get what I want."

Sensations

- low energy
- heaviness
- pain or hollowness in chest or stomach
- numbness
- heartache
- emptiness
- slumped posture
- tearfulness

Urges

- avoiding activities and people
- brooding
- withdrawing
- giving up
- ruminating
- blaming or criticizing yourself

SHAME

Other ways to describe shame

- embarrassment
- humiliation
- mortification
- self-consciousness
- shyness

Events that can prompt shame

- being exposed for your mistakes or wrongdoings
- being rejected
- being criticized in public
- not being understood or validated by others
- exposure of a private aspect of your life
- failure at something you feel you should be able to do

Thoughts

"I am not good enough."
"I will be rejected."
"I am unlovable."
"I am bad."
"I am a disappointment."
"I am ugly."

Sensations

- pain in the pit of stomach
- sense of dread
- hollowness or heat in chest and neck
- blushing
- sweating
- feeling of being uncomfortable in your body

Urges

- wanting to hide or disappear
- wanting to cover your face
- urge to say you're sorry, repeatedly
- wanting to avoid others
- looking down and away from others
- wanting to shut down and block all emotions

GUILT

Other ways to describe guilt

- remorse
- regret
- apologetic
- at fault
- in the wrong
- sorry
- to blame

Events that can prompt guilt

- doing or thinking something you believe is wrong
- violating your personal values
- not doing something you said you would do
- causing harm to yourself or someone else

Thoughts

"If only I hadn't done that."
"I am to blame."
"I behaved poorly."
"My action was against my values."

Sensations

- hot, red face
- feeling like you are suffocating
- feeling heavy
- pit in stomach
- feeling jittery

Urges

- wanting to repair the harm
- wanting to change
- urge to apologize or make amends
- asking for forgiveness
- wanting to avoid the person you've harmed



MY EXPERIENCE OF EMOTIONS

JEALOUSY

Words I use for Jealousy

Events that can prompt my jealousy

Thoughts I have that can trigger jealousy

LOVE

Words I use for Love

Events that can prompt my love

Thoughts I have that can trigger love

SADNESS

Word I use for Sadness

Events that can prompt my sadness

Thoughts I have that can trigger sadness

SHAME

Word I use for Shame

Events that can prompt my shame

Thoughts I have that can trigger shame

GUILT

Words I use for Guilt

Events that can prompt my guilt

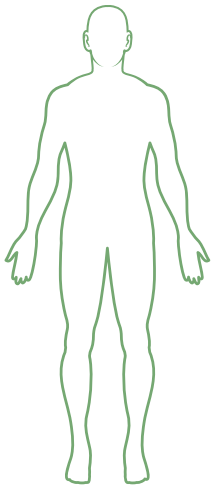
Thoughts I have that can trigger guilt



MY EXPERIENCE OF EMOTIONS

JEALOUSY

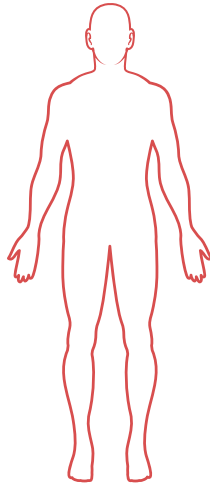
Sensations I feel when I feel jealousy



Urges I have when I feel jealousy

LOVE

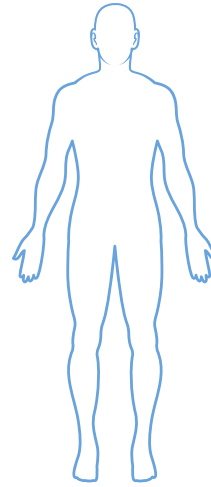
Sensations I feel when I feel love



Urges I have when I feel love

SADNESS

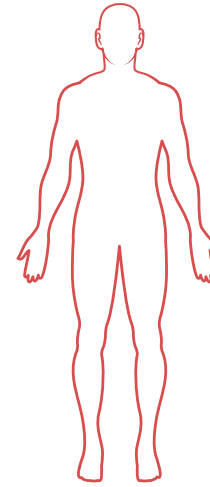
Sensations I feel when I feel sadness



Urges I have when I feel sadness

SHAME

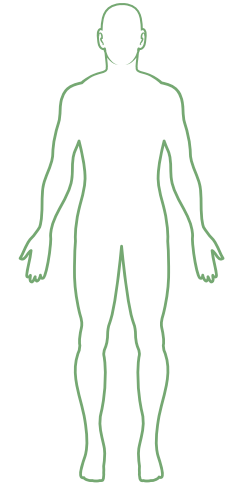
Sensations I feel when I feel shame



Urges I have when I feel shame

GUILT

Sensations I feel when I feel guilt



Urges I have when I feel guilt
