



What Am I Feeling?

The *why* and *how* of
identifying our emotions



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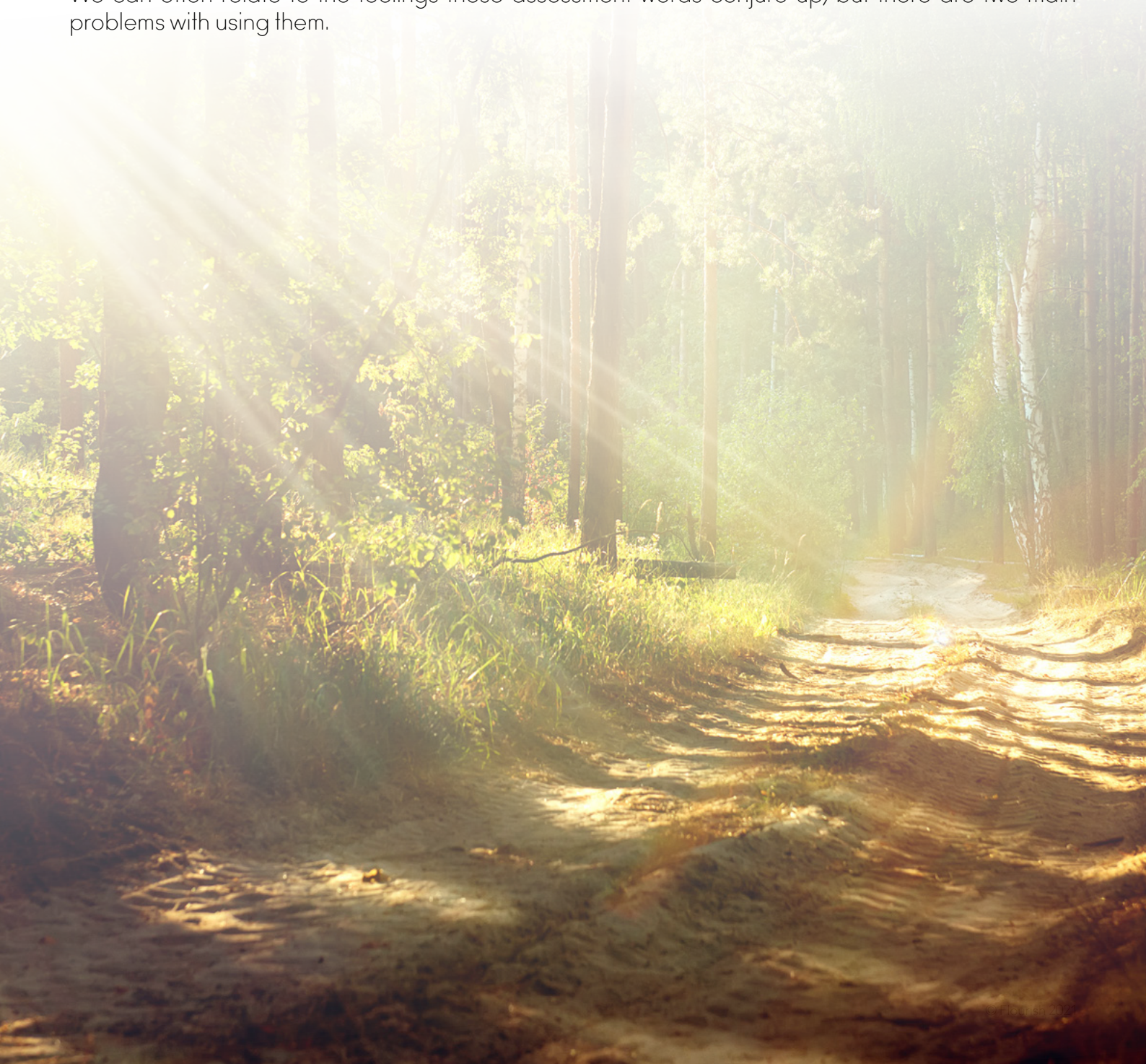


INTRODUCTION

This tool helps you identify what you're feeling.

There are numerous lists of emotions available, but many of them muddle up feelings with other things. For example we might say we feel 'cheated' or 'betrayed', or 'judged' or 'left out', but these aren't actually feelings. They're assessments of behaviour - usually someone else's behaviour - that may or may not be accurate.

We can often relate to the feelings these assessment-words conjure up, but there are two main problems with using them.





PROBLEM 1: the effect on others

If we're trying to communicate with the person involved in our assessment, they're likely to get defensive because our words can come across as an accusation or judgment.

We all know what it's like to be accused of something negative. It's a hurtful experience and anxiety usually comes up. So if we express our feelings as an assessment or judgment of the other person, they're likely to want to defend themselves.

Often these assessments are incorrect. For example my friend tells me she feels 'belittled' but that wasn't what I was intentionally 'doing' at all. Perhaps I just chose some words unskillfully that made it sound that way. Maybe she had a sensitivity to the expression I used.

If instead of telling me she felt 'belittled' by me, she said she felt hurt because she interpreted my comment to mean she was incompetent, it's much easier for me to feel compassion, to express care, and to want to clarify what I meant (and reassure her that I think she's competent). I'll want to make things right, rather than wanting to defend myself.

When talking to others, expressing the actual feeling is much more likely to draw out a positive response.

PROBLEM 2: we miss the power of self-insight

If we're identifying feelings as part of our own internal work (rather than telling someone else about them), and we find one of these "assessment" words coming up, it can also be unhelpful. That's because it can tempt us to stop at the assessment, and let the underlying feeling go un-named.

The reason this is a problem is that there's something very powerful about accurately identifying what's going on in our internal world. Once we've identified and acknowledged a feeling it's like our body-mind has permission to move on, to shift in relation to that feeling.

Feelings are clues our body gives to tell us what's going on inside. Often, if we brush past the clues without picking them up, we can't move to the next chapter of our experience. Our mind keeps nagging us to look at something it's worried about.

Don't get upset at yourself if you find yourself using these kinds of words, it's perfectly normal. We're used to this language of assessment, so it will definitely come up. Just take it as the starting point and see if you can go a level deeper to identify what the actual feeling is that goes with that assessment. What's underneath it? Simply looking through the list in this workbook can help you figure that out.

THE LIST

Below is a great list of 'clean' feelings. That is, they're not mixed up with assessments. This list is adapted from the very helpful practice of Nonviolent Communication (often called NVC - you can read more about it at cnvc.org).

The feelings are listed under two headings - those relevant to needs that are being met at the moment and those that are relevant to un-met needs.

For practical purposes, the two categories are essentially pleasant and unpleasant feelings. This might help you hone in on the ones relevant for you. Just scroll through the list - the headings can help you narrow down the search - and see which ones match what you're feeling.



This is a powerful tool. We hope you find it helpful. If you do, we'd love you to let us know! Leave us a comment on our [website](#), or [Facebook Page](#). You might also find some of our other [tools](#) and our [programs](#) helpful. Come on over and have a browse around at flourishpersonalgrowth.com.

PLEASANT FEELINGS - ASSOCIATED WITH MET NEEDS

AFFECTIONATE	CONFIDENT	ENGAGED	EXCITED	EXHILARATED
compassionate fond loving openhearted tender warm connected close	courageous empowered open proud safe secure	absorbed alert curious engrossed enchanted enthralled entranced fascinated interested intrigued involved open spellbound stimulated	amazed animated ardent aroused astonished dazzled eager energetic enlivened enthusiastic exuberant giddy invigorated lively passionate surprised vibrant	blissful ecstatic elated enthralled exuberant electrified euphoric overjoyed radiant rapturous thrilled
GRATEFUL	HAPPY	HOPEFUL	INSPIRED	PEACEFUL
appreciative humble moved thankful touched	amused blissful cheerful delighted ecstatic elated giddy glad jolly joyful jubilant merry overjoyed pleased rapturous tickled	confident expectant encouraged light-hearted optimistic sanguine up upbeat	admiration amazed awed eager enthused humble motivated moved psyched respect stimulated stirred wonder	calm clear-headed comfortable centred content equanimous fulfilled mellow open quiet relaxed relieved satisfied serene still tranquil trusting
REFRESHED				
enlivened recharged rejuvenated renewed rested restored revived				

Note: Indifference or neutrality might be thought of as a feeling in-between pleasant and unpleasant feelings. It's essentially the absence of a feeling about something.

UNPLEASANT FEELINGS - ASSOCIATED WITH UN-MET NEEDS

ANGER	DISQUIET	FEAR	DISCONNECTION	SADNESS
aggravated angry animosity annoyed disgruntled dismayed displeased enraged exasperated furious hostile impatient incensed indignant irate irritated irked livid miffed nettled outraged peeved rage resentful	agitated alarmed concerned discombobulated distraught disconcerted dismayed disturbed frustrated perturbed rattled restless shocked startled surprised troubled turbulent turmoil uncomfortable uneasy unnerved unsettled upset	afraid anxious apprehensive dread fearful foreboding frightened guarded insecure leery mistrustful panicked petrified scared shaky suspicious terrified trepidation wary worried	aloof apathetic bored cold closed detached distant distracted indifferent listless numb removed uninterested withdrawn	depressed dejected despair despondent disappointed discouraged disheartened forlorn gloomy heavy hearted hopeless melancholy miserable unhappy wistful wretched
FATIGUE	AVERSION	TENSION	PAIN	VULNERABILITY
beat burnt out depleted exhausted lethargic listless pooped sleepy tired weary wiped out worn out	abhorrence appalled bothered contempt disdain disgust dislike enmity hate horrified loathing repulsed revulsion	anxious cranky distressed distraught edgy fidgety frazzled frustrated irritable jittery nervous overwhelmed restless stressed out vigilant	aching agony anguished bereft devastated grief heartbroken hungry hurt lonely miserable regretful remorseful	fragile guarded helpless insecure leery reserved sensitive shaky
YEARNING	EMBARRASSMENT	CONFUSION		
envious jealous longing nostalgic pining wistful	ashamed chagrined flustered guilty mortified	ambivalent baffled bewildered conflicted dazed discombobulated disoriented doubt	hesitant lost mixed mystified perplexed puzzled torn uncertain	