



# What Your Feelings May Be Telling You

How Emotions Communicate Our Needs



# *Emotions* are the language of the soul



Emotions tell us something about ourselves. They can provide valuable information about our needs. A need is something that is necessary for an individual to live a healthy and happy life.

Negative emotions tell us that a certain need is not being satisfied. For instance, a person who is unexpectedly not invited to a party may feel excluded. This feeling may be a signal that she has a need for connectedness, a need to belong.

Positive emotions, on the other hand, signal that our needs have been met and that an activity ought to be continued. For instance, a person who is able to complete a complex task without help from others may experience pride. The pride signals that one's need for autonomy and competence are being satisfied.



# Feel Reflect Connect

## Step 1

### Identify feelings and daily needs

For the next week(s), whenever you experience an emotion, try to identify the emotion. Do you feel joy or relief? Do you feel anger, confusion, disappointment or simply sadness? Don't worry about labelling it 'correctly' – go with your instinct about what you're experiencing.

If the emotion is positive, list the emotion under the first column of **Table 1 (p.4)**.

List negative emotions under the first column of **Table 2 (p.5)**.

Next, ask yourself what the emotion is telling you

about your needs. If you experience a positive emotion, which need(s) are being satisfied as indicated by this emotion? List the need(s) under the second column of **Table 1 (p.4)**.

If you experience a negative emotion, which need(s) may not being satisfied as indicated by this emotion? List the need(s) under the second column of **Table 2 (p.5)**.

Use **Reference 1 (p.7)** to identify possible feelings and drill down for a more precise fit. For a list of possible of needs, use **Reference 2 (p.8)**.

Table 1. Positive emotions as indicators of need fulfillment

<i>Positive Experience</i>	<i>Need that is satisfied</i>

Table 2. Negative emotions as indicators of need thwarting

<i>Negative Experience</i>	<i>Need that is not satisfied</i>



- What stood out most for you from this exercise?

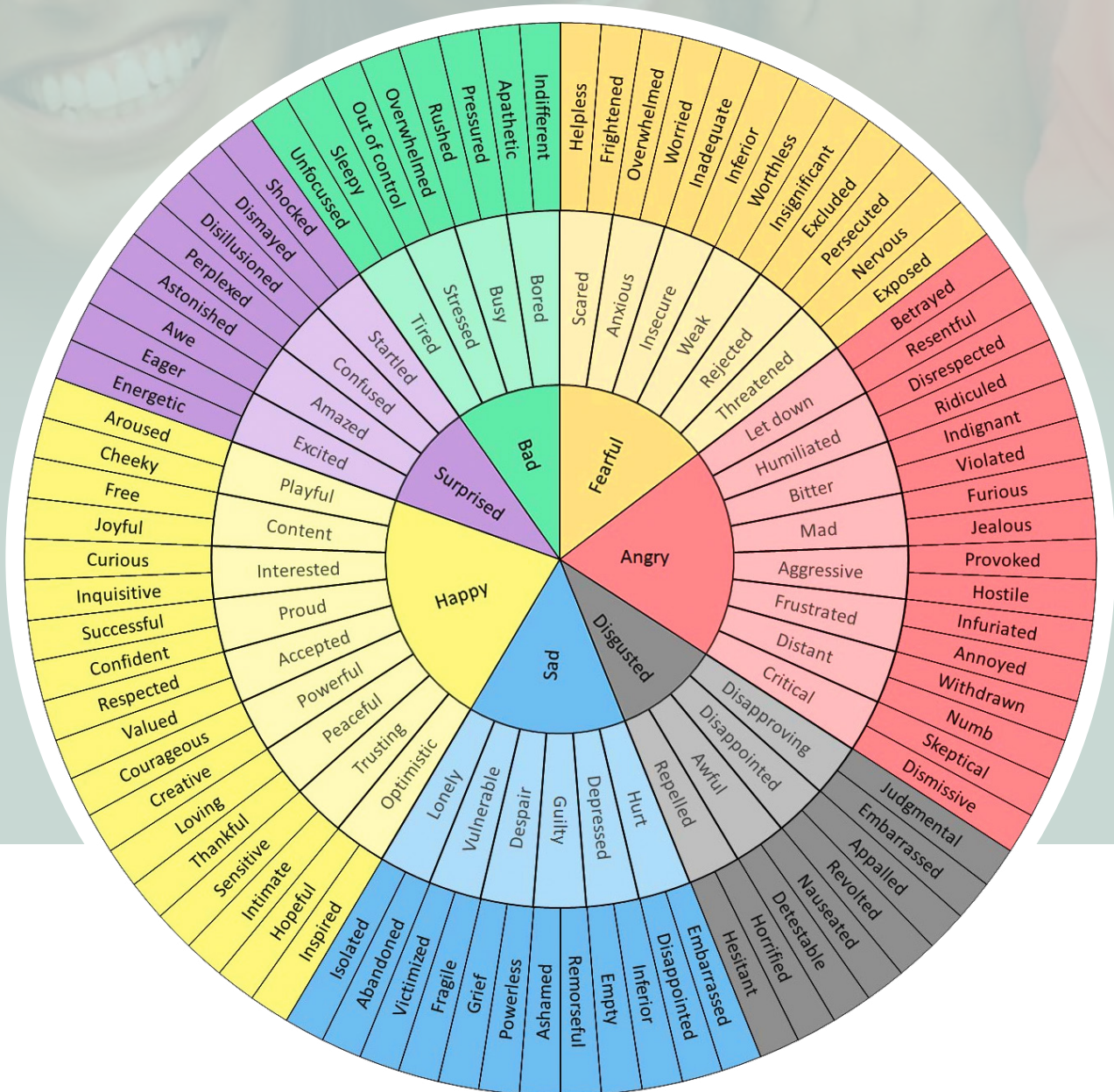
- What did you learn about yourself?

- What might you do with what you have learned?

- How can you use this exercise in the future?

[illegible]

# The Feeling Wheel



**Reference 2:** The list below highlights possible needs that may arise for you.

<b>Connection</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ acceptance</li><li>■ affection</li><li>■ appreciation</li><li>■ belonging</li><li>■ cooperation</li><li>■ communication</li><li>■ closeness</li><li>■ community</li><li>■ companionship</li><li>■ compassion</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ consideration</li><li>■ consistency</li><li>■ empathy</li><li>■ inclusion</li><li>■ intimacy</li><li>■ love</li><li>■ mutuality</li><li>■ nurturing</li><li>■ respect/self-respect</li><li>■ safety</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ security</li><li>■ stability</li><li>■ support</li><li>■ to know and be known</li><li>■ to see and be seen</li><li>■ to understand and be understood</li><li>■ trust</li><li>■ warmth</li></ul>
<b>Meaning</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ awareness</li><li>■ celebration of life</li><li>■ challenge</li><li>■ clarity</li><li>■ competence</li><li>■ consciousness</li><li>■ contribution</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ creativity</li><li>■ discovery</li><li>■ efficacy</li><li>■ effectiveness</li><li>■ growth</li><li>■ hope</li><li>■ learning</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ mourning</li><li>■ participation</li><li>■ purpose</li><li>■ self-expression</li><li>■ stimulation</li><li>■ to matter</li><li>■ understanding</li></ul>
<b>Peace</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ beauty</li><li>■ communion</li><li>■ ease</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ equality</li><li>■ harmony</li><li>■ inspiration</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ order</li></ul>
<b>Autonomy</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ choice</li><li>■ freedom</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ independence</li><li>■ space</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ spontaneity</li></ul>
<b>Physical well-being</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ air</li><li>■ food</li><li>■ movement/exercise</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ rest/sleep</li><li>■ sexual expression</li><li>■ safety</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ shelter</li><li>■ touch</li><li>■ water</li></ul>
<b>Honesty</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ authenticity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ integrity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ presence</li></ul>
<b>Play</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ joy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ humor</li></ul>	