

Emotional Identification

Emotions are important. Emotions are normal and everyone experiences them. Emotions link to our mood and that, in turn, links to our actions and behaviours. By noticing and managing our emotions, we can influence our actions and behaviours.



This isn't about getting rid of emotions! Emotions help us recognise when things are good or aren't right. A lot of people I have worked with wish that they were able to stop themselves getting angry. But anger can be a good emotion! It can help us recognise when things aren't right, or something is happening that is not in line with your values.

Think about Greta Thunberg. She displays anger at climate change as it is against her values – she uses this anger for a positive purpose. It can be an agent for change. Think about other people that have used strong emotions for positive change: Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr etc.

HOWEVER - what is important is how we choose to react to our emotions. We can only make a choice on how to react when we actually know what emotion we are experiencing.

Family	Fits the facts	Function	Action urge
Anger	Threatened Blocked from goal	Energy burst	Attack
Fear	Danger	Protection	Avoid/run Freeze
Sadness	Loss	Recover/replace Don't lose anymore	Cling to/pine for lost item Withdraw
Joy	Potential benefit for you	Repeat/do more of	Do more of Maximise gains
Guilt	Social crime	Keep in group	Repair
Shame	Social crime Risk expulsion	Keep in group	Hide yourself or your crime
Disgust	Toxic substance	Safe from contamination	Repel or recoil from