



Feelings just are. They are neither good nor bad. Emotions are a natural reaction to a situation, a person, an environment. We cannot not have feelings. The word “bad” when referring to feelings is an inaccurate description because there is no such thing as a bad feeling. Difficult feelings do exist, yes, and some people feel them more deeply than others but that does not make them bad.

Given that feelings are usually at the root of our turmoil, it’s important to learn how to observe our feelings, identify them and not judge ourselves for having them. Once we start to identify them, we can start to see (and feel) as they change. Every single feeling we experience does change, with or without any help from us. Feelings never stay the same or at the same intensity.

4 STEPS TO IDENTIFYING FEELINGS

▶▶▶ 1) Physically Relax & Examine Your Body

We tend to hold our feelings in different body parts, so start identify feelings in your body. Pay attention to the cues that your body gives you. E.g. tight chest can be anger, stomach pain can be anxiety, headaches can be stress. Having these physical responses should tell you to pause and ask yourself “what is going on right now?”

▶▶▶ 2) Ask Yourself “What Am I Feeling Right Now?”

Tune in to that place in your body where you feel emotional sensations and ask yourself “what am I feeling right now?” Wait and listen to whatever you can sense in your place of feelings. Although it may seem silly, referring to a feelings chart or wheel such as the one in this tool kit can be an extremely helpful when trying to figure out what you’re feeling.

▶▶▶ 3) Be Still & Do Not Judge or Analyse

Take some time to just sit with yourself and the situation. See what comes up. Perhaps the feelings change or you find your self getting fidgety and tensing up. Breathe deeply into these feelings, don’t try dismiss them, stay as an observer.

▶▶▶ 4) Get Curious

Once you have obtained a general sense of what you are feeling, go on to ask the following questions:

*Where about in my body is this feeling, is it in its original place? What is the shape of the feeling?
If I have to give a it color, what would it be?*

In this way, we see that it is important to give a concrete form to feelings then it becomes easier to identify them. Once you have identified your feeling, it is important to express them appropriately.



FRIENDSHIP BENCH

#iwillthrive