

## **Rethinking Emotions**

**By The Emotional Pro, Ilene L. Dillon, M.S.W.**

The saying goes that human beings only use a small percentage of their brain cells—ever—in their lives. The new saying goes that so far, human beings barely use their emotions, collectively one of the most powerful, potent and helpful parts of ourselves. The question is.....are your emotions a problem or a boost in your life?

For most people, emotions don't play much of a role, UNTIL something happens that stirs them up, and then they are seen as a problem. "I'm emotional," we say. "I lost control." "Pardon me for crying." "I lost it because I just got so angry." "I couldn't help myself." "Things just got out of control." The ways in which we talk about emotions reveal the way we relate to emotions. Apparently, we see them as something embarrassing, overpowering, just barely under our control, and as something we should not be having!

This way of relating to our emotions is the result of decades and decades of people not learning about emotions, about what they are truly designed to do, and about how to work with them. And now, they are hurting us. Just look at daily news reports about war, killings, arguments, shootings, rampant illness, drug wars, etc. Emotion—particularly anger—is involved with every one of these, yet we don't know enough about our emotions, including anger, to effectively change things. We've learned to hold our emotions down, sequestering their energy deep inside of us. Whenever we hold emotions inside of us, they tend to grow.

Because emotions are energy. Think of e-motions, energy in motion. Each emotion is a form that energy takes, each with a unique job that it is designed to do for us. Through physics, we know that energy needs to move, and will at every opportunity; yet we don't know how to masterfully move the energy of our own emotions through us so we can release it harmlessly and allow it to move on.

We also don't know why we have emotions in the first place, or what they are designed to do for us. We think of emotions as "negative," believe we can get "rid" of them (we can't), and push them away or ignore them as much as possible—all to our own detriment.

All of this is why it is now time for us to Rethink Emotions. Every human being on this planet has emotions. They are with us constantly. Emotions influence every decision we make, every action or reaction we experience, our relationships, and the ways we live. Isn't it time, then, for us to Rethink Emotions and discover how to relate to them in positive, constructive ways?

Personally, I'm a recovered angry person. After a very challenging childhood, which involved loss of my parents, abuse, neglect and constant moving, I was filled with anger. As it happens in life, being so angry drew my attention there. I wanted to find out how to get rid of that anger so it didn't constantly run my life. As a result of my 40-year investigation, I learned so much about emotions that I have now come to be called The Emotional Pro! I've written 20 books, booklets and CDs on emotions, have hosted Internet radio's *Full Power Living* since 2004, and have also focused on emotions through speeches, seminars, teleseminars, writing and coaching. Personally, I have discovered that emotions are incredibly important in human lives. Learning to be in charge of them stops emotions from tyrannizing us, allowing us to create better lives!

I'm out to show others the way through the sometimes-bewildering "forest" of emotions! So come and think differently with me about emotions. Let's re-think together.

Did you ever wish you had a "User's Manual" that could help you decide what actions to take in your life? In fact, each and every one of us comes equipped with a User's Manual, constantly available, 24/7, giving us immediate feedback and

“signaling” us what actions to take. Yet, have you ever had someone tell you of the Manual’s existence?

Our “User’s Manual” is made up of all our emotions. Each emotion gives us a different signal, telling us the best action to take. Together, emotions guide us through our days and nights. For them to do their work, we need to listen to them! We need to understand what they are saying. AND, we need to be the “conductors” of this emotional “orchestra,” rather than allowing any and all of our “emotional musicians” to take over and run the show. Make sense?

What emotions do for us is to *draw our attention to an area that needs attendance!* If you’re a young man or woman, for example, and meet someone who leaves you with that feeling of being “in love,” what does the emotion signal you to do? Come closer! Not only with words and spending time together, but with even greater closeness, such as hugging or kissing or walking arm-in-arm. The emotion of “love” signals us: come closer. The emotion “loneliness” signals us that we’re drained out and need additional energy added to us. When you feel lonely, it draws your attention to the fact that you are putting more energy out than you are taking back in. The action it stimulates you to take is to do something to bring energy into yourself: ask for a hug, read a book that is meaningful to you, walk in nature, play with your children or grandchildren—whatever it is that brings you back to balance by bringing energy in to you.

Whether it is anger, hurt, loneliness, jealousy, love, shame, guilt, grief, remorse, joy, happiness, or depression, each of your emotions has a signal for you. Once you know the signal, you can use it to guide your actions. (Get our complementary list of the “signal” of 7 everyday emotions when you visit [www.emotionalmasterycoach.com](http://www.emotionalmasterycoach.com))

Our original learning about emotions occurs in the first 7 years of life. When we have experiences in those 7 years, each experience gets connected to emotion.

Some emotions are positive; in later life we love to revisit those emotional experiences for sustenance and pleasure. Others are not positive. Unless we disconnect the experience/emotion connection (usually through therapy), whenever a similar experience arises, that emotion will come with it! And this will go on for the rest of our life. Michael Brown, author of *The Presence Process*, says that most of us spend our entire lives reliving the emotional matters of the first seven years of life!

This is what happens when we react—out of proportion—to things that happen in our adult lives. Our attention is being drawn to that still-sore spot from childhood, *so that* we can heal it and stop having it as a sore spot! By changing what we do today, we can heal the emotion from the past. Such healing also extends into our future. When we heal the emotion, we free up our own energy, tied up through all the years holding that emotion/experience connection in place.

For example, I once experienced a neighbor, who was normally pleasant and nice, speak to me in a harsh and critical way. It disturbed me for days. I went looking for when I had experienced the feeling I was having from this conversation—what was the earliest time I had been disturbed in the same way? What I found was MANY conversations with my father, who dealt with his children through criticism. Once I realized I was reacting to my neighbor because fear and anger arose that was connected to the fear and anger I felt when my father spoke to me in a similar way, then I had two choices. I could have gone into my imagination, returned to the situation with my father in my mind, and claimed power and stopped him from talking abusively to me. The other choice, and the one I took, was to take power in the present moment by going to talk to my neighbor and ask him to talk with me in another way. He was agreeable to do that; and we mended our relationship. By taking power in the present with my neighbor, I also healed those long-ago experiences with my father, so that from then on I did not have a reaction of fear and anger whenever someone spoke to me in a critical way. I had used the

appearance of those emotions of heal and empower myself, which is what they are designed to allow me to do.

Amazingly, there is an entire system set up in your life and in mine to allow us to heal those old emotional wounds, learn lessons, and empower ourselves to lead more satisfying and full lives! When we Re-think our emotions, it becomes clear that emotions are provided for our benefit, and are thus our friends and helpers.

What does this mean for your own life?

It means you can lead an emotionally balanced life, regardless of what happened to you in your early years.

It means that you can handle and learn from every emotionally-laden experience that comes up in your life.

It means that you can get free of repetitive patterns, the ones that cause you to call yourself “stupid” because you keep connecting with the same type of person as a love interest, or getting yourself stuck with people who drain your energy, or do more for others than you do for yourself, causing yourself tremendous stress. It means your self-esteem can improve, the amount of energy you have to live your life can increase, the joy you take, daily, from whatever you decide to do, will grow.

And all of this is at your fingertips! Constantly. To access it, you need to re-think emotions and learn more about them. You may wish to take a class, get some coaching or see a therapist to help you get to know your emotional landscape. Because emotions are energy, and because when we store energy inside of ourselves, that energy grows in power, if you have been holding onto emotions over many years, you’ll likely want an “assistant” or “gatekeeper” to help you when you open the door to your emotions. It would be like standing downstream of a dam when they open the spillway on a very, very full lake. Be sure to take care of

yourself as you open up to your emotions. At any rate, whatever you need to do, do it asap.

NOW is the time for All of us to re-think emotions. It's time for us to recognize that emotions are tools for improving the quality of our lives. It's time for us to bring emotions to the light of day, to know what they're pushing to tell us, to utilize their message, and to empower and free ourselves *through* our emotions!

*The End*

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