

Feeling is Healing

Understanding why you are having challenging experiences is helpful as it allows you to discover life's lessons which then permits you to grow as a human/spiritual being. However, when there are powerful negative feelings associated to these events they need expression or release for healing to occur. Avoiding (i.e. rationalizing or suppressing) these emotions only strengthens them – this can lead to all manner of physical and/or psychological disturbances (e.g. insomnia, digestive issues, headaches, depression, addiction etc).

In this article, I will outline some techniques and remedies to help you feel/heal five of the most prevalent emotions that accompany painful experiences: anger, depression, fear, grief and guilt. In most cases, once you have expressed these emotions you will begin to feel and think more positively. (If you do not know how to use the natural remedies listed below read some material on aromatherapy and Bach flower essences.)

1/Anger is usually about not getting what you want which can lead to frustration and resentment toward yourself, others and life in general.

Techniques: Scream; hit or punch a pillow, punching bag or dummy; smash plates on a brick wall or on the floor the way people do in Greek Taverns (make sure it is safe to do so); if you are angry at someone in particular, confront them in person or through a letter; write down what you need to say and burn it; play some angry music (hard rock, heavy metal etc) and jump around.

Remedies: Aromatherapy: Rose, Chamomile, Rose wood. Bach Flower Essence: Willow.

2/Depression is anger turned inward. It is still about not getting what you want but instead of externalizing the pain you turn it in on yourself. (If you are having difficulty functioning, are 'emotionally numb' and/or suicidal please seek professional assistance.)

Techniques: Refer to the tips on how to deal with anger listed above. If you are unsure about the source or cause of your anger reflect on it for a while – if this fails discuss it with someone wise, compassionate and trustworthy.

Remedies: Aromatherapy: Geranium, Bergamot, Clary sage. Bach Flower Essences: Sweet chestnut, Mustard, Gentian.

3/Fear is a lack of ease which comes from a sense of insecurity about the unknown. The only time that this emotion is really useful is when it is alerting you to some immediate threat for which you need to take steps to protect yourself (e.g. an impending natural disaster or the arrival of an abusive person in your life).

Techniques: If you are physically shaking, put your arms around yourself in order to self-soothe; for panic attacks, take a deep breath and slowly exhale counting backwards from five; write down your fears and anxieties then burn them; talk to someone who might appease your fears or

be able to help you in some other way (e.g. accompanying you to the doctor if you are afraid to go alone).

Remedies: Aromatherapy: Sandalwood, Frankincense, Lavender. Bach Flower Essences: Rock rose, Agrimony, Rescue Remedy (this last one alleviates all negative emotions to some degree).

4/Grief is sadness and sorrow related to a major life loss. Sometimes grief is confused with depression as both emotions are quite ‘heavy’ – the important distinction here is that the latter is characterized by a feeling of self-loathing. Of course you may be sad and depressed at the same time but they are still two different emotions.

Techniques: Cry, howl if necessary; if it is difficult to cry, watch a sad movie or listen to a melancholic song; write a letter to whom or what has been lost and burn it; document your thoughts and feelings by keeping a journal; talk about it with a compassionate person.

Remedies: Aromatherapy: Rose, Chamomile. Bach Flower Essence: Star of Bethlehem.

5/Guilt is about self-blame. It is often what I call “misplaced responsibility” which involves taking on the burden of a negative event that is really somebody else’s fault. For example, you may blame yourself for being robbed one night after walking into an unsafe neighborhood. Even though you may have been able to make a different choice about going to that place, the robbery is in fact the sole responsibility of the thief. If, however, you are the thief in this scenario you may feel guilty about stealing which you can resolve by making amends.

Techniques: You cannot feel guilt in order to release it. What is required for healing to occur is an understanding that you are not responsible for someone else’s actions. If you have transgressed, then you need to take action to undo or to minimize the harm that you have done (e.g. apologize, return stolen items, pay for damages and so on).

Remedies: Aromatherapy: Geranium, Sandalwood. Bach Flower Essences: Pine, Elm.

Happy Healing!

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