



eBook

The Gift of Our Emotions



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Introduction

Emotions. Just the word can fuel so many different ones, be it in a personal or professional setting.

Emotions are a gift, the cornerstone of our human experience. They are messages that communicate what's going right and what needs some attention or tweaking.

In the past, these messengers haven't been welcome at work, yet since the pandemic, remote work, and the Great Resignation that's changing. As a coach, trainer and speaker who has been supporting companies, teams, leaders, and entrepreneurs my entire career, I am glad that corporate culture is moving more towards embracing the value of our mental and emotional state—our wellbeing.

As a coach that pays attention to the whole person, it is easy to recognize that what happens at home impacts work and vice versa. Leadership is an inside job and starts with understanding and regulating one's emotions then encouraging those around you to do the same.

In this eBook we will discuss whether to suppress or express your emotions, if men and women handle emotions in different ways, and offer some support on feeling good every day.

Chapter 1: Suppress or Express Your Emotions?

We are wired with emotions. Therefore, when we suppress our emotions, we are actually going against how we are designed to work as a human being. In fact, rejecting or suppressing how you feel can cause you harm physically and emotionally.

Keeping emotions bottled up will eventually lead to stress, anxiety and other adverse mental conditions. Suppression of emotions over the long term can lead to depression, problems with professional and personal relationships, stalled career advancement, health problems and even alcohol or drug abuse as many people turn to these supports to calm anxieties and get sleep.

We may have been taught to suppress emotions by our parents and grandparents. These generations were taught that it was a true sign of character to be able to keep your emotions in check and power through them. There was less information about the effects of suppressing emotions than there is today.

Some people still adhere to the old way of not expressing emotions. While there are appropriate times and ways to communicate how you are feeling, modern studies are showing that suppressing emotions is damaging.

Let's look at a few different ways to express your emotions and stay healthy.

1. **Physical Exercise:** Some people play sports such as basketball or volleyball, while others will work out at the gym.
2. **Meditation:** Meditation is another, more tranquil way to reduce your stress and release tension.
3. **Talk it out:** Sometimes all you need is to talk to a trusted family member or friend about what you are feeling.

Keeping your emotions inside is not a healthy way of dealing with them. Finding ways to express your emotions in a way that works for you will help your overall health and wellbeing.

Emotions that are stuffed in come out sideways. It is not worth getting sick because you aren't willing or able to communicate how you are feeling or what you need. The benefits of expressing yourself will support you personally and professionally, leading to more good feelings.

Identify Your Biggest Triggers



Chapter 2- Do Men & Women Handle Emotions Differently?

Do you think there is a difference between the way men and women handle their emotions? Intuitively, many of us believe there is.

It could be due to societal expectations where men are taught to “man up” and keep their emotions underwraps. Women, on the other hand, are traditionally raised to be the nurturers and it is more common to accept and expect the expression of emotions from them. Of course, there are certainly men who are more comfortable expressing emotion and women who are not.

We have seen these stereotypes reinforced in movies, books, social media, and even the board room. People who grew up watching John Wayne movies saw the Duke as being a tough guy. Men would model themselves based on his characters. Even though our culture is changing, some of these gender norms are not much different today. Women are still looked at as more emotional and men less emotional.

The book, “[Men Are from Mars and Women Are from Venus](#),” lays out why we are different from each other, with a big difference being biology. Men and women are designed to complement one another. We know that this difference, if nurtured and supported, is beneficial to a family unit, but what about the workplace? Could the same be true there as well?

It’s important to note that many studies on the differences between men and women are centered around the study of the brain. While science has come a long way in the past 50 years with these studies, the brain is a highly complex organ. In the grand scheme of things, we know very little about it. Therefore, how much do we really know about emotions in either sex? What will we know 50 years from now about the brain? No one can say for sure, but it is likely to be very different from what is known today.

What do you think about this? What have you seen in your life, family and work with respect to how emotions are handled? What differences have you noticed, if any, between men and women?



Chapter 3- Top 3 Ways to Feel More Satisfied in Life

How satisfied are you with your life? If you feel restless and unsatisfied in certain areas, you aren't alone. Being satisfied with your life isn't always an easy state for anyone. Below are the top three aspects that can help you to feel more satisfied with your life.

1. Exercise

Exercise is great for you both physically and mentally. Exercise helps keep your body healthy while releasing endorphins that make you feel happy. Exercise is also an effective way to release tension and excess energy being held in the body, which is why many high-level leaders make exercise an important part of their daily routine. If you are not currently incorporating enough exercise (walking, running, going to the gym, yoga, etc) into your schedule, it's ok. Start small and add routines and tiny habits that move you closer to positive behaviors. Select behaviors that lead you to the outcomes you are seeking. Ease into it and let your results inspire you to build from there.

“Small steps in the right direction yield a big difference over time.” - Barb Girson

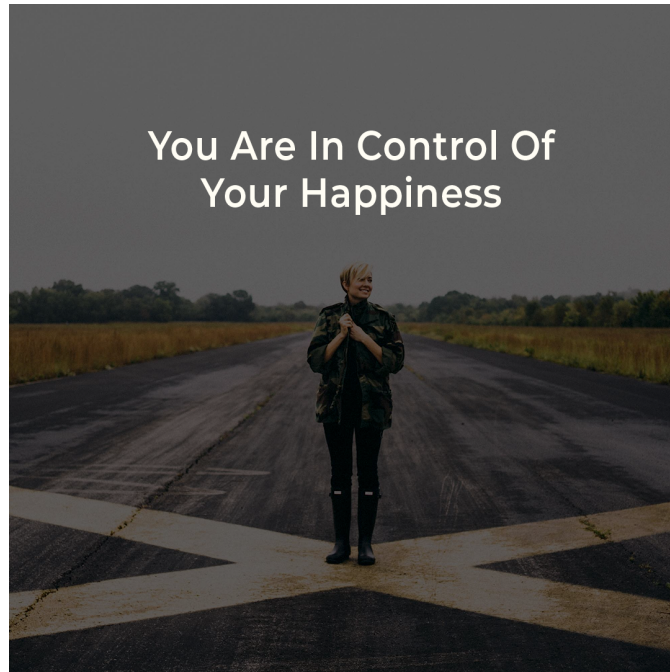
2. Be Grateful

One of the best ways to feel more satisfied with your life is by practicing gratefulness for all the amazing blessings you have already. Focusing on wanting what you don't have, personally or professionally, will leave you feeling unsatisfied. Practicing gratitude daily leads to a total mindset shift. Going from a mindset of lack, to a mindset of abundance. Take some time to brainstorm all the strengths, skills, people, and feelings that you have in your life, then remember to come back often and add to the list. Be sure to focus on what makes YOU feel good rather than what you believe SHOULD make you feel good. As I always say, “don't SHOULD all over yourself”.

3. Release Stress

We can all agree stress is a major hindrance to feeling satisfied with our life. That's why it's important to acknowledge and release stress. There are many different ways to come into balance; exercise, gardening, daily devotionals, meditation, being creative, or cooking for your family. Whatever mix of stress relieving activity works well for you, allow yourself time for self-care each day. These daily practices will build on each other and when you are faced with an especially stressful moment at home or work, you will

find you may not feel as triggered as you had in the past. And of course, don't underestimate the power of a deep breath, taking a break, or even reaching out to a friend for some help.



Chapter 4- 5 Surefire Ways to Release Regret

Regret happens. What doesn't have to happen is holding on to it forever. Releasing regret is a process, one that is different for every person and every situation. However, having a few tricks in your pocket to release regret is helpful— and you might just learn something wonderful about yourself in the process.

1. Practice Daily Gratitude

Practicing daily gratitude is a great way to constantly remind yourself of all that you have. Family, friends, a home, food to eat, purposeful work, time in nature, maybe even a loving pet to come home to. Whatever your gratitude is toward, reminding yourself of it is a great way to reflect on the good in your life and make the regrets seem less important in the grand scheme of life.

2. Trust the Journey

Reminding yourself that even the adverse events in life are part of a bigger journey allows you to look at the larger picture. Yes, you regret this one mistake. Don't mourn over your mistakes and bad decisions. Treat them as part of the learning process. Start overcoming them with good choices and decisions.

Also, did that one mistake lead you down a different path that had good outcomes? Trust that in time you will find out why that mistake or loss occurred and what it offered you; resilience, experience, a shift in direction, even humility.

3. Learn to Release Emotions

Emotions are fleeting, yet sometimes we hold on to them, replay them and even dwell over them and ruminate. Beating ourselves up for something that happened in the past is not supportive. It is certainly not what you would tell a friend. Practice self-compassion and self-empathy.

Cultivating the ability to release your feelings when they are not serving you will benefit you in all areas of life.

4. Accept the Lesson Learned

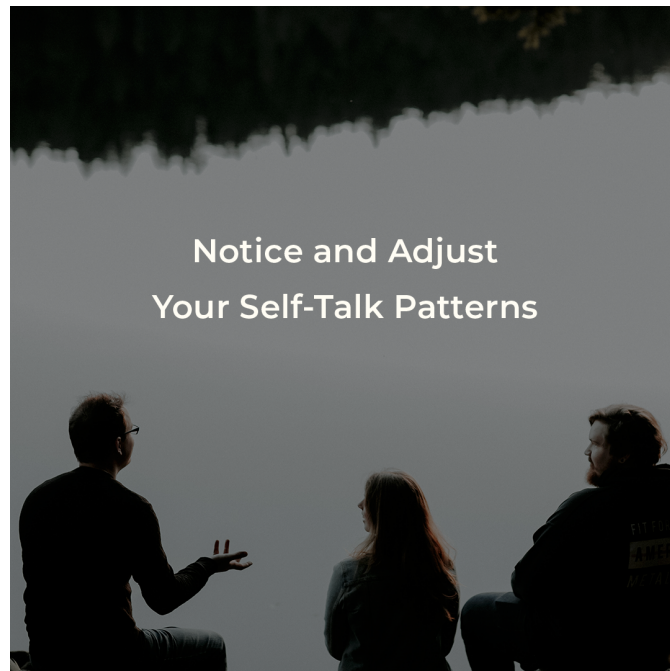
Situations or actions we regret typically offer us a lesson—if we are open to learning it. Accept the learned lesson and move forward. Living through a challenging event means more when you make choices that implement what you learned into your future life.

5. “What If-ing” the Past Doesn’t Change the Future

Living in the land of “what ifs” is tempting. However, “what ifs” mean nothing in the practice of daily life. You can spend hours or even days guessing at a different outcome, and it doesn’t matter. Those what-ifs will usually not directly impact your future other than to steal from it.

If you are living your life being swallowed alive by your regret, start exploring ways to release it and move on. This might mean seeking help from a coach to move forward or therapist to understand the past.

You deserve a life that is fulfilled and happy, not a life that leaves you stuck in the past and wallowing in disappointment.



Chapter 5- Laughter is the Best Medicine

Let's wrap this up with some fun. You have probably heard the phrase laughter is the best medicine. It may even be a bit cliché, and even so it still holds true. If you are feeling down, intentionally compelling yourself to smile or laugh can turn your mood around.

If you need a pick-me-up, hang out with people who are upbeat. If you are with others who are down as well, it's going to be difficult to get out of that funk.

No one can be happy 100% of the time. If you are unhappy more than you are happy, it could be time to seek some help.

Consider keeping a laughter journal and make note of personal stories and situations that make you laugh. For me it might be the time I was a participant of a serious training workshop, and after going to the restroom returned to the session with, you guessed it, a string of toilet paper on my shoes trailing behind me. It was a scene. No one wanted to tell me about and when they did the group (including me) was suppressing our laughter to the point of disrupting the speaker. The pure humanity of this error made me laugh again and again.

Next you might consider keeping a list of your favorite comedies, jokes, cartoons, and anything else that you find funny that will help you get that laughter out easily.

Additionally, part of your therapy might even use laughter as a tool.

There are clinics that promote laughing as part of the group. It entails gathering in a circle and forcibly laughing while the group participates. Depending on who is running the event, each person may take a turn laughing and then the group joins after the last person completes the exercise. It seems strange to outsiders, yet participants are proponents of the methods. They get a good feeling after the sessions, and many say they make great friends in the process.

Laughter can help lower stress as well. It releases endorphins in your brain which are responsible for you feeling good. It is even believed to help in producing antibodies which can fight disease. This could be how the phrase, laughter makes the best medicine, came about.

It may feel uncomfortable even forced at first. Yet, as you do it more and more, you'll get used to these intentional laughter methods, and it will stop feeling unusual over time.

This is another tool we can use to change our mood. After a while, you will find yourself laughing for real rather than forcing it.

Are you willing to give laughter a try for a consistent period?

Notice the changes that you experience in your feelings.

It is likely you will never go back to the way it was. While there is not a guarantee that using laughter will make you live longer, it certainly won't hurt you. The question is "why don't you give it a try as you have everything to gain?"



Reach Out
to an Old Friend

Conclusion

Emotions are an important part of our life. At home and at work, emotions help us navigate the world we live in and reveal what is important to us.

Honoring them and managing them effectively are important skills that offer us the ability to be compassionate with ourselves and others. Emotions can help us be resilient in times of trial.

Cultivating effective ways to understand ourselves and communicate with others supports our ability to slow down and share exactly what needs to be shared in a manner that is appropriate in each situation.

In closing, think of your emotions as a valuable part of your internal team. Rather than ignore them, understand them. Be open to the messages our emotions offer and be willing to help reframe what's going on if needed. Remember, emotions are a gift.

Beyond Sales Tactics



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