

# **YOUR FEELINGS ARE WHAT MAKES YOU ALIVE**

One of the main differences between you and a dead person is that you feel. Birds fly, fish swim, and people feel. You can choose your feelings when and if you remember that you are creating your feelings based on what you think.

You choose to think when you place meanings on people, events, and words. What you have heard, seen, and experienced, consciously or unconsciously, you make judgments about your experiences. That was good, that was bad, that was hateful, that is meaningless, "They are just acknowledging me," "they must be crazy," "I really screwed up," "I really did good," etc. Your feelings directly result from the judgments (meanings) you put on people, events, and words. So what are your feelings telling you?

**Your anger** tells you that you feel powerless. Something happened, and you decided either there was nothing you could do about it or you would have used your anger to manipulate people to get change. Either way, you feel angry and powerless until you change your expectations or the other person changes.

**Your anxiety** is telling you that something is going to happen, and you will not know how to handle it. Anxiety is always about the future. You cannot have anxiety about the past. You can worry about the consequences of something you did in the past, but the consequences are still in the future. Anxiety is about not trusting yourself to handle whatever situation comes up in the future.

**Your fear** tells you that something in the future will cause you or the ones you love great pain. "I am a shy person." (That is the meaning that you have put on yourself.) Therefore, "I cannot get up in front of 500 people and make a presentation, and the boss will probably fire me!"

**You suffer more from your imagination  
than you do from reality.**

Fear has never stopped anyone from doing something they wanted to do. Fear is the excuse you use to avoid facing uncomfortable situations. You get through fear by doing what you are afraid to do. Fear is a normal feeling that you will have whenever you do something new.

**Your apathy** is telling you that you are feeling depressed. You see no purpose in what you are doing. Apathy suggests that you are holding a lot of self-anger. You have a lot of “I shoulds” that you’re not doing. You can change your shoulds so that you do them or start doing the things you tell yourself that you should do.

**Your perfectionism** is a trauma response that results in your fear of the unknown. “If I am perfect, he will not leave me.” “If I’m good enough, I won’t get punished.” The trauma occurs when being perfect is not enough. So, you try to be even more perfect.

Your perfectionism may lead to obsessive-compulsive disorder, OCD. People with OCD may feel unable to control their obsessions, but they may try to manage them through rituals or compulsions, which are repetitive actions that can help ease obsessive thoughts.

While the symptoms can be time-consuming and distressing, treatment is available to help people manage them and improve their quality of life. I found two helpful approaches: “If you don’t do your rosary 15 times before you can drive the car, what will happen?” Invariably, the client will say something terrible will happen, but they can never say what that terrible thing would be. So, it comes down to their fear of the unknown.

The next step is to look at their fear. What is the catastrophic, the worst that could happen? And what is the anastrophic? What is the best that could happen? If the worst happened, would you be able to make it through? If the best happens, would you also be able to handle that?

If you want to get over your OCD fear, then it will require that you do what you are afraid to do. Get in the car and drive without doing the rosary.

Your feelings are not random; they are your messengers. You must recognize and express your feelings if you want to get anywhere. Your feelings will tell you what you really need.

# **If you know what you feel, you will know what you want.**

What are you looking for in life? Whatever therapeutic approach you choose, it comes down to your feelings. It is from your feelings that you choose your behaviors.

**Make friends with your feelings.** There are no good feelings or bad feelings. Feelings just are.

**There is nothing either good or bad,  
but thinking makes it so.**

Shakespeare, Hamlet 1599 A.D.

No one has ever gone to jail for being angry. It is what you do with your anger that gets you in trouble and blocks your success at work and at home.

Learning constructive ways of expressing your anger can be done in much the same way that we learn how to express sexual feelings in acceptable ways. How you are raised does not necessarily have to affect how you behave.

“Hello, anger; I recognize and identify your presence in me. Now, I will choose how to express my feelings. I create my feelings and decide how to express them. I am an alive, powerful person.”

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