

Relationship Matters

Emotions, Reactivity & Finding the Value

Our Focus: Personal Growth

Make a Shift:

Increased Self-Awareness

Personal Confrontation: Ask Yourself A Lot of Questions

Accept 100% Personal Responsibility

Humbly Manage Yourself Inside Your Own Hula-Hoop

Cultivate a Self-Soothing Anchor

Find the Value for Yourself

Why Make this Shift in Thinking?

Making this Shift Changes the Narrative from:

Victim to Victor

Reactor to Responder

Anxiety to Adventure

Powerless to Empowered

Hopeless to Hopeful

Quote

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere, people may deceive you. Be honest and sincere anyway.

Quote

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today will often be forgotten. Do good anyway.

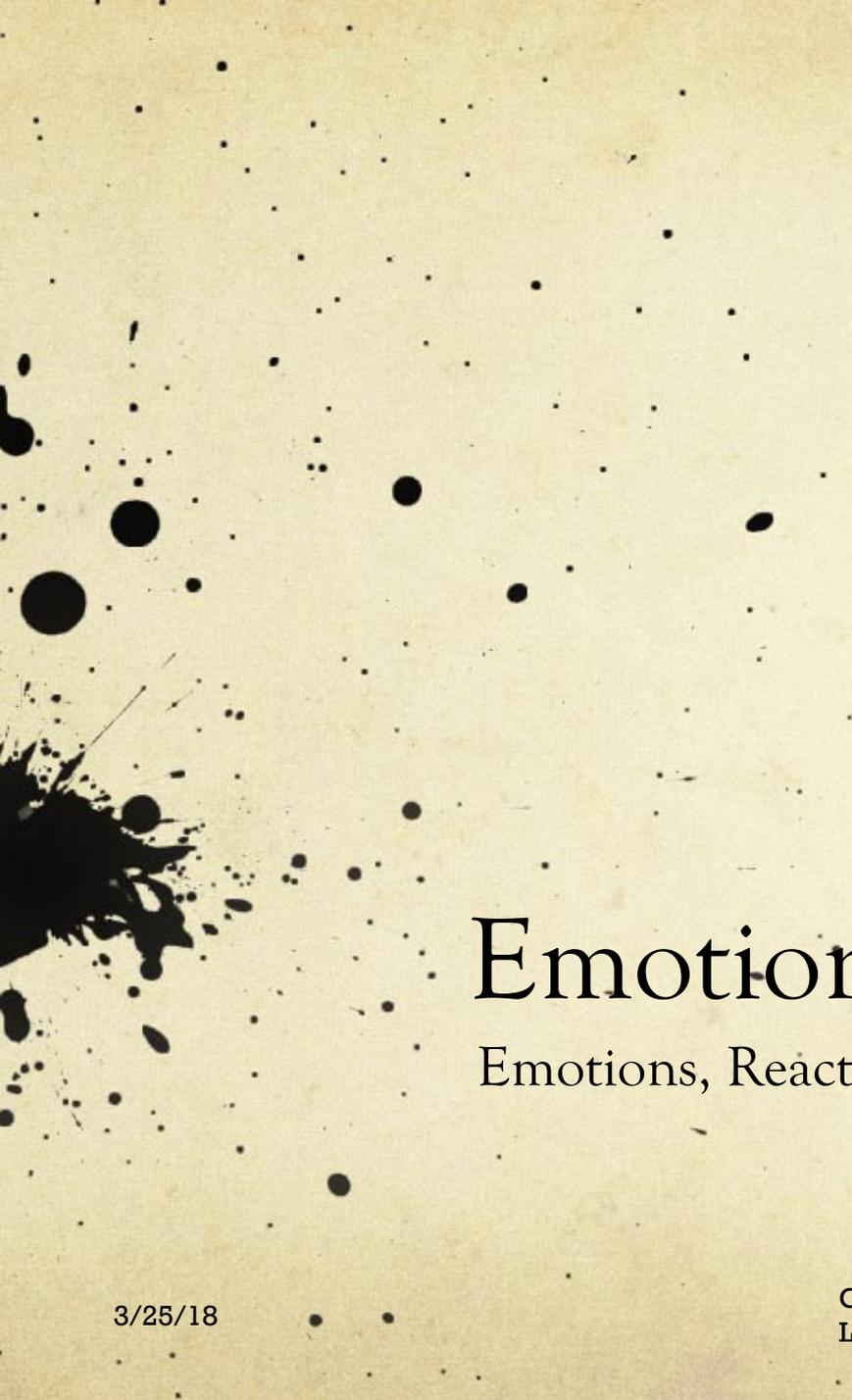
Give the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway.

Quote

In the final analysis, it is between you and God.

It was never between you and them anyway.

Mother Teresa



Emotions: What to Do

Emotions, Reactivity & Value

An Altered Reality

When the woman *saw* that the tree was 1) **good for food** and that it was 2) **a delight to the eyes** and that the tree was 3) **desirable to make one wise**, she **took** from its fruit and **ate**; and she **gave** also to her husband with her and he **ate**.

Genesis 3:1-6

What Happened? What Became “Altered?”

(Bonus Question #1: What “fruit” did she eat?)

(Bonus Question #2: In what context do we find these verbs in the N. Testament?)

Subjectivity & Objectivity

What Goes on Inside of Us, Influences How We “See”
and “Perceive” Thing Outside of Us!

“Lust” and “Coveting” Distort Perception

The More We Emotionally Invest in Something, the Less
Objectivity We have. We Cannot Perceive it for What it
is! We See it for what WE Want it to be!

Psalm 115 & 135

The Greater the Investment, the Less Objectivity.

Idolatry & Blindness

The idols of the nations are *but* silver and gold, the work of man's hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; They have eyes, but they do not see; They have ears, but they do not hear, Nor is there any breath at all in their mouths. Those who make them will be like them, Yes, everyone who trusts in them.

Psalm 135:15-18

Self-Justification & Deception

They followed vanity and became vain.

II Kings 17:15

They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves.

Jer 2:5

Notice: Romans 1:18-32 / Ephesians 4:17-24

Ex: Falling in Love

- Each person becomes idealistically distorted. Each see the other through “rose-colored glasses.”
- Each selectively use one “part” to define the “whole.”
- Each selectively present only the good parts of themselves. Selective presentation is the goal.
- Each experience more “oneness” than “separateness.”

Ex: Falling in Love

“Love” is that short period of time
when our Significant Other
holds the same opinion of us as
we do ourselves.

Magdalena Samozwaniec

Ex: Falling in Love

- Sooner or later each person's boundaries snap back into place. They are now two distinct individuals again and the illusion of "oneness" is disrupted.
- As time passes, the "attraction-glue" which began the relationship cannot sustain the relationship.
- Each partner gains a more complete and full knowledge of the other - real-life knowledge.

Ex: Falling in Love

- Each partner comes in contact with the gap between their own projected image of their partner (their fantasy partner who will “complete” them) and the true image – who their partner really is.
- A “necessary-loss” now leads to maturity.

Don't Interrupt my Fantasy!

“I will forever cherish my
original misconceptions
of you.”

Reflected Sense of Self

But unhappiness comes in, because the love which 'dominates' them is not a love of each for the other as that other really is. They love one another, but each loves the other *from the standpoint of self and not from the other's standpoint*. Their unhappiness thus originates in a false reciprocity, which disguises a twin narcissism. So much is this so that at times there pierces through their excessive passion a kind of hatred of the beloved.

Denis de Rougemont, *Love in the Western World*

Cognitive Dissonance

If a person voluntarily goes through a difficult or a painful experience *in order* to attain some goal or object, that goal or object becomes more attractive.

The greater the emotional investment, the greater the danger for personal “blindness,” i.e. one’s inability to “objectively perceive.”

Wanting Love from the Person Least Willing to Give it.

A Thoughtful Question #2

When is it “Right” to Share Your Emotions?

Ask Yourself:

“What is the *Purpose* of Sharing What You are Feeling and Experiencing with Your Spouse (or Someone Else)?”

“What Do You Want to *Happen* as a Result?” What is the End Goal: To Blame Others? To Grow Closer in Relationship?

“Can the Other Person Find the Value in this Process?”

“Does the Other Person Have the Tolerance/Ability to Participate in this Process?”

Self-Control for a Higher Value

In order for a problem to be *the* problem, don't *you* become the problem.

In order for an issue to have a chance to become the issue, don't let your emotional response to the issue become the issue.

What's the real issue: Your emotional response to the issue? Or the issue? What is "leading the way? What is taking front and center stage? The Issue or your Emotions about the Issue?"

What do *you want* the focus to be?

Are you trying to find a solution? Or do you simply *want* to make it "personal?"

The ABC's of Emotions

There is the “problem” and then again, there is our *response* to the problem.

We are each responsible for our response to the problem.

Our emotional response does not necessarily change “reality.” *If our emotional response does bring about change, we may have to continue having the emotional response in order to sustain the change that has been created.*

Manage Self Inside Your Hula-Hoop

When you Feel an Emotion, your Hula-Hoop Vibrates.

Sympathetic Resonance: Others will Vibrate.

Calm Yourself Inside Your Own Hula-Hoop.

Look Only Within Your Hula-Hoop (trusting in God) for the solution.

Challenge Your Perception of the Situation.

Control Your Behaviors. “Have” your Emotions, Without Your Emotions “Having” You.

Be Affected Without Becoming Infected.

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Responsible Sharing

Take 100% Responsibility for Your Own Emotions.

Resist the Temptation to “Blame” Others for What You are Feeling/Experiencing. Be Careful of the “You” word!

Share from Inside Your Hula-Hoop So as to be Known.

Your Emotions Will Tell A Lot About Your Own Life.

Share Your Life with Others without Taking Them Emotionally Hostage!

Important Ideas

1. Your Identity and Your Emotions are not the Same Thing. You are Not Your Emotions.
2. Emotions are Usually Shared in order to Influence, Persuade and Change Others.
3. Emotions Inadvertently Confirm One's Preconceived Version of Reality. Emotions Validate One's Own Reality.

“I want to irresponsibly hold onto how I see something, have my emotions and shift the blame (and responsibility) to you! I want both and the right to complain about it!”

Controlling Your Reactivity

Mastering the Discipline of Self-Control

The Concept

Effective interpersonal relations are enormously benefited by both a stable sense of self and a capacity for spontaneity in emotional expression.

Successful relationships require a capacity to self-regulate emotions in appropriate ways, to control impulsive behavior and to tolerate stimuli that produces discomfort, to a certain degree.

An Unregulated Living Organism is, by nature, Invasive.

The Concept

Successful, Productive Relationships Require Four Emotion Modulation Abilities:

1. Inhibit Inappropriate Behavior Related to Strong Emotions
2. Self-Regulate Physiological Arousal Associated with Emotional Affect
3. Refocus Attention in the Presence of Strong Affect
4. Organize Self in Service of an External, Non-Mood Dependent Goal

Emotional Vulnerability

- **High Sensitivity to Emotional Stimuli**
Reacts Quickly; Low Threshold
- **Inability to Regulate Emotional Intensity**
Emotional Reactions are Extreme
- **Slow Return to Emotional Baseline**
Emotional Reactions are Long-Lasting

A Full-System Response

Emotions are “Full-System” Responses. A Current Emotion Integrates the Entire System in its Favor.

Once Started, Emotions tend to Repeatedly Re-Fire.

A Slow Return to Baseline Exacerbates this Reactivating Effect.

This then Contributes to Increased High Sensitivity to the next Emotional Stimulus.

Increased Negative Cycle

Emotions

Thoughts

Behaviors

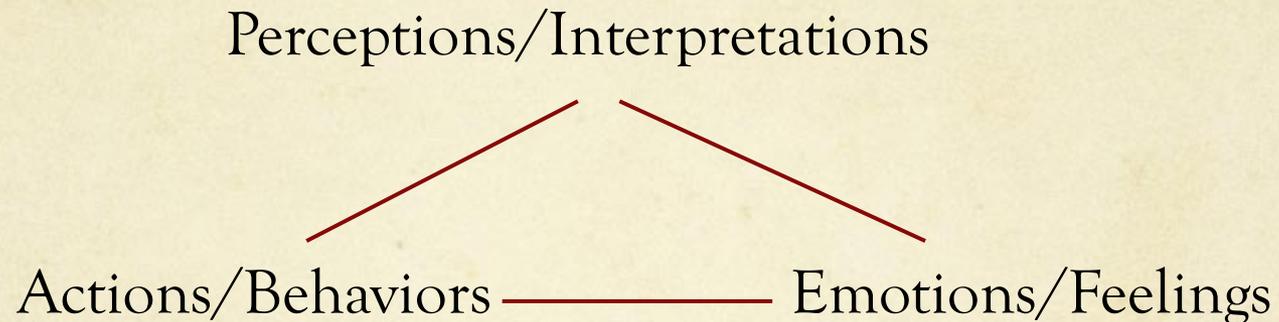
Emotional Vulnerability = High Sensitivity + Increased
Reactivity + Slow to Return to Base-Line

Results in: Increased Negative Thoughts, Behaviors,
Emotions

Leading to: Greater Increase in Emotional Vulnerability +
Increased Emotional Arousal

Arousal Increases + Accurate Thinking Decreases

How We “Use” Emotions



Each of These Strengthen Each Other and Create a Self-Serving, Unexamined, Closed-System

“My Way of Perceiving and Interpreting is the Right Way!”

Make a Healthy Shift

Increase Self-Awareness and Humility

“What can I learn from this?”

“What is it about me that contributed to me being triggered?”

“What is it in me that forms a hotspot about that topic?”

“What is it in me as a “host” that allowed this pathogen (virus) to become “active?”

Make a Healthy Shift

Increase Self-Observation

“What thoughts and emotions am I experiencing?”

“How are these thoughts and emotions affecting how I conduct myself?”

“What are my own emotional hot-buttons?” Identify These

Learn to Anticipate Your Hot-Buttons. Make a List of Responses that you Can Do. Rehearse Your Self-Talk.

Make a Healthy Shift

Increase Whole-Body Sensing

When we become triggered, the reaction most likely shows up first in our bodies. Physical sensations carry important information.

Pay attention to your facial muscles.

Pay attention to your flushed feelings.

Practice Mindfulness – Living in the Moment

Make a Healthy Shift

Increase reflective Processing

“Is this the only way to look at this situation?”

“What does this belief or emotion accomplish in my life?
What purpose might it serve?”

Make a Healthy Shift

If You Cannot Regulate Your Emotions, Make an Effort to Control Your Behaviors.

Make an Effort to Control your Negative Mental Tapes which arise out of Anxiety.

Self-Soothing may Require a Temporary Time-Out from the Relationship. Being “Out of Sync” is not a “Bad” Thing, unless You Make it a “Bad” Thing.

Practice “Mindfulness”

Finding the Value

Why Do You Do What You Do?

Finding the Value

The Willingness to Undergo some Personal Discomfort
for the Sake of Your own Growth: For What your Heart
Really Desires

Finding the Value that Matters to You

Romans 5:1-10

James 1:2-4

II Cor 4:17

The Fundamental Point of Growth

“Truth” and / or the “Good” Reasons for Growth
Must be Attached to a Personal Value Within Each
Individual.

People don't Grow for “Others” or for God. They
Grow When They Find The Value for Themselves in
the Growth Process.

People are Only Motivated to do Something Noble
and Courageous When They Can Identify the Benefit
for Themselves!

It's All About the "Self"

All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views. The will never takes the least step but to this object."

Blaise Paschal

The Nature of “Happiness”

Happiness is Looking for its “Value”

High Short-Term Yield

High Short-Term Return

Low Investment

Low Cost

The Nature of Happiness

Happiness is Looking for its “Value”

High Investment

High Long-Term Yield

High Cost

High Long-Term Return

Four Stages of Love and the Self

Love of Self for Self's Sake

Love of God for Self's Sake

Love of God for God's Sake

Love of Self for God's Sake

Bernard of Clairvaux

The Wonderful Benefit

The Ability to Experience and Sustain Personal Desire

The growth of a person is the progressive liberation of desire. It is the process whereby desire finds ever more deeply its subject, whereby desire comes to be in one who can say, ever more deeply and wholly, “I want.”

Sabastian Moore, *The Liberation of Desire*.

Desire is Looking for a New Subject; Not a New Object

Roller-Coaster Illustration

Serenity Prayer

God, give us grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things
which should be changed,
and the Wisdom to distinguish
the one from the other.

Serenity Prayer

Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did,
This sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that You will make all things right,
If I surrender to Your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next.