

E-Book on Processing Emotions

One of the most amazing books ever written on dealing with human emotions (in my opinion) is *Letting Go: The pathway to Surrender*, by David Hawkins. Dr. Hawkins says “The real source of stress is actually internal; it is not external as most people would like to believe. The readiness to react with fear, for instance, depends on how much fear is already present within... to the fearful person the world is a terrifying place. To the angry person the world is a chaos of frustration and vexation. To the guilty person it is a world of temptation and sin. What we are holding inside colors our world.” In other words we see the world as we are. Circumstances just give us a chance to express what we have inside us.

Most of us have a great deal of fear of failure and loss inside us and it has been there most of our life. We learned this fear from our parents, who probably learned it from their parents. What this means for you is your circumstances are not the real cause of your stress, fear and discouragement, your reactivity to the circumstances is. You have somehow learned to subconsciously react to life with fear.

This is good news not bad news because it also means you have power to change the way you react to circumstances. You can change yourself on the inside and you will then change how you feel about your life even if you can't change the circumstances..

The first step to changing how you feel is to understand human emotions in a different way and so you can process them more objectively. Dr. Hawkins created some fascinating charts on emotion and Levels of Consciousness. [You can download a Levels of Consciousness chart on my website.](#) These charts show that there are two main kinds of emotions. The first are fear-based negative emotions that produce unhappiness and suffering, and the second are trust and love based emotions that bring peace, joy and clarity. When you live on the lower end of the scale you tend to have lower energy, poorer relationships and worse health. When you live on the higher end you tend to have more joy, more energy, better relationships and better health. People and opportunities are also more attracted to you. It is interesting to see the range of emotions laid out this way on paper. It will help you to see all emotions as mindset options and it reminds you that you are in control of your reactions. You may have a subconscious tendency towards a certain level of consciousness, but you can work to choose your way to another.

In a specific moment you can step back out of an emotion you are feeling (like stress) and look at it objectively. You can then process the thinking behind it. You want to focus more on the emotion though, than the thoughts that created it. Thoughts are often illogical and

will keep you going in circles. If you will focus on resolving the emotion, like magic, all the negative thinking that went with it will disappear.

I am going to teach you a simple procedure in this article you can use to help you process emotions, but first you might need to break what you are feeling down into small pieces. You often experience a bunch of emotions at once (especially if we are dealing with a huge issue like the loss of a loved one or divorce). If this is the case you will want to process one small piece at a time. Start with one thing like your feelings that life isn't fair, or the feeling of being overburdened at work, or even the stress you feel to complete one specific project.

Dr. Hawkins says you must watch for the three ways we subconsciously deal with emotions if we don't consciously choose to process them a healthy way. They are to suppress them, express them or escape from them. He says when overwhelmed by big, painful emotions it might serve you to express them (talk about them), suppress some of them temporarily, or even distract yourself through service or staying busy, until you can deal with them all fully, but for small day to day emotions like stress, anger or discouragement, suppressing and escaping are not healthy and even expressing them may not serve you. Expressing negative emotions may give more power or energy to them and create even more misery. I recommend processing them in a healthy way using the procedure below.

1. Sit with the emotion for a while and explore how it feels. What is it exactly? Can you define it? Then ask yourself the following questions...
2. What am I feeling this for?
3. Is it serving me in any way?
4. Could it teach me anything useful?
5. What is behind it? What am I really afraid of?
6. Where would this emotion fall on the Levels of Consciousness Chart?
7. Is this what I want to experience today or in this moment?
8. Do I have any other options?
Could I choose gratitude? Could I choose to see life as a classroom not a test and detach my value from my performance? Could I choose to see the universe as a wise teacher and trust that it knows what it's doing? Could I choose to do the work I have to do today while feeling safe, unburdened, peaceful or calm?

You literally have the power to choose your attitude in this moment. Your stress and fear may come back two minutes later and you will have to make the choice again, but you can do it. Just take your life one moment at a time and keep consciously choosing your emotion.

Dr Hawkins believes “all reactions to life are subjective. There is nothing happening that is awful, exciting, sad, good or bad... With a broad view one can remain unperturbed by either the content or the context of life. This requires giving up judgments, expectations or sensitivities.”

What he means is you must stop letting your subconscious mind label each experience and create emotions unchecked. You must control your reactions but let go of trying to control life. You must see the opportunity to grow and learn in whatever you get and see “what is” as perfect.

All the great spiritual leaders have taught this idea. Buddha taught that to escape suffering one must stop craving life to be different from what it is and learn to be equanimous towards circumstances and choose peace. Christ was the ultimate example of being non-reactive and taught the principle of returning love for hate.

This will be an ongoing work to master your subconscious tendencies to react and let life dictate your emotions, but you can get control of yourself and I believe you are meant to. It is the main lesson you are on the planet to learn. Just keep working on it. Practice doing what you need to do today from a state of calm, safety and trust that things will work out.

There is one factor in play that could make it difficult for you to choose a positive outlook. You might be getting some quirky subconscious benefits from the negative state and you might not be ready to let those benefits go.

Let me give you some examples of how this happens. Someone who is holding onto feelings of anger or hate toward another person may be getting the benefit of staying distracted from their own feelings of inadequacy. By staying focused on anger toward another person, they don't have to deal with their own faults. If they let go of their anger they would have to deal with their pain, so anger feels like a win.

People who are constantly dwelling in feelings of inadequacy or have low self-esteem often apologize a lot, worry about what others think and need to vocally explain every aspect of their behavior. At the subconscious level they may think this fear mindset protects them at some level, because it makes them very careful what they do and say. It might even make them more polite or gracious toward others so people will like them.

They could be afraid that thinking positively about themselves would make them selfish and less cautious. They may also see self-deprecation as humility and think it's righteous. This means that low self-esteem may make them feel better in some ways. The problem is that low self-esteem makes people see you as weak and lose respect for you. Loving strength and confidence are much more attractive.

Someone who is overburdened with work, who feels stressed out and exhausted all the time, may get all kinds of benefits from these negative feelings. They may subconsciously believe this state means they are working really hard (they may believe if you don't feel this way you aren't working hard enough). So, they get a sense of accomplishment or self-esteem from being stressed. Complaining about being overworked may also protect them at some level, discouraging others from asking anything more from them, or giving them an excuse to say no to anything they don't want to do. They may also like the sympathy love they get from others, who feel sorry for them when they complain.

Sympathy love is a common benefit to being in a negative state and many of us learned to use this as children to get the attention or love we needed. You may subconsciously complain about life mostly for this reason. Why else would you need to voice your complaints out loud so often? Why not just feel this way on the inside and keep it to yourself?

If you find yourself complaining a lot about how unfair your life is, how difficult you have it, how awful you are, or how miserable you are, you must ask yourself these questions:

- What am I getting for voicing these feelings so often? What benefit do I get when I feel this way or act this way?
- Could I have a subconscious tendency to play the self-pity card to get attention or love?
- Did I learn (as a child) to get love this way?
- Does having someone acknowledge my pain and feel sorry for me, make me feel better?
- If I stopped complaining and chose to feel strong, safe, capable, grateful, protected, loved and even blessed (by God or the universe), would I lose out on anything?

- If I stopped voicing my complaints, is there any other way to get love or validation from others? A way that would make them respect me more than playing the “self-pity card” does?
- Would setting my complaints aside and focusing on giving love and validation to others work better? Am I ready to give up the benefits of negative thinking?
- What are the benefits in choosing a positive mindset? (Write them down and think about them.)

You may want to take the free Fear Assessment on my [website](#), which will show you on paper some of your subconscious thought processes and where you might be getting positive benefits from negative thinking. There is a subconscious benefit to fear everywhere you experience it. For example, people who have fear of failure can also be extremely motivated and work hard. Fear can drive them to succeed. But don't start thinking that motivation requires fear. You could be just as driven by passion and love.

One other thing you mentioned was that your life is unfair and more difficult than most people get. I want you to see that you have placed a label on your experience, and just because you have chosen to do this doesn't make it true.

Beliefs like these are only true in your life if you believe they are true. They are a perspective you have chosen, but you could just as easily choose a different perspective, one that might make you feel more grateful, loved, safe and blessed even in the very same circumstances.

When I was going through a difficult time in my life, I wasn't very happy with people who gave me the very advice I'm giving you. I felt they needed to walk a mile in my shoes (and suffer like me) before they could know how impossible it was to be positive here.

Then I read about Viktor Frankl, who suffered through the concentration camps in World War II, lost everything and everyone he loved, and who (in much more miserable circumstances than mine) found the power to choose his attitude, to find meaning and purpose in his experiences and to choose love over fear, and I realized that if he could do it I had no excuse.

Having said that, I also know it isn't easy and it takes time and work. I usually work with a coaching client for 3 to 6 months to teach them how to process their experiences in a

different way and learn how to choose their inner state, but I promise you can get there if you keep reading, learning and practicing.

Steven Richards, who wrote "Think Your Way to Success," said, "You are essentially who you create yourself to be and all that occurs in your life is the result of your own making."

I believe this is true. You can change the way your life is going! I see people do it every day. Just know that you are way more powerful than you realize and you can create change by changing your thinking.