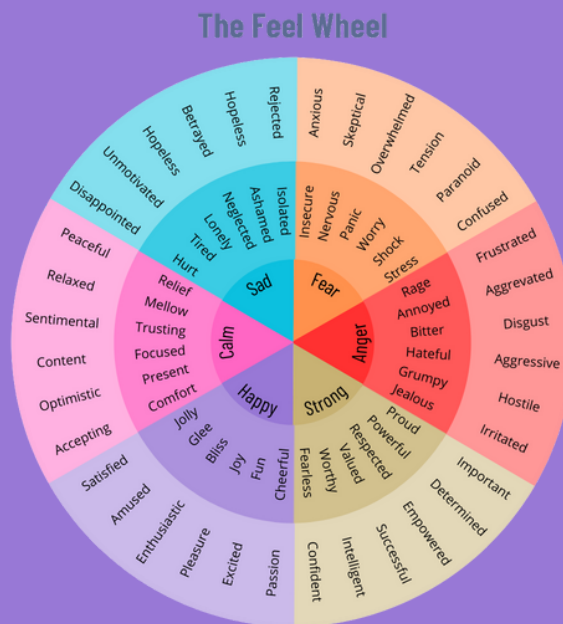


The Feelings Wheel Exercises



The Feelings Wheel

If you struggle to put your feelings into words, the Feelings Wheel is a powerful, practical tool that can help you understand, recognise, and put words to your emotions.

If you struggle to verbalise your feelings, or you are not sure how to, the feelings wheel can be a starting point and a great tool to support you.

If you ever find yourself saying “I don’t know how I feel,” or reaching for the same few words as “angry” or “sad,” the Feelings Wheel can open a wider emotional vocabulary, helping you explore what’s going on underneath. It supports you in:

- Identifying emotions
- Expressing yourself more clearly in relationships
- Deepening your emotional intelligence and self-awareness
- Connecting with your needs beneath the feelings

Whether you're using it to help understand who you are, or to your patterns, behaviours and reactions, the Feelings Wheel offers a gentle guide to help you tune in to what you’re really feeling.

How to Use the Feelings Wheel

This version of the Feelings Wheel categorises 72 feelings into six primary emotions: fear, angry, strong, happy, calm and peaceful. Each primary emotion is then broken down into secondary emotions.

There may be many reasons as to why you're feeling sad. The secondary emotions help you to identify what you are experiencing on a much deeper level.

Ways the Feelings Wheel can help:

- Communicate more effectively – You are unaware of why you feel angry or fearful. This is where the Feelings Wheel helps you verbalise what is really going on
- Emotional Intelligence – Naming your emotions and recognising what's going on will aid in emotional regulation, as well as a reduction in overwhelm and anxiety
- Self-compassion – The Feelings Wheel can help you develop self-compassion by thinking you are stuck (in fight/flight/freeze response) by moving to acceptance, understanding and compassion
- Connecting with your needs – Understanding what is really going on beneath the surface will help you to become more resilient, set boundaries and show yourself kindness and compassion

Here are Some Simple Exercises:

Emotional Check-In

Purpose: To identify and articulate how you're feeling in the moment.

How to Do It:

- Take a few deep breaths and tune into your body
- Look at the Feelings Wheel and choose the emotion closest to what you're feeling
- Start at the core feeling in the centre of the wheel, and move outward to identify more specific emotions
- If you're feeling multiple things, note all of them
- Reflect: Does this feel accurate? Why do you think you're feeling this way?

This helps move from vague or overwhelming feelings like “bad” or “stressed” to more specific emotions, offering clarity. It’s a great tool for increasing emotional awareness.

Emotion-Focused Grounding

Purpose: To ground and regulate emotions, especially in times of overwhelm.

How to Do It:

- When feeling anxious, upset, or overwhelmed, look at the Feelings Wheel
- Find a feeling that fits your emotional experience and begin to describe it. Where in your body do you feel it? What sensations are associated with this feeling?
- Use grounding techniques, such as deep breathing or focusing on the present moment, to help you stay connected to your body
- Try to shift your focus from a vague sense of discomfort to a more specific, manageable emotion (e.g. “I’m feeling *overwhelmed* vs. “I’m feeling *hopeless*”)

Expressing Your Emotions to Others

Purpose: To practice sharing your emotions openly and honestly with others.

How to Do It:

- Choose a feeling from the Feelings Wheel that you're currently experiencing
- Think about how to express it to someone in your life — whether that's a partner, friend, or co-worker
- Use “I” statements to communicate your emotions, such as:
 - “I feel frustrated because...”
 - “Right now, I’m feeling confused about...”
 - “I’m experiencing anxiety related to...”
- Explain your feelings calmly and listen to the response from the other person

Using the Feelings Wheel helps avoid vague statements like “I’m fine” or “I’m upset.” It encourages clear, honest communication, which strengthens relationships.

Emotion Mapping for Difficult Situations

Purpose: To gain insight into complex or conflicting emotions, especially in challenging situations.

How to Do It:

- Think of a situation (e.g. a difficult conversation, a recent argument, or an event) that caused a strong emotional reaction.
- Use the Feelings Wheel to identify all the emotions you were feeling during that time. Start with the core feelings and move outward to find specifics.
- Draw or write the different emotions on a mind map. Connect them with arrows to show how they are related.
- Reflect: Which emotion is the most dominant? Which is the hardest to experience? What might these emotions be trying to tell you?

This helps break down complex emotions, making them easier to understand and manage. It allows you to gain perspective on what's really going on beneath the surface.

Why Emotional Awareness is important for your Mental Health

Emotional intelligence and awareness help you to articulate and understand your feelings, behaviours and responses. It aids in healthier relationships, self-awareness, improved mental health and resilience in being able to cope in everyday life.

As human beings we are made up of many complex emotions, all are there to be felt, embodied and understood, they play a vital role in being a human being.

The Feelings Wheel is a valuable tool to use for your well-being, self-care and mental health journey. It is a simple but powerful tool in becoming emotionally aware and helping you to evolve and grow.