

Living in the Maze of Our Feelings

We are often confused by what is occurring in our emotions. It is important that we learn how to read them well. For this to occur in a healthy manner we need to know what feeling is and how it works in our experience. Then we are able to navigate reality well. This talk makes a case that our Creator never meant for us to live by our feelings. He did however intend for us to live in our feelings.

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INTRODUCTION:

We were not made to live by our feelings. We were made to live in them.

It is important to distinguish between two categories of feeling:

- (i) True and Deep feeling
- (ii) Shallow and sentimental feeling

1. What Feeling is

The word emotion means 'to move.'

Feeling exists in three dimensions when it comes to human experience;

- (i) Body Affect

Feelings are generated within the body as an automatic response mechanism. Every experience on a moment by moment basis generates a feeling in the body.

- (ii) Sensations

This is subjective awareness of what is occurring in the body as feeling. It is how the person ascribes meaning to body affect. These sensations are important for navigating reality well.

- (iii) Emotions

This is human capacity to name the sensation with a proper feeling word. This naming gives the deeper meaning as to what we are feeling and why.

It is important to realise that feeling gets stored in the body as memory. Every memory has some kind of feeling attached it. Even if our awareness of this is lacking the memory feeling is still there.

2. Different Kinds of Feeling

Feeling can be broken down into the two classes of negative and positive.

(i) negative feeling:

- a. Fear - as sensation of tightening in the chest region
- b. Anger - as sensation of an energy surging from chest region to bodily extremities
- c. Shame - as sensation in chest region of a hollowness
- d. Deep Sadness - as sensation in chest area of a 'pulling down'
- e. Anxiety - as sensation in abdomen of a tingling and queasiness

(ii) positive feeling:

- a. comfort - as sensation in the body of relaxation from chest outward
- b. joy - as sensation in form of energy that radiates out from heart region with expansiveness

We should be aware that *we never experience one emotion in isolation from the rest.*

There are feelings that exist on the level of the primal. These come from living East of Eden and exist in the form of shame, deep sorrow and anxiety.

We should never forget that our Creator and Father created us for deep joy.

3. Why living in our true feeling is so important

It is not healthy to live in 'the grey zone'

- (i) Feeling helps us to navigate reality well
- (ii) Feelings enable us to form healthy attachments

The Bible reflects that a significant aspect of the Lord's work in our lives is connected to our feelings. This is in the agency of the Holy Spirit. He is the comfort giver and the giver of joy.