

Feelings Wheel Instructions

The feeling wheel was developed by Dr. Gloria Willcox to help clients expand their emotion vocabulary. The feelings wheel helps people describe their feelings and identify their emotions with more accuracy.

Since there are thousands of emotions, people often find it difficult to express their feelings.

HOW TO USE THE FEELINGS WHEEL

Use the feelings wheel to identify the specific feelings and emotions you are experiencing at any given moment. Once you can identify them, then you can address and resolve them. For example, if you are feeling sad, you can use the wheel to describe the kind of sadness you are feeling. Are you hurt, feeling inadequate, humiliated, angry, or anxious? Each emotion will need to be addressed in a different way.

You might want to carry a copy of the Gloria Wilcox feelings wheel with you for times you are feeling emotions that you want to better understand. It is much more effective to use it while you are feeling the emotion than later on after it passes when you might not recall exactly what you felt.

You can also keep a copy in your journal if you want to use it when writing about your feelings.

Since you can experience different emotions at the same time you might be looking for more than one emotion to describe your feelings. The emotions and feelings in the wheel can exist in many combinations. In fact, you can even have positive and negative emotions at the same time.

Take out your copy of the feelings wheel and either mark or find the emotion/s that best describe what you are feeling. If you are going through a difficult period during which you experience many different emotions you can mark them all each time you feel a new emotion.

The negative feelings in the inner band of the wheel are located on the exact opposite side of the wheel than the positive feelings.

It is important to accept your emotions even if they are negative and not repress them in an effort to force positive emotions ([source](#)).

HOW DOES THE FEELINGS WHEEL BENEFIT YOU?

IDENTIFY, ADDRESS AND RESOLVE FEELINGS

After you use the feelings wheel to identify the specific feelings and emotions you are experiencing at any given moment, you can then address and resolve them.

HEAL YOURSELF

“You cannot heal what you cannot feel” ([source](#)). Once you can identify the feelings and emotions you can work on healing yourself.

INCREASE SELF-COMPASSION

In order to develop self-compassion, it is important to pay attention to the experiences that are present in order to take appropriate compassionate action ([source](#)). For example, if you feel jealousy, your kind inner voice can tell you that you are human and it is ok to experience negative emotions. You can try to learn from the experience to see how you can do it differently next time.

WHEN SHOULD YOU USE THE FEELINGS WHEEL?

AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT

If you are feeling emotions at any given moment and you have a copy of the feelings wheel with you, then take it out and use it there and then. It is most effective when you are actually feeling the emotions than when you are trying to remember how you felt a few hours, days, or weeks ago.

DAILY REFLECTION

You might practice daily reflection at the end of the day. It is a good opportunity to ask yourself what you experienced that day, how you felt, etc.

REFLECT ON A SPECIFIC PERIOD

You might go through a rough patch, a crisis, or a period during which you experience various emotions. Use the wheel to explore your feelings and emotions during that period.

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