What are Emotions?
Emotions are action-requiring neurological programs that bring you specific gifts and skills to help you understand your world. Each of your emotions requires its own action, and each action helps you learn more about yourself and your environment. When you know what emotions are for, you can respond to them in new ways and discover your inborn emotional genius!

The Gifts in Your Emotions

ANGER: The Honorable Sentry
ACTION REQUIRED: Anger arises to address threats to your voice, standpoint, position, interpersonal boundaries, or self image.
GIFTS: Honor ~ Conviction ~ Healthy self esteem ~ Proper boundaries ~ Healthy detachment ~ Protection of yourself and others
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: What must be protected? What must be restored?

APATHY & BOREDOM: The Mask for Anger
ACTION REQUIRED: Apathy is a protective mask for anger, and it arises in situations where you cannot or should not (probably) express your anger openly.
GIFTS: Detachment ~ Boundary-setting ~ Separation ~ Taking a time-out
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: What is being avoided? What must be made conscious?

GUILT & SHAME: Restoring Integrity
ACTION REQUIRED: Shame arises to moderate your behavior and make sure that you don’t hurt, embarrass, destabilize, or dehumanize yourself or others.
GIFTS: Atonement ~ Integrity ~ Self-respect ~ Behavioral change
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: Who has been hurt? What must be made right?

HATRED: The Profound Mirror
ACTION REQUIRED: Hatred arises in the presence of shadow material (things you cannot accept in yourself, and demonize in others). Shadow work helps you reintegrate and detoxify this material so that it no longer activates your hatred program.
GIFTS: Intense awareness ~ Piercing vision ~ Sudden evolution ~ Shadow work
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: What has fallen into my shadow? What must be reintegrated?
FEAR: *Intuition & Action*
ACTION REQUIRED: Fear arises to orient you to change, novelty, or possible physical hazards. Fear focuses on the present moment and your immediate surroundings.
GIFTS: Intuition ~ Instinct ~ Focus ~ Clarity ~ Attentiveness ~ Readiness ~ Vigor
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: *What action should be taken?*

WORRY & ANXIETY: *Focus & Completion*
ACTION REQUIRED: Worry and anxiety arise to help you organize, plan for, and complete your tasks – both are related to fear, but they arise to help you orient to *possible upcoming* change, novelty, or hazard. *Bonus:* If you feel anxiety or worry, you’ll know that there is nothing to fear in the present moment!
GIFTS: Foresight ~ Focus ~ Conscience ~ Task-completion ~ Procrastination alert!
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: *What triggered this feeling? What truly needs to be done?*

CONFUSION: *The Mask for Fear*
ACTION REQUIRED: Confusion is a mask for fear and anxiety, and it arises when you are overwhelmed by change, novelty, or too many tasks. Confusion can be a lovely vacation from overwhelm.
GIFTS: Diffused awareness ~ Innocence ~ Malleability ~ Taking a time-out
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: *What is my intention? What action should be taken?*

JEALOUSY: *Relational Radar*
ACTION REQUIRED: Jealousy arises when your connection to love, mate-retention, or loyalty is threatened.
GIFTS: Fairness ~ Commitment ~ Security ~ Connection ~ Loyalty
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: *What has been betrayed? What must be healed and restored?*

ENVY: *Interactional Radar*
ACTION REQUIRED: Envy arises when your connection to material security, resources, or recognition is threatened.
GIFTS: Fairness ~ Security ~ Access to resources ~ Proper recognition ~ Self-preservation
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: *What has been betrayed? What must be made right?*

PANIC AND TERROR: *Frozen Fire*
ACTION REQUIRED: Panic and terror arise when your physical life is directly and immediately threatened. You have three choices: Fight, flee, or freeze.
GIFTS: Sudden energy ~ Fixed attention ~ Absolute stillness ~ Healing from trauma
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS (during the emergency): Just listen to your body – don’t think, just react. Your body is a survival expert, and it will keep you safe.
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS (for PTSD): *What has been frozen in time? What healing action must be taken?*
SADNESS: The Water Bearer
ACTION REQUIRED: Sadness arises when it’s time to let go of something that isn’t working anyway. If you can truly let go, relaxation and rejuvenation will surely follow.
GIFTS: Release ~ Fluidity ~ Grounding ~ Relaxation ~ Rejuvenation
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: What must be released? What must be rejuvenated?

GRIEF: The Deep River of the Soul
ACTION REQUIRED: Grief arises when something has been lost irretrievably or when someone has died.
GIFTS: Complete immersion in the river of all souls
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: What must be mourned? What must be released completely?

SITUATIONAL DEPRESSION: Ingenious Stagnation
ACTION REQUIRED: Situational depression arises when some aspect of your life is unworkable or dysfunctional; depression stops you for a vital reason.
GIFTS: The Ingenious Stop Sign of the Soul
THE INTERNAL QUESTIONS: Where has my energy gone? Why was it sent away?
Important note: Please study the different forms of depression on pages 328-330 in The Language of Emotions; many require therapeutic and/or medical intervention.

HAPPINESS: Anticipation & Possibility
ACTION REQUIRED: Happiness arises to help you look forward to the future with hope and delight.
GIFTS: Merriment ~ Gaiety ~ Amusement ~ Hope ~ Delight ~ Wonder ~ Playfulness ~ Invigoration
THE INTERNAL STATEMENT: Thank you for this lively celebration!

CONTENTMENT: Pleasure & Appreciation
ACTION REQUIRED: Contentment arises to help you look toward yourself with pride and satisfaction.
GIFTS: Enjoyment ~ Satisfaction ~ Self-esteem ~ Renewal ~ Confidence ~ Fulfillment
THE INTERNAL STATEMENT: Thank you for renewing my faith in myself!

JOY: Affinity & Communion
ACTION REQUIRED: Joy arises to help you feel a blissful sense of expansiveness and connection to others, to ideas, or to experiences.
GIFTS: Expansion ~ Communion ~ Inspiration ~ Splendor ~ Radiance ~ Bliss
THE INTERNAL STATEMENT: Thank you for this radiant moment!
Be aware: Extreme joy (exhilaration) is a state to approach with care, especially if it cycles with depression or sadness. Repetitive exhilaration or flights of giddy mania may be a sign of emotional dysregulation; please reach out for help.
Unlocking Stress & Resistance

Stress and resistance are masking words for emotional responses to difficult situations. The key to unmasking your emotions is to catch yourself when you describe yourself as “stressed out.” What do you mean by that? What do you feel? What are your emotions trying to tell you, and why are those emotions arising? What actions should you take?

Are changes coming too quickly (see Fear)? Are your boundaries being threatened (see Anger)? Are you losing access to important resources (see Envy)? Are you holding on to something that really doesn’t work (see Sadness)? Have you suffered a loss (see Grief)? And so on. Stress is always an emotional reaction to whatever is occurring around you – and you know how to work with emotions.

Resistance can look like an unwillingness to engage with what is occurring, but the truth is deeper than that. Resisting something is also a way to stop everything and underscore and highlight the situation; if you can turn toward your resistance and its emotional content, you will often discover absolute genius inside it.

Emotions and feelings – what’s the difference?

Emotions are reliable neurological programs that arise in response to specific stimuli. Your ability to feel and properly identify your emotions determines your level of emotional awareness. As a reminder, this is the complete flowchart – from stimulus to action – that we explored in our presentation today:

1. Emotionally evocative stimulus → Emotion arises → You feel it → You identify it → You question the emotion → You act on the information the emotion provides
2. OR you decide not to act because the stimulus is invalid

I know this seems like a long pathway, but you can actually do it in a split second once you get your emotional skills under you. It’s not hard. It’s actually much harder in the long run to sleepwalk through your life, being pushed around by emotions you can’t identify or understand.

When an emotion is evoked, it gives you information about an emotionally relevant stimulus, and it tells you what you’ve perceived and what you’re experiencing. Your job as the partner of your emotions is to feel and identify the emotion, ask the correct questions, and act in a way that is both emotional and rational. This is not only possible – it’s doable, and this process becomes very easy (and fun, and enlightening) once you get the hang of it. Thank you for bringing your emotional awareness to a waiting world!

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