

Myths About Emotions

COMMON MYTHS:	THE REALITY...
There is a right way to feel in every situation	Emotions are not right or wrong, good or bad. All emotional experiences are valid.
Letting others know I am feeling bad is a weakness	Our brains are geared to be informed by emotion. Acknowledging and expressing them appropriately can put us in a significantly improved position to take effective action.
Sometimes emotions just come out of the blue, and can happen for no reason	Even though we are not always aware of the causes, there tends to be specific triggers (situations, people, thoughts) that lead us to react a certain way.
Negative emotion is bad and destructive	Emotions are neither positive nor negative. Emotions are not 'bad' or 'bad for us'. It's what we do in response to our emotion that makes the difference.
I feel it so it must be true	Emotions reflect thoughts and if your thoughts are inaccurate or misguided your emotions may be too.
I know exactly what you did to upset me	People often misread other people's emotions, particularly when their perception is colored by their own preferences or prejudices.
I should feel differently	Even though you do have some control over your emotions, your feelings aren't wrong. Accept that you feel that particular emotion, and recognize that you have choices in how you react to it.
If others do not agree with how I feel then I must be wrong	People can experience different emotions after the same event. There is no clear cut "normal" way to feel in any situation
Other people are the best judge of how I feel	We are always the best judge of how we feel and what is going on in our body and soul. If something doesn't feel right, there is probably a reason for this.
Being emotional means being out of control	Learning to experience our emotions in an objective manner provides a way to think before we act, while still acknowledging the way we feel.
Painful emotions should be ignored and repressed	Ignoring our emotions will not make them go away and can lead to damaging effects on our overall happiness and functioning.
Other people have the power to make me feel certain emotions.	Clearly, others can influence your feelings. But they can't control them. It's up to you to be in charge of the way you think, feel, and behave.
I can't handle uncomfortable emotions	Although some emotions are uncomfortable, they're tolerable. Allowing yourself to experience those emotions can be part of healing and they can be the key to creating the best life for yourself.
Controlling my emotions means behaving like a robot	You're capable of experiencing a wide range of emotions, but you don't have to be controlled by them. You can turn your feelings into productive action, and make the best choices for yourself.
We should always act on our feelings	It is important to think through possible consequences, rather than relying solely on our gut feelings.
The hydraulic metaphor	The metaphor represents passivity, against the view that emotions can be cultivated and educated.
Being angry with others is wrong	Anger is a natural emotion and not a sign of bad morals. What can be inappropriate is the way anger is outwardly expressed.
Negative emotions only happen to negative people	Emotions like sadness, anger and fear are universal and are experienced by all healthy individuals
I will always feel this way	Emotions are essentially transient. A typical emotional response involves a quick rise lasting for a few minutes, followed by a relatively slow decay.
We should be able to "snap out" of our emotions whenever needed	Emotions are complex and involve changes to our body chemistry and mental state. Expecting ourselves to be able to just switch feelings off would be unrealistic.