

Note

It's important to be in touch with your emotions and to be able to identify what controls the emotions most important to you.

I've always known that but kind of disregarded it for fear of finding out.

I needed to open myself up and look at what causes my emotions and how I feel about them and come to terms with all of them.

Our emotions are what make us human and alive. Each person has a different way of viewing and interpreting the world and its important for people to understand what makes them human.

Anxiety

Sometimes I get really anxious. I don't even really know why. It hits me in random waves. Of course I start to feel really stressed out when all my school stuff hits the fan and I feel overwhelmed by something but I also feel anxious when I only chew food on one side of my mouth or when I eat two different color M&M's at the same time or when I tap one finger and not the other.

Sometimes I have a really sudden urge to touch something and feel how the color or texture looks and the longer I wait to touch it, or if I try to keep myself from touching it, the more anxious I feel.

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Soren Kierkegaard once said, "Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom." I feel the most anxiety when I have too many options. Life would be easier, even less enjoyable, if we had fewer options. When you don't have much to decide from, you don't have anything to be anxious about.

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I feel like all of the decisions that I'm forced to make on a day-to-day basis are the ones that cause my anxiety; even the small things, like which clothes to wear to school; which is also why I'm such a big supporter of uniforms. We'd be able to have more fulfilling days if we didn't have to worry about "I don't look as good as her", "my shirt is last season and her shirt is this season", or "what if he doesn't like me because of my clothes?". Life would be easier if we didn't have that choice. It's not necessarily even taking away our freedom because we still have the weekends to decide what it is we want to wear. I think in this case it's in one of these scenarios that show how the fewer choices you have, the better. Sometimes choices get in the way and hide everything that we really need to be focusing on. I understand that anxiety is a normal human emotion. Everybody feels anxious sometimes. People feel anxious when faced with a problem that they don't know how to solve or when they're doing something important like taking a big test or making an important decision. Some people have it worse than others. OCD, for example can extremely heighten a person's anxiety. But I know that in the end anxiety is a natural part of life. It's something we all have to work around and cope with in order to find happiness in our day-to-day lives.

Frustration

*Why don't I know the answer to this question?
I SHOULD know.
I'm stupid.
Is it hot in here?
I can't believe I don't know what this means.
My life is going nowhere.
I am a let down.
God, it's hot in here.
I hate myself.*

* * *

The Oxford Dictionary defines frustration as “The feeling of being upset or annoyed, especially because of inability to change or achieve something. An event or circumstance that causes one to have such a feeling.” It gives the synonyms, “disappointment, defeat.” Frustration is a weird thing because it’s like this bridge between sadness and anger. It’s the best of both worlds. When I get frustrated I don’t know if I want to cry or scream.

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In a classic experiment done on frustration, a psychologist places rats on a small platform at the top of a tall pole. The rats are then forced to jump off the platform toward two elevated doors, one is locked and the other is unlocked. If the rat chooses the correct door the door opens and the rat lands safely on the platform. If the rat chooses the wrong door, it bounces off and land on a net below. The open door was made to be unpredictable through random alternations and therefore frustrating. After several rounds of this the rats would develop a stereotyped response where they chose the same door every single time. This door would then be permanently locked. All the rat would have to do was to jump to the other door to avoid the fall, but the rats would jump to the closed door over and over again. Frustration, when met with inflexible persistence can turn into stupidity. When dealing with frustration it is important to know when to quit and look for a new direction.

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Kurt Vonnegut once said, “Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning to do afterward.” He makes it sound so easy, to just brush off frustration and laugh instead. Yet, I’ve found that in life that’s been the best way to deal with frustration; when I start feeling it creeping up on me I try to take a step back and think about whether or not it’s worthwhile for me to get upset over something that most likely is

frivolous. It can be really hard to do that, and it doesn't always work, but when it does I'm so thankful that I was able to take a breath and think rationally.

Insignificance

I feel really insignificant. Always.

I love to research things about our cosmos and our origins and all that good stuff, ESPECIALLY when I feel angry or stressed out.

Once I put into perspective how small and insignificant my problems are compared to universal problems [world hunger, rape culture, etc.] our world is faced with, I'm able to realize that whatever catastrophic event I'm dealing with, isn't really all that bad.

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I think it's also really important to leave a lasting mark on the world in order to break your insignificance, whether that mark is on another person or on a large group of people. "You will always feel insignificant if you never do anything to change the world or another persons life, other than your own." [-Shannon L. Alder]

I know that I feel really insignificant right now but eventually I'll [hopefully] make a lasting impact on the world and then I won't feel so small. It's something that's more of a life long process and goal and I don't know if I'll ever reach it or if I do, how I'll reach it, but its something I find myself constantly thinking about and striving for.

Happiness

I love to be happy.

A lot of things make me really happy.

My friends make me happy when they show that they care and aren't just hanging around for the sake of hanging out.

My teachers make me happy when they invest their time in me and make me feel worthwhile.

My parents make me happy when they tell me that they are proud of me.

Giving gifts makes me feel happy because it allows me to bring joy to others.

Good weather makes me happy, I love good weather.

Learning makes me happy; it transports me to another place, better than my own.

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“For every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness.” [Ralph Waldo Emerson] Because really, if you can help being happy why bother being sad? Sure, sometimes you really need to feel sad for a bit, but there's no point in dragging it out. So when I get really sad I try to take a minute and find something to smile about, even if I don't necessarily feel a hundred percent better right away, I'd rather sit and smile than sit and cry.

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There is no disputing that emotions are all a state of mind. They are all temporary and completely alterable. “People are just as happy as they make up their minds to be” [Abraham Lincoln] Most people are in good control of their own emotions. If you decide for yourself that you're going to be upset about something no one else other than you can change that and you'll only ever be as happy as you let yourself be.

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In one study done by Peter Milner and James Olds, on controlled happiness, rats' Brains were implanted with electrodes. They found that when they gave electrical brain stimulation to the rats, the rats would enjoy extreme pleasure. The rats had the ability to press a lever, which would deliver this current into it's own brain. The rats would perform difficult tasks in order to press the lever and receive another dose of the simulation. In some instances the rats would press the lever 2,000 times an hour and would disregard eating and drinking in return for the feeling of happiness. This same experiment was then performed on humans and found parallel results. People will do almost whatever it takes in order to be happy. I know that I try to do something countless times in order to ultimately get a result that brings me joy.

Sadness + Worry

I often feel really sad.

My grandpa passed away.

My dad told me the news in the morning before school.

“Good Morning!”

“Its not a good morning... Grandpa passed away... Do you still want to go to school?”

“Yes.”

At lunch my mom called. I cried.

That morning when I woke up, before I heard the news, I dressed up all in black. I don't know why, but I did. I never wear all black.

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Sadness is such an important part of life. Leonard Holmes once said, “Allow yourself to be sad. Denying such feelings may force them underground, where they can do more damage with time. Cry if you feel like it. Notice if you feel relief after the tears stop.” [Leonard Holmes] Sadness can be really hard to deal with, but if there were never any sadness in life, you'd never be able to feel the happiness because you'd have nothing to gauge it against.

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I worry a lot.

I am not good enough to make my parents proud. I will not ever be able to make them proud of me because I am nothing special.

I cannot predict the future. I don't know where ill be 10 years from now. There is nothing that can ever give me any assurance about my future. I hate not knowing. [See frustration]

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“The quality of your life is in direct proportion to the amount of uncertainty you can comfortably deal with.” [Tony Robbins]. Worry and sadness go hand in hand and are both necessary to me leading a fulfilling life. If I knew everything that was going to happen in my future, life would no longer be interesting. I'd have no goals, ambitions or fears. Life would be empty and boring. If I didn't ever have to worry about anything, nothing would be worthwhile achieving or attaining.

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