

# Feelings Training v.3

How to train yourself to be more aware of your nuanced feelings—so you can feel more alive, be a more skillful friend/partner/leader, and finally understand the system dictating your moment-to-moment experience of life.

## Michael Caloz

(an ENTP who spent most of his life completely stuck in his analytical mind—who struggled with feeling and expressing empathy, who was confused about what was preventing him from staying focused and finishing his projects, and who felt numb and “meh” despite an objectively great life... and who figured out how to completely transform all of that)





## WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF FEELINGS

**Even if you're a Thinker type**—in fact, *especially* if you're a Thinker type—**this PDF will be valuable to you.**

Why?

Because you're someone who values self-awareness.

You're someone who values truth and accuracy.

And here's the truth:

You might think of yourself as highly analytical. That you're fully oriented around logic and rationality.

But if you were 100% logic-driven (i.e., a robot), you would do the perfectly rational thing every time.

You'd go to sleep on time every night. Only eat nutritious foods. Exercise every day. Never feel anxious. Never lose your temper. Never worry about something outside your control.

In a bad mood feeling completely unproductive for no rational reason? No problem, you'd simply convince yourself to begin thinking productive thoughts, right?

## THE TRUTH

No one is fully rational. No one is 100% driven by logic.

**We're all animals controlled by our emotions.**

Consider what happens when you're in physical danger.

Your body tenses or even freezes up. You're unable to think clearly.

And the crazy thing is: This can happen in all sorts of situations (e.g., public speaking)—even when you're not *actually* in danger.

If you can't feel your feelings, it's not because you're "not a feeler." It's simply because you haven't developed the skill.

It's like the difference between a child looking at "scribbles" on a white board and a mathematician seeing that they're actually complex math equations.

**By learning to understand your feelings, you'll get a huge boost to your self-awareness.**

You'll understand what specifically is holding you back from what you want, what's making it hard for you to be productive, and why you keep looping back to the same unpleasant thoughts (e.g., "why did I say that stupid thing?" or "why does no one like me?" or "how am I supposed to work with a stupid person like that?").





It's important to remember that all humans are naturally wired to feel a wide range of feelings.

As living organisms, feelings are core-level mechanisms evolved to quickly convey messages to us:

"Danger! Unsafe!"

"This feels good, move toward it!"

"This feels bad, get away from it!"

So why do we struggle to get in touch with our feelings?

One reason is cultural. In our modern society, the analytical mind is what's prized. From an early age, we (at least people older than Gen Z) were taught not to express vulnerability.

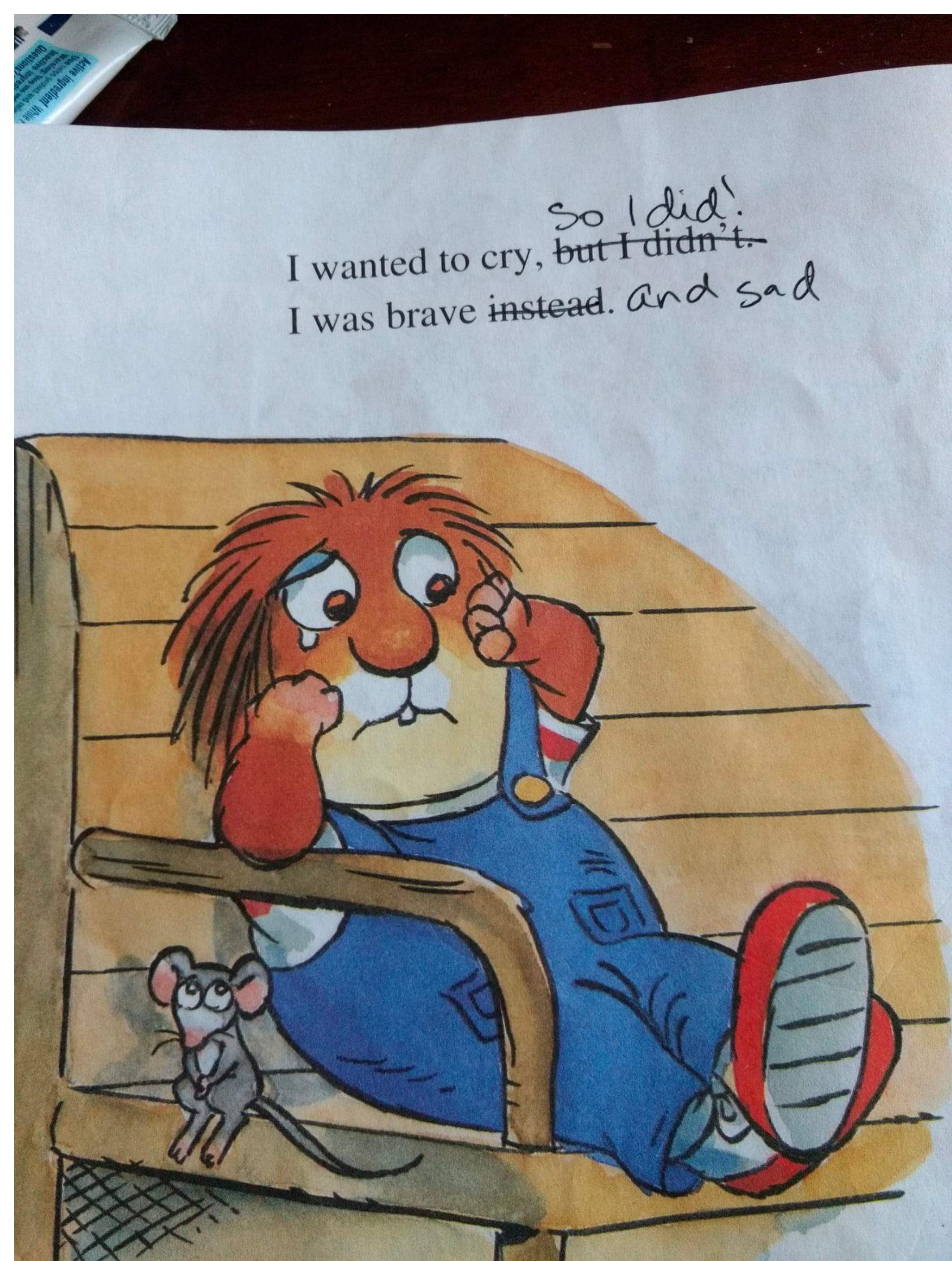
We were taught that good, successful people are in control of themselves, highly productive, and don't complain.

In other words, they're robots designed to succeed within the structure of capitalism.

But, it's possible to push back against the way you've been trained and get in touch with the parts of yourself that haven't been prioritized.

(Trust me: It's so much better on this side. Having undergone this transformation myself, I can promise you that I now feel more alive than I ever thought possible. It's both deeply nourishing as well as incredibly useful to have this additional data channel at my disposal.)

*Edits to the children's book Little Critter, by Parenting Works*







## IDENTIFYING FEELINGS

Feelings Wheels are tools to help you figure out what you're feeling.

Here's the deal:

1. Take a moment during your day—especially **when you're experiencing unpleasantness** (e.g., frustration, anxiety, stuckness, etc.).
2. Close your eyes (if you can) and examine your experience, even for just 30 seconds. **What's it like to be you right now?**
3. Check one of the Feelings Wheels on the following pages and **identify the most likely feeling that you're feeling**.
4. **Practice this as often as possible** and you'll steadily improve. Eventually, you won't need the wheels at all.

No matter how brilliant your analytical mind is, you're a novice when it comes to feelings.

Progress will take a while. But I promise this will be time very well spent.

Getting in better touch with my feelings has had a major impact on my life.

It's helped me get clear on my life purpose, develop much deeper relationships, and use my gut to make decisions more easily.

## FEELINGS WHEELS

There are [many Feelings Wheels](#) out there, but the ones in this document are the best I've found.

They were created by [Filippa Araki](#), and I'm sharing them with her permission.

I'll guide you through each one, starting with...

## THE "FULFILLED FEELINGS" WHEEL

The wheel on the next page includes a list of **positive, pleasant feelings** (i.e., what you experience when you're feeling fulfilled).

"How are you?"

Are you the type to reply "fine," "okay," or "good"? If so, this next wheel will be very useful.

"I'm fine" is like saying "artificial intelligence is ok," or "philosophy is good." It's reducing something complex to trivially simple.

How does this sound instead?

"Artificial intelligence is promising and terrifying," or "philosophy is vast and nuanced."

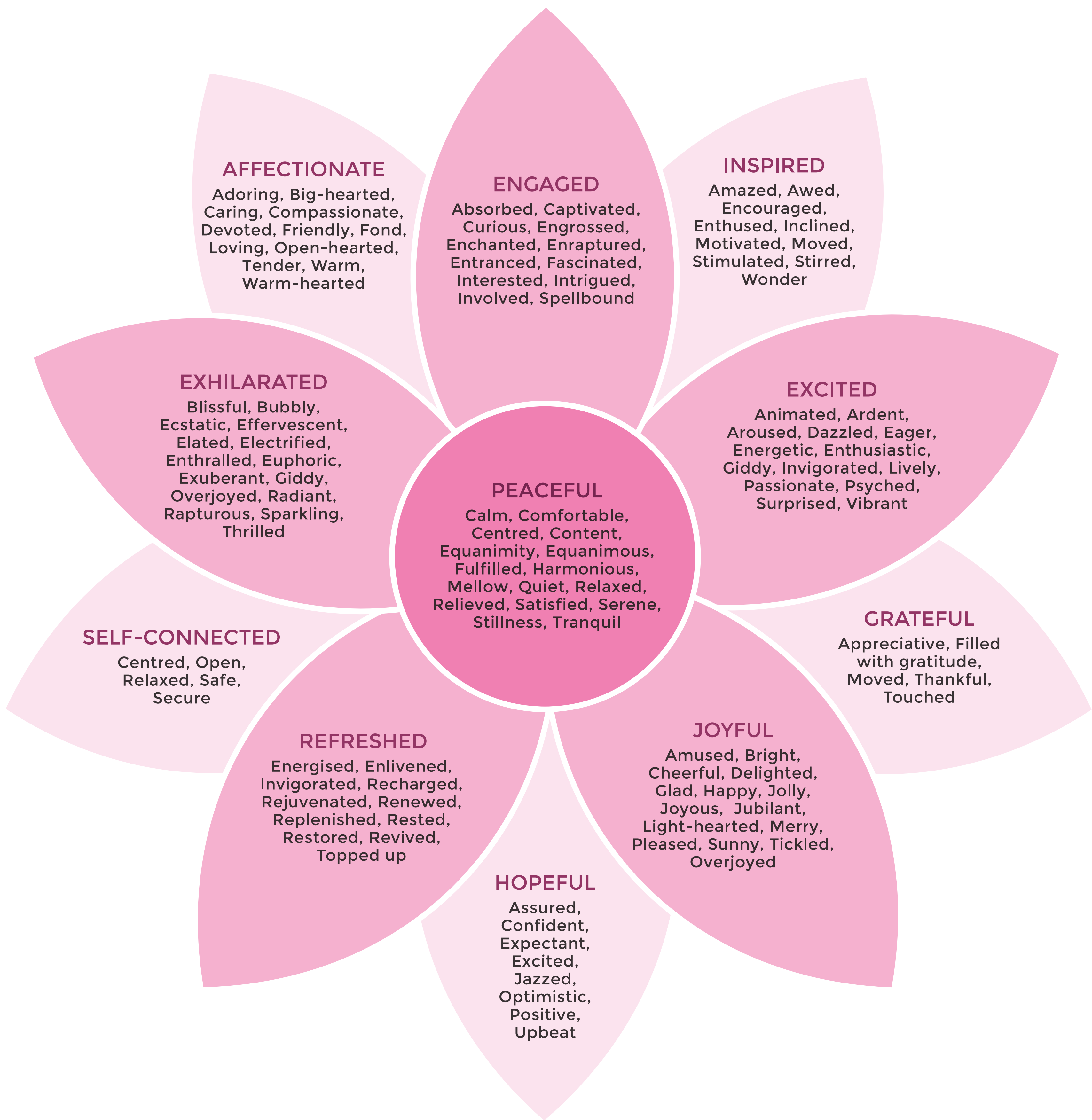
Now, what about you? You're pretty complex. So, train yourself to pick more nuanced words to describe your experience.

This will allow you to better express yourself to others and better understand yourself too.

On the next page, **pick the all-caps word that most resonates with your current experience** (e.g., peaceful or excited).

Then, as you get more practice, drill down deeper into the more specific words underneath. Remember: This will take practice, so **focus on the first layer for a while**.

# FULFILLED FEELINGS





## THE “UNFULFILLED FEELINGS” WHEEL

The next wheel is a list of “negative,” or more **challenging feelings** (i.e., what you experience when you’re feeling unfulfilled).

Again, start at the outer-most layer: fear, anger, sadness, etc.

It will probably be hard at first to identify the feeling even at that level.

That’s normal.

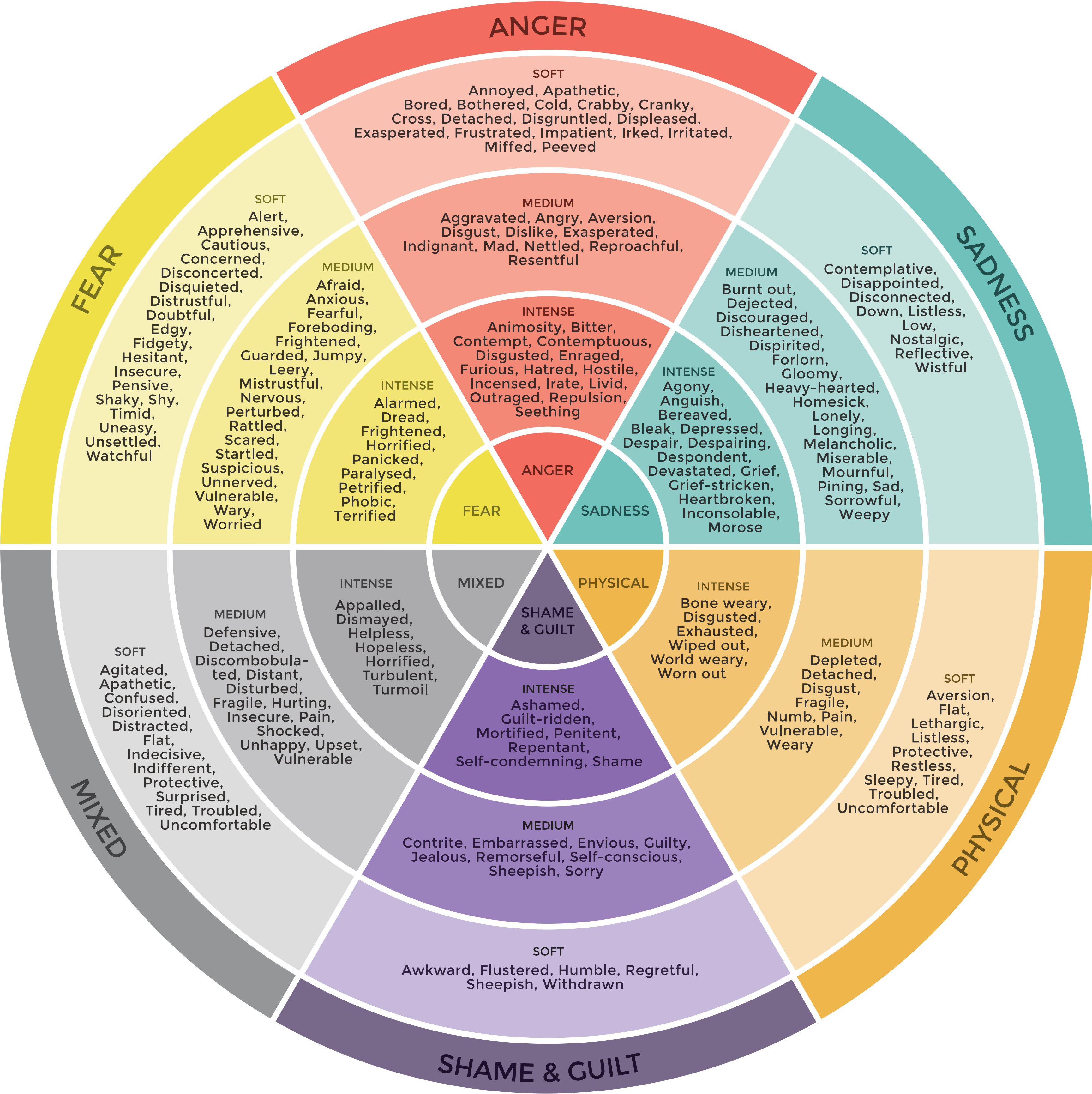
Then, once you get more advanced, you can try finding the more specific version of that feeling.

For example, a more intense flavor of anger might be disgust or hatred, whereas a milder version might be cranky or impatient.

(I suggest practicing with this next wheel for a while before moving on to the following ones. But, you might also find it helpful to check out page 6 as you’re practicing with this next wheel.)



# UNFULFILLED FEELINGS





## CAREFUL!

The most valuable types of feelings words—especially for sharing with others—are ones that focus only on your own experience.

Imagine you're having an argument with your partner (or a close friend). Notice how different it would feel to receive each of these:

1. "You betrayed me!"
2. "I feel betrayed!"
3. "I feel heartbroken and scared."

The first one was the worst, right? Because it's an accusation. It's focused on the other person. It's telling you that *you* did something wrong or *you're* a bad person.

The second one is a bit better since it's focused more on their own experience.

But the third is best because they're using words that are purely about their own emotions. Their sentence would make sense even if they were alone in the room

## ✓ EXAMPLES OF MORE USEFUL WORDS:

- I feel disconnected
- I feel tense
- I feel tender
- I feel shame
- I feel hopeless
- I feel dread
- I feel resentful
- I feel despair

## ✗ EXAMPLES OF LESS USEFUL ONES:

- I feel abandoned  
(*instead: sad, scared, lonely*)
- I feel betrayed  
(*instead: heartbroken, enraged, shocked*)
- I feel disrespected  
(*instead: irritated, embarrassed, discouraged*)
- I feel dismissed  
(*instead: confused, insecure, frustrated*)
- I feel ignored  
(*instead: unimportant, anxious, lonely*)
- I feel pressured  
(*instead: tense, overwhelmed, resistant*)
- I feel taken advantage of  
(*instead: resentful, disappointed, weary*)

## FIVE CLUES IT'S A LESS VALUABLE FRAMING:

1. "I feel *like* X" (e.g., "I feel like you abandoned me") versus "I feel X" (e.g., "I feel sad")
2. It requires another person for it to make sense (e.g., "I feel disrespected")
3. It involves interpreting an emotion or someone else's behavior (e.g., "I feel attacked")
4. It's a bundle of things (e.g., "I feel taken advantage of") versus a simple emotion (e.g., "I feel frustrated")
5. It's more likely to make them defensive (e.g., "I feel abandoned by you" versus "I feel scared and lonely")

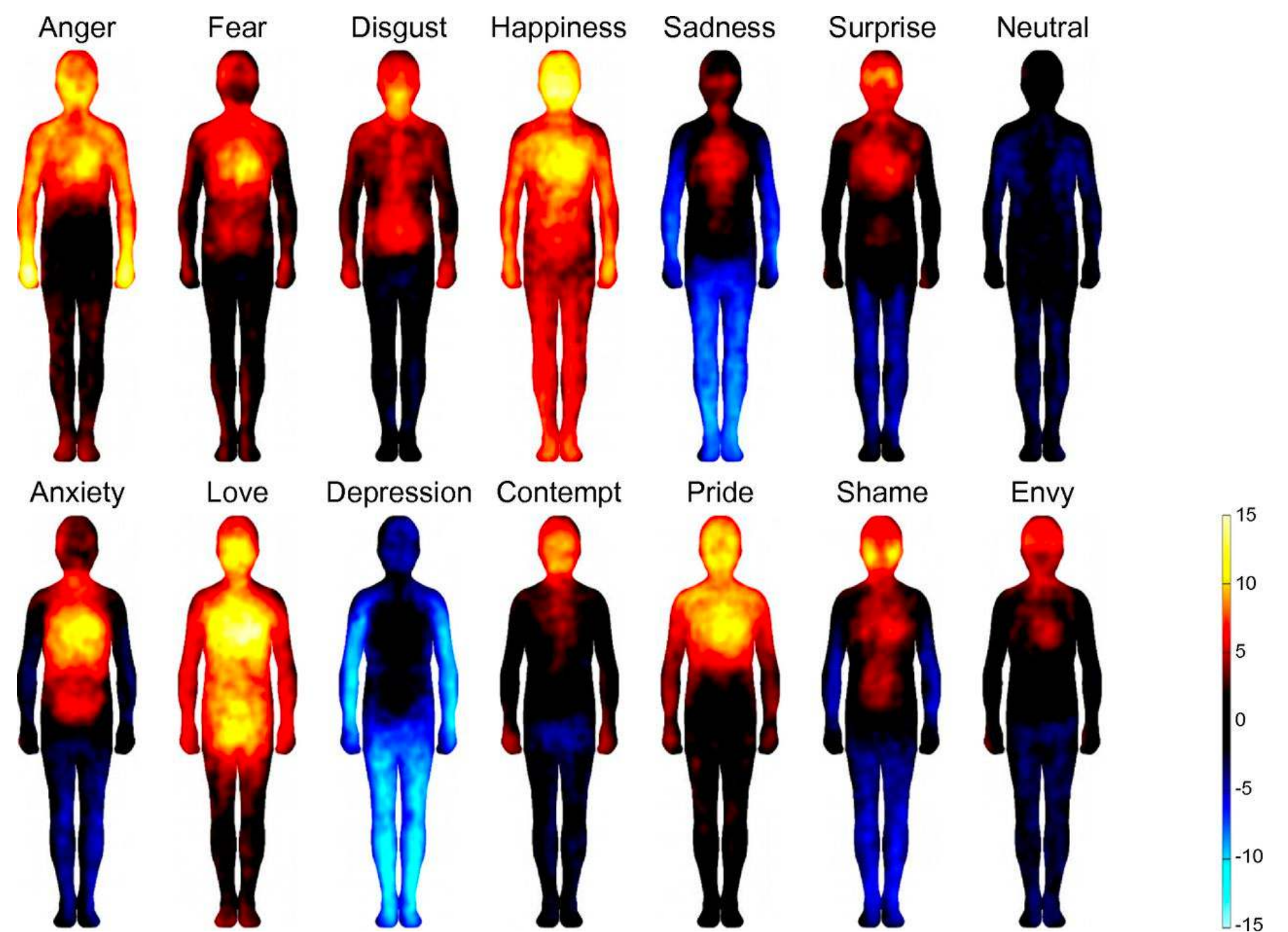


## WHERE IN YOUR BODY?

There's been [some fascinating research](#) on where in the body people tend to experience certain emotions.

These body maps show increased activation as warm red and decreased activation as cool blue (e.g., envy can be a strong sensation in the head, and sadness can be a loss of feeling in the limbs).

As you're practicing noticing what you're feeling, you might use these as starting points. Where do you feel something in your body? Which feeling might that be?







## THE “SUGGESTED FEELINGS AND NEEDS” WHEEL

(This final one is the same wheel spread across two pages to make room for all the items.)

**These wheels help identify common ways you might be seeing reality that are both unhelpful and not fully accurate.**

They’ll also show you how to shift that to a different framing that *will* help you.

We often think in these kinds of terms: that other people are *doing* \_\_\_ to us, or *making* us feel \_\_\_. It’s their fault and we’re the victim.

For example, “they humiliated me,” or “they intimidated me,” or “everyone always misunderstands me,” or “I’m always taken for granted.”

**These wheels guide you in converting sentiments like those into something more realistic, specific, and helpful.**

## HOW TO DO IT

Take a quick look at the next page so you can follow along.

At each spoke of the wheel, you’ll see the original thought in the center (e.g., “left out,” as in, “that person or those people are leaving me out, and I don’t like it”).

Your typical reaction is probably to stay with that thought and stew in it (“I don’t like it! Those people are bad! They shouldn’t treat me that way! Here’s why they’re wrong!”).

**Instead, use the wheel to move to the middle (pink) layer to see what specifically is actually happening for you.**

According to the pink layer, when you feel left out, what’s really going on is that you’re feeling some combination of “sad, lonely, annoyed, angry, or shamed.”

What can you do with that information? **Move to the outer-most (blue) wheel to see the underlying need that’s not being met.**

Why do you feel those things? Because you have several unmet needs: “inclusion, to matter, belonging, to be seen, connection.”

**Therefore, the real solution to your problem is to get those needs met.**

## WHAT’S COOL ABOUT THIS APPROACH:

Now that you’ve identified your unmet needs, **you can get them met in many different ways.**

The solution might *not* be to convince the people who have been leaving you out to start including you. (After all, how they choose to behave is outside your control.)

**But what you *do* have control over is getting your needs met in *some* way.**

So, if what you need in that moment is to feel “inclusion, to matter, belonging, to be seen, connection,” perhaps you can seek that elsewhere.

Or perhaps you can try to give that to yourself.

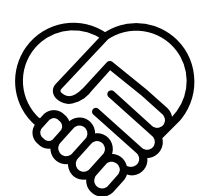


# SUGGESTED FEELINGS AND NEEDS

beneath Words that we commonly  
confuse with Feelings



**FRIEND:** I'm feeling left out.  
**EMPATHY GUESS:** Are you feeling sad and longing for inclusion?

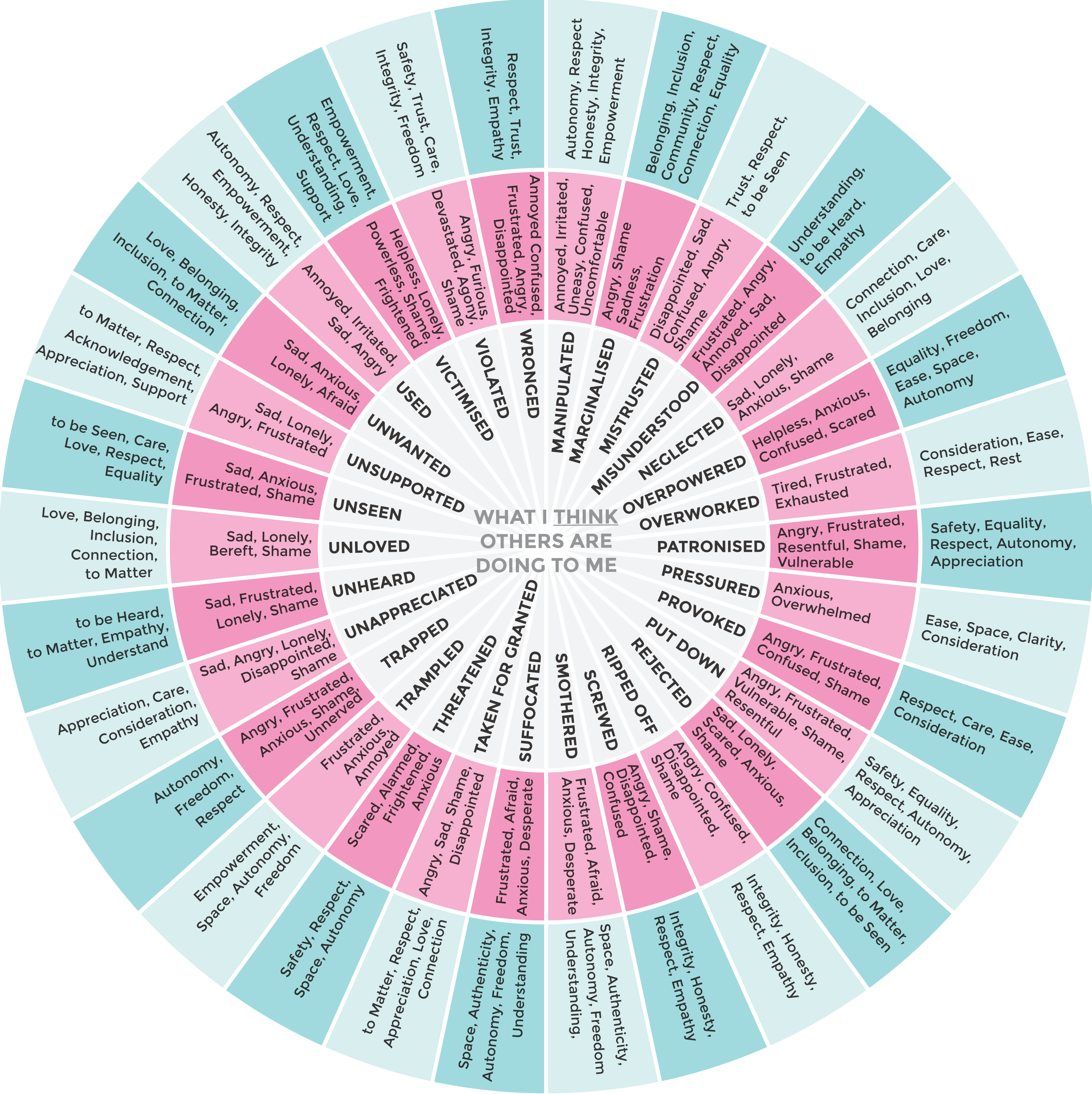


**The Compassion Lounge**  
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# SUGGESTED FEELINGS AND NEEDS

beneath Words that we commonly  
confuse with Feelings cont.



**ME:** I'm feeling misunderstood.  
**SELF EMPATHY:** I'm feeling annoyed and wanting some understanding,







## **THOSE LAST TWO WHEELS HAVE A BONUS BENEFIT TOO:**

Many of us struggle with empathy, which can negatively impact our relationships and prevent us from feeling fully at ease in emotional conversations.

**These wheels can teach you how to express empathy in a particularly powerful way.**

For example, say a friend, family member, or co-worker comes to you complaining that they feel left out.

Now, you can reply with very specific empathy.

**Use the pink layer:** “Wow, I bet that makes you feel lonely or annoyed.”

**Then, use the blue layer:** “You matter to me. I’d love to make time to connect with you right now and help you feel seen.”

**It’s basically a sheet sheet on how to be an amazing partner, friend, co-worker, manager, parent, etc.**

## **PRACTICE**

If you have a partner or good friend you’re willing to be vulnerable with, try asking for their help.

Tell them you want to practice empathy and that you have this cool new tool to try out.

Ask them to share something difficult they’re going through, then try checking your wheel to find the closest thing to what they shared.

Practice offering them empathy based on the blue and pink layers.

Alternatively, just look through the wheel on your own, and think about the most common types of complaints or venting you hear from other people in your life.

By reviewing the wheel in advance of the real situation, you’ll be better prepared to deal with it.

**Most of all though, simply practice using it on yourself for a while.**

Identify how you’re feeling, then figure out your underlying feelings and unmet needs.

Good luck!

—Michael