

Reframing Negative Emotions: Listen To Your Feelings

It's easy to dismiss our emotions as irrational, baseless, or "crazy." But they exist for a reason, and instead of ignoring them for shaming ourselves for them, we can pay attention to what they are communicating about our current experience. Negative emotions can be interpreted with positive, encouraging messages using the tool of reframing. Here are some examples of how seemingly negative emotions can be used to encourage, inspire, and heal:

Bitterness can show you where you need to heal: perhaps where you're still holding judgments on others and/or on yourself.

Resentment can show you where you're living in the past and not allowing the present to be as it is.

Discomfort can show you that you need to pay attention to what is happening *right now*. You're being given the opportunity to change, to do something different from what you would typically do.

Anger can show you what you're passionate about, where your boundaries are, and what you believe needs to change about the world. Anger is a usually great indicator that you have an important need that is not being met.

Disappointment can remind you that you tried for or attempted something, that you did not give into apathy, and that you still care.

Guilt can show you that you're still living life within other people's expectations of what you should do or who you should be.

Shame can show you that you're internalizing other people's beliefs about who you should be or who you are, and that you need to reconnect with yourself.

Anxiety can show you that you need to wake up, right now, and be present. You are likely either stuck in the past or living in fear of the future rather than attending to your present experience.

Sadness can show you the depth of your feeling, the depth of your care for others and for this world.

Remember....experiencing a full range of emotions is something to celebrate. It is beneficial, which is why humans evolved to have them. Take some time to practice reframing your negative emotions next time you notice them entering your consciousness.