

The Emotion Code Definitions of Emotions by Dr. Bradley Nelson

The list of emotions that follows encompasses the range of human emotion. There are many more emotions in the dictionary besides the ones listed here, but we choose to use a simplified list to keep things easy and quick. You do not need to add to this list - every emotion that can be experienced will fall under an emotion listed below (e.g., Embarrassment would fall under Humiliation, Bewildered would fall under Confusion, etc.)

Abandonment: Physical abandonment is being left alone; left behind or deserted (this is the type of abandonment that we most often see in childhood). Emotional abandonment is being given up on; withdrew from; emotionally deserted or separated from; a feeling of being “left behind” in a non-physical form.

Anger: A strong displeasure and belligerence aroused by a real or supposed wrong; wrath. Anger is often used as a cover-up or form of denial for emotions of hurt or fear.

Anxiety: A generalized feeling of uneasiness and foreboding; a fear of the unknown; fear without a subject (e.g., she feels anxious and fearful all the time for no apparent reason).

Betrayal: Betrayed is to have your trust broken, to be deserted or hurt by a trusted one. Betrayal of another is to be unfaithful in guarding or fulfilling a trust; to be disloyal or violate a confidence, to desert someone who trusts you. Betrayal of the self is to break integrity; act against one’s morals, to abuse the body or soul.

Bitterness: A harsh, disagreeable or cynical attitude. Being angry or resentful because of hurtful or unfair experiences.

Blaming: Being Blamed is to be held responsible; accused; or held guilty for something. Blaming another is to hold responsible; accuse; find fault with. Putting responsibility on someone or something else to avoid taking responsibility. This is a key emotion in creating a victim mentality and can cause a deterioration of personal power. Blaming the self is finding fault with oneself, which can lead to feelings of self-abuse, depression, etc.

Conflict: Internal Conflict is a mental and emotional struggle within the self, arising from opposing demands or impulses. (e.g., He was feeling conflicted about whether or not to take the new job) External Conflict is to fight; to disagree or be disagreeable; to struggle or battle against; to antagonize. Prolonged strife or struggle. (e.g., She and her ex-husband experience continual conflict about custody of their children).

Confusion: A disoriented feeling; foggy thinking; chaos; lack of distinctness or clearness; perplexity; bewilderment; a disturbed mental state.

Creative Insecurity: Feeling unsafe or untrusting the self about the creation or development of anything-relationships, family, health, money, career and/or artistic endeavors. A feeling of insecurity that arises and blocks the creative process. (e.g., writer’s block).

Crying: The (often) involuntary act of expressing a strong emotion; a response to pain or suffering (emotional or physical). A response to or expression of helplessness. A physical sensation felt in the throat, chest and/or diaphragm. Often becomes trapped when one does not allow him/herself to cry (i.e., suppressing this reaction or stuffing it down).

Defensiveness: A state of resisting attack or protecting oneself; being sensitive to the threat of criticism or injury to one's ego; being on guard against real or imagined threats to one's person, physical and/or emotional.

Depression: A state of being sad, gloomy, low in spirits, dejected. Often a secondary emotion caused by “anger turned inward” at the self and feelings of shame and guilt, etc.

Despair: A complete loss of hope; misery; difficult or unable to be helped or comforted. Discouragement: Feeling a lack of courage, hope or confidence; disheartened, dispirited. Losing the nerve to try or attempt something.

Disgust: A feeling of loathing; when good taste or moral sense is offended; a strong aversion. (e.g., She felt disgusted when the killer was acquitted).

Dread: Fear of something that is about to happen; apprehension as to something in the future, usually real but sometimes unknown. (e.g., He dreaded going to the high school reunion and facing the bullies who had tormented him).

Effort Unreceived: When one's work, achievement, attempts or endeavors are not accepted or recognized; when one's best effort is not considered good enough; a feeling of being unappreciated. Not feeling approved of or validated.

Failure: When one falls short of success or achievement in something expected, attempted, or desired; (e.g., The failure of a marriage or other relationship, being fired, bankruptcy, performing poorly in athletics, art, academics, etc.)

Fear: A strongly distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil or pain; the threat may be real or imagined.

Forlorn: Miserable; sad and lonely by reason of abandonment, desolation or emptiness; hopeless; forsaken.

Frustration: Exasperation; being stuck or unable to progress; feeling blocked from causing a change or achieving an objective or goal.

Grief: Intense emotional suffering caused by loss, disaster, misfortune, etc.; an acute sorrow and deep sadness. A universal reaction to bereavement. Also, can be feeling harassed, vexed or exasperated (e.g., if someone gives you grief).

Guilt: The feeling of having done wrong or committed an offense. Feeling responsible for the harmful actions of another (e.g., abuse, parents' divorce, death, etc.) Often accompanied by feelings of depression, shame and self-abuse.

Hatred: To loathe; despise; great dislike or aversion. Often comes as a result of “hurt love”. Often hatred is of a situation rather than a person (e.g., hatred of another's behavior, unjust circumstances, etc.) Self-hatred creates destructive behaviors and illnesses.

Heartache: Anguish and pain of the heart; distress usually as a result of difficulty or sadness in a relationship. Felt as a crushing or burning physical sensation in the chest.

Helplessness: Being unable to help oneself; being without the aid or protection of another. Having little strength or personal power. A common emotion for those suffering from a “victim mentality”. Feeling unable to change one’s circumstances or state.

Hopelessness: Devoid of hope; having no expectation of good; having no remedy or cure; no prospect of change or improvement.

Horror: A strong emotion of alarm, disgust, or outrage caused by something frightful or shocking (e.g., an event of extreme violence, cruelty, or macabre.)

Humiliation: A painful loss of pride, dignity or self-respect; to feel mortified; embarrassed.

Indecisiveness: An inability to make a decision; wavering back and forth between one choice or another. Stems from distrust of the self or doubting the ability to make a good decision.

Insecurity: A lack of confidence; self-conscious; shy. Feeling unsafe from danger or ridicule.

Jealousy: Resentful and envious of someone's success, achievements, or advantages. Having suspicious fears; fears of rivalry or unfaithfulness. Results from a fear of not being loved and/or from insecurity.

Lack of Control: Lacking restraint or direction; unable to regulate or command; a feeling that someone or something else determines your course.

Longing: To have a strong desire or craving; a yearning or pining; aching for; to miss someone or something; to want something you do not have (e.g., She longed for a different life).

Lost: Unable to see the correct or acceptable course; having no direction. Physically lost most often shows up from childhood- (e.g., being lost in the woods and can’t find the way home, etc.) Emotionally lost refers to a feeling of being unable to see what the right decision or direction, being unable to find emotional stability (e.g., He felt lost after his wife died; She hasn’t done anything with her life, she seems really lost.)

Love Unreceived: A feeling that love expressed is or has been rejected. Feeling unwanted, not cared for; not accepted; a lack of love where it is desired.

Low Self-Esteem: A low appraisal of one’s own worth or value; feeling and focusing on one’s flaws; holding a feeling of disrespect for the self; not confident; lack of self-love.

Lust: Intense sexual desire or appetite; an overwhelming want or craving (e.g., lust for power); passion; to covet.

Nervousness: Unnaturally or acutely uneasy or apprehensive; fearful; timid; to feel jumpy or on edge.

Overjoy: Intense delight or elation which is too overpowering for the body; joy that it is a shock to the system. This one emotion will appear for any and all positive emotions that have become trapped.

Overwhelm: To be overpowered in mind or emotion; extreme stress; feeling overpowered with superior force; feeling excessively burdened.

Panic: A sudden, overwhelming fear that produces hysterical behavior, unreasonably fearful thoughts or physical symptoms such as trembling and hyperventilation; a strong feeling of impending doom.

Peeved: Irritated; annoyed; exasperated; irked; aggravated; ticked off.

Pride: An overly high esteeming of oneself for some real or imagined merit or superiority; vanity (an excessive desire to be noticed, praised, or approved); feeling better than others; haughty; non-teachable; has to be right; expects more credit than earned; or treats others with disdain or contempt. Having a healthy amount of pride (self-respect or self-esteem) is a good thing, and this type of pride usually doesn't show up as a trapped emotion (although it may show up if one's healthy pride is injured).

Rejection: Feeling denied, refused or rebuffed; discarded as useless or unimportant; cast out; unwanted; forsaken.

Resentment: A feeling of displeasure or indignation at someone or something regarded as the cause of injury or insult; bitter for having been treated unfairly; unwilling to forgive. Often this emotion comes along with animosity (ill-will that displays itself in action, strong hostility or antagonism).

Sadness: Unhappy; sorrowful; mournful; affected by grief.

Self-Abuse: Abusing the self emotionally includes negative self-talk (e.g., "I'm such an idiot."), blaming the self, etc. Abusing the self physically includes mistreating the body by use of addictive substances; to not care for the body by lack of sleep, proper diet or nutrition; to work beyond what one can or should endure; to punish or tax oneself excessively. This abuse may help atone for "sins", real or imagined, and usually is driven by anger. Illnesses can be forms of self-abuse (e.g., "I don't deserve to be healed.")

Shame: A feeling of being wrong, defective or disreputable. The painful feeling of having done or experienced something dishonorable, improper or foolish; disgrace; humiliation; a cause for regret. The lowest vibration of all the emotions. Leads to guilt, depression and even suicide.

Shock: A sudden or violent disturbance of the emotions or sensibilities; extreme surprise; to feel traumatized or stunned.

Sorrow: A sad regret; distress caused by loss, disappointment or grief; to feel or express grief, unhappiness, or sadness.

Stubbornness: Being difficult; unbendable; unable or unwilling to forgive; obstinate; headstrong; resistant.

Taken for Granted: Feels treated with careless indifference; not given thanks or for something accomplished, similar to ignored.

Terror: Intense, sharp, overmastering fear; extreme fright; alarm.

Unsupported: A lack of support, help or encouragement; not provided for by another; not defended when help is needed; feeling the burden is too heavy to bear alone, etc.

Unworthy: Not good enough; beneath the dignity of; not commendable or credible; undeserving; not valuable or suitable; unbecoming.

Vulnerability: Feeling susceptible to harm, either emotional or physical; unsafe; unstable.

Wishy Washy: Weak, spiritless; undecided irresolute; without strength of character. To lack conviction; without a backbone.

Worry: Dwelling on difficulty or troubles; unease or anxiety about a situation or a person; extreme concern over potential problems; concern about a loved one in possible distress.

Worthless: Of no importance or value; without excellence of character, quality or esteem; serving no purpose.