



Empowerment Coaching

## How emotions are made



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# How emotions are made? – Introduction 1/2

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Emotions arise in the body, as a result of an event and at the moment when the process of evaluating that event is triggered in us. At the root of emotion is thought, belief, which is the source of our judgment. **Thus, there is always a thought first (often unconscious, hidden), and only then an emotion.**

An emotion can be positive if we judge an event as beneficial to us or negative when the event presents us with a difficulty, obstacle, threat or crossing our boundaries.

Emotions are like an automatic radar that informs us about what in our opinion is good for us and what is not good for us. **The body cannot lie, and it is always the ultimate distinguishing feature of our truth.** Even such a truth that we may not reasonably like (e.g. I should not be angry in such a situation, and yet I feel angry).

# How emotions are made? – Introduction 2/2



In addition, what is very important, emotions remind us of our value system, because emotions arouse in us what is currently important to us. We always judge the situation, whether we realize it or not – our mind works continuously.

It is the emotions that really decide which actions and goals we will take first and which we will leave for later. Emotions determine most of our purchasing decisions. But they also decide to flexibly change behavior and adapt to the situation.

Changes in the body that we feel in the case of strong and unambiguous emotions are, for example, heartbeat, accelerated breathing (when we feel, for example, fear), stomach cramping (when someone exceeds our limits), tension of the shoulder girdle muscles (in the case of feeling strong pressure), or even changes in facial expressions (such as a smile or surprise).

Quite often it happens that we feel a mixture of emotions. They are the result of several source habitual thoughts or the clash of our previous experience with a new situation for us. Emotions can also vary in intensity and complexity.

# Paul Ekman's Concept of Basic Emotions 1/4



Paul Ekman is an American psychologist, a pioneer in the field of research on emotions, the author of several books, included in the group of 100 most outstanding psychologists of the twentieth century and the most influential people in the world in the Time magazine ranking. In the 70s of the twentieth century, he published the concept of Basic Emotions and their mimic expression.

According to him, emotions can be divided into basic and complex.

Basic emotions are universal emotions. Each of us is born with basic emotions and they are common to all people. According to Ekman, everyone feels them, regardless of their place of birth and culture. They are programmed in the brain and are associated with the automatic reaction of our face equally recognized by everyone. They can be compared to the basic color palette, on the basis of which we create all other colors (i.e. complex emotions). Culture, on the other hand, influences how we express these emotions.

# Paul Ekman's Concept of Basic Emotions 2/4



Ekman distinguished 6 basic emotions: joy, sadness, anger, fear, disgust and surprise.

Complex emotions are emotions created by combining several basic emotions, often felt as the appearance of several emotions at the same time – even those that seemingly contradict each other. According to Ekman, complex emotions derive from basic emotions and depend on the culture in which we grow up. They are also called derivative emotions. Their feeling is related to the cognitive assessment of the world (with the beliefs that we acquire in the process of upbringing).

An example of a complex emotion might be feeling fear of punishment combined with a desire to submit to it to atone for one's transgressions. You can also love someone and be angry with them at the moment. You can also hate someone and at the same time admire them and be very attached to them.

Ekman's distinction of Surprise as a basic emotion caused a lot of discussion and controversy. Eventually, Ekman gave up treating Surprise as a basic emotion and limited their list to 5. Therefore, in many sources you can meet with inconsistent information about the amount of basic emotions distinguished by Ekman.





**Joy** is an emotion that we always strive for. From an evolutionary point of view, it shows us an ideal state, thanks to which we feel a high level of energy, happiness, fulfillment, satisfaction, well-being.

**Sadness** is an emotion in which we feel regret, disappointment, malaise, a decrease in energy. We express it through tears, withdrawal, silence. Thanks to this, we can survive the loss and go through the purification. Nature has prepared sadness in such a way that we can calm down and regenerate. Therefore, in mourning we do not have the strength for anything, we would like to hide in bed for days and not leave the house. Our body helps us to work through it.

**Fear** is an evolutionarily very important emotion. Thanks to it, we avoid threats. It increases the level of stress hormones (cortisol and adrenaline) to be able to escape faster or better face the threat. Thanks to it, we reflexively turn the car so that there is no collision or hide when we are sure of failure. If we are confident in our abilities, fear does not stop us from gaining new experiences, but at the same time helps us not to get into serious trouble.



**Anger** is the emotion that makes changes. Through frustration and agitation, we notice that our goal – joy – is too far away and we mobilize for change. Anger is also a clear signal that a situation or person is crossing our boundaries. In the course of evolution, anger like fear allowed us to survive. In addition, anger forces us to discharge the tension stored in it from the body. Thanks to this, we can feel calm again.

**Disgust** is an emotion based on the senses. If something from the outside looks, smells or tastes in a way that we consider unhealthy, harmful, or dangerous, we avoid it and thus survive in good condition.

**Surprise** – the feeling of this emotion is indicated by open mouth, widely dilated pupils of the eyes and high raised eyebrows. Surprise allows us in the event of an unexpected situation to see more information and quickly plan the appropriate action.





Lisa Feldman Barrett is a distinguished professor of psychology at Northeastern University, where she focuses on affective science. He is the director of the Interdisciplinary Laboratory of Affective Science. Along with James Russell, he is the founder and editor-in-chief of the journal Emotion Review.

In 2017, Feldman Barrett, based on her brain research, **challenged Ekman's concept of Basic Emotions**. You can read about it m.in in her book "How emotions arise. The secret life of the brain.,,"

**According to Feldman Barrett, we are not born with basic emotions encoded in the brain.** The brain works on a different, simple principle. It receives messages from the outside, which, combined with previous experiences recorded in it, are the only way to assess what is happening around.



There are only two types of signals: pleasant vs. unpleasant and stimulating vs. calming.

All that reaches our brain is whether the experience is pleasant or unpleasant, and whether it is stimulating or calming. Everything else—sadness, anger, joy, fear, disgust, surprise, and all the other emotions we feel on a daily basis—are the social norms, cultural patterns, and other concepts of our social reality that we have been taught.

Lisa Feldman Barrett's theory of constructed emotion argues that the brain predicts and categorizes the messages it receives and imposes on them concepts of emotions from its own culture, thus constructing emotions.

Despite the fact that we perceive emotions as separate categories, the sensations processed by the brain (pleasant – unpleasant; stimulating – calming) are only a certain scale. A scale constructed by a given individual brain.



The same emotion can be experienced in many ways. There is no one-size-fits-all way to experience each emotion.

My sadness does not have the same symptoms as your sadness. Only if you know a certain emotional concept can you feel such an emotion. For example, sadness is known in Polish culture, but in Tahitian culture there is no sadness at all. Each of us reacts to different situations differently. So, according to Feldman Barrett, Ekman's six basic facial expressions are just stereotypes.

There is no single, specific part of the brain where an emotion is experienced.

There isn't even any region of the brain that specializes in emotions in general.

Regions of the brain that are active when experiencing emotions are also active in other situations. In other words, just because someone laughs doesn't mean they're happy.

# Concept Comparison

## What does this mean in practice?



# Concept Comparison – What does this mean in practice?



According to Ekman's classical theory, Fundamental Emotions are universal, they are programmed in the brain and we are born with them. So the Basic Emotions work automatically, beyond our conscious control. Something happens, neurons in the brain are fired up and as a result we make m.in certain specific, globally recognizable mines.

According to Lisa Feldman Barrett's latest theory of Constructed Emotions, basic emotions do not exist. In fact, as such, objectively there are no emotions. It all depends on how deeply rooted certain repetitive concepts are in your culture.

Lisa Feldman Barrett's latest concept is much more convincing.

Since our mind is malleable and changes throughout our lives, we always have a choice and the ability to consciously control the sensations generated by the brain.

Each of us can redefine how and when we want to feel each of the emotions and consistently work to develop patterns that are beneficial to us.



## Basic Emotions Theory by Paul Ekman

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul\\_Ekman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Ekman)

<https://www.paulekman.com/universal-emotions/>

<https://www.paulekman.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Basic-Emotions.pdf>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318447136\\_Basic\\_Emotions](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318447136_Basic_Emotions)

## Constructed Emotion Theory by Lisa Feldman Barrett

<https://lisafeldmanbarrett.com/>

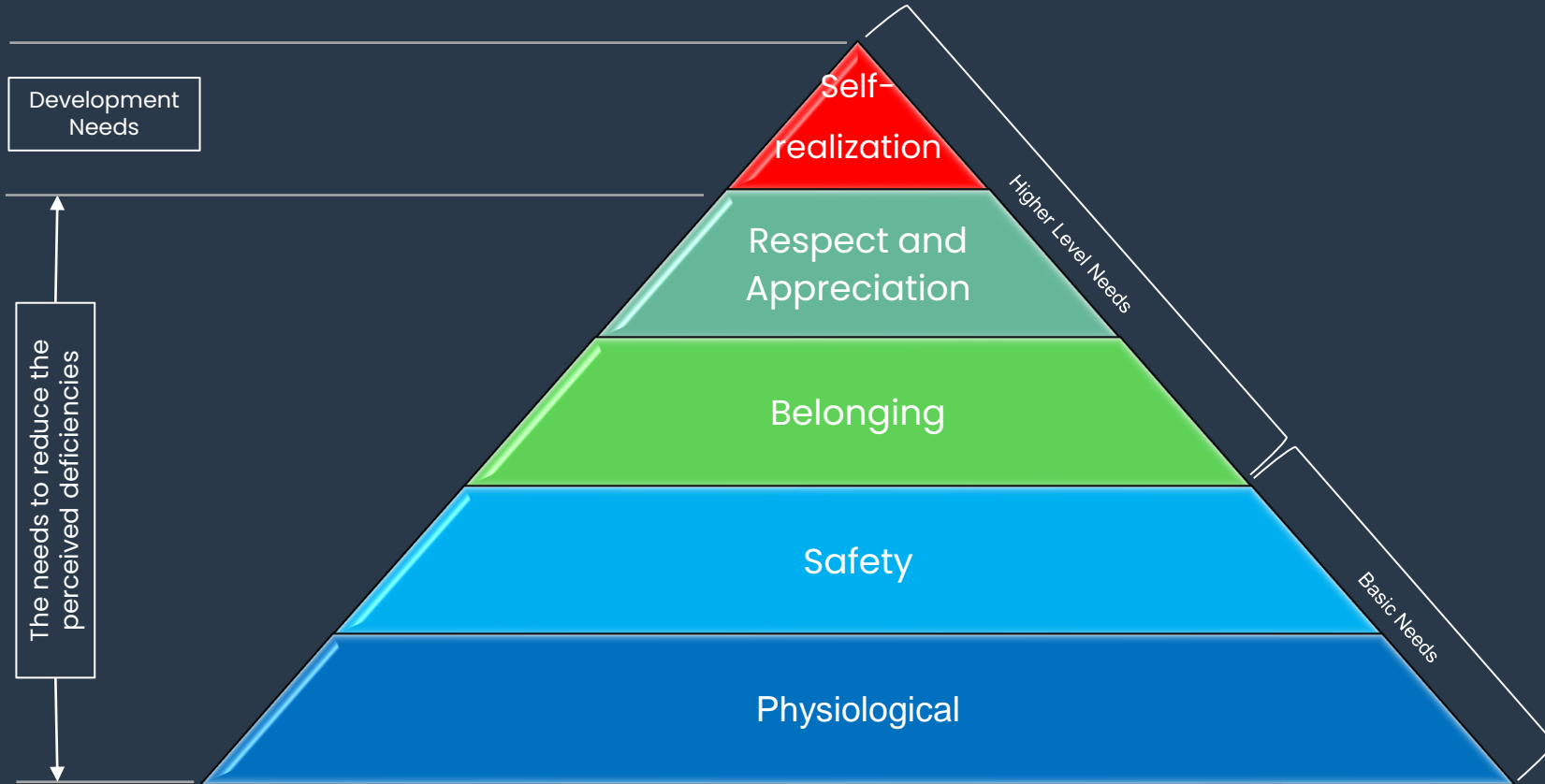
[The book "How emotions are made. The secret life of brain"](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjXHoJ8d8IU&ab\\_channel=TEDxTalks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjXHoJ8d8IU&ab_channel=TEDxTalks)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVD4OsLEntY&ab\\_channel=LisaFeldmanBarrett](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVD4OsLEntY&ab_channel=LisaFeldmanBarrett)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gks6ceq4eQ>

# Maslow's Pyramid of Needs





# Briefly about human needs 1/2

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Surely you have met with Maslow's Pyramid. Maslow's pyramid, otherwise known as the hierarchy of needs, is the best-known theory about the needs and motivations that guide human behavior. Abraham Maslow was an American psychologist who, based on his research, classified and divided all the needs of each person into five groups. But he did it in 1943.

Since then, the world has changed a lot. And although in its foundations Maslow's Pyramid is still applicable, in today's world the majority of our society (or at least most people living in highly developed countries) have basic needs met, and paradoxically struggle with the needs of a higher level. These needs change with the increasing pace of life, the development of technology and civilization in general.

# Briefly about human needs 2/2

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The lack of satisfaction of the needs of a higher level, as well as forgetting about one's individual Values (or lack of awareness about it) is a source generating very strong individual emotions in today's world.

Example: I hope you belong to this group of happy people who on Sunday afternoon do not feel anxiety and tension associated with the fact that the next day you have to go to work.

In the following pages you will see a slightly different approach to the Needs of Modern Man developed on the basis of the theory of Non-Violent Communication by psychologist Marshall B. Rosenberg, and then a list of emotions that we experience when these needs ARE or are NOT met.

# List of needs of modern man 1/3



## Physical Needs

- Air
- Food
- Water
- Shelter
- Physical security
- Rest
- Sleep
- Move
- Sexual expression

## Autonomy needs

- Freedom
- Independence
- Own space
- Choosing your own plans
- Pursuing your own goals and dreams
- Following your values
- Spontaneity



## Needs of Contact with Oneself

- Self-acceptance
- Authenticity
- Awareness
- Self-Development/Growth
- Openness
- Creativity
- Self-respect
- Trust
- Consistency/Integrity
- Certainty
- Efficiency
- A sense of agency and influence on your life
- Balance
- Goal
- Meaning
- Fulfilment

## Needs of Relationship with Other People

- Acceptance
- Recognition
- Respect
- Sincerity
- Empathy
- Trust
- Being seen
- Attention, being taken into account
- Being understood
- Belonging
- Communication
- Feeling Support from Others
- Sharing, Reciprocity
- Equality
- Closeness
- Warmth, Tenderness
- Love



## Needs for the Joy of Life

- Fun
- Humor
- Joy, Happiness
- Ease, Simplicity
- Adventures, Inspirations
- Diversity, Variety

## Needs of the Relationship with the World

- Contact with nature
- Order
- Peace
- Beauty
- Harmony

# How can we feel when our needs are NOT met



Abashed	Disappointed	Indifferent	Saddened
Agitated	Discouraged	Ignored	Scared
Alarmed	Disgusted	Insignificant	Shocked
Angry	Distanced	Irritated	Sour
Annoyed	Distressed	Lonely	Stressed
Anxious	Disturbed	Longing	Surprised
Ashamed	Embarrassed	Lost	Tense
Bewildered	Exhausted	Meaningless	Timid
Bored	Fearful	Nervous	Tired
Broken	Fierce	Overwhelmed	Troubled
Concerned	Frightened	Panicked	Tormented
Confused	Frustrated	Pissed off	Unimportant
Depressed	Furious	Raging	Upset
Desperate	Hungry	Rebelious	Weary
Devastated	Impatient	Sad	Worried

# How can we feel when our needs ARE met



Absorbed	Composed	Full of energy	Involved	Radiant
Agitated	Confident	Full of hope	Inquisitive	Refreshed
Alive	Curious	Full of joy	Joyful	Relaxed
Amazed	Dazzled	Full of life	Jolly	Rested
Amused	Delighted	Full of peace	Liberated	Safe
Animated	Eager	Full of vigor	Lifted up	Satisfied
Attentive	Effusive	Friendly	Loving	Soothed
Awakened	Elemental	Grateful	Mild	Sensitive
Bold	Enchanted	Happy	Mobilized	Surprised
Bowled	Encouraged	In a good mood	Muted	Tender
Brave	Energetic	In love	Overjoyed	Touched
Bursting with energy	Enthusiastic	Infatuated	Optimistic	Trusting
Calm	Excited	Inspired	Open	Winged
Carefree	Fascinated by	Interested	Passionate	
Cheerful	Fulfilled	Intrigued	Proud	



# Summary and Conclusions

## 8 Practical Tips



# Summary and Conclusions 1/2

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- Emotions arise when the process of assessing an event is triggered in us. At the root of emotion is thought, belief, which is the source of our judgment. **Thus, there is always a thought first (often unconscious, hidden), and only then an emotion.**
- **Unconscious beliefs or internal conflicts can be a source of very strong or complex and at the same time incomprehensible emotional reactions.**
- An emotion can be positive if we judge an event as beneficial to us or negative when the event presents us with a difficulty, obstacle, threat or crossing our boundaries.
- Emotions are short-lived, on the order of seconds or minutes. Moods last from several hours to several days.
- Emotions that last for hours are the result of the accumulation of repeated, unreleased shorter emotional episodes.



- Emotions remind us of our value system, because emotions are aroused in us by what is currently important to us. We always judge the situation, whether we realize it or not – our mind works continuously.
- Emotional response is also a reflection of the realization (or not) of our needs.
- In the modern world, most basic needs are met, while more and more often strong emotions are the result of not satisfying the needs of a higher level.
- We always have a choice and the ability to consciously control the sensations generated by the brain. Each of us can redefine how and when we want to feel each of the emotions and consistent work to develop patterns that are beneficial.

# 8 Practical Tips

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1. **Values:** Be aware of what is important to you in life. Know and organize your Values. Live in harmony with them.
2. **Needs:** Be aware of your needs. Learn to express them maturely.
3. **Thinking Patterns:** Become aware of the repetitive patterns of your thinking, behavior, and feeling. Recognize unconscious internal conflicts and beliefs "bought" from others. Cleanse yourself of what is not yours and what does not serve you.
4. **Emotions:** Learn to recognize, name, and fully feel your emotions. Work on a mature way of expressing them. Blocking or avoiding emotions is the worst possible way.

## 8 Practical Tips

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5. **Body:** move regularly. Take care of your physical condition and a healthy diet. Physical movement is the best way to release the tension accumulated in the body, as well as a source of generation and release of well-being hormones.
6. **Contact with Nature:** if you live in the city, look for contact with Nature as often as possible. Many scientific studies confirm that being in the bosom of pure Nature calms and adds energy. And oxygen is life.
7. **Support System:** take care of relationships with people close to you. Do not isolate yourself. Strive for friendship and offer it yourself. As often as possible, be in a company and environment where you can truly be yourself.
8. **Know yourself:** be yourself. Everyone else is already busy. Do not copy. Work regularly on self-discovery and realize what you really like, what you really need, what activities you really realize yourself in, what environment favors you, how best you renew your life energy. Don't ask what the world needs. **Ask what makes you full of life and do it. Because what the world needs are people full of life.**



# Empowerment Coaching

QUESTIONS INSIGHTS GROWTH