



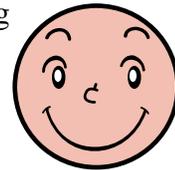
“How Do You Feel?”



This is one of the most commonly asked questions in our vocabulary, and one of the most meaningless. People don't usually know how to answer that question because they're not sure what the person who's asking it means. So, the common answer is, “Fine,” and that's the end of it.

When we have been sick and a person who knew we were sick asks that question, we know what to answer. We can tell them about our progress in getting well and how our body feels. But, usually the question, “How do you feel,” is not about physical problems, it's about emotional problems. We associate feelings with emotions much more than we do with sickness.

When we haven't been sick, and someone asks how we feel, our first thought is to just say “Fine,” even though we may be suffering overwhelming emotional pain inside. Take a moment to think of all the times you have said, “Fine,” when inside you weren't fine at all. We have been trained to hide our emotions, as though it was wrong to feel them, and we have also been trained to believe we should always show a “happy face” to the world, even though tidal waves of emotion may be crashing inside of us.



Emotional dishonesty is what we do to hide our true feelings. When we attempt to hide our true feelings, it may be out of fear of not being understood because we have tried to talk about our feelings in the past and were told we were wrong to feel the way we do. This can start in early childhood, when most children are taught about everything except understanding what they feel. We're sure told what not to feel – “You shouldn't feel that way about your teacher – your little sister – doing your chores – kissing your cousin – not getting to go with the other kids” – etc., etc.

Denying our emotions means we have to file them somewhere in our subconscious mind because we can't act them out. But, at some point in our lives, when similar circumstances occur, no matter how old we are, those pockets of emotions are going to open and release strong feelings, the very same way we felt them as a child. A lot of times, by the time we're older we don't remember the childhood incident anymore so we wonder why we feel so bad, and so strong, about some incident or relationship we're in now.

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This is where emotional confusion begins. We just feel one great big emotional upset and don't realize it is made up of a lot of different kinds of emotions that we have never taken time to sort out. There are hundreds of different emotions, that produce hundreds of different feelings, but we can't separate them enough to deal with them one-on-one because we're too upset at the time.

The time to find out "how we feel" is not when we are feeling it! Instead of just feeling bad – take time to identify the emotions that are involved. If it is anger, sit quietly and try to trace that anger to it's root and you will find out that it is rooted in fear or disappointment. Go deeper and find out what you are afraid of or disappointed about. All fear originates from the possibility of losing something you want to keep. Admit to yourself you feel angry, and that it is not wrong to feel anger – it is only wrong to express it with yelling or violence against another person.

Your emotional package is like a magnet. One emotion stirred up will pull up another one to stick to it. Anger can pull up jealousy, memories of rejection, the pain of being abused, failures, abandonment, the list of emotions is very long. But, as you take time to separate them in your quiet thinking, you can find a root cause for each of them and deal with it.



The reason it is important to develop emotional honesty is because your emotions are part of your soul. Our soul is the part of our spirit that deals with our humanness. The other part of our spirit deals with our divineness. Our soul is our mind, our will and our emotions. Our soul can feel wounded just like our body can feel wounded. The symptoms are often more painful and last longer than physical symptoms.

Our God has emotions. The Bible talks about them. We are created in His image, so we know He has feelings of love, hate, laughter, mercy, compassion, jealousy, sorrow, - and He understands us when we feel them.

“As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him (live a life patterned after His), rooted and built up (emotionally and spiritually) in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” (Colossians 2:6,7)

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” (Colossians 3:17)



“How Do You Feel?”

1. Why is the question “How do you feel?” meaningless most of the time?

2. What do people say when they don’t know how to answer?

3. What kind of problems are they usually asking about?

4. Why do we hide our emotions from people?

5. What are most children never taught?

6. If we deny our emotions what happens to them?

7. When we are upset is it just one emotion we feel?

8. When is the time to find out “how we feel?”

9. Why is it important to develop emotional honesty?

10. How should we control what we say and do? (Colossians 3:17)
(The answer to this question will be your memory verse)

MEMORY VERSE _____

“How Do You Feel?”

1. Why is the question “How do you feel?” meaningless most of the time?

Because people don’t know how to answer it.

2. What do people say when they don’t know how to answer?

Fine.

3. What kind of problems are they usually asking about?

Emotional problems.

4. Why do we hide our emotions from people?

We were trained to believe it was wrong to feel them.

5. What are most children never taught?

Understanding what they feel.

6. If we deny our emotions what happens to them?

They are filed away in our subconscious mind.

7. When we are upset is it just one emotion we feel?

No, it is a lot of different emotions that we’ve never sorted out.

8. When is the time to find out “how we feel?”

When we are not feeling bad.

9. Why is it important to develop emotional honesty?

Because my emotions are part of my soul.

10. How should we control what we say and do? (Colossians 3:17)

MEMORY VERSE “And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”