

Emotion Myths

Myth	Fact
Emotions are “good” or “bad.”	<p>Although some emotions are uncomfortable, they still play a vital role in our lives. For example, fear alerts us to danger, guilt reminds us we’ve gone against our values, and anger motivates us to stand up for ourselves.</p> <p><i>How has an uncomfortable emotion helped you?</i></p>
Myth	Fact
There’s a “right” way to feel.	<p>If our emotions don’t line up with our expectations, we can feel confused or frustrated. But the truth is that no two people have identical emotional responses, even to the same situation. Given this, it’s impossible to define one “right” way to feel.</p> <p><i>How do you try to force yourself to feel a certain way? When does that happen?</i></p>
Myth	Fact
Talking about emotions is useless.	<p>The benefit of talking about emotions goes far beyond problem-solving. Talking about emotions helps us make sense of what we’re feeling. This alone can make things more manageable and even lead to new perspectives.</p> <p><i>Can you recall a time when talking about your feelings made them more workable?</i></p>
Myth	Fact
Others will think less of me if I show emotion.	<p>Showing emotions can be intimidating, but it’s also a relationship superpower. When you’re open about your feelings, others see you as authentic and relatable. This makes you more likely to have healthy and fulfilling relationships.</p> <p><i>When is it most challenging to be honest with others about what you’re feeling?</i></p>
Myth	Fact
If I feel too much, I’ll lose control.	<p>Many are afraid that if they allow themselves to feel a difficult emotion—even if just for a second—they’ll lose control. But refusing to feel an emotion actually gives it <i>more</i> power than when we go ahead and let ourselves feel it.</p> <p><i>What emotions are you afraid of allowing yourself to feel, and why?</i></p>

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Myth	Fact
I should be happy all the time.	<p>Happiness is great, but it's not the norm, even if social media posts create that illusion. By seeing happiness as an occasional gift rather than a guarantee, we can savor it more fully and not blame ourselves when we don't feel that way.</p> <p><i>What are some ways you put pressure on yourself to be happy? Do they work?</i></p>

Myth	Fact
Emotions are inferior to logic.	<p>For a balanced perspective, we need <i>both</i> emotion and logic. Logic is great for solving problems or thinking through options, but only emotion tells us what we actually <i>want</i> and care about.</p> <p><i>Do you favor emotion or logic in your decision-making? What would balance look like?</i></p>

Myth	Fact
I can always trust my feelings.	<p>It's wise to pay attention to emotions, but we should be cautious about how we <i>interpret</i> what we feel. For example, if we feel strong jealousy, we may leap to the conclusion that our partner is cheating, despite having no actual evidence.</p> <p><i>Recall a time when you had an emotion that led to a false assumption. What was it?</i></p>

Myth	Fact
Women are emotional & men are logical.	<p>Research shows that men and women experience emotion in similar ways. But social expectations can push people to change how they express their feelings. It can be challenging to ignore these expectations and risk being authentic.</p> <p><i>How have you felt pressure to show emotion in a certain way due to your gender?</i></p>

Myth	Fact
Other people control how I feel.	<p>What others do can affect how we feel, but no one can make us feel a certain way. We have to take responsibility for what we feel, how we respond, and the consequences of that response.</p> <p><i>When have you blamed others for your feelings? What was happening?</i></p>