

Understanding Emotions

by

Judith H Morrison

Those who express their emotions often feel that this is better than suppressing them. Ayurveda says it is better to understand emotions rather than suppressing or expressing them. In understanding them, they are transformed and released. If you are angry, look behind the events that triggered your anger. Then look behind the anger. Behind anger, or fear, and other negative emotions there is usually a hurt. A deep, deep hurt that you have tried to silence.

Deep unresolved emotions can disturb the mind. They suck your energy to parts seemingly beyond your control or manifest themselves as illness in the body. You may not be able to resolve all emotional pains as they occur, particularly if an event overwhelms you or if emotional traumas happen before you have the maturity to digest and assimilate them.

The body and mind have powerful survival instincts which can override conscious processes. Phobias, or less clearly labelled but equally inappropriate and habitual actions, may be behaviours set up as defence or denial mechanisms. The problem of the phobia diverts attention from the unresolved hurt. Energy is used to maintain the denial or avoidance rather than for creating wellness.

The resolution of pain releases the energy used in denial or avoidance, or that manifests as physical symptoms. Take time to resolve your emotional pains. It is a process of small steps forward, and some seemingly backward until at the right time you experience the change inside. The change comes

through understanding, acceptance, and letting go.

Contacting your inner wisdom helps when you are trying to resolve your deep emotional hurts. Observe your body and mind as you enquire about what you are experiencing. Ask yourself why you are experiencing this. Let your connection with your inner wisdom grow, and let it show you your unique way to understanding. Open yourself to the inner guidance that is always ready to reveal the opportunities you truly need. You have to have awareness to see them. Then it is vital to act upon them.

Start by seeing coincidences or synchronistic events in your life. Ask yourself simple questions as if a wise person were listening to you. Immediate or direct answers are not necessarily given. As you go about your daily life something may happen that seems coincidental. Someone may say something or give you a book that has something that strikes a chord in you, or you meet someone who opens new ideas about your internal questions. The circumstances of these coincidences are unique to each individual, and easily dismissed by the logical mind.

However, use common sense and discrimination, but do not miss the quiet way in which the guidance comes. This gets easier with practice, and in time you will find yourself becoming more and more in flow with your life.

You may be guided to seek support from someone as you come to understand and acknowledge all you experienced, how you reacted at the time, and how you have been affected.

When this inner acknowledgment comes, you will feel the force that held the pain dissolving. You are ready to assimilate the good squeezed from the pain.

Coming through Pain

Emotional hurts can be very painful and you may feel unwilling to face that pain. Coming through emotional pain is one way to release it. It is generally acknowledged, for example, that the only way to resolve the pain of bereavement is to come through it. If the grieving process stops before the pain is resolved then different psychological and physical problems arise, which may not be seen as connected to the bereavement. Apply this principle of "coming through pain" to all types of pain you experience.

Love Yourself

The release is a process, a means by which we grow. Take it in small sips. Remember to love yourself through all this. Your mind and body always strive towards health, but their starting point is how they are now. They need time, nurturing, routine, and gentle discipline.

Exploring Your Pain

When you experience pain, either emotional or physical, or you have an emotional problem, take time to stop and see how you think about the pain or

problem as well as taking practical steps to alleviate it.

Watch and experience the pain dispassionately with an inquiring mind. Relate the qualities of your experiences to the doshas*. Ask yourself questions about what you are experiencing. Be patient; it usually requires practice to obtain the insights. Learn to recognise your way of knowing that you have received a meaningful insight. Trust yourself to receive the counsel of your inner wisdom, which may be hidden by the chatter of the everyday mind.

You can do this inquiring, observation exercise with any problems in your life. Be with the problem and explore all its facets. Remember, you are the observer. Lovingly, patiently, diligently search for the keys to understanding and resolution.

Who am I?

This is a question that has no answer. But if asked in stillness or meditation it brings growing awareness of parts of your being that are beyond words - insights of "who you really are". It heals internal wounds and brings integration. Everyone experiences this in different ways. As you continue to ask "Who am I?" your inner wisdom will grow whatever your outer circumstances, and a light will shine through any pains you still have to bear.

From **The Book of Ayurveda: A guide to personal wellbeing** by Judith H Morrison (Gaia 1994) pp168/9

*According to Ayurveda, the doshas are responsible for all physiological and psychological processes in your body and mind. They are dynamic forces that determine growth and decay. Each of your physical characteristics, mental capacities, and emotional tendencies can be described in terms of the three doshas. The doshas cannot be detected with our senses, but their qualities can. From Ch 2 *The Book of Ayurveda*.