

Basic Emotion Awareness

This is the simplest, easiest way to keep your mind focused on your body while you are feeling an emotion. This allows the emotional energy to be released from your body rather than stored within you, and you might be surprised at how quickly the emotions pass when you use this method.

1. Imagine any thoughts you have about the upsetting situation as if they were in a cartoon bubble outside of your head. Let them stay there, and know that if you need them, they are easy to reach. You don't have to do anything with them right now, but you do need to focus away from them and pay attention to your body.
2. Notice any physical sensations the emotion is creating within your body. Describe them with adjectives, sounds, or images. Don't worry about writing anything down – just let your mind describe these sensations to you as you feel them. There is no right or wrong way to do this, and you will notice different things every time you feel an emotion.
3. Stay with this awareness and descriptive process for as long as you feel the emotion. Be an observer of the emotion, as if you were a scientist, journalist, or moviegoer, curious about this emotion and what it feels like in your body. If you accidentally start thinking thoughts from the bubble, just put them back.
4. Notice what colors or images arise from this sensation. See if you can make a sound (or envision a sound) that perfectly describes/expresses this emotion. If you can, make this sound as much as you need, in whatever ways feel best.
5. You might find that the emotion just dissipates and at some point there's nothing left to describe, notice, or make a sound about. This is how you know you're finished.
6. Notice any thoughts from the bubble that still feel a little stressful or emotion-provoking. Do thought-work on these thoughts, using whichever method feels right.