

Acceptance: **We honor all emotions and memories.**

As we accept traumatic memories and the emotions that accompanied them, we can restore our ability to embrace all emotions.

One common pattern is denying our own emotions and memories because, at the point of trauma, experiencing that emotion would have been overwhelming or perhaps dangerous. To honor them we begin to shift old patterns of denial, dissociation and self negation (see the Acceptance Step). Many of us have experienced strong influences to deny, ignore or even suppress certain selected emotions and memories. This is understandable, as the innate response to trauma can cause us to repress certain powerful emotions, such as anger and grief. However, the suppression of one or two emotions causes us to repress or constrain all emotions.

Access to our emotions determines the quality of our lives. Emotions give us purpose, passion and drive. We see all emotions as valid information worthy of awareness and attention (see table below which lists some common responses for some fundamental emotions).

Fundamental Emotion	Physical Sensation	Role in Healing
Joy	Opening, high spirit, lightening	Makes healing and living worthwhile. Motivates us to seek more joy.
Anger	Tightness, flushed, pounding/racing heart	Helps us change situations that cause us pain or fear.
Fear	Nausea, sweating, pounding/racing heart	Can be used as a regulator to help us pace our healing.
Sadness	Weightiness, overall ache, intense pain, fatigue, tears	Validation of our experience and grief for our losses.

Our memories are our memories. We aren't here to debate or confirm the accuracy of the memories. We are here to accept what we feel and remember and heal the lingering effects, including myths, beliefs, pain, and patterns of thought and behavior.

As we restore connection with our emotions and memories, the entire range of feeling becomes available to us. Having released deep pain, we gain the capacity to experience immense joy and our wholeness is revealed.

Vital Cycle: The more we honor our emotions and memories, the more we accept ourselves. The more we accept ourselves, the more we honor our emotions and memories.

Activity:

Take the table above and adapt it to your own perception and experience. If you wish, add more emotions, your experience of physical sensation and that emotion's (many) roles in your healing.