

# EMOTIONAL FITNESS TOOLKIT

BY CAROL ROSS

[EMOTIONALLYFITLEADERS.COM](http://EMOTIONALLYFITLEADERS.COM)





# WELCOME

I'm thrilled that you have taken the first step toward feeling all of your feelings, as a way to return to wholeness and to be a leader in your life and work. When you expand your emotional range, you will:

- Harness the creative power of authentic emotions and become more adept at problem-solving
- Quickly get unstuck, by lifting the fog of unexpressed emotions, and returning to being in your right mind
- Experience increased energy and a sense of well-being

## THIS TOOLKIT HAS THREE PARTS

Tiers of Emotion

Emotional Comfort Zone

Practices





LET'S GET STARTED

## LEFT TO RIGHT

Degenerates to  
lower frequencies

(FREQUENCIES)

## RIGHT TO LEFT

Lifts or elevates  
to higher resonance

# TIERS OF EMOTION

This is a map of twenty-one emotions, with each emotion representing a part of our humanity. Experiencing each of these emotions, at some point in our lives, is perfectly normal. It's what makes us human, among other things.

## EXPANSIVE

## TRANSITIONAL

## IMPRISONING/CONSTRICTING

Love  
Individuality, Joy,  
Authority, Freedom

Well-Being  
Contentment  
Satisfaction

Boredom  
Impatience

Happiness

Optimism

Anger  
Fury  
Resentment

Passion  
Compassion

Hope  
Trust

Thrill  
Eagerness, Excitement,  
Enthusiasm depending  
on intensity

Fear  
Anxiety  
Angst

Frustration  
Confusion

Pessimism

Hopelessness  
Despair  
Feeling of  
Meaninglessness,  
Emptiness

Worry  
Doubt

Pity  
Crisis/Overwhelm

Guilt  
Sadness

Hurt  
with its Betrayal, Abandonment,  
Rejection, Humiliation

Jealousy  
Envy

Blame

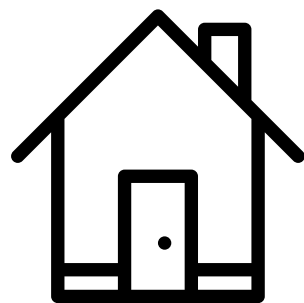
Revenge,  
Violence, Hatred

Loneliness  
Worthlessness  
Feeling Hollow



HOW TO

# READ THE MAP



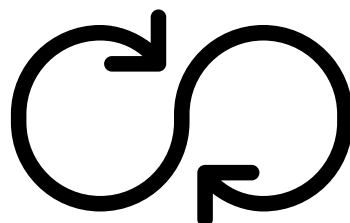
WHERE  
WE START

These emotions are arranged in order of frequency, from the lowest frequency of Hopelessness and Despair to the highest frequency of Love.



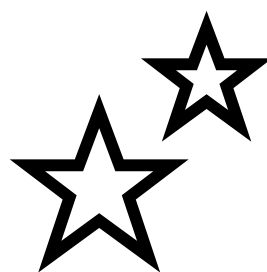
CONSTRICTING/IMPRISONING

Starting with the Constricting and Imprisoning Tier, the frequency increases as you move from right to left, from Hopelessness and Despair to Fear/Anxiety/Angst.



TRANSITIONAL

The next highest frequency is in the Transitional Tier, with Anger/Fury/Resentment. As you move from right to left, to Boredom and Impatience, the frequency increases.



EXPANSIVE

The next highest frequency is in the Expansive Tier, with Well-Being. As you move from right to left, the frequency increases to the highest frequency of all, Love.



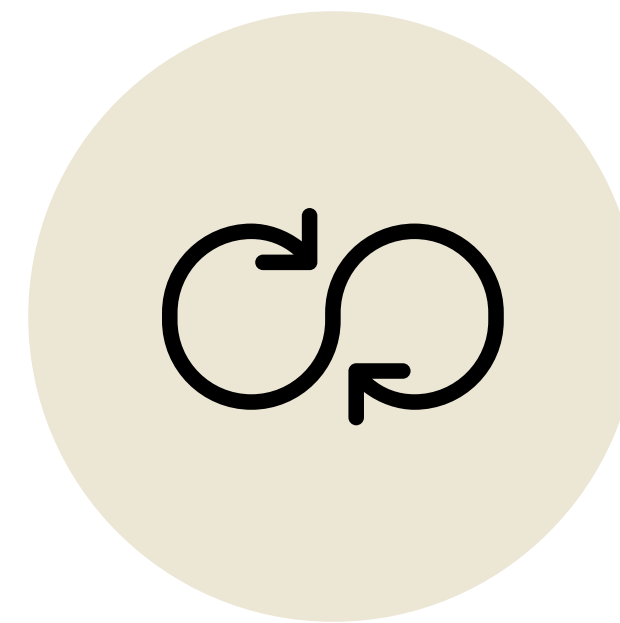
WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF

# THE TIERS



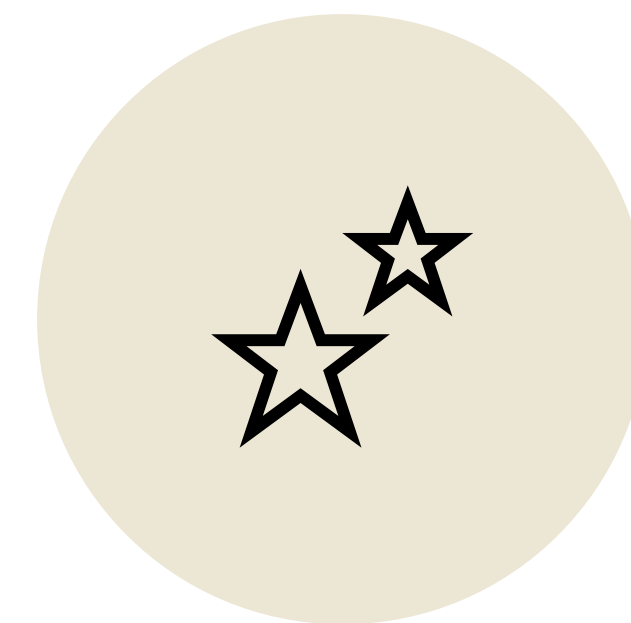
## CONSTRUCTING/ IMPRISONING

The Constricting and Imprisoning Tier correlates to the Victim Story. These are the emotions that show up when you are feeling powerless in some way. These are also emotions that we are often taught to avoid or deny.



## TRANSITIONAL

The Transitional Tier correlates to the Overcoming Story. These are the emotions that show up when you are faced with a challenge that can lead to proving and struggling or learning and growth. These emotions are called transitional because you can use these emotions to “spiral down” or as springboard to make a positive shift.



## EXPANSIVE

The Expansive Tier correlates to the Great Story. These are the emotions that show up when you are in connection with yourself as well as others.



I S T H E P O I N T T O S T A Y I N T H E

# EXPANSIVE TIER?

The point is to be able to feel and express all 21 emotions, **without judgment**, and to move through the emotion, fluidly, without getting stuck in any one emotion. Any authentic emotion, felt genuinely, will bring you into connection with yourself.

It would be great to always feel love or happiness. But that's not realistic. Again, all of these emotions are part of our humanity. So there will be times when you will feel hurt, or bored, or angry or in despair.

Many people avoid the Imprisoning and Constricting emotions because they lack the skill to experience these emotions in a healthy and responsible way. However, denying the lower frequencies limits the capacity for feeling the more expansive emotions. The movie, Inside Out, made this point with the characters of Joy and Sadness. The ability to feel one is tied to the ability to feel the other.

Emotions are neutral in the sense that none of these emotions are “bad” or “good”. It's true that with a higher frequency emotion, you have access to more creativity. For example, you can create more when you are feeling thrill than you can when you are feeling hurt. However, if I am feeling hatred, it doesn't say anything about me as a person. It only means that I'm feeling an emotion that is part of my humanity.

L E T ' S M A K E A D I S T I N C T I O N H E R E

Expressing an emotion—to and for myself—is different from communicating an emotion to another person. In most situations, it is not necessary to communicate the emotion to others. I can express hatred without communicating my hatred to anyone else.



A close-up photograph of a single white snowdrop flower with green leaves, set against a blurred blue and green background. The flower is positioned on the right side of the frame, with its stem curving slightly. The background is a soft-focus mix of blue and green, suggesting an outdoor setting.

NOW LET'S EXPLORE YOUR

# EMOTIONAL COMFORT ZONE

You have emotions that you are comfortable feeling and expressing, that are your “go-to” emotions. You also have emotions that you resist feeling and expressing, that you avoid at all costs. This is true for each of us. This pattern of “go-to” emotions and emotions that you avoid is called your **Emotional Comfort Zone**. As you take more responsibility for feeling all of your feelings, you expand your Emotional Comfort Zone.

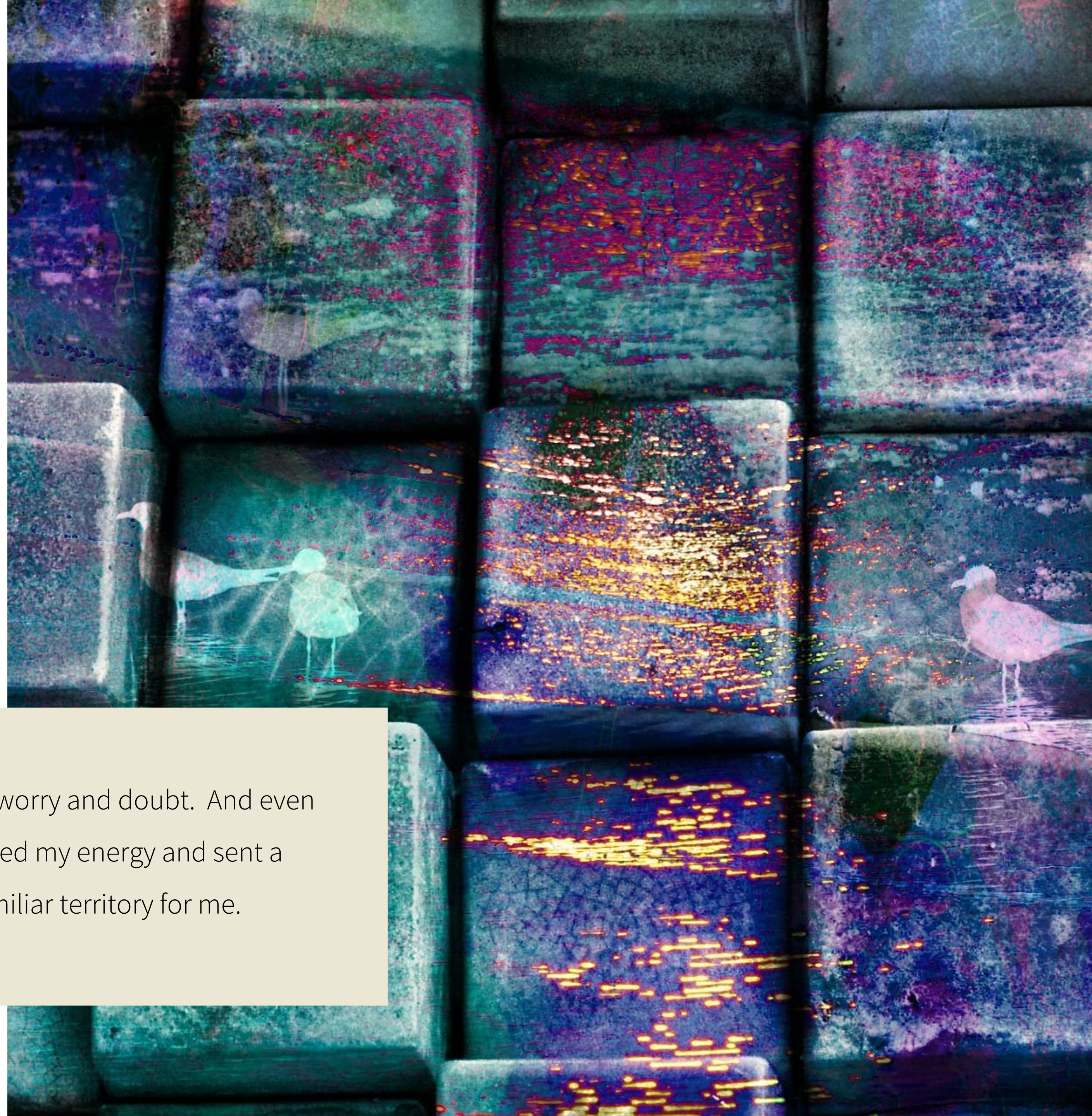


# MY STORY

For many years, I did not allow myself to feel anger or remorse (which is at the same frequency as sadness). Anger is a natural response when I feel a boundary as been crossed. Remorse is the feeling of being truly sorry for something I did. Is it reasonable to think that in decades of living, I've never had a boundary crossed or regretted something I did? No. Yet, these emotions were not part of my Emotional Comfort zone.

There are also emotions that I have returned to over and over again, like worry and doubt. For many years, these were the emotions that I reached for while raising my younger son, who is adventurous. Like paints in a paint box, I kept choosing the color blue, when I could have chosen the color yellow.

Instead of reaching for hope and trust, I kept choosing worry and doubt. And even though choosing worry had a negative impact—it drained my energy and sent a message to my son that he was not capable—it was familiar territory for me.





E X E R C I S E

# DETERMINE YOUR EMOTIONAL COMFORT ZONE

Keep a log of your emotions. At the end of each day, look at the Tiers of Emotion and write down the predominant feelings from the day. You may want to write down what event or circumstance preceded the emotion, but that's not as important as noting the emotion that you felt. .

At the end of 2-3 weeks, you'll have enough "data" to see a pattern. Notice which emotions you have written down, repeatedly. This is your baseline. Then notice which emotions are missing. Get curious about these emotions, as opportunities to stretch into more of your humanity.







# PRACTICES

Now that you have a sense of your Emotional Comfort Zone (and the opportunities for growth) and you have a map of emotions with the Tiers of Emotion, the pages that follow will present some ways to increase your Emotional Fitness.



## CLEAR THE DECKS

One of the biggest barriers to feeling and expressing our feelings is judgment, usually from our Negative Ego. Judgment freezes everything in place.

Instead, give yourself permission to feel your emotions. Declare a judgment-free zone.

If necessary, put your Negative Ego on “loudspeaker”. Write down the story your Negative Ego makes up about you when you express your emotions.

Remember that expressing an emotion—to and for yourself—doesn’t say anything about who you are as a person.





## SEED NEW BELIEFS

Another barrier to feeling and expressing our feelings is negative beliefs about emotion.

These beliefs can range from “Emotions are dangerous” to “I’ll get lost in my emotions” to “Feeling doesn’t change anything”.

Many of these beliefs come from our upbringing as well as the culture we live in, and are fueled by your Negative Ego. These beliefs keep you from your authentic emotions.

Choose new beliefs that support you in increasing your emotional fitness, such as:

- My emotions are a gift of realness.
- My emotions are a portal to change.
- Unexpressed emotions are dangerous. By choosing when and how I express my emotions, I avoid my emotions coming out “sideways”.
- When I express my authentic emotions, I return to my whole self.
- Expressing my emotions does not say anything about who I am.



# COMMIT TO FEELING

Feeling is a choice. For decades, I purposely chose not to feel. In college, a good friend asked me what it was like to have my father die when I was 13 years old. I responded by saying, “We don’t talk about those things in my family.” I quickly shut down the conversation, because I was choosing not to feel.

## **One way to numb yourself is to go to a “false emotion.”**

This is often what we see on reality television shows, where drama is rampant and authentic emotion is scarce. False emotions serve as a proxy for emotions that are too difficult to go to.

The false emotions are guilt, blame, self-pity, and martyr. They can be hiding places to avoid feeling more vulnerable emotions like remorse, sadness, hurt, and anger.

Instead of taking responsibility for feeling remorse, it’s easier to feel guilt. Instead of feeling hurt, it’s easier to go to blame. Instead of feeling sadness, it’s easier to say, “Poor me.” Instead of feeling anger, it’s easier to be in martyr.

Make the choice to feel. Commit to being honest about your emotional experiences.





# MAKE THE TIERS OF EMOTION YOUR BFF

It's not always easy to know what you are feeling. That's one of the reasons why the Tiers of Emotion is a powerful map.

## > PRINT IT OUT

Print out the Tiers of Emotion and keep it handy. I have a laminated copy that I keep on my office desk. Some of my clients have it posted on their white board at work. Another client printed a copy for her fridge, so that her kids can use it as well.

## > CHECK IN OFTEN

Do a check throughout the day, or when you are “in flow” or “out of flow”, to see if you can identify the emotion that is present. Notice how long you hold a feeling or how deep you go into the feeling. For some people, they “dip” into an emotion momentarily, and then pull back. . Humor can be used in this way, when a feeling is too intense or scary.





## MOVE UP OR DOWN THE TIERS OF EMOTION

Once you locate the emotion you are feeling on the Tiers of Emotion, notice the emotions that are to the right and left. Then ask yourself if you can feel either of those emotions.

For example, if you are in overwhelm, check whether you are also feeling worry or sadness. Continue going “up” or “down” the Tiers of Emotion, based on what you are feeling.

Going down the Tiers of Emotion (e.g., from sadness to pessimism to anger) may be necessary to get to the crux of what’s going on for you. Going up the Tiers of Emotion may be a way for you to get unstuck and move to another emotion that is more pleasant to experience (e.g., worry to frustration to impatience to well-being.)



# FIND YOUR EXPRESSION

Giving voice to an emotion may not be natural for you. If this is the case, experiment with a range of ways to express an emotion. **One of the emotions that can be difficult to express is anger.**

## FEEL IT

First, allow yourself to fully feel the anger in your body.

## USE YOUR VOICE

Channel your anger with your voice through screaming, grunting, etc.

## USE YOUR BODY

Or go for a run, punch a pillow, wring a wash cloth, hit golf balls at the range.

## USE YOUR WORDS

Words can release the anger. Journal, write a letter that you will never send, vent to a trusted friend. Expletives encouraged.

## MIX UP YOUR MEDIA

Doodle, sketch or paint your way to the other side. Listen to or create music that resonates with your anger.

I have expressed hatred by screaming while jogging and through intense words during a coaching session (where I was the client). I have expressed remorse with tears while meditating. And I have expressed anger by venting to my husband for five minutes (with his permission, of course) about a situation that had nothing to do with him. Find a safe place where you can give full expression to your emotion.







## BE AN INTENTIONAL EXPLORER

Take time to “walk” the Tiers of Emotion, by exploring the emotions, one by one.

Start with Hopelessness and Despair and move up in frequency until you get to Love.

Allow yourself to feel into each emotion before moving to the next one.

### NOTICE ANY RESISTANCE

Resistance can look like an urge to “rush through” an emotion or feeling sleepy or having a wandering mind.

The more you do this, the more that you’ll uncover your true Emotional Comfort Zone.





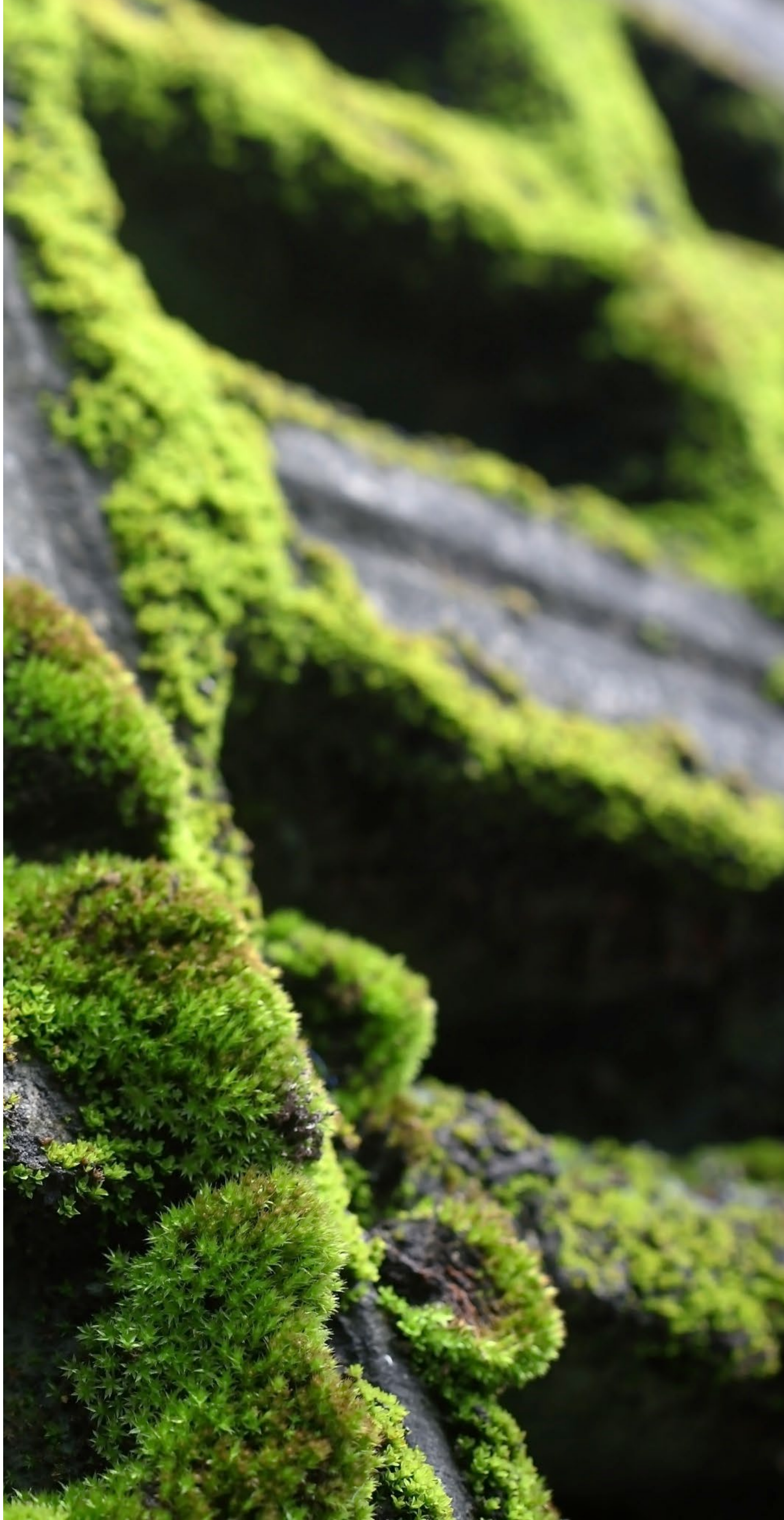
# THE BOTTOM LINE

As you become more familiar with the Tiers of Emotion and put the above practices in place, you will expand your emotional range. Don't rush the process. Becoming emotionally fit, with the ability to feel and express all twenty-one emotions, can be a life long journey. I know it is for me. I am learning to feel remorse, which has allowed me to forgive myself for past choices and behaviors. I'm working on feeling anger, and no longer denying or suppressing it in the name of "being professional". I also know that I want to work on feeling humiliation and overwhelm, because those are emotions that I push away, which then influence my behavior with others.

**This is a journey of becoming more**— more alive and powerful, as you reclaim parts of yourself through your emotions. As you do this work, you change the world around you. This includes impacting your relationships with colleagues, staff, bosses, family, and friends. I am grateful to share this work with you, and hope that it transforms your life as much as it has transformed mine.

---

*Thank you to Leza Danly and Jeanine Mancusi of Lucid Living for the following concepts: Victim Story/Overcoming Story/Great Story, Emotional Comfort Zone, and False Emotions. I stand on the shoulders of giants in doing the work I do today.*







**CAROL ROSS**

EMOTIONALLYFITLEADERS.COM

**Please share this with your colleagues and staff in the workplace.**

Emotional Fitness in you and others creates more productive and healthier organizations.

Find more resources at [emotionallyfitleaders.com](https://emotionallyfitleaders.com).

Need more support? Contact me directly at [carol@emotionallyfitleaders.com](mailto:carol@emotionallyfitleaders.com).