



## Podcast 4

### Self-awareness: how to understand one's emotions & manage them?, part 2

IDENTIFY the emotional state of the group members.

Emotions make people feel a certain way (angry, happy, excited, sad, insecure, intrigued, etc.) when faced with a stimulus.

They are the fulcrum of a position or decision. The fact that emotions are involved in decisions does not mean that they are irrational.

There is no choice between reason and emotions. Both work together.

However, without an accurate emotional identification and interpretation, decisions can be impulsive and can lead later to regrets, because of not having made an accurate assessment of emotions.

INTERPRETATION the emotions

Secondly it is important to recognise the origin of the emotions present to know how to manage them later.

This process involves interpreting the situation in which the emotion has emerged. In other words:

- What has led to these emotions?
- Is it caused by something in the here and now, or is it an emotional resonance to something that occurred in the past?

It is important to give meaning and significance to emotions, so that it will be possible to identify how they emerge in the person. This is the only way to control the appropriate intensity with which to express an emotion.

Emotions are a reflection of how we feel, they tell us about ourselves in a given context. Failure to identify the emotion correctly as well as its origin can lead us to judge ourselves, to feign feelings or to self-deception, which can be emotionally counterproductive.

MANAGEMENT of emotions

It is important to learn to differentiate between:

- the feeling of an emotion which is largely beyond our control
- and the expression of emotions which is always the result of a decision involving activities in the frontal lobe of the brain.

There are special circumstances where making this distinction is not self-evident: children growing up with abusive adults would often inherit a narrative that anger can only be expressed by verbal or physical abuse and might try either to suppress their anger entirely to avoid expressing it destructively, or they will consider abusive behaviour inevitable for themselves.





In both cases, it is crucial to learn and to experience that anger can be expressed in ways that are meaningful and do not require suppression of feelings, at the same time also don't harm others.

Learning to use our bodies to express difficult emotions in constructive ways is an important milestone in this area of self-improvement.

In fact, the influence of expressive body movements on the neurobiology of emotional behaviour has shown that there is a relationship between body expression and brain activation.

- Breathing or relaxation techniques are very suitable for relaxing the body when an emotion activates it,
  - o for example, when we become emotionally unsettled, we may experience physical symptoms, but relaxation clears the emotional blocks we accumulate, deactivates neurons in an area of the brain associated with stress and helps us to achieve wellbeing.
- Music can help concentration as well as relaxation and modify emotional states. Here we move from feeling dominated by one emotion to start feeling another (this works gradually)

