

Finding the Memory Behind Your Emotion

Emotions tend to be reactions to past events. When you have a strong emotional reaction, you should check to see if you are projecting past events and feelings onto the present. To do this, you will need to find the memory that is causing your emotional response.

Step 1: Focus on the feeling.

Really feel your emotion. Let it consume your consciousness.

Step 2: Define your emotion.

1. Name your emotion: _____

Step 3: Search for a memory.

1. Concentrate on the emotion. Really feel it.
2. Let your mind bring up associated images and memories. Remember your mind is a web of connections, it already knows what memory caused the emotion, otherwise you would not have had the emotion.
3. Many emotional memories come from early childhood. So if the memory you find seems in the distant past, you are on the right track. Even seemingly unrelated memories may be the root cause. When you examine the memory further, you will discover the link.
4. Ask yourself, "Is the feeling here? Is the feeling present in the memory I found?"
5. If not, concentrate on the feeling and try to find a new memory.
6. If the feeling is in the memory, what is the memory? _____

Step 4: Look for earlier memories.

1. Is the memory you found the first time you had the feeling? Try to search for an even earlier time. Your earliest memory is the root cause of the emotion. You will need to address your first memory to release the emotion.
2. What earlier memory/memories can you find with the feeling? _____

Step 5: Evaluate the emotion using your preferred method or another worksheet from the How To Feel Better Program.