

4 FEELINGS, OUR GUIDANCE SYSTEM

Feelings are the primary feedback mechanism for the human being . The goal of this work is to present tools with which to explore life, feelings , and the Truth about the world. Our next goal is to demonstrate how to use these tools and inspire each person we contact to put them to work. Let's look at feelings from a different perspective than the norm.

Feelings come from within. No one can make you feel angry, sad, afraid or anything else; others, however, can certainly trigger the cause of the feelings you hold. It takes a significant shift of mind to see that the cause of pain is internal. Grasping the Truth of this premise is difficult for most people because they have spent their entire lives investing in the belief that someone else has the power to make them feel.

The first step required in order to integrate any new idea is to let go of old, conflicting beliefs. No one can simultaneously take responsibility for his or her life while blaming someone else. Once the commitment is made to be response-able , the output of the internal mechanism is free to change—reality changes.

"Richard, freeing yourself from the belief that any person, place, thing, event or circumstance causes you to feel requires a new look at reality and an undoing of the clouds of the past . When you are angry, you have caused your own anger; when there is fear, the fear is of your own making."

"That's ridiculous! Why would I make myself angry? How could I make myself angry? My feelings are a result of what happens in my life," Richard protested.

"Would you be willing to do an experiment that is designed to give you a direct experience of what causes your feelings ?"

"Sure."

"Once you do this exercise, there is no turning back to blame , because its conclusion is so simple. It can be denied, but only temporarily. The direct experience lies in the mind as a seed that will , sooner or later, bear the fruit of responsibility for every aspect of your life."

"I'm really not sure I'm ready for that, but I guess it's time . Let's go for it!"

"Okay. If you would, close your eyes. I'm going to ask you to let yourself feel some feelings . First, let yourself feel sadness . Intensify the sadness . Take a deep breath and let go of your sadness . Let yourself feel anger. Intensify the anger. Take a deep breath and let go of your anger. Go to the feeling of fear. Intensify the fear. Take a deep breath and let go of the fear. Let yourself feel pain . Place your hand wherever you are feeling the pain ." Richard placed his hand on his forehead as he held his breath.

"Now, open your eyes.

"Notice where your hand is, Richard. Your hand is showing you where you hold the energy that causes your pain . If you learn how to change that energy , healing happens. If you don't, that is where your disease processes will tend to manifest."

"But... " Richard interjected.

"Let me just go through the rest of the exercise before we get into a discussion. Would you close your eyes again for a moment? Take a deep breath and let go of the sadness , the fear, the anger and the pain . Let yourself go to the feeling of joy and aliveness, and open your eyes."

"That feels better," he said immediately.

"How did you feel each of the feelings you just had?"

"I recalled an experience that caused those feelings in me previously," he replied.

"What did you do to recall that experience? What specifically was the mechanical process ?"

"I'm not sure I understand what you're asking."

"What happened in your mind to get to each of the feelings you just felt?"

"I thought about something that caused those feelings . Is that what you mean?"

"Yes. Notice, to feel a feeling you had to think. You had a thought, right? Feelings are shadows of thoughts," I offered. "In the last two minutes, you had several different feelings , right?"

"Yes."

"Whose thoughts caused those feelings ?"

"Mine, I guess," Richard said, looking a little confused, "but I had the feelings because of the event I thought about, not because of the thoughts I had."

"It sure looks that way, but I think it actually works differently, Richard. What was one of the scenes you thought of to feel anger?"

"I just had to think of my wife leaving me and being alone as a result of her action," he said.

"What if you were to think about her leaving and at the same time hold the thought, 'I'm ready to do my whole life differently, what an opportunity to heal!'"

"I would never think that, michael!"

"After this experience, you might change your mind. Give it a try, see what happens. Get into thinking about her leaving and allow yourself to generate thoughts of excitement about doing your life differently and the opportunity to heal. Think those thoughts as true, exciting thoughts about your life and see what happens."

"I'm not feeling angry. Actually, I feel anticipation about how life can be. Hmm . . . but it's not true, I am angry with her."

"Notice, Richard, it is your thought about the event, not the event itself that causes your feelings . You can choose to hold onto your angry thoughts, but when you do, you get the original, your wife just gets a carbon copy. Your thoughts impact you first. Take notice, she is not here to know what you are thinking, but each thought has an impact on you. Your feelings inform you of the nature of the impact of the energy of your thoughts on your physiology. If you are in pain , you are the one who is in error."

"My thoughts cause me to feel . . . what a novel concept ," Richard half mumbled to himself.

"Let's take the principle a step further. If yesterday, last week, last month or last year, you had negative feelings or pain , whose thoughts caused you to feel that pain ?"

"Mine," he acknowledged.

"If tomorrow, next week, next month or next year you experience that quality of pain , whose thought will be the cause of your pain ?"

"Obviously mine," was his short reply.

"Do you expect to experience pain at some time in the future?" I inquired.

"Of course, won't everyone?"

"I'm not sure it is necessary, Richard. Why would you inflict pain on yourself?"

"I-I don't know. Habit, I guess."

"There is only one reason . Insanity ."

"You mean I'm insane!?"

"To the degree that we each inflict pain on ourselves, Richard, we are all insane. The world teaches us insane thought systems and, in so doing, it teaches us to destroy ourselves. If we buy in and think insane thinking is normal, we will reach the conclusion that we have no other choice .

"Thoughts, I would offer, are a form of energy . Whenever you put a quality of mind energy into your physiology , you get a feeling that corresponds to that quality. Feelings are your feedback mechanism and tell you whether you are engaging in constructive or destructive mind energy .

"When you make a mistake, the feeling is negative. I would offer that you and I are made in the image of Love , and there is no other reality that belongs in the human experience. Any other reality is a violation of the human structure, and we destroy ourselves when we focus on dis-integrative energies.

KEY THOUGHT—If I'm in pain, I'm in error.

"We build our realities , literally, with each piece of mind energy in which we engage. The mind has the amazing capacity to turn our mind energy into the actual images we see. If you put hate, fear, anger, anguish, terror, criticism, condemnation, gossip, slander or vengeance into your structure, that mind energy will turn into an image in your brain. If you're in denial , you'll think the image is about somebody else, though it comes from your physiology . Every image your mind produces explains where you are. If you can't own that, you'll never be able to see yourself accurately and correction will be impossible. One of the goals of this work is to provide a variety of tools for correction."

"Just what do you mean by tools , michael?"

"Tools are concrete techniques or actions you can use to resolve upsets or patterns at the moment they occur. They are designed to provide a way to assist in creating joy and unloading the burdens most people accumulate in the course of their daily lives. For instance, taking responsibility is a tool . When you project responsibility onto another, the mind shows you they are your problem. When you use the tool of responsibility, you resolve that projection because your mind will shift what it shows you about both them and yourself. Being aware that feelings are a guidance system is another tool . When you use that awareness you tend to look at yourself accurately and are more likely to see your self truly rather than blame others when your upset surfaces.

"A few of the many other tools presented in this work include 'My Commitment,' Breathing, Awareness , and Forgiveness. I could go on with a long list but each tool will unfold in its own time."

"I'm confused," Richard said solemnly.

"I understand. It is a lot to absorb all at once, but the principles of this work are really quite simple. The seeming complexity and confusion of learning this new way of thinking

come from the habit of holding onto old beliefs, which makes it difficult to integrate new ideas. The confusion does not come from the principles themselves.

KEY THOUGHT—Truth is complex to a complex mind and simple to a simplified mind.

"Did you learn traditional mathematics when you were in school?" Richard nodded.
"Have you encountered the new math since then?"

"Yes, I attempted to learn it and teach it to my daughter. Studying it was like going into a foreign world, and I felt pretty stupid when it took me weeks to catch up with her. She was only twelve at the time!"

"That is my point. With this material, you are being introduced to a whole new way of thinking and living, a new world so to speak. You may even get the chance to feel and heal some of that old 'stupid' feeling as you integrate this teaching. There is a saying that, 'You can't do new math with an old math mind.' In the same way, you cannot simultaneously take responsibility for your life while you blame someone else.

KEY THOUGHT—When we respond, we make a conscious choice. When we re-act, we are unconsciously driven by our past. Respons-ability is the ability to respond rather than re-act.

"Once you recognize your feelings are generated by your internal mechanism, you have the key to power over those feelings, and you can take responsibility for them. It is then possible to respond rather than just react to life's triggers. When you are willing and committed to being response-able, you can change the output of your mind and that action will change your reality. The way you feel will no longer be dependent upon any person, place, thing, event or circumstance."

"Ha! That sounds great. What's the catch?" he asked.

"Richard, there is no catch," I replied, "but there are ideas you have to change. For example, you will have to be able to see and deal with your hidden pain."

"You see, Richard, someone can only bring up a painful reality if it's already in your mind; it has to be there first. You can pretend that all is well and continue to deny and hide from your issues, but the fact that someone can trigger anger in you is a sure sign that something is hidden.

"Removing realities from the mind is the original meaning of the word 'Forgive.' In this work, when a negative reality is triggered, it is an opportunity to learn True Forgiveness. When pain surfaces, if you are honest and in touch with yourself, you will own the upset and seize the opportunity to release that internal reality—to Forgive! Pain functions to inform us of our errors.

"False forgiveness is based on the belief that others are responsible for what we feel, and therefore it tends to reinforce that error. To forgive others, in this manner, for what happens in your mind leaves your pain intact and the opportunity to heal is lost. Making use of every opportunity to heal is an important decision you can make and that decision will immeasurably accelerate your process ."

Richard didn't seem convinced. "Thanks, but I'll pass," he said sarcastically, "if I have a painful reality hiding somewhere in my mind, I'd just as soon leave it there, thank you."

KEY THOUGHT—The purpose of life, when we refuse to listen to pain, our warning signal, is to kick us in the limitation. The more we resist listening, the harder life kicks us.