

How Emotions Work (Youth)

 www.pursuegod.org/how-emotions-work-youth/

You have emotions for a reason- to help you connect with God and others.

SUMMARY:

[Submit a summary](#)

In this lesson, we're going to talk about how your emotions work. Everyone has emotions. Emotions make some moments of your life fun and memorable, and others intense and scary.

Think about some of the best times in your life. Now, try and remember what emotions you were feeling in those moments. You probably can do it. Emotions stay with us long after an event has passed. You can probably remember your emotions from the happiest moments in your life and the saddest moments.

God wants us to be authentic with our emotions

At every moment of the day, you are experiencing different emotions. They're a huge part of our lives. However, social media covers this up. A lot of posts we see online are of people with seemingly-perfect lives, always looking happy. If you are feeling sad or embarrassed, the world tells you that no one cares to hear about that.

This is not God's message. Fortunately for us, the Bible is very open about human emotion and how authentic we should be.

***Psalm 42:3-5, 9** Day and night I have only tears for food, while my enemies continually taunt me, saying, "Where is this God of yours?" My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be... Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? "O God my rock," I cry, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I wander around in grief, oppressed by my enemies?"*

The Psalm writer was very honest about how he was feeling. He was unashamed to express sorrow, grief, and depression. The world tells us that we have to have it all together, but God desires us to be honest and real, especially with him.

Not only does God want us to be genuine about our emotions with him, but also with others. Being honest with your friends about how you are feeling can help them understand and connect with you on a more vulnerable level. Never think that others don't want to know about the real you, because that's not true!

Being authentic can lead to deeper friendships, but negative emotions can still cause problems in relationships.

Understand what's causing your emotions

While identifying what we are feeling can be easy at times, it can be harder to understand why we are feeling that way. Let's say a friend says something a little rude to you and you snap at them. Why? Probably because they hurt your feelings and you reacted to that feeling of hurt.

Maybe you see someone flirting with the person you like, and suddenly you want to walk right over to them and punch them in the face. You're not just randomly doing that, but an emotion- in this case jealousy, motivates you.

In school, there is a lot of drama, which can cause a lot of different emotions. Jealousy, envy, shame... all are negative emotions that we experience, especially in relationships. Understanding the cause of your emotions can be pivotal in keeping a relationship healthy, and keeping yourself from doing something you regret.

Instead of letting your emotions control your actions, you can talk about them with someone you trust. Maybe you have a friend or a mentor in your life who can listen to how you are feeling and help you work through it.

Take ownership of your emotions

God wants us to be authentic with our emotions, but this doesn't give us an excuse to sin or be a jerk. We don't have permission to be overly sensitive or take out all of our emotional frustration on someone else. In fact, The Bible gives us a very valuable tip of how to avoid this.

***Psalm 42:9,11** "O God my rock," I cry, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I wander about in grief, oppressed by my enemies?"... Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again – my Savior and my God.*

Instead of being controlled by his emotions, the psalmist chose to turn to God. He trusted God and expressed how he felt. When we are overcome by grief, hurt, anger, or any negative emotion, remember that God loves you and desires to help. He is the only one who completely understands what you are experiencing.

Be real with him about how you feel and turn to him. Don't drown in despair. Get a bigger picture of God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

[Submit questions](#)

1. **Set Up:** Watch the video together or invite someone to [summarize the topic](#).
 2. Describe one of your best memories. What emotions were you feeling and why were you feeling them?
 3. In what ways have your emotions affected your relationships? Have they drawn you closer to others or pushed others away? Explain.
 4. Have you ever let your negative emotions control your actions? Describe what happened.
 5. Has there ever been a time that you were open and honest with God about how you were feeling? Explain what happened.
 6. Read [Psalm 42:11](#). How did the Psalm writer react to his emotions? What are some ways you can take control of your emotions?
 7. **Takeaway:** Write a [personal action step](#) based on this conversation.
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