

<b>The 8 Core Emotions</b>	<b>Other Names</b>	<b>It's Gifts</b>
<b>Anger</b>	Resentment Irritation Frustration	Assertiveness Strength Energy
<b>Fear</b>	Apprehension Overwhelmed Threatened	Preservation Wisdom Protection
<b>Pain</b>	Hurt, Pity Sad Lonely	Healing Growth Awareness
<b>Joy</b>	Happy Elated Hopeful	Abundance Happiness Gratitude
<b>Passion</b>	Enthusiasm Desire Zest	Appetite Energy Excitement
<b>Love</b>	Affection Tenderness Compassion	Connection Life Spirituality
<b>Shame</b>	Embarrassed Humble	Humility Containment Humanity
<b>Guilt</b>	Regretful Contrite Remorseful	Values Amends Containment

# Emotions Are Energy

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Emotions	Your Own	Carried or denied can produce
Anger	All Over Body Power/Energy	Gut Pressure/Rage
Fear	Stomach/Upper Chest Suffocation	Extremities Numbing and/or Tingling Panic
Pain	Lower Chest and Heart Hurting	Gut Depression/Hopelessness
Joy *	All Over Body Lightness	All Over Body Lightness
Passion	Specific to What Type of Appetite is Present	<i>(Only problematic with carried sexual passion)</i> Nausea in Stomach Icky, Slimy, Dirty Feeling When Touched
Love*	Heart Swelling/Warmth	All Over Body Warmth
Shame	Face, Neck and/or Upper Chest Warm/Hot/Red	Gut Worthless/Inadequate/Stupid
Guilt	Gut Gnawing Sensation	Bottom of Feet Sensation of Being Stuck to the Ground

\* Not Problematic

***Where in your body do you experience these emotions?***

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# Body Scan Body Map—Awareness of the *Felt Sense*

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## EXERCISE 2

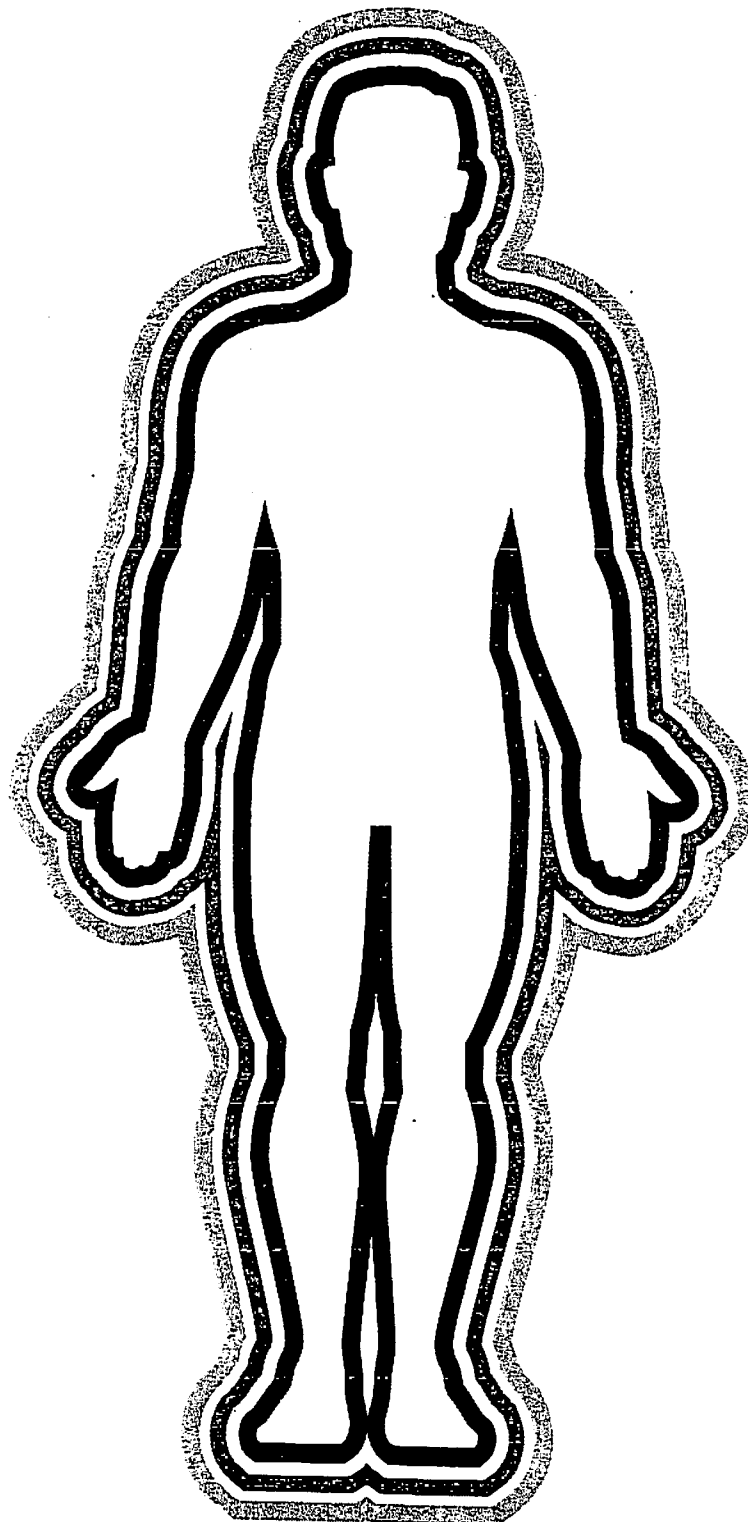
### PART ONE:

Allow yourself to be comfortable . . . either lying down or sitting up with your back, neck, and spine fully supported. Knowing that you will not be interrupted for the next little while, begin by gently closing your eyes. Now begin to bring your attention to your breath—the direct experience of your breath—however it is . . . and however it changes. Allow yourself to softly focus your awareness on to the breath that is arising right now . . . the in-breath and the out-breath . . . the rising and the falling. If you can, try to follow one full cycle of the breath from the beginning of the in-breath and through its entirety the beginning of the out-breath and through its entirety. Allow yourself the time and the space to be in direct contact with the breath throughout one entire cycle. Now, starting at the crown of your head, gently guide your focus down your entire body, noticing and then noting any and all sensations. Notice any tension, tightness, and any pressure; notice any sensations of warmth, coolness, pain, or areas of numbness, feelings of softness or pleasure and relaxation. Just note what is. Continue to scan, noticing any other identifiable sensations. Allow yourself to label them, and then gently bring your attention back to the direct experience of the sensations themselves. When you've completed the journey through the entire body, bring your attention back to the room.

Using the following body map, color in all areas of the body that were calling to you—any signals of pain, pressure, tension, tightness, calm, relaxation, etc. Use those colors and the type of strokes that you feel best represent the particular body sensation that you are experiencing in each area of the body. For example, if you feel jittery and nervous in the stomach, you might pick a bright color and draw something that represents electricity in the stomach area. If you feel flighty and not really present, you might choose a light color and draw wispy lines wherever that sensation is noted.

**PART TWO:**

Choose the area that was signaling the loudest—the one with the strongest sensations of pain, tension, or tightness. In the outline below, mark that body area.



**PART THREE:**

In the space provided, you will be writing out a dialogue between you and that body part. You will be using both hands, therefore both hemispheres of your brain. With your dominant hand, you will write out the questions, and with your nondominant hand you will answer the questions:

- What are you?
- How are feeling?
- How long have you been feeling bad?
- What has you feeling like that?
- Is there something you want or need from me? Is there something I can do to help you?
- Is there something I need to know from you?
- Is it okay to stop now?
- Should I check in again?

DOMINANT HAND QUESTIONS	NONDOMINANT HAND ANSWERS

# *Week Four Group Exercise*

## *Emotional Sobriety*

## **EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY**

**"I think that many oldsters who have put our AA "booze cure" to severe but successful tests still find they often lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spearhead for the next major development in AA, the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows, and with God.**

**Those adolescent urges that so many of us have for top approval, perfect security, and perfect romance, urges quite appropriate to age seventeen, prove to be an impossible way of life when we are at age forty-seven and fifty-seven.**

**Since AA began, I've taken immense wallops in all these areas because of my failure to grow up emotionally and spiritually. My God, how painful it is to keep demanding the impossible, and how very painful to discover, finally, that all along we have had the cart before the horse. Then comes the final agony of seeing how awfully wrong we have been, but still finding ourselves unable to get off the emotional merry-go-round.**

**How to translate a right mental conviction into a right emotional result, and so into easy, happy and good living. Well, that's not only the neurotic's problem, it's the problem of life itself for all of us who have got to the point of real willingness to hew to right principles in all of our affairs.**

**Even then, as we hew away, peace and joy may still elude us. That's the place so many of us AA oldsters have come to. And it's a hell of a spot, literally. How shall our unconscious, from which so many of our fears, compulsions and phony aspirations still stream, be brought into line with what we actually believe, know and want! How to convince our dumb, raging and hidden 'Mr. Hyde' becomes our main task.**

**I've recently come to believe that this can be achieved. I believe so because I begin to see many benighted ones, folks like you and me, commencing to get results. Last autumn, depression, having no really rational cause at all, almost took me to the cleaners. I began to be scared that I was in for another long chronic spell. Considering the grief I've had with depressions, it wasn't a bright prospect.**

**I kept asking myself "Why can't the twelve steps work to release depression?" By the hour, I stared at the St. Francis Prayer ... "it's better to comfort than to be comforted". Here was the formula, all right, but why didn't it work?**

**Suddenly, I realized what the matter was. My basic flaw had always been dependence, almost absolute dependence, on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security, and the like. Failing to get these things**

according to my perfectionist dreams and specifications, I had fought for them. And when defeat came, so did my depression.

There wasn't a chance of making the outgoing love of St. Francis a workable and joyous way of life until these fatal and almost absolute dependencies were cut away.

Because I had over the years undergone a little spiritual development, the absolute quality of these frightful dependencies had never before been so starkly revealed. Reinforced by what grace I could secure in prayer, I found I had to exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these faulty emotional dependencies upon people, upon AA, indeed upon any act of circumstance whatsoever.

Then only could I be free to love as Francis did. Emotional and instinctual satisfactions, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love, and expressing love appropriate to each relation of life.

Plainly, I could not avail myself to God's love until I was able to offer it back to Him by loving others as He would have me. And I couldn't possibly do that so long as I was victimized by false dependencies.

For my dependence meant demand, a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me.

While those words "absolute dependence" may look like a gimmick, they were the ones that helped to trigger my release into my present degree of stability and quietness of mind, qualities which I am now trying to consolidate by offering love to others regardless of the return to me.

This seems to be the primary healing circuit: an outgoing love of God's creation and His people, by means of which we avail ourselves of His love for us. It is most clear that the real current can't flow until our paralyzing dependencies are broken, and broken at depth. Only then can we possibly have a glimmer of what adult love really is.

If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependence and its consequent demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love: we may then be able to gain emotional sobriety.

Of course, I haven't offered you a really new idea --- only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own hexes' at depth. Nowadays, my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity or depression. I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine"

Bill Wilson



# EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY

I recommended Bill Wilson's writing on "Emotional Sobriety" to someone who I have never met in person, but who sent me inquiries via email. The next paragraph is the particular excerpt from Bill Wilson's writing that he referenced, followed by his question, followed by my response. Following my response is Bill Wilson's complete writing on this subject.

*"Suddenly, I realized what the matter was. My basic flaw had always been dependence, almost absolute dependence, on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security, and the like. Failing to get these things according to my perfectionist dreams and specifications, I had fought for them. And when defeat came, so did my depression."*

*Bill Wilson, Emotional Sobriety*

But if we're correct that the spiritual malady is the real problem, and drinking, drugs, self-pity, self centered fear, demands for security and prestige, depression, etc. are just "solutions" or symptoms: since Bill W. obviously learned God-reliance and service to others through the 12 step-work which kept him sober, why didn't that same God-reliance and service keep him from dependence on people, circumstances, prestige, and security, which led to depression? To ask it another way: since he was still dependent on people or circumstances instead of God, how did he stay sober? Was it a matter of degrees—it was enough God reliance to keep him sober, but not enough to keep him from depression?? (Do matters of the soul lend themselves to this kind of linear analysis??)

The simple answer is that Bill learning principles or being aware of the principles is not the same as practicing them. We can know that we need to eat food, but if we don't eat food, it doesn't matter what we know. The twelve steps are not a solution for "lack of willingness". In my experience "pain, or the fear of pain" and "joy or the promise of joy" are the only motivators for willingness to do something that doesn't look like it's going to work.

I suspect that often people believe that we can somehow "ride the momentum" of yesterday's activities and get relief today. The timing of Bill Wilson's reliance upon things human that he attributes to his depression was the early 1940's to the mid 1950's. My spiritual condition is contingent upon my current actions, not the actions I took yesterday...not even the actions that I hope to take tomorrow. What I am doing now will directly affect how I perceive the world around me right now. So the question in my mind is "what was Bill Wilson doing from the early 1940's to the mid 1950's?"

- The traditions were being developed out of a sense that AA was falling apart.
- The fellowship of AA was not particularly receptive to these Traditions and Bill Wilson felt that without the adoption of them, there is no reason to believe that AA would meet the same demise as the Washingtonians and the Oxford Groups...Bill had an internal fight on his hands.
- Dr. Bob's health was failing. Not only was Bill losing his best friend, but he also knew that the fellowship of AA usually followed the suggestions that Dr. Bob and Bill agreed upon, but hardly ever followed the suggestions that only one of them believed in. Bill was never more aware of his own mortality and he felt that he had to do something to sustain AA's future before Bob died. In 1950, AA Came of Age, the steering of AA's future was turned over to AA World Services.
- Dr. Bob died in 1950.

Bill seemed to recover from his depression only after the service structure was in place so that him and Bob were no longer the leaders and now he could go back to being nothing more than a "garden variety alcoholic" trying to help one alcoholic at a time, rather than feeling as though he had the weight of the future of AA completely on his shoulders. By this point in time, the Traditions had already been adopted as well. I visualize Bill doing one big gigantic exhale after holding his breath for about fifteen years.

I do NOT believe that matters of the soul lend themselves to linear analysis because matters of the soul are eternal...matters of the mind wear out in a very short amount of time, in comparison to eternity, which I suppose is the lifespan of the soul. Linear analysis lives in the intellect. Even man's "collective intellect" can never totally grasp the matters of the soul. They can't even grasp most matters of the physical universe of which they are aware of, let alone things that they're not aware of. The intellect is always trying to steer the direction of the human condition...the soul is always telling the intellect whether or not the direction it chooses is love driven or fear driven.

It is only when the human being accepts that the matters of the soul, or in other words, spiritual dependence (planting seeds of Love), will always produce the most beneficial result. Then, and only then, can a man truly live in peace under any and all circumstances. This, in my opinion, is the spiritual awakening. Until man accepts this, I believe that he will always live with internal turmoil...a constant struggle between dependence on worldly things vs. dependence upon things spiritual.

I also suspect that way too often, people mistakenly believe the primary purpose of the twelve steps is to attain sustained abstinence from alcoholic beverage. I don't believe that this is a realistic goal, nor do I believe this is what the literature is truly stating.

In most of AA's literature, "sobriety" is the stated purpose.

One of the definitions of sobriety is undoubtedly a period of abstinence from alcoholic beverages, it states nothing about sustained abstinence in the definition, however, implying an undetermined period of time or possibly implying merely a moment in time. This feeds into what I believe is a serious misconception that just because you've attained a substantial amount of time abstinent from alcoholic beverage that you have somehow achieved seniority or somehow now have valuable experience to share with others. I believe this misconception to be one of AA's biggest challenges today.

Other definitions of the word sobriety, according to [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) refer to a "state of being" that don't appear to have anything to do with mind or mood altering substances or beverages.

First Definition Entry...

1. The state or quality of being sober.
2. Temperance or moderation, esp. in the use of alcoholic beverages.
3. Seriousness, gravity or solemnity: *an event marked by sobriety.*

Second Definition Entry...

1. Gravity in bearing, manner or treatment.
2. Moderation in or abstinence from consumption of alcoholic liquor or use of drugs: *"three years of drug-free sobriety" (Ron Rosenbaum).*

Definition of "Soberness" from Dictionary.com:

1. Not intoxicated or drunk.
2. Habitually temperate, esp. in the use of liquor.
3. Quiet or sedate in demeanor, as persons.
4. Marked by seriousness, gravity, solemnity, etc., as of demeanor, speech, etc.: *a sober occasion.*
5. Subdued in tone, as color; not gay or showy, as clothes.

6. Free from excess, extravagance or exaggeration: *sober facts*.
  7. Showing self-control: *sober restraint*.
  - ~~8. Sane or rational: *a sober solution to the problem*.~~
  9. To make or become sober: (often fol. by *up*).
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I'm not attempting to debate accurate usage of the English language, nor am I trying to suggest that I have a clue why the authors of AA's literature chose the words they chose. They do seem to have been very selective in their choice of words, however. But the common usage of words changes over time. Only half a century ago, the word "gay" had a completely different meaning. If I use today's definition, then Bill Wilson was being drawn into a bar in the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel which was currently occupied by homosexuals, according to his story...obviously, ridiculous. Not so obvious is the evidence that the word "alcohol" was not used to describe a beverage prior to the early twentieth century. Malts, ales and lagers are examples of the words used to describe alcoholic beverages at that time. However, "alcoholism", being "es spiritus" in Latin, was used as far back as the Bible to describe a spiritual condition.

Those of us who have had the experience of an addictive substance or behavior driving our lives without the full consent of our will, who are desiring and attaining complete abstinence will experience one of the following...

1. If he/she has a spiritual malady, and they live a life based on spiritual principle, they will experience...
  - An unexplainable, but undeniable, removal of a mental obsession and compulsion, of which if yielded to would immediately incite, upon the initial ingestion of the substance, a physical allergy or craving for more, which appears to be a direct result of...
  - A spiritual condition that is filled with hope, purpose and direction due to our spiritual actions.
2. If he/she has a spiritual malady, and they cannot or will not live a life based on spiritual principle, they will experience...
  - A possible unexplainable, but undeniable, removal of a mental obsession and compulsion, of which if yielded to would immediately incite, upon the initial ingestion of the substance, a physical allergy or craving for more, combined with...
  - A miserable perception of the world around them forcing them to find relief in any and many other forms, all of which will produce destruction of the spirit. Some examples of the forms are depression, anger, selfish behavior, ad infinitum.
3. If he/she does not have a spiritual malady he/she can get sober in the 4H club, the church or anywhere else, provided he/she does not forget what will happen if he/she ingests even a little bit of the addictive substance.

I believe that the majority of Alcoholics Anonymous today consists of the third type, a large percentage of the second type and a small percentage of the first type. Not that this assessment means anything, I just felt like taking the opportunity to point it out.

I suspect that during Bill's depression years, he fell into the category of the second type mentioned, although he was originally in the first and then eventually came back to the first.

There are reports that Bill Wilson was supposedly begging for a drink on his death bed. If this is true, then what appears to have been removed first was his spiritual awareness followed by either the

realization that he was dying, so there won't be any negative consequence or the deterioration of the mind as the body was shutting down preparing for the transition from life to death. The physical and mental chaos that might accompany someone during this transition could have allowed for a lack of spiritual awareness...he died from emphysema...apparently a very painful death, gasping for air. He might have simply wanted relief of any kind.

As far as expanding my personal spiritual horizons I definitely do not want to fall into a trap by diving deep in to studies or intellectual exchanges of dialogue as a replacement for giving my brother my time. This would be a guarantee of spiritual detriment, which might be, in some ways, what Bill Wilson was doing. He spent so much time organizing, writing, reading, engaging in intellectual gymnastics that he forgot that what he really needed was "to be his brother's keeper". It would be the equivalent of studying to be a personal trainer but never working out...or studying to be a nutritionist but eating crappy food, and then being perplexed that I'm not getting the results I'm promised in the studies. It appears to me that most of the world finds very creative ways to attempt to grow spiritually, while the common denominator in all of these approaches is they all stop just short of actually laying down their lives for their brother.

## **FEAR**

**Fear is a natural emotion. It indicates that you need to be alert. It is a survival instinct. Fighting or forcing away fear creates a counterforce that makes you tense and anxious and interferes with your performance.**

**...Take the first sign of fear as an indication that I may have overstepped my skill level, that I may not be ready; I may need more training. If I can relax in that moment of fear, my ability to perform will improve.**

**Because fear is a natural part of life, it doesn't go away. It can either paralyze you or give you an opportunity to assess the risk you're facing and prepare for it properly. Fear is a friend that you must acknowledge and embrace.**

**Remember that you are not alone. Every athlete—even the greatest of the great—has fear.**

## **FEAR OF FAILURE**

**The arrow that hits the bull's eye is the result of a hundred misses. You perfect your game through adversity and failure.**

**See failure as an opportunity for improvement, makes it more tolerable and will help you relax and figure out how to go beyond your present level of performance.**

**...A trait common in many champions: A high tolerance for failure and setback, as valuable pieces of data. They realize that what they learn from defeat is more valuable than a victory.**

# What Neuroscience Tells Us About Being in Love

Love may be the most compelling mystery of the mind science will ever tackle.

Published on February 12, 2014 by David DiSalvo in Neuronarrative

*"How on earth are you ever going to explain in terms of chemistry and physics so important a biological phenomenon as first —Albert Einstein*

Einstein was correct—science will never clinically sterilize the wonderment of love (first or otherwise). But I think he'd also agree that it's a mistake to confuse increased understanding with diminished meaning. No matter what we learn about love, it will continue to be one of the most meaningful and powerful forces on the planet, as it should be.

With that disclaimer, let's jump in and discover what we've learned so far:

## Love is addictive.

Thinking about one's beloved—particularly in new relationships—triggers activity in the ventral tegmental area (VTA) of the brain, which releases a flood of the neurotransmitter dopamine (the so-called "pleasure chemical") into the brain's reward (or pleasure) centers—the caudate nucleus and nucleus accumbens. This gives the lover a high not unlike the effect of narcotics, and it's mighty addictive.

At the same time, the brain in love experiences an increase in the stress hormone norepinephrine, which increases heart rate and blood pressure, effects similar to those experienced by people using potent addictive stimulants like methamphetamine.

## Love is obsessive.

The brain in love experiences a drop in the neurotransmitter serotonin. Serotonin provides a sense of being in control; it guards against the anxiety of uncertainty and instability. When it drops, our sense of control decreases and we become obsessively fixated on things that rattle our certainty and stability cages—and since love is by definition unpredictable, it's a prime target for obsession. The term "crazy in love" isn't too far off the truth.

## Love is prone to recklessness.

The prefrontal cortex—our brain's reasoning, command, and control center—drops into low gear when we're in love. At the same time, the amygdala, a key component of the brain's threat-response system, also revs down. The combination of these effects is a willingness to take more risks, even ones that would normally seem reckless to us while in another state of mind. (For more, see this study.)

## Love and lust can coexist in the brain—and not necessarily for the same person.

Love and lust appear to be separate but overlapping neural responses in the brain. They both produce a "high"; they're both addictive; and they affect many of the same parts of the brain—but they are distinct enough that you can be *in love* with one person and *in lust* with another.

Over time, the differences become more significant. For example, the brains of people in long-term love relationships show increased activity in the ventral pallidum, a region rich with oxytocin and vasopressin receptors that facilitate long-term pair-bonding and attachment. (See researcher Helen Fisher's work in this area for more information.)

## Men in love are extremely visual beasts.

The brains of men in love show greater activity in the visual cortex than those of women in love. Add this to the fact that men seem to be more visually stimulated romantically than women in general.

## **Women in love remember the details.**

The brains of women in love show greater activity in the hippocampus—a region associated with memory—than those of men in love. Add to this that a woman's hippocampus takes up a larger percentage of her brain than does the male counterpart. (Another lesson here for men in relationships: Women *remember*.)

## **Eye contact is a lover's magic.**

Newborns and lovers have this in common: More than any other factor, eye contact is the main conduit for emotional connection. When those in love speak of their lover's "entrancing gaze," it's not just a romantic notion—it's a biological reality. Eye contact and a smile is an especially potent combination.

Only voice interaction comes anywhere close to eye contact in this regard. Our voice carries more information than we think, and it can help facilitate an emotional connection, but it's still a distant second to eye contact. (Check out Barbara L. Fredrickson's book, Love 2.0, for more on all of the above.)

## **Promiscuity and monogamy can be chemically influenced.**

You may have heard about our furry little friends, the prairie voles. Scientists who study monogamy and promiscuity love the critters because they provide an excellent mirror for human relationships. One type of vole is monogamous—it bonds with one mate for life. Another type (the montane vole) is promiscuous. The key difference between the two types of voles appears to be genetic—an intriguing point when you consider that otherwise the voles are 99% genetically identical.

When researchers inject the promiscuous variety of vole with oxytocin and vasopressin—the neurochemicals linked to pair-bonding in humans (and in the monogamous voles)—the promiscuous voles become monogamous. While it's not entirely clear if this effect would hold true to the same degree in humans, there's good evidence that it might, if only for short periods of time. In two studies (described here) men who inhaled oxytocin became (temporarily) more empathetic, sensitive, and cuddly.

## **Women and men can just be friends...(at least women think they can).**

Research suggests that when it comes to managing a platonic relationship, men really don't "get it" and are far more likely to want more than just friendship. Women, on the other hand, are able to keep friendship and romantic involvement separate in their minds. So the old question, "can men and women just be friends?" appears to depend entirely on who you're asking.

# How of Happiness

## 6 + Myths About Happiness We Need to Stop Believing

Nearly all of us buy into what I call the myths of happiness—beliefs that certain adult achievements (marriage, kids, jobs, wealth) will make us forever happy and that certain adult failures or adversities (health problems, divorce, financial struggles) will make us forever unhappy. Overwhelming research, however, reveals that there is no magic formula for happiness and no sure course toward misery. Rather than bringing lasting happiness or misery in themselves, major life moments and crisis points can be opportunities for renewal, growth, or meaningful change. It's how you greet these moments that really matter:

### 1. "I'll Be Happy When I'm Married to the Right Person"

One of the most pervasive happiness myths is the notion that we'll be happy when we find that perfect romantic partner. The false promise is not that marriage won't make us happy. For the great majority of individuals, it will. The problem is that marriage—even when initially perfectly satisfying—will not make us as intensely happy (or for as long) as we believe it will. Indeed, studies show that the happiness boost from marriage lasts an average of only two years. Unfortunately, when those two years are up and fulfilling our goal to find the ideal partner hasn't made us as happy as we expected, we often feel there must be something wrong with us or we must be the only ones to feel this way.

### 2. "I Need a Partner to Be Happy"

Many of us are positive that not having a partner would make us miserable forever. However, multiple studies show that single people are no less happy than married ones, and that singles have been found to enjoy great happiness and meaning in other relationships and pursuits. Unfortunately, believing in this myth may be toxic: Not recognizing the power of resilience and the rewards of singlehood (such as more time to spend with friends or engaging in solo projects and adventures) may lead us to settle for a poor romantic match.

### 3. "Landing My Dream Job Will Make Me Happy"

At the root of this happiness myth is the misconception that, although we're not happy now, we'll surely be happy when land that dream job. We encounter a problem, however, when acquiring that seemingly perfect job doesn't make us as happy as we expected and when that happiness is ever so brief. What explains this unwelcome experience is the inexorable process of hedonic adaptation—namely, the fact that human beings have the remarkable capacity to grow habituated or inured to most life changes.



#### **4. "I'll Be Happy When I'm Rich and Successful"**

Many of us fervently believe that, if we're not happy now, we'll be happy when we've finally made it—when we have reached a certain level of prosperity and success. However, when that happiness proves elusive or short-lived, we weather mixed emotions, letdown, and even depression. When we've achieved—at least on paper—much of what we have always wanted to achieve, life can become dull and even empty. There is little around the corner to look forward to.

#### **5. "I Will Never Recover from This Diagnosis"**

When our worst fears about our health are realized, we can't imagine getting beyond the crying and despairing stage. We can't imagine experiencing happiness again. **Yet our reactions and forebodings about this worst-case scenario are governed by one of the myths of happiness. Science shows that we have the power to decide what our experience is and isn't.** Consider that during every minute of your day, you are choosing to pay attention to some things and opting to ignore, overlook, suppress, or withdraw from most other things. What you choose to focus on becomes part of your life and the rest falls out. You may have a chronic illness, for example, and you can spend most of your days dwelling on how it has ruined your life, or you can spend your days focusing on your gym routine, or getting to know your nieces, or connecting to your spiritual side. We can change our lives simply by changing our attitudes of mind.

#### **6. "The Best Years of My Life Are Over"**

Whether we are young, middle-aged, or old, the great majority of us believe that happiness declines with age, falling more and more with every decade until we reach that point at which our lives are characterized by sadness and loss. Thus, we may be surprised to learn what research conclusively confirms—that many of us could not be farther from the truth when we conclude that our finest years are long behind us. Older people are actually happier and more satisfied with their lives than younger people; they experience more positive emotions and fewer negative ones, and their emotional experience is more stable and less sensitive to the vicissitudes of daily negativity and stress. Why is this? When we begin to recognize that our years are limited, we fundamentally change our perspective about life. The shorter time horizon motivates us to become more present-oriented and to invest our (relatively limited) time and effort into the things in life that really matter. In a sense, we become more emotionally wiser as we age.

\*What are some of the things you need to stop staying today, in order to show up to your personal happiness?

**REMEMBER:** "Wherever you go, there you are" you bring yourself everywhere you go, people, places and things will not keep you happy forever!