

Becoming Honest in Expressing Your Emotions

This exercise is designed to help you express your uncomfortable feelings in a way that is helpful to you. Close your eyes now and relax, and remember back to the last time you felt an emotion that was difficult for you to express. It might have been anger, depression, hurt, sadness, jealousy or any other emotion. Choose an emotion and a specific situation when you experienced that emotion. When you do the exercise another time, you can choose another feeling.

Having settled on which feeling and situation you would like to explore, try to recapture in detail the surrounding circumstances that sparked off this feeling in you.

Where were you?

Who else was involved?

As you are recreating the scene, are you aware of wanting to dilute the feeling?

Of judging yourself?

Are you blaming someone else?

Give yourself a chance to explore the reality of the situation and just notice the internal voices that interfere with your experiencing the feeling directly and completely.

Do you often hold back from expressing to people what you are feeling?

Imagine for a moment that you are able to say or express whatever you feel, without fear

What would you say if you didn't have to fear any consequences or reactions from others?

Imagine yourself telling whoever else is involved how you feel and how they have impacted you.

If that feels impossible, imagine telling a friend about what happened and how you really felt.

Now tell the person directly. Don't be apologetic. Don't dilute your feeling. Don't allow yourself to get sidetracked. Don't allow yourself to worry about what the other person might be thinking or feeling about you.

Focus on what you need to say to them.

Say it directly, expressing yourself accurately and fully.

When you have finished, notice how you feel.

How does this affect the picture you have of yourself.

We are coming to the end of the exercise, so try to focus on what you have learned about yourself. Decide how you will handle this situation the next time it arises.

When the exercise ends, take some time to write the details of your experience as well as what you have learned from this experience. You may write this in your journal. Are you willing to more honestly express your emotions in exchange for practicing your addiction?