

21 DAYS

TREATING EMOTIONS AS DATA

TIME NEEDED: 1-5 MINUTES AS NEEDED

WHAT

The reality is, many of the emotions we feel are powerful. Sometimes, we don't want to feel what we are feelings and will attempt to deny, ignore, or minimize the experience. These choices can actually make the emotions come out 'sideways' at inappropriate times. For example, when we are feeling overwhelmed with studying, we might tell ourselves we're fine but then when a person asks us for assistance, we snap at them. This is an example of an emotion coming out 'sideways.'

Therefore, instead of denying, ignoring, and or minimizing what we are feeling, consider treating emotions as data. Data is to be gathered, analyzed and interpreted so that the information can productively assist the current situation.

WHY PRACTICE THIS?

People are becoming easily overwhelmed by emotions these days. Many people think they have very little influence over what they are feeling and subsequently what they think and do. This is inaccurate.

Instead of being at the mercy of one's emotions, people can change the way they are viewing the situation and begin to see how they have agency to learn from their feelings and then think logically about what to do with the data they have just gathered.

As a person does this, they shift to an internal locus of control - meaning they are the one's steering the ship of their life, making choices about how to live and move forward.

HOW

When a person experiences an emotion, it is helpful to take a step back and treat the emotion as information. A great question to ask is: what is this emotion trying to communicate or make me aware of right now?

Another question to ask is: What is a proportional response/decision to make in light of the information just gathered.

Heads up: Deep feelers will find this practice challenging if not irritating. This is a very cerebral way to approach emotion. The key to realize is that this practice actually elevates the role of emotion in a person's life, not diminish it. If a person practices this, they must take their emotions seriously. They must reflect on what they are feeling, name what they are feeling and explore why they are feeling. This data then informs way forward while at the same time putting emotion on an even playing field with cognition. The two sides of the mind coin need to work in tandem.

TO DO FOR 21 DAYS:

Choose this practice each day for 21 days

- Perhaps keep track of how this practice is affecting your life and wellbeing during the 21 DAYS by making notes in the Habit Share app.
- FYI: Keeping a written record of your practice helps the habit formation process for it provides useful data for you to reflect on and learn from at the end of the experience.