

Describing Feelings



A feeling is a spontaneous inner reaction to a person, place or situation. It can be a *present* situation or a situation which I am *thinking about* or *picturing* in my mind. Feelings are neither right or wrong, good or bad. They can be pleasant or unpleasant (or difficult). Feelings don't *mean* anything. A feeling is what it is. A feeling is a feeling is a feeling.

We can describe feelings using **P.I.I.B.M.** (**P**hysical sensation, **I**mage, **I**nnner conversation, **B**ehavior, **M**emory).

Example: "I feel *nervous*"

Physical Sensation	Heart pounding, sweaty palms, upset stomach, dry mouth, chilled, hot, giggling, etc	<i>"I feel nervous. My heart is pounding, my palms are sweating and my stomach is upset."</i>
Image ◆ Painting a picture	An image of a scene or a situation	<i>"I feel nervous like how a person might feel walking down a dark alley" or "I feel nervous like a child giving an oral report in front of the class"</i>
◆ Intensity	Rate the feeling on a scale from 1 to 10	<i>"I feel nervous. It's about a 9"</i>
◆ Nature	A beautiful sunset, crashing waves, dark forest, ominous clouds, a sunny day, a raging storm, etc	<i>"I feel nervous like when I see ominous clouds rolling in" or "I feel nervous like a deer might feel smelling a scent of danger."</i>
◆ Color	Red, blue, black, white, etc	<i>"I feel nervous. If it had a color it would be orange like a warning sign that is flashing danger."</i>
◆ Taste	Sour, bitter, sweet, etc	<i>"I feel nervous like a bitter taste in my mouth"</i>
◆ Touch	Scratchy, soft, prickly, sharp, etc	<i>"I feel nervous like touching a prickly porcupine"</i>
◆ Sound	Screech, crack of thunder, birds twittering and chirping, high pitched	<i>"I feel nervous like when I hear the sound of thunder"</i>
Inner Conversation	What am I telling myself, what am I thinking, what am I "believing"	<i>"I feel nervous. I'm telling myself 'I'm trapped. There is no way out.'"</i>
Behavior ◆ Actions	What do I tend to act out? What do I tend to do? Where do I tend to go?	<i>"I feel nervous. I tend to want to go eat something to soothe me"</i>
◆ Words	What words tend to come out of my mouth? What do I tend to say?	<i>"I feel nervous. I tend to say 'don't bother me. Stay away from me'"</i>
Memory ◆ Past experience	Something you have experienced in the past like childbirth, riding a bike for the first time, walking on the beach, watching a movie, death of a loved one, etc	<i>"I feel nervous like the time when I had to perform in front of an audience for the first time"</i>
◆ Shared memory	Something you have experience together, like your wedding day, buying a house, vacationing together, meeting each other for the first time, etc	<i>"I feel nervous like how we felt waiting to hear if we got our mortgage approved" or "I felt nervous like how we felt when we got lost on our vacation"</i>