

YOUR ESSENTIAL EMOTIONAL NEEDS

*How to meet your essential emotional needs in
balance*



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The Human Givens

Meeting your most essential emotional needs

Your essential emotional needs

You were born with a set of essential emotional needs. I've listed them below. It's absolutely vital that you do all you can to meet these needs in balance as best as you can. Know that you already have the resources you require to meet these needs. They're templates that you were born with which can be adapted to the environment. This is your genetic inheritance. These needs and resources are what make you human and we call them the Human Givens¹.

Take advantage of this knowledge and actively apply it in your life. You'll be in much better emotional shape and more equipped to deal with life's inevitable setbacks.

The results?

¹ Human Givens, The New Approach to Emotional Health and Clear Thinking, by Joe Griffin and Ivan Tyrell

You're less likely to become depressed, anxious, discontented or unhappy in general.

Take the time to work your way through the list and make a plan of action.

How will you be meeting your essential emotional needs?

Security

It helps to have a stable home life, and to live in a safe environment. This allows you to spend your energy not just on surviving but also on constantly developing yourself.

What can you do to improve your sense of security?

Giving and receiving attention

This simply means sharing, giving (ideally generously, without expecting anything back) and receiving (gracefully, if you can).

This is one of our most important needs. Without getting attention or having the opportunity to give it, you'd quickly become depressed and needy.

Be aware though: needing or demanding too much attention makes you a pain in the backside!

What can you do to increase your opportunity to give and receive attention?

Friendships, fun, love, and physical intimacy

This means you need to invest in relationships of any kind. Physical intimacy really doesn't mean just sex. Hugging a friend, stroking your dog, kissing and hugging family and friends (appropriately, in a safe way and at the right time) are just as valuable. Friendships need energy and time to be invested in them. They also require relationship skills. (Just in case yours need updating, I've got your back - see the bonus section.) How much better we feel after a good

belly-laugh with a friend, or a good old heart-to-heart!

Plan now what
you'll do this week
to invest in your
most important
relationships

A sense of autonomy and control over our environment

However little control we may have, it's better than none at all. We need to feel that our actions have an outcome, and that something we've done has affected other people and/or our environment. This could be in your home, at work, whilst walking your dog, nationally, or internationally. And they could be just brief moments of time, or a long-lasting change.

What do you feel
out of control with?
And what do you

plan to do about it?

Being part of a wider community

We need to feel as though we belong and are connected to others. The best way to achieve this is to be part of a group, be that friends, family or an interest-based group. The more groups we belong to, the better we protect ourselves against loneliness and calamities. Being part of groups also provides us with opportunities to meet our other essential emotional needs. And it helps us to see our problems in the greater context of other people's pains and pleasures.

What precisely can
you do to develop
your connections?

Meaning and purpose

The most difficult tasks are easier to accomplish if we know why we're doing them. Being stretched towards achieving a meaningful goal provides a sense of satisfaction. The most difficult times are

more bearable if they have meaning and purpose. The more we feel our actions have value and that we're contributing to something bigger than ourselves, the healthier our emotional well-being will be.

It's also useful to have meaning and purpose when life is going well for us because it prevents us from becoming bored.

If you feel your life is lacking meaning and purpose, what is your dream outcome?

A sense of competence and achievement

If we stretch ourselves to achieve a goal, we feel more alive - we make full use of our inborn resources. The more we stretch ourselves, step outside our comfort zones and keep learning, the more competent we feel and the more solid our self-esteem becomes. This is regardless of how small or large someone else might judge our accomplishments to be. It's important that *we* know we're stretching ourselves, and give *ourselves* the credit that's due.

If you look back on your life, you'll probably see that you've somehow been able to deal with all life's challenges so far. Even if you feel you could have done better it's very likely that you were more capable than you'd ever imagined.

List 3 things you're proud of having achieved

A sense of status within social groupings

Status here doesn't mean the trappings you've acquired in life or that you need to be the CEO of a large company. It simply means that you are as much recognised for keeping the place clean as the CEO is for keep the place running. We need to feel that we have a role to play and that we're recognised for what we contribute to the communities we belong to, be that a formal or informal role.

What is your role?

Privacy

That doesn't mean having a room all to yourself. It does mean having the space and time to reflect. It's through reflection - when you're in a calm state of mind - that you can separate yourself from your troubles, review your attitude and learn from life's experiences. As you may have noticed, learning and reflecting on your learnings and your experiences in life are large parts of this programme.

What precisely do you need to do to give yourself a better opportunity to reflect?

Sleep on it now. You'll find that after a good night's sleep, you'll have come up with new ideas or refinements of your existing ones. Then commit to making some changes in your life starting right away!