

Episode Transcript

TAOLC EP: 017 - The Art of Fully Feeling: How to Embrace and Express your Emotions

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Welcome to the art of living consciously podcast, a show designed for out of the box thinkers and mindset shifters, who are looking for new ways to evolve. This is an intimate container designed to uplift, inspire, and motivate you on your own growth journey. I'm your host, Dannie Reeve. As a certified BNE or Bioneuroemotion practitioner, I empower men and women to turn their conflicts into stepping stones for growth. Because when you question your own beliefs and perceptions, and take responsibility for your life, everything else follows. If you ask me, Earth is a place where souls are sent to evolve, and in this podcast, we will discuss the best tools for our evolution.

Hello my wonderfully flawsome friends and welcome to episode 17. Today I would like to delve into the wonderful world of emotions, which I know is a fascinating topic for most people and is also a source of frustration for many of us because although as children we know how to navigate this world beautifully, as we grow older, a lot of us get disconnected from it. That disconnect can be a source of a lot of unnecessary suffering. And today what we are going to do is to talk about ways in which you can fully acknowledge your feelings and also express them.

Emotions are the driving force behind anything you do. So if you want to fully heal from past hurt or from a conflict, a situation, you must acknowledge what is going on in your internal emotional world. And that includes fully embracing and accepting quote and quote negative feelings and emotions such as shame, anger, blame, sadness, fear, and the list goes on. But a lot of us do is to talk ourselves out of those states by rationalising them away, when actually the only way to truly overcome the pain that we are feeling is to fully feel it. Today we are going to look at two very important components of this process. One is to feel and the other one is to emote or in other words, to express what you're feeling. I want to delve deeper into both of these processes so you can fully understand them and also integrate them because both are essential.

In fact, as I recently learned and it was very eye-opening for me to learn this, is that there is a ying and a yang component to these two states. One of them is more feminine and the other one is more masculine, of course. And so it would be interesting for you as you listen to this episode to think about which one you are most comfortable with and probably the invitation is that you start integrating the other polarity, the one that you're less comfortable with, whether it be feeling your emotions and sitting with them or expressing them and emoting them. So we'll delve into this right now and then at the end of the episode I'll also give you some effective tools to help you with this process. So please stick around for that and let's get into it. Now, if you've listened to episode 10 where I talk about the purpose of emotions, and if you haven't, I encourage you to listen to that episode as well. You'll know that emotions are energy in motion. So that means that whenever you repress an emotion, whether it be by not fully feeling it or not fully expressing it, it gets trapped in your body and will seek to be released. And that's why you create all these different kind of scenarios and

the same kind of conflicts in order to release that trapped emotion. Repressing emotion is something that we learn as we grow older when our environment and our experiences teach us what we might determine as acceptable to feel and express or not. That's why the greatest teachers when it comes to expressing and feeling emotions in a healthy way are children. And so it's wonderful to be able to observe that in them but also realise that that is an innate process that we all know how to do. We can definitely relearn how to be that fully feeling child again, how to move these emotions and let them move us into action.

In the Great book *The Tao Fully Feeling* by Peter Walker, he talks about observing one particular child. And I'm going to read you that passage because I think it's really well written. It really gives you a feeling of what fully emoting implies. This is what he says: Children fully emote themselves out of many deaths such as being hurt or losing something of value. A child runs past a sandbox, trips and hurts his knee. His experience of feeling joyful and carefree momentarily dies. He jumps up and starts crying out his pain with sobs and tears. He looks at the ground and releases his anger about the pain through angry, verbalising stupid ground, dumb old ground. I hate You, ground! This brief and dramatic emoting fully releases his pain unless he's seriously injured and he runs off again, reborn to exalt in the joy of playing. This brief passage is an example of many occurrences that you might have seen, uh, with children in your life or that you remember of your own childhood.

We often marvel about how children can go from being really angry to being super joyful in the blink of an eye. The reason they do that is because they don't judge their emotions so they allow them to surface and then they can fully emote them. And what that child did is that he cried and expressed his sadness and then he fully verbalised his anger. Since he had fully processed that emotion, he was free to move on to another emotion, which in that case was joy. Emoting is masculine energy. It's a yang experience, it's the process of offering pain and active expression and release through crying, angering or verbally ventilating. And we'll look at more active ways that you can do that later on. But first I want to contrast this with the more ying experience, the more feminine experience of passively feeling. Think of feeling as the process of grieving that allows you to work through your pain in a passive way.

And a lot of people try to jump that process or that experience, right? And, for a lot of us, it's the most difficult thing to do to sit with our emotions without resisting them, to observe them, to just be with them and not do anything with them. There is a great quote by the American psychologist, Arthur Janov, I hope that I am pronouncing his name correctly, which really highlights the importance of allowing yourself to feel. This is what he says. Feeling is the antithesis of pain. The more pain one feels, the less pain one suffers. If you think about the child in that sandpit, that is a completely natural statement for him. But for us it would sound almost counterintuitive, right? But it isn't. You need to allow yourself to feel your pain if you want to eventually overcome whatever you are dealing with.

There is no way around this. There's only a way through. And that is something I see a lot with my students, with myself where we have kind of put into place this survival mechanism, which is to clamp down on whatever we are feeling and to try and numb it, to banish it from our awareness. Feeling is the opposite of that. This is Peter Walker's definition of pain and I really like it. He says that feeling is focusing on pain with the intention of relaxing any resistance to it so that it may pass through and out of the body. You could think about feeling an emotion as a digestive process. So it's like when you eat, the more relaxed you are, the

better you will digest your food. And it's the same thing with emotions and feeling them. What is very useful to understand for this process is that your emotions will show up in your body and usually they will show up anywhere between your stomach area to your heart space and your throat as well, right?

So your emotions translate as physical sensations in the body. That's why there are many techniques that can help you to observe those sensations and ease into the emotion and help it digest better. The idea is to sit with the discomfort and observe it instead of running away from it. This can be very challenging for a lot of us, especially nowadays where we have so many distractions that we can cling onto in order not to feel. I'm sure that you can relate:going on that phone, scrolling down your social media is a way of numbing discomfort, bingeing on Netflix, shopping, reaching for that extra tub of ice cream. There's a lot of ways that our brain can talk us out of feeling discomforts and it's about retraining yourself to sit with it. So in a few minutes I will give you some tools to help you with that.

But first, let's recap real quick and get very clear about the difference between feeling and emoting and why both of them are so important. As we've seen, emoting is the yang to feeling, which is the ying. Think of it as a relationship. In order for you to have a healthy relationship with your feelings, you need to integrate both the ying and the yang. Just like in a relationship with a partner, there's someone who will bring more of a feminine energy and another person will bring more of the masculine energy. That's what makes a healthy balanced relationship. While the same applies to when you process your emotions, understanding that will help you to process anything that you're going through your pain, your hurt, your grief in a better and more efficient way. And what Pete Walker argues in his book and at a very much agree with is that a lot of philosophical approaches that are dealing with resolving emotional pain are incomplete because they exclude either the feeling or the emoting.

As part of grieving, feeling alone doesn't always resolve pain. Some feelings are so intense that they need to be expressed and fully emoted through anger and crying, et cetera. However, on the other extreme, there are some forms of therapy that believe that you need to express your emotions and empty them out as soon as you feel them. Like for example, primal scream therapy where the focus is on releasing the emotion rather than simply sitting with it and feeling it. And what this can do is create a belief that feelings are bad and that it's awful to feel them and that you immediately need to do something about them. What I'm trying to say here is that both approaches are valid, but you need both of them in order to effectively heal. In a BNE session,that's the objective, to take a person through a journey where they first acknowledge their pain and we help them to fully see it and fully experience it and then allow them to release it.

So it's using both the feminine and the masculine, which helps that person integrate and process whatever their process they need to process. I found that was very interesting, um, as far as the method is concerned. But for now, let's look at some simple ways that you can start tapping into either feeling or emoting and process your emotions. When it comes to feeling, there are many meditation techniques out there that can be really helpful. And one of them is Vipassana. It essentially teaches you to observe your physical sensations without judgement. So it teaches you to sit with them. You are essentially sitting with what is, which is the definition of feeling. Now there are some simple techniques that can help you do that

for yourself. One exercise that I often use for myself is to first sit with your back against a chair or a wall because it signals to your primitive brain that you are in a safe place. Or you can always do this laying down as well with your back on a solid surface. And just allow yourself to close your eyes, take some deep breaths, right, and just ease into yourself being there, maybe observing, you know the sounds around you, what you can smell, the touch of your skin against a particular surface, anything that helps you to really ease in that moment. And then you'll start to pay close attention to that area in your body that I mentioned earlier where all your visceral emotions are manifested, right? Or manifest themselves. And that is your stomach area or your heart area around your throat. And just see what comes up, any physical sensation in that area that you are drawn to. Just observe it. What quality? Is it hot? Is it cold? Is it tingling? Is it anything that can describe it? And just allow yourself to feel it and observe it.

And you'll see that two things can happen while you do that without judging it, just observing it. One outcome is that it will dissolve or move into a different sensation. And the other one is that it might intensify, it might well up or intensify enough in order for it to be emoted as well. And you might feel an urge to cry or or to express your anger. And it's just allowing that to happen as well if it does. And remember that if at any point you want to step away or take a break from the intense sensation, you can always choose to draw your attention back to the wall behind you or the solid surface, right? And that will signal to your brain that you're safe. And then you can go back and observe the sensation again. And that will really help you to be in that moment with your body.

It'll teach you to sit still with what is instead of running away from whatever you are feeling in that moment. This is something that you can incorporate as a short practice that you do every now and again just to get curious about what's happening in your body and what emotions are there. Or you can also use it when you're feeling overwhelmed to start to sit still with what is instead of running away from it. As I said earlier on, Peter Levine is a great reference for those kinds of techniques and his book *Healing Trauma* is a great one. Also, *Waking the Tiger* will give you greater insight on all of that. Now let's look at the more active emoting part of the process. So you can be like that child in the sandpit, fully embodying your state, but in ways that are more acceptable as an adult, maybe .

So I'll take you through a couple of techniques that you can do for yourself and just pick the ones that you prefer and try them on. The first one is verbal ventilation. So it's a process of releasing pain by talking or writing about it like that little boy. The more you feel your emotions as you do this, the better, right? It's allowing yourself to express your anger or cry as you speak to somebody. Maybe if you have somebody that can create that space for you. And it's important that that person brings a non-judgmental, attentive listening ear to what you have to say. So make sure that you trust that person and that you know that they can be there to listen to you. If you decide to do this with a person, it could be your partner, it could be a really good friend, a relative.

And something that I feel is really useful in those cases is to ask for permission to ask that person if they have a space to listen to you right now. This is something that I've started to apply in my own life and it really works because you are, instead of just dumping on the other person, you are asking them if they have the space to listen to you or when they can listen to you. And then also it's telling them that you just need them to be there to listen. You

don't need them to give you any advice or help you fix this. You just want to be able to vent. Basically, if you ask, most probably the person will find a space for you at some point, even if it's not that same day, even if it's a little bit later. But you will be given that space and they will know what to expect and what you need from them.

And you might not have anybody that you can do that with, or at that moment you might not have anybody who's available. And then it's okay to do that process by yourself and to vent out alone to speak to yourself. Children do this naturally and it helps them to process their emotions. And when I heard that, I was like, wow, I used to do that a lot as a kid. I used to sit in front of the mirror and talk to myself and my parents would always say, you would just go on and on to yourself for ages afterwards. And I learned that that was a healthy thing to do because I was expressing my emotions. And you can do that as an adult, obviously try to be in a place where you are by yourself and there's someone around because they might think that you might need to go to a psychiatric ward, but, but that is a very natural way of processing your emotions and venting them.

Emoting is a creative process, so you can also do that while singing a song, singing a song that is quite sad or that means something to you, or just really feeling that song can be a way of emoting and expressing your sorrow or your anger. Another way is to write creative writing is a great way to emote, just sit down and write freely without censoring yourself about what you are feeling. The magic of writing is that it accesses a different part of your brain and you have greater access to your intuition, and as you write, you get to feel better as well. You get to process everything that's going on and you get to touch deeper parts of yourself as well. Journaling is a great way to emote. This is what Rachel Balloon, a psychotherapist that specialises in the therapeutic use of writing has to say about it. Something mystical and magical happens when writing about a problem. The power of the pen knows no bounds through writing. People bypass their constant head chatter and the rationalisation that occurred in talking. Writing touches the unconscious in a way. Talking does not, it gets beyond the old to the truth of the real stories within.

I love that. And it also really highlights how creative the process of feeling and emoting really is. Now, there is another less magical aspect of emoting, which is cursing and swearing, especially if you're the type of person who doesn't tend to swear or curse. When you curse, you say the things the way they are and with the intensity that you mean to say them. So you know when you're feeling raw, just let loose and try on. Now the last tip I want to give you for emoting involves movement because your emotions are trapped as energy in your body, your suppressed emotions are, and there are plenty of different techniques out there that are really helpful when it comes to moving that energy in and out of your body.

Physical activity is a great way to get your body moving and therefore your emotions flowing as well. So any kind of sports involve movement like running, walking, spending time in nature, dancing. Those are all very accessible ways that you can emote as well when you are feeling low. But there are also other techniques that are specifically geared towards helping you process unresolved emotions and get rid of that kind of stagnant energy in your body. One of these methods that I have tested and highly recommend is ecstatic dance. I have been going in London here to particularly events that are organised by a company called Uruburu, ecstatic Dance, wellbeing and embodiment that I will link in the show notes because I highly recommend them and it has really helped me a lot. I can see such a

difference when I leave the dance floor and it's two hours of solid dancing, but it's done according to particular rhythms.

And so they take you through sort of quiet movements and then more, more intense movements. And then, it's kind of a meditation and a dance and it's a great environment where you see all kinds of people from all different walks of life just really letting loose. It also takes place in a non-judgmental, safe environment, which helps you to ease into the experience. Yeah, it's, it's such an amazing way to emote, but also to feel, I think it's a blend of both. So they really encourage you to bring to the dance floor whatever you are feeling right now in the moment. Um, I highly recommend this. There's another technique called five rhythms that's a little bit similar and shaking is another one that I have not personally tried. But, the more you are interested in those kinds of methods and techniques, there's a plethora of them out there and it's just about following your intuition and wherever you are led to in that sense. But moving your body is a great way to emote basically as well.

The bottom line is that if you truly want to reconnect with that innate capacity of yours to fully feel, to be that child who knows how to navigate their emotions and use them as a stepping stone to a creative and more self-expressed you, you need to integrate both your ying and your yang, both your feeling and your emoting capacities. This might feel alien or challenging to you right now, but remember that you know how to do this because that five year old in the sandpit did it automatically. This is not about learning, it's about unlearning. That creative process is what's going to propel you forward. As Jack Cornfield says in his book, *A Path with Heart* Feelings can move within us like the changing weather and we can be free to feel them and move on. Like the wind free is not free of feelings. Free to feel each one and let it move on. Unafraid of the movement of life.

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