

## 1. My “Emotional Code” Screening Tool

**Instructions:** the term “emotional code” refers to the belief (usually unspoken) that guides how you deal with emotion—how you *feel* them on the inside and what you *do* with them. Take a few minutes to reflect on your style of managing emotions (such as joy, hurt, anger, frustration, grief, compassion, love). Remember: your “Emo-Code” isn’t necessarily right/wrong, good or bad. You’re not judging—just exploring. So, just *check the statements below that seem true*. (Note: this is a draft and not a scientifically validated instrument. Your feedback is welcomed! )

- 1 \_\_\_ I’m usually pretty tuned into my emotions and I’m comfortable expressing them to those I trust
- 2 \_\_\_ I notice and feel most all my emotions *but prefer to keep* the distressing ones (like anger, sadness, fear) inside
- 3 \_\_\_ It’s hard for me to stay with vulnerable emotions like sadness and fear for more than a few seconds
- 4 \_\_\_ I often feel really positive emotions like joy, happiness, deep contentment, silly, carefree, deep peace
- 5 \_\_\_ I seldom feel strong positive emotions—it just seems like I’ve got to be serious all the time
- 6 \_\_\_ I can cry when I really need to, and it feels like a relief afterwards
- 7 \_\_\_ I don’t think crying really helps—and you just feel worse afterwards
- 8 \_\_\_ I’m not very tuned into what I feel emotionally—I just keep pushing and try to be strong
- 9 \_\_\_ Before expressing anger towards someone, I think first about the impact it will have on them
- 10 \_\_\_ When I am angry at someone I tell them immediately without reflecting much on how they’ll take it
- 11 \_\_\_ Others tell me I handle stress and my emotions well
- 12 \_\_\_ One or more persons I respect have told me I don’t handle my emotions well
- 13 \_\_\_ Usually when I am angry I feel it, think about it, and talk about it when helpful
- 14 \_\_\_ I don’t express anger to others—I just move on
- 15 \_\_\_ Usually when I am angry I hold it in until it feels like too much then it just comes out
- 16 \_\_\_ It’s really hard for me to admit to others when I am afraid
- 17 \_\_\_ It’s okay to tell others when I feel fear and I do so when it is important to.
- 18 \_\_\_ I release difficult emotions and stress by exercising, recreation, and/or having fun with friends/family
- 19 \_\_\_ When I am upset I tend to respond by self-medicating (over-eating and/or drinking, sex or other...)
- 20 \_\_\_ I hate conflict and will do anything to avoid it
- 21 \_\_\_ I can assert myself (speak respectfully and clearly about the matter) as needed with peers I trust
- 22 \_\_\_ I can assert myself when I need to with my superiors
- 23 \_\_\_ People tell me I am a very confrontational person
- 24 \_\_\_ When people I care a lot about start to cry, I can feel some of their hurt and try to support them
- 25 \_\_\_ When people I care about start to cry, I feel anxious OR shut down my own feelings AND/OR try to “fix” them

- Now, remembering to not be judgmental, just look back over your responses. *What do you notice?*
- Check *any* of the following statements that would help summarize your own Emotional Code :
  - A. \_\_\_ ***It’s okay to express difficult emotions*** at work after highly distressing events (when time permits) as long as I don’t hurt anyone and it doesn’t interfere with my work
  - B. \_\_\_ ***I’d like to be more open*** expressing hard emotions at the workplace after highly distressing events but that wouldn’t be supported by my peers and/or superiors
  - C. \_\_\_ ***It feels weak and not very helpful to express painful emotions***
  - D. \_\_\_ ***It doesn’t feel safe*** to express vulnerable emotions
  - E. \_\_\_ Other (if none above applies, summarize yours):
  - F. \_\_\_ My Emotional Code is ***similar to my family’s*** when growing up
  - G. \_\_\_ My Emotional Code is ***different than my family’s*** when growing up
- *How would you summarize the Emotional Code you want to live by, if different than above? Write it here:*
- *What would you need to DO to best fulfill your healthy Emotional Code in the future?*

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