



Expanding the feeling function

Higher stages of leadership embrace and embody integration of the thinking, feeling and action functions. The majority of business leaders are yet to reach the higher stages of leadership. Often they are overdeveloped in their thinking function and underdeveloped in their feeling function.

It is difficult to think your way into feeling. Allow your bodily response, the tension in your shoulder to speak, the smile on your face to speak for you. The exercises below will help you develop and express your feeling function.

Exercise 1.

Respond fully to these questions drawing on the list of feelings below:

So how are you today...really? (Imagine your listener really cares about the answer)

How do you feel about your life?

How do you feel about your work?

How do you feel about your children, your family?

What feelings do you ache for?

Remember!!! This is not a school test – no mandatory single word response. For example, today, as I write this for you, I feel a little tired, very blessed and loved, a bit dreamy, very warm towards the people in my life and very determined!



Exercise 2

Take a look at the feeling words below and notice your immediate response to each one. Do some feeling words seem more readily accessible than others? Breathe into the words and acknowledge that each feeling-state is one you are likely to experience from time to time.

Absorbed	Enchanted	Lost	Sad
Accessible	Enchanting	Lonely	Seductive
Afraid	Encumbered	Lost	Separate
Aggressive	Enraged	Loveable	Silly
Angry	Envious	Loving	Sinister
Anxious	Excited	Mad	Sloppy
Apathy	Excluded	Magical	Slow
Attached	Fantastic	Manipulated	Sorry
Attuned	Fierce	Mischievous	Special
Aware	Fiery	Mysterious	Spellbound
Beautiful	Flaky	Nasty	Spiteful
Blank	Flat	Naughty	Still
Blessed	Flawed	Neglected	Stuck
Bewildered	Flirtatious	Neglectful	Stupid
Bemused	Floppy	Normal	Supportive
Carefree	Free	Oblivious	Suspicious
Careful	Fresh	Obnoxious	Sympathy
Challenged	Friendly	Pathetic	Tender
Cheated	Furious	Pedantic	Tense
Coerced	Generous	Persuaded	Tight
Committed	Giving	Persuasive	Timely
Cold	Glamorous	Playful	Tired
Connected	Glorious	Powerful	Toxic
Critical	Grandiose	Present	Traumatized
Cut-off	Grateful	Purposeful	Treasured
Deadened	Heavy	Quarrelsome	Trusting
Delighted	Happy	Questioning	Trustworthy
Delirious	Honoured	Quirky	Unaware
Desire	Hypnotized	Rebellious	Unbalanced
Desired	Inferior	Regal	Uncertain
Detached	Influenced	Regret	Vague
Diagnosed	Influential	Relieved	Valued
Dreamy	Invigorated	Remote	Vexed
Disembodied	Invincible	Resilient	Vibrant
Dismissed	Invisible	Responsible	Warm
Dismissive	Isolated	Responsive	Wary
Divided	Jealous	Restless	Weary
Empathy	Joyful	Revengeful	Worried
Empowered	Judged	Ridiculous	
Empowering	Judgmental	Righteous	
Empty	Light	Rude	



Exercise 3

I once asked a neighbour how she was. She told me “I’m fine”. I replied “really? You don’t seem so...”. She then chuckled and said “Ah! I forgot that when you ask you really do mean to know how I am”.

Commit for one month to only use the word “fine” when you are discussing the weather – especially if you are English! The English weather will give you ample opportunity I am sure.

Exercise 4

Silently, to yourself, think of someone you care about. Ask yourself why do I love_____? Let yourself feel the whole sense of loving. See if you can find a few words that get at what it is. Allow yourself feel what those words refer to and see if new words and feelings come up.

Exercise 5

Teach your children, by example, to fully express their feeling-states – it’s bad for my business, but good for them!

