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The Energy -Emotion Matrix

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Today more than ever before there is an awakening to subtle energy, the vital force that flows within and around us creating the ambiance of life. The increased prevalence of Yoga, Tai Chi, Reiki and other energy-based systems are rousing learners' energy senses. As individuals begin feeling the flows in their body and noticing the energy interactions among people many are inspired to consciously participate in the dance of subtle energy to create meaningful, life-affirming change. What people may not realize however is that the key to understanding energy lies with our emotions.

In addition to providing the rhythm, context and meaning to life, emotions deliver messages from our surroundings and generate the energy needed to respond. They convey the essence of being alive, informing our perceptions and enabling our goals. Without emotions there is small satisfaction in our successes and minimal learning in our failures; yet most of us spend a considerable amount of time and energy trying to avoid and control our feelings. We strive to escape or suppress anger, fear, sadness and shame while valuing happiness, excitement, satisfaction and joy. This is natural: the first group consists of emotions that are uncomfortable, the second energizing and uplifting. We confuse comfortable and uncomfortable with value, labeling some emotions good and others bad. But what if there is function in our emotions that goes beyond comfort?

Emotions translate subtle energy information coming to us from our environment and transmit our response back into the world. They form our gut instincts and intuition. Consider this scenario:

Sarah is walking down the street to meet a friend. She stops to answer her cell phone and becomes engrossed in conversation, oblivious to the people around her. Suddenly, for no reason, Sarah's hair stands on end and she becomes overwhelmed with anxiety. Whirling around, she looks directly into the eyes of a man who is clearly following her. A bolt of energy electrifies her arms and legs. Immediately she feels angry. Energy pathways in her body open to send vital force to her boundary, the outer border of the energetic space around her. She is instantly filled with physical strength and ready to respond.

What happened? From an energy perspective, the danger to Sarah is conveyed on a carrier wave and received by the energy structures in her body. The information is converted into emotion which arrives with such magnitude it pulls her attention from her phone call. Before the information reaches the emotional processing center in her brain, Sarah is already reacting as the energy signal informs her intuition and triggers a chemical cascade that tightens muscles and focuses her awareness. Her emotion informs her perceptions about her level of safety and transmits her response while providing energy for immediate action.

Dissecting this process further, we see three distinct emotions that interact with Sarah to provide for her safety. First, she feels anxiety which lets her know that something is out of place. When she swirls around she is confronted with the source of the incongruity: someone is threatening her. The immediate burst of fear prepares her system for fight or flight and the subsequent anger provides protection and resolve. Each of these emotions is uncomfortable to feel and is often labeled as negative, yet each plays an essential role in keeping Sarah safe.

Every emotion we experience provides a message and also channels our energy toward specific results. Here are a few examples:

- **Despair-** The function of desperation is to jump-start creative thinking. It tells us that old ways of doing things can't work: there are no more resources and no further answers on this path. Energetically, desperation releases our fixed attention, freeing our energy fibers to reach for new ground.
- **Guilt-** The reverse of anger, guilt tells us when we have over-stepped another's boundary, obstructed someone or caused an injustice. Guilt lets us know that our boundary has hardened and that we need to establish fair exchange with others.
- **Contentment-** The message here is that we are enough just the way we are, and that life is enough just the way it is. It may not be our idea of perfect, yet none the less, it is. Contentment is a purring vibration that harmonizes the cells of our body. The vibration of contentment opens our energy structures and invites flow through our entire system.

The benefits of our emotion are lost when emotions continue past their usefulness. For example, an uncomfortable emotion such as fear keeps us safe unless it persists after the threat is gone. This can happen when we don't process the information or discharge the energy. Unprocessed emotion is suppressed under the surface, erupting at unexpected moments to make us afraid of things that are not threats. Fear prepares us for action. When we don't discharge the energy, muscles tighten to hold it in which sets the stage for chronic muscular pain.

The main reason we suppress our emotions is because we have been trained to second guess our instincts. We have been trained to rely on rational thinking and to distrust what we feel. However, the reasoning part of the brain, the pre-frontal cortex, receives information from the emotional centers of the brain and integrates it with other types of intellect. (1) In other words, intelligent response includes emotional information. Research shows that emotional

intelligence is more important than IQ in career success and fostering happiness in relationships. (2)

Do you remember being a kid and knowing from how you felt that a parent was angry with you, but being told you were “wrong”; that “nothing was the matter”? Denials of this nature send a two-fold message. First, they dissuade us from trusting our senses as we try to come to terms with a contradiction between what we sense vs. what we are told. A person who is always second guessing his or her instincts is unable to act with conviction or access personal power.

Second, the denial of our true feelings implies that emotions are somehow bad and that we should deny what we feel. We are trained to believe that the mind is good and emotions are bad; that emotions take us away from logic and will lead us into the addictions of pleasure over the virtues of hard work. Fear, anger and shame, we are told, trap us in limitation. Many religions teach that emotions are tricksters, seducing aspirants away from faith. Emotions have even been described as parasites, as though one of the attributes in the magnificence of life is non-functional. The message is clear: emotions should be suppressed and overcome in favor of either logic and rationality or blind faith.

Opposition between mind and emotion is an illusion: the two are meant to work together, each augmenting the other’s unique contribution. To return to our innate ability to utilize emotional information requires that we pay attention to the body. As demonstrated with Sarah, neuroscientists have found that emotions are often felt in the body before they are received in the brain. (3) Being in touch with how we feel puts us into direct contact with the flows of subtle energy around us.

To access emotions is the key that opens the door to higher consciousness, helping us to understand our selves and the world better. Emotions do this by being a direct link to subtle energy and the information that directs our inner convictions. Emotions are the language of subtle energy; the body’s translation of frequency. Through emotions, energy interactions are brought into direct awareness.

When we become proficient using the emotional language of energy, we receive the information that emotions hold, direct the force they entrain and then are able to release them. We no longer harbor feelings that hurt or cause injury and no longer allow them to dictate our actions and behaviors. We choose to step into our personal power and take command of our emotional terrain so that our actions become conscious, creative, potent and fulfilling. We become the master creators of our life.

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Synthia Andrews is the author of *Path of Emotions* to be released January 2013, published by New Page Books, a division of Career Press, Pompton Plains, NJ. 800-227-3371. All rights reserved.