

BASIC FEARS

- Fear of **extinction**
 - Annihilation
 - Ceasing to exist i.e., no longer being
 - The primary existential anxiety in all normal human beings
- Fear of **mutilation**
 - Losing part of one's bodily structure
 - Having one's body invaded
 - Anxiety about dangerous animals/humans
- Fear of **losing one's autonomy**
 - Becoming immobilized, paralyzed, entrapped, imprisoned
 - Becoming controlled by circumstances
 - Becoming overwhelmed
 - May be physical or social
- Fear of **separation from others**
 - Abandonment
 - Rejection
 - Loss of connectedness
 - Becoming a non-person
 - Not valued by others
- Fear of **ego death**
 - Humiliation
 - Shame
 - Profound self-disapproval
 - Disintegration of one's sense of lovability, capability and worthiness
 - Religious bigotry and intolerance may express the fear of ego-death on a cosmic level.
- Fear of **powerlessness**
 - Lack of ability to meet perceived demands or expectations.
 - Absence of tools or resources to meet situations.
 - Can result in utilizing what are perceived as more powerful tools to meet the situation.
- Fear of **the unknown**
 - Life is never totally predictable
 - Healthy life is never predictable, but it is trustworthy
 - Unhealthy life is more predictable

FEELINGS

As we dialogue and relate together, a very commonly used word is “feelings”. This word is used to address a number of our internal functioning stances:

	<u>Definition</u>	<u>How we use this</u>	<u>Translation</u>
*Speculations	Ideas that we strongly think are accurate though we do not have irrefutable proof for them	I <u>feel</u> like you are angry	I <u>think</u> you are angry
*Life Presuppositions	Basic “myths” upon which we base how we live. Usually rather deep in our unconscious levels of thinking.	I <u>feel</u> that women talk more than men.	I <u>believe</u> that women talk more than men even though I cannot prove that to be.
*Desires	A longing, yearning or desire to do something.	I <u>feel</u> like going to see my sister	I <u>want (desire)</u> to go to see my sister
*Judgments	An assessment of a situation	I <u>feel</u> like that it is wrong to wear blue jeans to church	In my <u>judgment</u> it is wrong to wear blue jeans to church
*Affective states	Emotional states of our being	I <u>feel</u> happy, sad, angry, afraid, content, & etc	I <u>feel</u> happy, sad, angry, afraid, content, & etc

There are three basic rules that apply to our affective states, i.e. the true definition of feelings:

1. Feelings are neither good nor bad, they just are.
2. We do not control our feelings. They happen before control is an issue. We control what we do with them.
3. Feelings are not challengeable. What we feel is what we feel, and nobody can say we don't feel that way.
4. Feelings are not caused by external actions. They are our responses to events. Nothing makes us have a feeling. This means that we are responsible for our feelings.

Speculations, life presuppositions, desires & judgments are commonly called feelings. This erroneous use of the term is basically related to a desire to prevent having one's statement challenged, i.e. “If I feel thus and so, nobody has a right to challenge me.” Speculations, life presuppositions, desires and judgments are always challengeable. They do not come under the basic rules that apply to feelings. We will not stop this common misuse of the word or the social acceptance of its misuse. However, by identifying erroneous use of the term, feelings, we are freed to challenge statements in which the word is misused.

HUMAN FUNCTIONING PROCESS

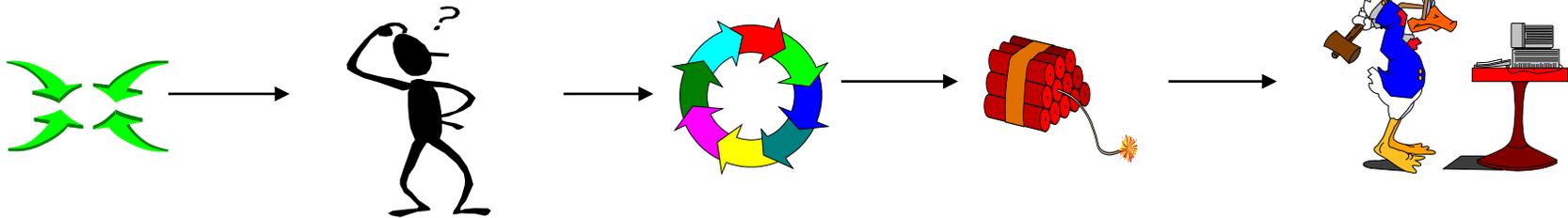
AN EVENT
OCCURS

A PERSON IS
INVOLVED

EVENT IS FILTERED
THROUGH PERSON'S
PRESUPPOSITIONS

FEELINGS
(EMOTIONS)
ARE IGNITED

BEHAVIOR
RESULTS



Feelings (emotions) are a result that precipitates behavior (action). An event does not cause behavior. One's basic life presuppositions evaluate events. This evaluation establishes a meaning for the event, which prompts an emotional response. The emotional response then prompts behavior.

This means that the primary driver of behavior is not the event or one's feelings but one's presuppositions. Feelings are merely a barometer pointing toward the presuppositions.

To change one's feeling responses, the basic presuppositions must change. One can learn to identify and manage her/his behavior even without changing feeling responses. In a number of situations managing behavior can, over time, change one's presuppositions and, therefore, the feeling responses.