

Name the Feeling

An emotion wheel to help you move from “I feel bad” to the word that actually fits.

Start in the centre and pick the family closest to how you feel. Then move outward to a more specific word. More than one feeling at once is normal.



Need help right now? If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency department. Call or text 9-8-8 (Suicide Crisis Helpline, 24/7). Under 18? Call Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868.

This is an educational self-help tool. It is not a diagnosis, and it is not a substitute for care from a regulated health professional.

Where this comes from: Naming feelings (affect labelling): Lieberman et al. (2007), *Psychological Science*, 18(5), 421–428. Emotional granularity and emotion regulation: Barrett et al. (2001), *Cognition and Emotion*, 15(6), 713–724; Kaloerinos et al. (2019), *Psychological Science*, 30(6), 863–879. Wheel design and word list are original to Clover Counselling.

How to use the wheel

Putting a feeling into words can lower its intensity and make it easier to know what you need. People who describe their feelings more precisely also tend to handle them more flexibly. Like any skill, this gets easier with practice.

1 Pause and notice
Take one slow breath. Ask: *what am I feeling right now?* If nothing comes, check your body first (see below).

2 Find the family
Look at the centre ring. Which one or two are closest? There are no wrong answers.

3 Get more specific
Move to the outer ring. Is it *worried* or *overwhelmed*? *Lonely* or *left out*? If none fit, use your own word.

4 Ask what it needs
Finish the sentence: "*I feel ___ because ___, and what might help right now is ___.*"

Where do you feel it?

Your body often notices a feeling before your mind can name it. A few common clues:

Tight chest, fast heartbeat, butterflies
often worry or fear

Clenched jaw or fists, heat in the face
often anger or frustration

Heavy limbs, lump in the throat
often sadness or grief

Wanting to hide, hot cheeks
often embarrassment or shame

Loose shoulders, slow easy breathing
often calm or content

Foggy, far away, nothing at all
sometimes numbness or exhaustion

Practice log

When	What happened	Feeling word(s)	0-10	What might help

Need help right now? If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency department. Call or text 9-8-8 (Suicide Crisis Helpline, 24/7). Under 18? Call Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868.

This is an educational self-help tool. It is not a diagnosis, and it is not a substitute for care from a regulated health professional.

Where this comes from: Naming feelings (affect labelling): Lieberman et al. (2007), *Psychological Science*, 18(5), 421-428. Emotional granularity and emotion regulation: Barrett et al. (2001), *Cognition and Emotion*, 15(6), 713-724; Kalokerinos et al. (2019), *Psychological Science*, 30(6), 863-879. Wheel design and word list are original to Clover Counselling.