

UNDERSTANDING MOOD: NAVIGATING THE EBBS & FLOWS OF INNER EXPERIENCE

WHAT IS A MOOD?

MOOD vs EMOTION

Emotions are short-lived, situation-specific responses (e.g., anger after being cut off in traffic)

Moods are more diffuse, longer-lasting states, often not tied to a single identifiable cause.

Think of emotions as ripples on the surface of a lake, while moods are the overall temperature of the water.

EFC CONSCIOUSNESS SPECTRUM

- * Low-consciousness states (survival mode) often amplify reactive, stuck moods.
- * Higher-consciousness states (flow) allow for a fluid processing of emotions, reducing prolonged moods.
- * Mood is a reflection of internal energy and not inherently 'bad'.

TANGLED THREADS: DECONSTRUCTING MOODS

Moods are a combination of:

- * Physiology: Lack of sleep, diet, chronic stress, and nervous system dysregulation.
- * Emotion: Residual unresolved emotions (e.g., frustration or sadness from previous situations).
- * Cognition: Rigid thought patterns, catastrophizing, or rumination.
- * Environment: External stressors (e.g., overwhelming demands, noise, or interpersonal dynamics).

Exercise

Write down all the potential 'threads' that are contributing to your current mood...

- *What's happening in my body right now?
- *What thoughts or worries are dominant?
- *What's unresolved emotionally?

PHYSIOLOGICAL BASIS OF MOODS

Autonomic Nervous System:

- *Sympathetic (fight/flight) states often create reactive or irritable moods.
- *Parasympathetic (rest/digest) states support calm and ease

Neurochemical Factors:

- *Low serotonin or dopamine levels can lead to prolonged low moods.
- Stress hormones like cortisol perpetuate feelings of being "stuck."

ANATOMY OF MOOD

AWARENESS OF MOOD

BUILDING ATTUNEMENT

Deepening Awareness:

- The Importance of Naming:
 - *Studies show naming emotions can reduce their intensity
 - *Extend this idea to moods: Name what you feel in a mood (e.g., "heavy," "stuck," "foggy").
- Body Scanning Exercise:
 - *Scan to notice where they feel tension or discomfort. Can you associate physical sensations with your mood
- Signs of a Mood:
 - *Cognitive: Foggy thinking, difficulty articulating.
 - *Emotional: Generalised heaviness or irritability.
 - *Physical: Tension, fatigue, or shallow breathing
- When you feel unable to cognitively explain or shift a mood, this may indicate:
 - *Multiple unresolved threads.
 - *Overreliance on external resolution instead of internal attunement
- Recognising When You're Stuck:

PERMISSION FOR MOODS

- ADDRESSING SOCIAL NARRATIVES**
 - Myths About Moods:
 - *"Being in a mood is unproductive or selfish."
 - *"You should just shake it off."
 - Reframing:
 - *Moods are a natural part of human experience and often signal deeper needs or unmet energies
- SELF-COMPASSION & ALLOWING**
 - Normalise giving yourself permission to process moods without judgment.
 - Mantras:
 - *"This mood doesn't define me."
 - *"It's okay to feel this way right now."
- PROCESSING VS FIXING**
 - There is a distinction between:
 - *Allowing space for the mood vs. rushing to fix or suppress it.
 - *Example: Sitting with the discomfort of being "foggy" rather than forcing clarity

STRATEGIES FOR NAVIGATING MOODS

- PRACTICAL STEPS FOR UNRAVELLING MOODS**
 1. Pause and Acknowledge:
 - *"What am I feeling right now?"
 - *Write it down or say it aloud.
 2. Name the Strands:
 - *"What physical sensations am I noticing?"
 - *"What recent events might be influencing this?"
 3. Create Space:
 - * Give each thread "a voice" without judgment.
 - * Example: "I feel overwhelmed because I didn't set a boundary earlier today."
 4. Decide on Next Steps (if needed):
 - *Take micro-actions to resolve or release what's possible (e.g., breathing exercises, small acts of self-care)
- EFC PRINCIPLES FOR MOOD REGULATION**
 - Somatic Grounding:
 - *Consciousness breathing, movement, opening senses
 - Vagal Toning Exercises:
 - *Humming (Vibrational Repatterning Process), extended exhalations to activate the parasympathetic system, eye movement, bilateral stimulation (tapping strokes)
 - Mindful Movement:
 - Walking, yoga, tai chi, qi gong, exercise
 - Psycho-Spiritual Practice
 - *Walking in the shoes of the true self - being the observer
 - Remember the Ebbs & Flows:
 - *Mantra: "Thinking will only make me feel worse, there is nothing to fix"
 - *Moods will fluctuate, meddling can just exacerbate
- LEVERAGING THE CONSCIOUSNESS SPECTRUM**
 - *Recognise where your consciousness is currently anchored (survival mode, reactive, reflective, or flow).
 - *Explore practices that allow a gentle upward shift in consciousness.