

Pathwork on
Distinction Between Feelings and Emotions

This quote from Pathwork Lecture 111 *Soul Substance – Coping with Demands* distinguishes between **feelings** (objective, related to real self and truth) and **emotions** (subjective, related to images, etc.). I find the distinction quite helpful – but we are warned not to get too hung up on labels. Rather, understand the essence of this concept.

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QUESTION:

I should like to hear your **differentiation between feelings and emotions.**

ANSWER:

There is a difference between the two.

One way of describing the difference would be that

a feeling is deeper-rooted and more permanent.

By this

I do not wish to **imply** that **feelings**
do not change.

I do not mean that **feelings are permanent**
in time,

but they are so

in quality,
in consistency,
in character,
in being.

A feeling may truly change faster than an emotion,
and yet it is permanent in essence.

This is very difficult to explain;

in order to understand, you would have to

perceive what I mean with your own inner faculties.

An **emotion** is more superficial,

even though it may be **retained longer**

in the soul substance.

An **emotion comes from superficial conditions in the soul.**

Reactions and responses that are

based on superimposed modes of coping with life,
not originating from the real person,

are emotions.

The **real self** sends forth **feelings.**

Hence, a **feeling** is something **much more substantial.**

	<p>This cannot be evaluated by the apparent worth of the feeling or emotion.</p> <p>You may have an unpleasant feeling, yet it is based on truth, on reality.</p> <p>An emotion is based on a subjective inner condition.</p>
45	<p>Here is an example: Let us suppose you sense a detrimental, negative quality in someone else, or in yourself.</p> <p>If this quality is true, you are dealing with a feeling, even if highly unpleasant.</p> <p>In another case you may have the same perception; however, you do not sense the negative quality because, instead of merely observing what is, you become frightened, suspicious, guilty, and resentful; because some image or pseudo-solution is at work.</p> <p>You have, again, a correct perception, in this instance though of an emotion.</p> <p>When you do not push the feeling aside, you will come to see that you have a valid intuition, be it about yourself, or about someone else.</p> <p>When you do not push the emotion aside – and you should never push aside an emotion, a feeling, or anything else, for that matter – you will come to recognize factors within yourself that cause you to be subjective, distorted, and out of touch.</p> <p>In short, you will see all the blocks in you that prohibit feelings and intuition.</p>

	<p>A <u>feeling</u> always reacts to <u>reality</u>, however temporary this particular reality may be, as it exists now.</p>
46	<p>Let us now examine a <u>favorable emotion</u>. Gratified vanity, greed, or pride may produce a <u>pleasant emotion</u>.</p> <p>Or, to go a step further, a <u>situation</u>, even if <u>truly perceived</u>, <u>but utilized subjectively</u>, produces an <u>emotion</u> and <u>not a feeling</u>.</p> <p><u>Feelings</u> are based on <u>objectivity</u>, <u>emotions</u> on <u>subjectivity</u>.</p> <p>In both instances, they may be <u>pleasant or unpleasant</u>.</p> <p>The <u>language is often confused</u>. One speaks of emotional maturity or emotional involvement, of expressing one's emotions when feelings too, are meant.</p> <p>But the words do not matter that much as long as you understand the essence.</p>
47	<p>QUESTION: Am I correct in understanding that anything can be either feeling or emotion? Fear, for instance?</p> <p>ANSWER: Yes. That is right.</p> <p>But, my friends, my advice is: Do not try to label it. Labeling is always a dangerous procedure. With it you somehow <u>close a door to further understanding</u>.</p> <p>Try rather to deal with the feeling, or emotion, as it comes up.</p>

	<p>Try to understand it, to see whether or not it is based on objective factors, or on personal, colored, and subjective notions.</p>
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