

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 <b>cannot be evaluated by the apparent worth of the feeling or emotion.</b></p> <p>You may have an <b>unpleasant feeling</b>, yet it is <b>based on truth</b>, on <b>reality</b>.</p> <p>An <b>emotion</b> is based on a <b>subjective inner condition</b>.</p>
45	<p>Here is an <b>example</b>:  Let us suppose <b>you sense a detrimental, negative quality</b> in someone else, or in yourself.</p> <p><b>If this quality is true</b>,  you are dealing with a <b>feeling</b>,  even if highly unpleasant.</p> <p><b>In another case you may have the same perception; however</b>,  you do <b>not sense the negative quality</b>  because,  <b>instead of merely observing what is</b>,  you become  <b>frightened,</b>  <b>suspicious,</b>  <b>guilty, and</b>  <b>resentful;</b>  <b>because some image or pseudo-solution</b> is at work.</p> <p>You have, again, a <b>correct perception</b>, in this instance  <b>though</b> of an <b>emotion</b>.</p> <p><b>When you do not push the feeling aside</b>,  you will come to see that you have a <b>valid intuition</b>,  be it about yourself, or  about someone else.</p> <p><b>When you do not push the emotion aside –</b>  and you should <b>never push aside</b>  an <b>emotion</b>,  a <b>feeling</b>, or  anything else, for that matter –  you will come to <b>recognize factors within yourself</b>  that <b>cause you to be</b>  <b>subjective,</b>  <b>distorted, and</b>  <b>out of touch.</b></p> <p>In short, you will see <b>all the blocks</b> in you that <b>prohibit</b>  <b>feelings and</b>  <b>intuition.</b></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>. <b>Gratified</b> 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 <b>language is often confused</b>. One speaks of emotional maturity or emotional involvement, of expressing one's emotions when feelings too, are meant.</p> <p>But <b>the words do not matter that much</b> <b>as long as you understand the essence</b>.</p>
47	<p>QUESTION: Am I correct in understanding that <b>anything can be either feeling or emotion?</b> Fear, for instance?</p> <p>ANSWER: <b>Yes.</b> That is right.</p> <p>But, my friends, my advice is: <b>Do not try to label it.</b> <b>Labeling is always a dangerous procedure.</b> With it you somehow <u>close a door to further understanding</u>.</p> <p>Try rather to <b>deal with the feeling, or emotion, as it comes up</b>.</p>

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