



Emotional Detox

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This document is derived from the transcript of a talk.

We spend a lot of time talking, reading, and hearing about the toxicity in our world in terms of toxin levels in our food and water. However, we don't talk a lot about the toxicity in our emotional and nervous systems.

Negative emotions can create just as much turmoil and work for your liver as chemicals in the environment, PCVs in your food, and pesticides in your water. Now is the time to work on centering yourself and allowing toxic emotions to be transformed into emotions that are going to serve you.

When you start a detoxification program, many times your body is releasing stored toxic emotions as well as stored physical toxins. So, as you are going through this process, at times you may find yourself getting very irritable, short, or sad. Be aware that those experiences are just part of your emotional detox. Your system is cleansing itself of those emotions, and it's irritating your nervous system to get rid of all the toxins.

Also, once you have identified that you're having toxic emotions, there are techniques to transform those emotions into things that can drive you forward and help you to improve your overall health.

One of the things that's important to understand is the **strong emotional connection between food and emotional comfort.** For most of us, our very first experiences with food were connected with the love of a mother.

There are lots of women who do what's called comfort nursing: When a baby cries and the reason for the child's distress isn't clearly understood, the mother's first response is to just feed it. That teaches a child right from the beginning to expect comfort from food whenever in distress, scared, or in pain. So, **food can become strongly tied in with our very first experiences of comforting feelings of fear, pain, and confusion.**

When we embark on a detox process, we choose to remove some of the variables in our detox equation and take out some of the physical things that are burdening our systems.



That means that less of the body's energy needs to be spent on managing food, and it frees up our systems to deal with our emotions. All kinds of interesting things can happen as that early connection between food and emotions is uncovered and reprogrammed.

For all these reasons, when we get into a detox program, things can just start feeling a little bit funky emotionally.

That's why it's important to **identify some of the emotions that you may experience during detox**, explore tools you can use for managing them, and learn things you can do to improve situations that affect our emotions.

It's important to approach the detox in such a way that **your detox process doesn't add to your toxic emotional burden**. When you embark on a detoxification program, it's important to find ways to keep yourself emotionally healthy.

We'll soon be introducing ways to detox in a very deep way, to release toxins that have likely been stored for a very long time.

Deeply detoxifying your system involves a lot of steps, changes, and processes. You may be pressuring yourself to get it all exactly right and then berating yourself when you don't. It's **important to relax through the process and to not be hard on yourself**.

If you look at all the recommendations and immediately get a feeling of overwhelm, thinking, "Oh my. I can't do all that," just break it down into small, manageable pieces and take it one step at a time. First, you handle one part, then you handle the next part, then you handle the next part. Keep in mind that there's no perfect way to do this. We are just giving you the guidelines to help you. **Follow the program as closely as you can and then relax.**

Detoxification is a lifelong process. Your body's doing it all the time. Your liver is not just detoxing when you say, "Hey! I am going to take a break to detox." Your liver is detoxing 24/7; every minute of the day. **As we move to the next steps in the detox module, you will be guided to give your liver the extra support it needs to be able to tackle some of the backlog** of things that it wasn't able to handle before.

There's another concept I want to bring up at the beginning of our discussion: **In Chinese medicine**, each of your different major organ systems is associated with a particular major emotion. **The liver is associated with anger.** So, as you are going through this detox, **if you find yourself angrier than usual, keep in mind that it is probably part of the detox process.**

During this process, you might have angry thoughts like, "Oh, this is not working for me. This detox regimen is bad for me. I shouldn't be doing this process. It's stupid." That's your liver talking, and it's the anger in your liver being released.



When those thoughts happen, **you can breathe through it and just acknowledge**, "Oh, yes, there we go. My liver is detoxing. It's trying to get rid of that anger that's been stored there for safe keeping. I am ready to let it go. Let me find an outlet for it." The more you are able to recognize that and realize it's part of the process, the better you're going to be able to let go of the anger.

Before I actually get into the list of toxic emotions, I want to address something else, which is a delicate but important subject: **Toxic people in your life**. We all have them. Some of those relationships are relationships of choice, and some are relationships of birth.

You may have a toxic relationship with a parent, a sibling, spouse, or even a friend, **in which they become critical of you anytime you try to do something that's different**. Often this is because they are afraid you're going to move into a place where you're "better than them" and no longer want to associate with them.

I have seen this situation over and over again in my practice. For example, a woman who is overweight comes in because she really wants to get healthy and trim. She starts the program, but her husband, who is also overweight, keeps sabotaging her. She might tell me, "I was trying really hard, but he just kept saying, 'Oh, come on. Just one cookie isn't going to hurt you. Just have a little ice cream with the family. What are you trying to do; wreck the family?'"

She would feel guilty and succumb, and then she would compromise her health program. I've actually been able to sit down with some of those husbands and have a really heart to heart conversation. Often, it turns out that they're scared that when she gets slim and trim and gorgeous, she will no longer have a reason to stay with them. There we find the reason for the unconscious sabotage.

I've found that the same was true with my own mother. We had a relationship where she would criticize me, and I would get angry and annoyed. I would be defensive, and then she would feel she had a right to criticize me even more. I started picking up on it when she would start the criticism, and to counter it, I'd be assertive and say, "We have a difference of opinion about this. I really feel strongly about the way I am living my life, and you're welcome to your opinion. Thank you very much for sharing."

I would do this, and do this, and do this, but she just kept at me so much that she would get me to scream. Then, she would say, "Oh, thank you. It seemed like you were thinking you were just too good for us anymore."

I share these examples with you because they are real life experiences, and you may be able to relate them to something that is going on in your life.



You're about to embark on a deep detoxification program. There are going to be some challenges at times. **It may disrupt the routine in your family if that routine normally includes going out to eat and snacking** while you watch a movie. Your loved ones may associate those activities with the love in your relationship, and it takes time and care to separate the emotions from the actions and create new patterns.

Now is the time to look at the challenging relationships and ask, "What do I really want from this relationship?" Look for ways to **have a heart-to-heart with these people.** Sit down and say, "I'm really committed. I know that I'm on the right path. I really love you and I want us to have a really loving, caring and supportive relationship. I promise you I won't try to make you do this with me, or coerce you in any way. All I need from you is support. I want to hear you saying, "Hey, I'm with you. I want the best for you."

It may be hard for you to imagine having those heart-to-heart conversations, but they are so helpful. If you don't address this at the beginning of the process, then that underlying fear or anxiety about what you're doing and how it's affecting your relationship is going to add to the toxic emotional burden.

So, I really want you to look at your relationships and consider whether there are people that you've been hanging out with that aren't very supportive. Maybe there are people that you go out and party with on Friday night. You might not want to totally cut those people off, but look at those relationships. **It's important for your health that you minimize the challenging relationships** and foster those relationships that support you.

For a lot of people, this is the hardest part of really improving their health. I've seen people stuck in a position where they can't move forward with their health because of a particular relationship. However, once they stop talking with one co-dependent friend who's not supplying them with any nourishment in their life, they begin to really move forward. If they can just stand up to that person and say, "Hey, I love you, but I can't listen to you complaining all the time like this. Life is good. Let's focus on having a pleasant conversation," they can really begin to move forward from there.

OK. Now, let's look at the list of **emotions you may experience as part of your detox.**

Anger is extremely, extremely toxic. But, face it; you are going to experience anger. So what do you do? A little later on, I'm going to share with you a process that you can incorporate in your life when these negative emotions start to crop up. This process has actually changed my life and my way of being. It's gotten me to the point where I can be in a situation where bad things are happening, center myself, and avoid that flustered, out of control state of anxiety. If you work at this process on an ongoing basis, you will see that it transforms you as well.



In addition to anger, probably **the most toxic emotion of all is worry**. **Worry is different from fear**. **Fear is an innate, built-in mechanism that protects you from true danger**. Fear is that emotion that comes up when you notice a car that's about to cut you off, a tiger that's about to eat your foot, or a dog that's about to bite your child. If there's an imminent danger, fear causes your body to mobilize its defenses. Fear causes your body to send blood to your extremities and your muscles, and to increase your heart rate so that you can either run or fight. Fear is good.

Worry, however, is fear of an event that has not yet happened. Worry is when you're thinking, "What if I'm walking across the street this morning and a car comes out of nowhere and runs me over?" That's worry. **When you have fear, there's an action that you can take that will protect you** and save you and change the situation for the better. That's good.

With worry, there's no action that can change the situation for the better because it's all in your head.

With worry, you're playing the situation over and over.

"What if the stock market crashes and I lose my house?"

"What if my child gets stricken with a disease?"

I'm a parent, and I know I've had all kinds of feelings like that come up about my children. I used to be scared to death to allow my child to ride somewhere with a friend's parent because they might have an accident on the way. That wasn't serving me. That was just depleting my energy and my health.

I'm sure you've been in situations that trigger worry. I work on this with my husband all the time, because he's a perpetual worrier. I ask him, "Are those thoughts going to help you make a decision that changes the situation for the better?" And if he says, "Yes," then I'll say, "OK. Then go for it. If you can come up with a plan that's going to change the situation, then go for it." However, 99% of the time that's not the case and the thoughts are not helping.

Worrying keeps your body in that sympathetic nervous system mode that we talked about when we discussed digestion. The fight/flight part of the nervous system, which is actually a physiological part of us, reduces the functional capacity of our higher level thinking centers. **So, worrying about something that may happen actually makes you less able to act effectively**.

So, here's an idea for how to approach worry: **Keep a worry journal**. Whenever those thoughts happen, write them down.



Then look at them and ask, "What can I do in the present to protect myself from this happening in the future?" Then, if you can come up with an action plan, you will be in your logical brain working on it, not in your emotional brain.

It's one thing to actually see a tiger in front of you, but it's another thing to perceive tigers or anticipate potential tigers.

It's important to be aware of where the fear is coming from. If you're afraid because your child is running into the street and there is a car coming, that makes sense. There is something in your present environment that is causing you to act that way.

However, **if there's no present danger and you're worrying, that could stem from an event in your past** (even one you may no longer remember) **that's being triggered by current events**. Many people have different perspectives on this, but **I believe that our earliest traumatic experiences have the biggest impact on us**. It's like they become anchors for the way we react to similar situations later on. Without going too far into the subject, I just want to say that can be why you can have a certain fear but not know why it's there.

The more you put your attention on something, the more you validate that thing and the more it grows.

If you find yourself constantly worrying, one of the best things to actually do is to get outside and go for a walk. The things you are worrying about, fearful about, or stressed out about aren't actually in your present-time environment. They're things you're either worried might happen in the future, or things that already happened you're regretting. So, **anything you can do to pull yourself back into the present moment will help remove some of the irrational stimuli that are causing the worry.**

Triggers for worry can stem from early trauma or accidents that may have happened when you were young, as well as negative relationships that you had. The original experiences could have happened when you were very young, and you may not recall them very well. The events don't need to be dramatic to have a big impact. It's like all of our early experiences get recorded, and circumstances in the present can trigger the same emotional reaction we had in the past.

There are two things that take an enormous amount of energy in the body. **One of them is digestion, and the other is managing emotions.** As we reduce our calorie intake and we clean up our diet, digestion takes less energy. Then, the emotions come up.

There are two **things that are really important to check on when managing negative emotions**, whether the emotions are stress, fear, self-punishment, guilt, or others. **The first thing is to make sure that you are getting enough sleep.**



When someone tells me they're constantly affected by their emotions, the first thing that I ask is, "Are you getting enough sleep?" When you don't get enough sleep, you weaken your defenses against those early emotional triggers that can amplify negative emotions. So it's really important to get enough sleep.

The other thing is to make sure you are eating well. Depending on your system and your sensitivities the choices you make about your food will affect your emotions. **It's important both that you are eating well and that you are eating enough.** If you are under eating, again, your defenses will be down and you'll have a harder time managing the emotions that come up.

"Is this fear based in this present moment? Is the danger something that is real based on what I can tangibly observe?" If it's not, we need to recognize that and stop the worry.

There is a possibility at any given time that we could be hit by a car, but we still have to cross the street. We still have to get out there and live. So **when the fear is irrational and anchored in the past, then anything you can do to bring yourself into the present environment will help you.** One of the very best things is going for a walk.

Fear is a reaction to something in the present. Worry is that reaction to something in the future, or regretting the past. So, anything you can do to bring you into the present moment is going to be very helpful. **Exercise is something that totally gets you into the present moment.** Plus, it's very cleansing.

Now, if you're in a situation where those emotions come up but you can't go out and walk, just get up and walk around your office or home. Even that small action can be very helpful.

Research from the **Institute of HeartMath** has shown that active appreciation is the most powerfully positive hormone, enzyme, and physiologic state generator that you can create. In other words, **appreciation is the emotion that creates the best physical state in your body.**

When you get into a situation where you start to play those worry tapes over and over again in your mind: Stop and you take a deep breath. That's the very first thing that you do.

In addition to taking a deep breath, actually focus on the breath, because that distracts you from the worry thought. Count your inhales. Slowly breathe in to the count of five, hold that breath for a few seconds, and then let that breath out.

The HeartMath researchers also found that it helps, while you're taking those breaths, if you focus on the area around your heart. So, pretend that you're breathing in and out through your heart.



For some reason, that technique has been able to shift the physiology more than any other deep breathing technique in their studies. I found it to be very useful. So, I recommend that, when you start to feel that worry come up, take your hand and just put it over your heart.

When you do this process and you feel good about it, **when your hand is over your heart, that action will become an anchor for you to a positive emotional state.**

They use this technique, where you set up specific anchor points on your body that you can touch to remind you to go into a different emotional state a lot in a process called NLP; Neuro-Linguistic Programming. That's also very effective.

When you start to feel that worry, that fear, that anger; or any kind of negative emotion come up, you can put your hand over your heart and just focus on your breathing. That will do a lot to neutralize the emotion.

With the next piece of the technique, you can move into a state where you feel completely different. It's a temporary state; I will give you that. However, **the more often you go to this positive state, the more benefit your body will get**, the more your body is going to be able to clear some of these toxic channels, and the more quickly you are going to be able to shift yourself without having to go through a conscious thought process.

In the ERC adrenal module, there is a link to the Transforming Stress System, which guides you through the entire Heart Math process and provides 30 days of audio reminders.

For me, I can best move out of toxic emotions by recreating the experience of being in the ocean and bobbing up and down on the waves. For others, it's a pet climbing up on their lap, watching a specific incident, or being a part of a kiss in a romantic spot. It can be anything that pops into your mind that makes you feel, "Oh, my." That is the best experience.

It's important for the success of the technique to actually relive that experience. Don't just think about it or picture it, but **really be there**. Be present. Were there particular smells or sounds that were associated with that situation? Bring them forth. **Go into that place, and as you go there, just feel a sense of deep, deep gratitude for that experience.** Be there, and just allow that experience to permeate through your body. Relive that place, that joy, that tranquility and that unconditional love.

The beauty of the process is that it plays on the fact that **your nervous system doesn't know whether you're actually living the situation or just remembering or anticipating it.** That is true for us in both directions.

It can become a really positive thing, because with your words and thoughts, you can trigger a state of bliss, joy, and tranquility, even in the midst of hardship. Even if it's only temporary, the positive effect on your system from experiencing that deep sense of joy and appreciation can last for hours.



The same is true on the other hand. We, when we relive negative, past experiences by telling people over and over, "Oh, yes, my jerk of an ex-husband did this and that," it affects the body negatively over and over.

Say you almost got clipped on the highway. There are two ways to react. How often do we hear, "Oh, I was so lucky this morning. Some guy almost cut me off and I was so alert that I was able to hit the brakes and maneuver away and nothing happened. Isn't that awesome?" How often do we hear this version of the story instead: "Oh, I was almost hit by this idiot and I was so scared..."

Every time you relive that story of almost being hit and being scared, your heart starts to race again, the adrenaline starts to rush again, and you create this rush of toxic chemicals in your body. So, when we learn to emphasize what was positive about that situation as we tell it over and over, like Tera said just a bit earlier, the parts of the experience we focus on become magnified, and become our reality.

If we focus on the good parts of the situation and say, "Wow! I managed to hit the brakes in time and nothing happened. My car didn't even get scraped. Nothing! Isn't that amazing? What a great day today is." Instead of, "Oh, I started off this day badly. What else bad can happen to me?" it can make a huge difference in our body chemistry.

It's important not to wait for the stressful situation to come up and then try to do the technique, because it is going to be challenging to remember all the steps in the moment if you haven't done it in a while. **If you practice the HeartMath when things are good, it will be easier to do in the challenging times.**

For example, before you brush your teeth every night, take yourself through that process. Do it before each meal. If you get into that grateful state before you put anything in your body, that food is going to have a turbo-charged positive effect on you. It's going to open up all the channels and go just where it needs to go.

So, **associate the HeartMath with things that you do regularly throughout your day.**

Before you do those things, take just a minute to bring yourself into that grateful state. When you practice regularly, you will get to the point where you can actually bring that state on with one breath.

If I find myself getting very excited or stressed about something, I just say one word to remind myself, "OK, do the HeartMath." They call that "quick coherence" in HeartMath training.

I'll say the word "appreciation" and then take the one breath, go to Hawaii, and actually have a shift. People who read energy have been with me when I've done that, looked at me, and said, "What did you just do? The whole energy around you shifted."



So, I give you that technique to apply when these toxic emotions come up during the detox process. When you start to feel jumpy, agitated, or irritated, just stop yourself and say, "That's my detox. I am so grateful for this detox process. It's great that emotions are coming out and that I can do this technique to clear them."

Doing HeartMath will cleanse the negative emotions. **It's not like sticking your head in the sand; you're actually transforming the emotions.** That's what I like about it. You're not just managing it or shutting it down for a little while; you're actually recognizing and transforming the emotions.

And one more thing about the worry journal. The **intent is not to have it to dwell on, but to use it to diffuse worry.** Sometimes, when something plays around in your head, it gets really big; it just keeps getting bigger and bigger. If you can write it down on paper, then it stops spinning inside your head and you can put your finger on it. Then, you can do the analysis where you evaluate, "What is it that I am worried about? What can I do to protect myself from this? What can I do to actually create positive action?"

Another really valuable tool for managing emotions I learned from Tera Warner, when we did a 6 week deep detox together. You can **sometimes overcome worry by putting yourself into that creative and imaginative state of mind** where dreams happen.

Here's what she said: "When someone has a worry, I often ask, "OK, what is the worst thing that could happen?" From there, **I use a technique where we exaggerate the fear using the creative mind.**

For example, let's say I'm really afraid of giving a presentation. I would exaggerate my worst presentation scenario as much as possible. The very worst thing that could happen might be that I would give this presentation and make a total fool of myself, people would laugh at me, point their fingers at me, get up and walk out of the room, and throw tomatoes at me on the stage, or something like that.

Exaggerating the worst case scenario in your mind gives you a picture that is actually ten times worse than your original worry. Then, when you come back to the situation you were afraid of, it doesn't look so bad anymore.

After you create the exaggerated picture, you can really play with it. You can really make it dramatic: "And they are yelling at me, and telling me that I'm terrible!" When you do that, you can see that there might be some kind of disappointment if it doesn't go well, but it's not the end of the world. **That also takes off the emotional charge.**

With my kids, I get them to tell me what the very worst thing that could happen is. Then I say, "OK, now make it even worse. Make it even worse. OK, now let's look at the situation for what it is." When they come back and look at it for what it is, often the charge is just gone.



This technique can be very empowering. When you have a worry, you feel powerless because you feel that your future is in somebody else's hands. **When you do that exaggeration technique, it empowers you to take control of the outcome.**

Actually, **one of the most toxic emotions that exists is powerlessness; feeling like you're a victim.** I hear this in people's language all the time. People will say, "Oh, this always happens to me," or "I know that's going to happen if I go there," or "if I get another house then the mortgage is going to go up so that I can't pay it anymore. I'm not going to bother getting one." You've all heard that kind of talk from people. When I hear that kind of language, the powerless emotion is obvious, and I go running in the other direction because I don't want that energy.

There are also more subtle ways powerlessness shows up in people's language; for example, the phrase "I hope." Often, I hear people say something like, "Wow! I lost 12 pounds in the last three months doing this program. I'm so excited! I hope I continue to lose more weight so that I can reach my goal." **The phrase "I hope" gives away your power.**

That language makes it sound like losing the 12 pounds had nothing to do with your actions. Maybe it had to do with luck or some situation beyond your control. If that's your perspective, any future progress you make in the program won't feel connected to your actions either. You will never acknowledge your own power to affect your experience and outcome. So, when I'm coaching people and I hear somebody say that, I help them with the language.

I ask, "How can we say that differently? You've just done this great thing, like losing weight or clearing up your acne. Rather than saying 'I hope it continues,' you can say, 'Wow! I have done so much good work. I have taken control of my health and gotten myself to this point. I can't wait to see what I'll be able to do in the next month.'"

How much more positive is the signal do you give to your system with that revised language? How much do you free up your system to move forward? A lot! It's the difference between saying, "I've done well! Now, what else is possible?" versus, "I hope the little weight gain genie doesn't come and cast a spell on me again and cause me to gain the weight back."

Emotions exist on a scale, and we pass through them in a specific order. The emotions lower on the scale are closer to death; that they have less life in them than others. **Serenity, enthusiasm and cheerfulness are very high.** Then we move down through boredom and anger. Unexpressed resentment would be even lower. At the bottom, we get into things like victimization and apathy.

When your emotions see to be challenging to control, you can look at the thought that created the emotion. For example, if you're in the middle of rage, in order to change that rage, you must change your thought that created it.



We addressed this with the HeartMath process by thinking about something different so that the negative emotional state was able to shift. With HeartMath, you take the breath to interrupt the original thought pattern, and then you create a new thought. You put a new thought in there, and that thought immediately creates a different emotion; completely different.

That's where we have the power; in controlling our thoughts. When you say that thoughts are rooted in past experiences, it's actually not just an airy-fairy idea like, "Oh, yes, there are these things that are stored there and we have to remove them." The process is more concrete than that. It's actually there in brain, where there **are shortcuts in the neural pathways for common trains of thought**.

Here's what happens in the brain when you encounter a new situation: First, there's a new stimulus. Then, there's a part of your brain that searches and tries to match it to your catalog of previous experiences. It decides, "Let me see if I can find that anywhere. Hmm. I don't find it exactly. Let me see if I can find something similar. Oh, that was similar. Maybe we should respond this way." Then, it activates a whole series of neurotransmitters and connecting neurons to get to a response. When this happens over and over again, it becomes like a reflex (like the one where you hit your knee and your knee kicks up) that happens in your brain.

For example, say you have had bad experiences with dogs like getting bitten, seeing people getting bitten or even watching a movie where somebody got hurt by a dog. If that association between dogs and biting happens enough times, when you hear a dog bark, your brain no longer has to evaluate, "Oh, is that sound familiar? Oh, yes it's familiar. This is what happened before." Instead, the shortcut bypasses a whole part of your brain and goes right to the quick response that causes you to immediately jump and scream, even if there's no danger of being bitten in the present situation.

You can reprogram those neural pathways by stopping in the moment and interrupting the usual chain of events.

For people who have kids here's another emotional shifting technique. Whatever emotions they are trying to throw at you to upset you or get a response out of you, you ask them to give you more of that emotion. Then, they stop.

This process teaches them that they're the ones in charge. When you say, "Okay. Do this," then they want to take control again, and it's a brilliant way to get them to go a more positive direction. It works so fast, and it completely avoids dramatic outbursts.

The other thing I just kind of want to slip into the discussion is something about anger.



We may not realize this, but **anger is a higher toned emotion than sadness, regret, apathy, or fear**. When we're angry, we're actually moving up the scale of emotions. It's important that we not punish or resent other people for having anger.

In fact, **one of the most damaging emotions that we can dish out is sympathy**. If someone in your life is hurt, sick or upset and you react by saying, "Oh, poor you. Oh, poor you," you create a mechanism for them to continue to dramatize illness for attention. Of course, it's OK to be empathetic and supportive and caring. Saying, "OK. Let me see. What happened? Are you OK?" and those kinds of things is loving. However, **when we give sympathy for sadness, people learn that they benefit from dramatizing their discomfort for attention**.

One of the best ways to manage high maintenance relationships, or relationships that are toxic, is to just stay neutral.

It's great to say things like, "I understand," or, "I hear what you're saying," or, "I know what you mean." That's not saying, "Oh, poor you. Oh, you poor thing."

Another thing that's very draining emotionally draining can be aggression. When someone is invalidating us, or cutting us down, we can have a similarly aggressive kind of response. That just validates that form of communication. You don't need to engage in the same emotional tone as the person talking to you. You don't need to react to it. You don't need to play emotional tennis matches.

You can just acknowledge where that person is without having to just jump on the bandwagon. If a person is angry, you don't need to feel that anger. You can just say, "OK, I understand where you are coming from. I hear you."

Heart Math teaches that empathy means you're in their emotions." **If somebody's sad or feeling discouraged and you go in that emotion with them, you are not going to be very helpful to them.** Two crying, depressed people can't really help each other.

But you can be compassionate. You can be with their emotion and you can stay separated enough from it that you can help them with insights that can guide them and bring them through to the other side.

Yes, that's great to acknowledge, because often I hear people justify empathy. When you point out that empathy means, "being in another person's emotions," I love that clarification. You can actually bring a person down further by entertaining their emotional level.

I think that we have a responsibility to keep a sane world out there. There are reasons we lose a fuse. There are reasons why some people will set us off more than others.



When you have taken responsibility for your stuff and for your emotional poise, you're doing your part for the health of the relationships around you.

When you are at peace with yourself, people can't aggravate you very easily by scratching at you with negative emotions. Before we direct anger or frustration at other people, **there is always something we can do on the home front to create a more peaceful environment.**

Depression, powerlessness, and resignation are the most toxic emotions, and actually anger and rage are right above.

So, if you were depressed and feeling powerless, when you go through a detox, suddenly you may get the energy to move up the emotional scale a little bit. Then, you may get angry or full of rage, and people around you don't like that. They like you much better when you're depressed. **It's a lot easier to deal with a depressed person than an angry person**, but that angry person is taking that stuff that was causing them to be depressed, expressing it, and allowing it to move through.

However, the temptation you may have, when you get to that anger stage, is to just get stuck there. People sometimes get angry and decide, "Oh, this isn't working," and then fall back into the powerless state.

A better idea would be to just keep moving forward, up a little bit, to feel less negative, less negative, and less negative. **When you get out of those powerless emotions and into the more active emotions** like rage (and I think of rage as being completely out of control anger), and then anger just a step above that, frustration a step above that, and worry a step above that, **you're actually making progress**. As you keep going up the emotional scale, there's a little less emotional charge and each of those emotions is going to have less of a negative impact on your body.

One of the techniques I learned was to actually work at talking yourself up the emotional scale. For example, say you go in to the kitchen and something bothers you. Say the garbage is overflowing and you think, "Why didn't my husband (or kid, or whoever it is) take out the garbage? They are so lazy to leave it here. Now I have to do it and I don't have time to do it."

The technique would be **to just keep asking yourself questions and making statements that raise the energy around that particular situation up a little bit**. So, with the example above, I might decide to shift by asking, "Wow! I wonder what happened? He is usually pretty good about doing that. I wonder what happened to cause him not to be able to take that garbage out. I bet he was in a hurry."



Now, it may spin back down: "He really should be organizing his time better. He must have been in a hurry and forgotten about it. Oh, brother. He is always doing stuff like that, and I am just so discouraged because he's always leaving things to the last minute." If your thoughts head that direction, try to bring them back up again: "You know, he did mention the other day that he was willing to go to that class and learn how to manage his time better, so maybe he will change...." With this thought, you've shifted into optimism.

Talk it as far up the scale as you can get it, and then leave it there. That way, when you revisit that situation, chances are good that you'll revisit it at the higher level emotional state and be able to take it even higher.

Rather than immediately going into rage the next time you see the garbage overflowing, if you've done this process before, your reaction may be, "Oh, my poor husband. He's just so overwhelmed," which is a higher state than rage.

Criticism and sarcasm are two things that can be challenging to deal with, whether we're hearing them from other people or dishing them out ourselves.

To deal with criticism, first identify what its purpose is. Often, attacking someone with criticism is a way of making them smaller. **Usually the criticizer has done something to the person being criticized.** If you're the one who's criticizing, ask yourself, "Have I done anything to this person that I wouldn't have wanted done to me?" If you find yourself feeling critical toward a person, ask yourself, "Is there anything I should have said or done, or could have said or done, but didn't say, that's causing me to feel this way?"

Sometimes, criticism is used as a justification for having done something to someone. That might be hard to accept. . **Criticism and sarcasm (which is a covert stab at someone) are forms of communication designed to shrink another person, make them smaller, and invalidate them.** I would like these kinds of communications to have a big red flag attached to them. I would like us to see them for what they are; negative forms of communication.

Another thing I want to address is **how to deal with people who are hostile towards the things that we are doing** who they find ways to invalidate it or make it wrong so that we feel like we need to defend it. Just because someone is invalidating your choices, **it does not mean you need to defend yourself to them.** You can simply acknowledge what they are trying to tell you.

Suppose someone is telling you, "You're missing out on protein." You know they don't know the first thing about protein, and what they're saying isn't rational and has no basis in reality. So, ask yourself is this: Do you really want to put your energy into defending something when you know it won't be a rational argument? Instead, you can simply say, "I appreciate your concern."



You don't need to defend your position, because when you do, you are likely to create more conflict. A better way to approach that situation is to **understand that when people communicate in a critical and hostile way, they don't feel good about themselves**. They are in an emotional position quite low on the scale of life. When people are low, we have a certain responsibility to not push them down further.

When you find you are being invalidated, understand that that person is standing in a place of low survival and not doing well. Because they are not doing well, they are clinging to this need to be right.

You can help that person by not needing to be right yourself. Just listen and acknowledge. Give them space to be where they are, and then find something you can validate and make them right about. When you make them right about something, you disarm their defenses, and that is a very empowering thing to do. You can stop the motion toward a rather destructive, unproductive argument with someone who would be largely irrational anyway.

I'm sure you've all been in this situation, where someone is just certain that they are right about an idea and there is nothing you can say to change their mind. Keep in mind what we've just learned: **You cannot show them that they are wrong**, and trying to do so will not help that person.

A better way to respond is to find something that they can be right about and point it out. Find something they have done that you appreciate and express gratitude. It's a great way to diffuse the criticism.

It is important to realize that you **can facilitate bringing other people up the emotional scale**.

If someone is really angry and you are little miss bubbly positivity, you can't communicate with each other because your emotional tones are too far apart. If someone is really, really, ticked off, you can't just say, "Oh, just stay positive! Just see the bright side of it!" It's more effective to get a little bit closer to their tone.

The tone closest to anger is boredom. So, **around angry people, try playing that you're bored**. When you see that their anger starts to calm, you can come up a bit and start being positive and things will shift for them. A good response to have to an angry person is, "OK. Yes. Uh, huh. I understand." That will work better than using a higher emotional tone.

So, to improve your ability to communicate with the people around you, **identify the emotional tone that they're using, and then stay slightly above it**.



You can review the emotional scale document on the module page to help you do this.

If you want good communication with someone, you can mimic their body language.

Let's say you're sitting across from a table from that other person. You can mimic the way they're sitting, not too obviously, but subtly, and that creates an affinity toward you in that person.

It will help you through the detox and thin your life if you remember that it's all a choice. **The more you practice making a choice with your emotions and decisions**, the easier making that choice is going to be.

Practice it on the minor things to start. Then it'll become easier, and you can do it on the major things.

Children are great examples of how we would be without the 30, 40, or 50 years of life experience bashing us around. Children they change their emotions very fluidly. We can, too, once we realize we're in the driver's seat.

This emotional stuff is a really critical piece of the detox puzzle. If you really haven't gotten the emotional piece mastered, that's where you can put your attention during this process.

I have seen situations where I look at someone's diet and exercise and everything seems right. However, they have this helpless/hopeless mentality and they're in the victim mode, and that's what makes them go under. All that good food isn't going anywhere if the emotional landscape is a mess.

In detoxifying emotions, it's important to recognize **the difference between feedback, criticism and sarcasm**.

Feedback is constructive, like saying, "I noticed you didn't take the garbage out, but I would really appreciate you doing that in the future." or, "It was an inconvenience to me, and this was your responsibility, so could you agree to do it next time?"

Criticism is direct and would sound more like: , "You are so lazy. You never take out the garbage! Why didn't you do it? You made it so hard for me.".

Sarcasm is less direct. An example of sarcasm would be, "I love the way you took out the garbage this morning. It was really helpful that you remembered to do your job." Meanwhile, the garbage is sitting there. It's a covert form of criticism.



Sarcasm is lower than criticism on the emotional scale. Doing something negative behind your back, like pretending to be sweet with a knife behind your back, is a very low, low level of communication. That's why I say these two tones, sarcasm and criticism, are not ways that you want to communicate when you want to send positive communication out into the world.

Put some of this into action.

Use the emotional scale to help you to shift from toxic emotions to more life affirming ones. This will increase the success of your detox magnitudes.