# Healthy thinking

**Healthy thinking is where we want to be with our mental and emotional state on a day-to-day basis. To live well in that space, we need to consider how we regulate our emotions.**

Emotional regulation is a life skill that ensures our strong feelings don't impede decision-making, working with others, or ruin relationships.

The first step to the concept of healthy thinking is knowing that **all emotions are valid and are a healthy, natural expression of living.**

Linking back to values, we learn emotional regulation from our parents or caregivers. If we were shouted at a lot as kids, we grow up to believe that this is the way to deal with difficulty. If we were not allowed to cry as kids, we can believe there's something shameful about crying.

Today, we're seeing the consequences of decades of emotional suppression. Many adults struggling with communication, suffering silently with mental health challenges, or exploding in moments of stress because they never learned any other way, they were never taught how to feel, understand or respond. It's not a personal failing and we can learn regulation.

Instead of "keeping the peace" and staying silent, we can learn strength in boundary setting. Instead of bottling up our feelings, control can be letting emotions move through us in healthy ways. Resilience doesn't mean never feeling but allowing ourselves to feel everything and finding courage to still move forward.

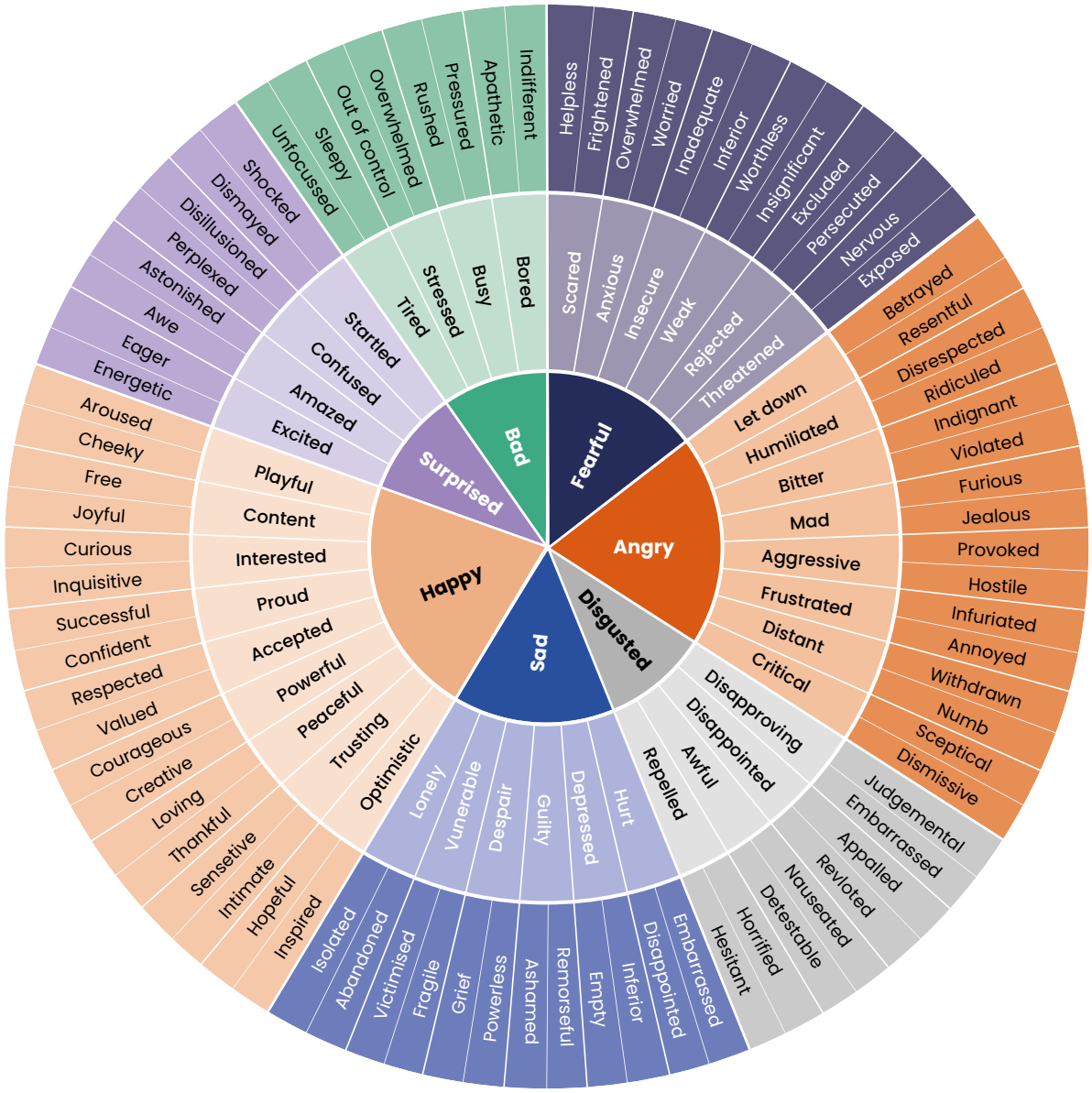
**One of the tools to help with that is called the emotions wheel. Check out the diagram on the next page.**

# Healthy thinking

**We tend to focus on around 5-7 types of emotion, those in the middle of the circle. If we start to expand our emotional vocabulary outside of that inner circle, we can see there's a lot to consider.**

Use this tool to really start naming what you're feeling. We can realise it's not just fear it could be feelings of inadequacy; it's not anger but possibly disgust, or not happiness it's feeling valued.

**Emotions are not the enemy.**
Treat them as messages and be curious.




*Robert Plutchik (1980) was the first to publish and use the emotions wheel.*