

100 Questions To Being In Flow With Your Emotions

“The quality of your life is determined by the quality of the questions you ask yourself.”- Kristen Ulmer

These 100 questions are meant to inspire sharp, certain awareness about the relationship you have with your primary emotions. Each time you contemplate them- expect that your relationship with them will become more and more revealed.

With this reveal, comes self-awareness that will serve to deeply affect not just how you view your emotions, but ultimately how you deal with them. The end goal, is that step by step you will organically over time learn how to feel your emotions in an honest way, and have them help you come alive.

To maximize this opportunity, here's how to best approach these questions:

1. Don't try to power through them all at once. Savor the experience and maybe only explore a few at a time, then come back to the list whenever you're again ready, and continue in a linear order.
2. This is not like a math test. Don't expect to find answers. Especially when it comes to emotions, know that things change so fast that whatever is true for you right now will change very quickly. Which is why, it's better to merely savor and contemplate these questions, rather than grasp for answers.
3. Please don't go through this list just a single time. These 100 questions are meant to be explored over and over again. Each time they will serve you anew, and take your relationship with your emotions to a higher and more magnificent level.

Enjoy.

Dictionary:

HH: Helpful Hint

SQ: Secondary question (within a question)

(HH) before you get started. See each emotion as a person -as if they are a roommate in your life, a child for whom you're responsible, an employee in your company, or spouse with whom you're married. It helps you to access more clarity in your answers. To help you accomplish this, I capitalize the names of the emotions as a constant reminder.

1. What is your current relationship with your emotions?
HH: Primary emotions are Joy, Eroticism (which includes Sexuality but isn't limited by it), Anger, Sadness and Fear.
2. Do you contemplated your relationship with them very often?
SQ: If no, why not?
3. Why do you want to contemplate your relationship with them, now?
4. Do you feel like most days, you have a conscious relationship with your emotions (you are aware of them) or do you feel like they are more under your radar?
SQ: How conscious or unconscious are you, to them?
5. Do you feel like most days, you have a mostly healthy relationship with your emotions, or do you feel like the relationship between you and them, is strained?
6. Let's start with an emotion that you may have an easier time connecting with. Do you have a healthy, considerate relationship with Joy?
HH: Healthy and considerate means many things, including but not limited to: you have an easy time feeling it when it shows up, and are moved in a mature way by the emotion.
7. When Joy shows up, what typically happens next? (check all that strike you):
 - I embrace it
 - I celebrate it
 - I feel relieved, like- finally!
 - It makes me feel uncomfortable
 - I worry it will go away
 - I cling to it and try to make it permanent
 - It sometimes brings up Sadness HH- 'tears of joy' are actually a combination of Joy + Sadness)
 - I'm annoyed by it- either in myself or when I see it in others
 - I'm embarrassed by it
 - I try to tone it down or hide it from others
 - I mistrust it
 - I feel like I don't deserve it
 - It (I)_____ (what else happens?)_____
8. Do you have a healthy, considerate relationship with your Eroticism?
HH: Eroticism is that feeling you get when you're so deeply connected to something or someone, such that you become physically hypnotized by the experience: like perhaps while petting the belly of your dog or cat, or when eating a piece of cheesecake with your eyes closed, etc.
SQ: What about with your Sexuality, which is when you have an erotic connection in a sexual way to another person, or to yourself.

9. When your Eroticism (or Sexuality, if it seems easier or more familiar to contemplate) shows up, what typically happens next? (check all that strike you):

HH: Knowing it so often depends on external circumstances such as other people igniting it, their reactions to it and more, take circumstances out of it and make this instead a personal, internal exploration that has nothing to do with others. In short: this is about you, only.

- I embrace it
- I celebrate it
- I'm curious about it
- I'm surprised by it
- I'm motivated by it
- I want to express it
- I cling to it
- I cling to the person or thing who/that inspired it
- I try to control it SQ: If yes, how to you do that?
- I worry it will go away
- I mistrust it
- I feel ashamed about it
- I try to hide it
- I'm annoyed by it
- I feel guilty about it
- It brings up trauma
- It (I)_____ (what else happens?)_____

10. Do you have a healthy, considerate relationship with Anger?

HH: Again, healthy and considerate means many things, including but not limited to: you have an easy time feeling it when it shows up, and are moved in a mature way by the emotion.

11. When Anger shows up, what typically happens next? (check all that strike you):

- I embrace it
- I take responsibility for feeling it
- I come alive because of it
- It motivates me to right a wrong
- I feel energized and ready to take on the world
- I mistrust it
- I feel ashamed about it
- I try to hide it
- I feel like a bad person for feeling this way
- I try to control it SQ: If yes, how to you do that?
- I try to distract myself from feeling it
- I cling to it

- I blame other people (or external situations) for it
- I direct this feeling onto others
- I get verbally or physically violent
- It (I)_____ (what else happens?)_____

12. Do you have a healthy, considerate relationship with Sadness?

13. When Sadness shows up, what typically happens next? (check all that strike you):

- I embrace it
- I enjoy it
- I celebrate it
- It breaks open my heart to compassion for myself, or others
- I'm curious about it
- I'm surprised by it
- I makes me want to connect with people
- It makes me want to hide
- I apologize for it
- I mistrust it
- I'm annoyed by it
- I feel ashamed about it
- I try to control it SQ: if yes, how do you do that?
- I try to distract myself from feeling it
- I cling to it / marinate in it
- I blame other people for it
- It makes me want to talk a lot and explain myself
- It brings up trauma
- It (I)_____ (what else happens?)_____

14. Do you have a healthy, considerate relationship with Fear?

15. When Fear shows up, what typically happens next? (check all that strike you):

HH: Knowing that circumstances vary wildly- sometimes you choose to do something scary that brings up Fear, other times things just happen TO you, that brings up Fear. To keep it simple then, take circumstances out of this exploration, and recognize that Fear is but a sensation of discomfort in your body:

- I embrace it
- I enjoy it
- I become excited by it
- I come alive because of it
- I'm curious about it
- I'm surprised by it
- I'm amused by it
- I mistrust it
- I feel like it's a sign of personal weakness

- I'm embarrassed by it and hide it from others / pretend I'm not afraid
- I'm annoyed by it
- I hate it
- I try to control it SQ: if yes, how do you do that?
- I try to distract myself from feeling it
- I blame other people for it
- I get crazy and irrational because of it
- I cling to it / marinate in it
- It brings up trauma
- It (I)_____ (what else happens?)_____

16. Was this difficult for you, to answer these first 15 questions?

SQ: if yes- why do you think that is?

These next questions, involve what I call a body scan- where you scan your body to find whatever it is that you feel. As much as possible, this is done without thought.

HH: If you notice, these questions are not in any way exploring your history with your emotions, but are instead about what you feel in this exact moment, right now. Which -because the past is long gone- when it comes to emotions, is ALL that matters.

17. How do you feel emotionally, right now?

HH: You may feel a lot of things, including physical pain, hunger, warm, etc. But because these questions are about emotions, stay only with that curiosity.

18. Whatever you just said that you feel, is that a borrowed answer?

HH: Is this what you WANT to feel, or what you've been TAUGHT that you should feel?

SQ: If yes, from whom did you borrow that answer? (parents, society etc.)

19. Can you observe and say out loud where it is in your body, that you feel whatever you feel?

HH: Do you feel it in your stomach, your throat, your forehead etc.?

20. Go a little deeper. What else do you feel?

21. Where in your body, do you feel it?

HH: Notice that emotions are found in your body, not in your mind. Merely, you use your mind to interpret these emotions. Interesting- yes?

22. Can you stay in your body, where the emotions are located, and just feel them, or is your analytical mind trying to take over and interpret or understand those emotions?

SQ: If no, you can't stay in your body and your mind is trying to take over, why is your need to interpret or understand those emotions or make sense of why they're here, so strong?

23. Can your mind interpret or understand those emotions and why they are here?

SQ: If yes, what is it that you understand? If no, why do you think that's not possible?

24. What would it take for you to stay connected to your body, where the emotions are felt?

25. What about Fear: where do you feel Fear right now, in your body?

HH: If you're willing to be honest with yourself, and look beneath your relative reality, you'll find it.

HH: Don't get too caught up in the word Fear. Other names for it are stress, anxiety, angst, discomfort, worry etc. It's also tied to almost any feeling of discomfort you have, including jealousy, unworthiness, shame, guilt etc. Beneath all these feelings, lies Fear.

HH: I often feel it in my throat or jaw. Although sometimes I feel it my belly, shoulders or lower back.

26. Are you thinking about Fear right now, or are you feeling it (or neither: you may also be ignoring it, avoiding it, repressing it, etc.)?

SQ: Fear is a sensation of discomfort in the body. However, if Fear seems to be in your mind, why do you think that it's showing up there, instead?

*These next few questions are based on the equation found in my book- The Art of Fear- which is:

Suffering = Discomfort x Resistance

27. Also doing a body scan, are you aware of any discomfort, right now?

HH: Reminder: most discomfort is Fear based, which you may find interesting.

HH: Keep looking until you find it, for because Fear is always there, discomfort is always there.

28. What kind of discomfort it is, that you feel?

HH: This may be Anger, Sadness, Fear itself or fear-related feelings such as Anxiety, Stress, Angst, Self-loathing, Embarrassment, Disgust, Frustration, Powerlessness and on and on. Just give it your most accurate name.

29. On a scale of 1-10 -10 being high- how strong is your level of emotional discomfort, right now?

30. On a scale of 1-10 -10 being high- how much are you in resistance to that emotional discomfort, right now?

HH: This is the same as asking how much do you NOT want to be feeling this?

31. Why are you reacting to what you feel, in this way?

32. How often are you in the mood for dealing with your emotional discomfort?

HH: This is another way of asking- how often are you in the mood for owning your sh*t?

33. How much does your resistance to your emotional discomfort, contribute to your suffering?

HH: Times your two numbers together to become aware of your current level of suffering.

34. In what ways have you been running away from (avoiding, fleeing, distracting yourself from, etc.) your emotional discomfort, lately? (check all that strike you)

HH: Note: the discomfort of Fear is supposed to inspire fight or flight action- like fighting or fleeing, say, a tiger. But because of our learned habits of resisting the Fear, we are now fighting or fleeing- the Fear itself. The Fear then, is the new Tiger that we fight or run away from.

- eating
- shopping
- exercising
- watching TV a lot
- cleaning / organizing
- being super busy
- racing around feeling overwhelmed
- being in your head a lot, so that you don't have to feel anything
- worrying
- justifying
- comparing yourself to others
- dismissing or criticizing others
- lecturing, managing, correcting or policing others
- getting righteous
- blaming your emotional state on others
- whining or complaining
- feeling like a victim
- being sarcastic all the time / comedian

35. In what ways have you been fighting your discomfort, lately? (check all that strike you)

- tapping / EFT
- meditation, as a tool to feel better
- breathing exercises
- massage
- float or other relaxation spas
- choosing Gratitude, Love, Relaxation, Forgiveness etc. or any kind of "positivity" practice
- getting enlightened / working hard to drop the ego
- positive affirmations
- using your intellect to rationalize "negative" feelings away
- evaluating situations to limit discomfort
- trying super hard
- being very controlled
- controlling other people
- exercising HH: notice this is both a way to flee OR fight fear
- talk therapy either with friends or with a professional, aimed at helping you interpret or understand your emotions
- alcohol
- recreational drugs
- prescription drugs including painkillers, anti-anxiety medication, anti-depressants etc. specifically to treat emotional problems

36. How much energy do you currently spend fighting or fleeing your emotional discomfort?

37. When you feel emotional discomfort, do you tend to fidget, and if yes, what does that look like?

HH: Check all that strike you:

- nail biting
- pacing
- sewing machine leg
- shaking
- hair twirling
- nervous laughter
- injuring yourself
- smiling a lot
- coughing a lot
- yawning a lot
- what else: _____

38. When you feel emotional discomfort, do you tend to faint, and if yes, what does that look like?

HH: Check all that strike you:

- getting disoriented
- getting confused
- getting embarrassed
- losing your ability to perform
- getting shy
- spacing out / daydreaming
- getting distracted
- seizing up and being unable to function properly
- feeling overwhelmed
- being disorganized
- getting or being sick
- getting tired
- what else _____

39. When you feel emotional discomfort, do you tend to freeze, and if yes, what does that look like?

HH: Check all that strike you:

- not being able to move or function
- not breathing
- procrastinating
- going numb
- ignoring
- withholding
- withdrawing
- concealing the truth from others (or yourself)
- what else: _____

40. Is all of this (fleeing, fighting, fidgeting, fainting or freezing) working to manage and / or quiet down your discomfort?
SQ: If yes- how well? If no- why do you think that is?
41. What kind of physical discomfort (pain, aches, hunger, cold etc.) do you feel, right now?
42. What is your reaction to that physical discomfort?
HH: Likely you feel more than one thing- for example maybe you feel both pain and hunger. So answer one at a time. I.E. My reaction to hunger is I'm going to stop and go eat some food. My reaction to pain is to...
43. On a scale of 1-10 -10 being high- how much are you in resistance to that physical discomfort?
HH: How much do you NOT want to be feeling this.
44. How is your resistance to either emotional and / or physical discomfort, showing up for you right now?
HH: Resistance comes in many forms. Perhaps you ignore, avoid, try to control, fight, rationalize it away, or try to understand it etc.? Anything you do to not feel it, is resistance.
SQ: Is resistance showing up for you physically as perhaps numbness, tension, stoic-ness, rigidity, shakiness, hot or cold, nauseous etc.?
45. Can you distinguish any difference between your emotional and physical discomfort, right now?
SQ: If no- why do you think that is? If yes- what is the difference? If you're not sure, spend extra time contemplating the next question.
46. How are physical and emotional discomfort connected?
47. Do you feel like your discomfort- emotional or physical- has been or is jumping up and down, trying to get your attention?
48. Are you willing to listen to what your discomfort has to say, right now, without resistance?
SQ: If yes- what is this discomfort trying to tell you (i.e. go to the doctor, it's time to deal with your marriage, etc?)
49. Are you willing to feel your discomfort- emotional or physical, right now, without resistance?
HH: This is a thought free experience. Feeling is done without thought.
SQ: If no- why not? If yes- why are you willing to do so?
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50. Are you currently aware of the wisdom of your emotions, or have you lost sight of that wisdom?
51. Are you aware of the energy of your emotions -energy that is here to help you- or are you more aware of the energy you exert trying not to feel or deal with them?

52. Are you aware of the creativity and expression found in fully feeling your Joy, without resistance?
53. What would the human experience be like for you, for everyone, without Joy?
54. Are you aware of the creativity and expression found in fully feeling your Eroticism, without resistance?
SQ: How about found in fully feeling your Sexuality?
55. What would the human experience be like for you, for everyone, without Eroticism?
SQ: How about without Sexuality?
56. Are you aware of the creativity and expression found in fully feeling your Anger, without resistance?
HH: Integrity = Whatever you feel + Grace. There is no integrity found in controlling your Anger- because then you are denying it and only harming yourself. Instead Integrity is found in expressing it alongside a drop of grace.
57. What would the human experience be like for you, for everyone, without Anger?
HH: Anger is here to right a wrong, and to ignite positive change.
58. Are you aware of the creativity and expression found in fully feeling your Sadness, without resistance?
59. What would the human experience be like for you, for everyone, without Sadness?
HH: Sadness is here to break open your heart to compassion and empathy for others, and for yourself.
60. Are you aware of the creativity and expression found in fully feeling your Fear, without resistance?
61. How is Fear showing up for you, right now?
HH: Your answer could include what it feels like (anxiety, embarrassment, worry etc.), where you feel it (chest, head, throat etc.) and how it makes you feel (shaky, angry, excited etc.)
62. Why is Fear here today- what is it trying to tell you?
HH: Instead of searching for answers in your analytical mind, let the answer come to you, through the wisdom of your body.
63. How does it make you feel or react, knowing Fear is there?
64. Why is Fear an important part of your life?
65. Why is Fear an important part of the human experience, for everyone?
66. What would an animal be like, without Fear?
67. What would you be like, without Fear?

68. Is a life without Fear, sustainable?

69. Is a life without Fear, desirable?

70. How much do you currently value aliveness?

71. Are you aware of the aliveness found in Fear?

72. Are you aware of the aliveness found in Anger?

73. Are you aware of the aliveness found in Sadness?

74. How does your emotional discomfort make you feel alive, right now?

75. How does your emotional discomfort help you see more clearly and / or make you more sharp and aware, right now?

HH: To have deeper insights into this and forthcoming questions, consider the relationship animals have with their emotions.

76. How does your emotional discomfort motivate you?

HH: I.E. Fear of failure can be a tremendous motivator to make sure you bring your A game to a task, to ensure that you don't fail.

77. How does your emotional discomfort make you energized and strong?

HH: Feel the percolation of energy found in that discomfort, then answer the question.

78. What does emotional -and even physical discomfort- offer you?

SQ: What does it offer humanity?

79. What would you, and the world be like, without emotions?

80. Are you willing to have an honest, welcoming, mature, graceful relationship with your Joy?

81. When it arises, what would it take for you to feel your Joy with full presence, and express it in a mature way, yet not cling to it when it dissipates?

82. Are you willing to be ok with other states besides Joy, when it's not there?

83. Are you willing to have an honest, welcoming, mature, graceful relationship with your Eroticism?

SQ: How about with your Sexuality?

SQ: For both of these: If no- why not? If yes- what would that feel and look like?

84. Are you willing to take responsibility for cultivating for yourself, a more Erotic approach to life?
SQ: If no- why not? If yes- what would that feel and look like?
SQ: If yes, how do you intend to accomplish that?
85. Are you willing to have an honest, welcoming, mature, graceful relationship with your Anger?
86. When it arises, are you willing to feel your Anger with full presence, and express it in a mature way so as to right a wrong, rather than try to deny it its rightful place in your life?
SQ: If no- why not? If yes- what would that feel and look like?
87. Are you willing to own and take responsibility for your Anger, rather than blame it or project it on others?
SQ: If no- why not? If yes- what would that feel and look like?
88. Are you willing to have an honest, welcoming, mature, graceful relationship with your Sadness?
89. When it arises, are you willing to feel your Sadness with full presence, and let it break open your heart to compassion for yourself, for others, or for the world?
SQ: If no- why not? If yes- what would that feel and look like?
90. What would it take for you to become intimate with your Sadness, learn how to enjoy it, and express it in an honest and mature way?
91. Are you willing to have an honest, welcoming, mature, graceful relationship with your Fear- as it shows up in its so many ways?
92. Are you willing to feel your feelings of Fear or other associated discomforts (stress, anxiety, angst, discomfort, worry, jealousy, unworthiness, shame, guilt, etc.) and remain curious about why the feeling is here, what it's trying to tell you, and what it has to offer you, without trying to ignore or push it away?
93. Think of emotions as flowing into, through and out of your life like a river. With this analogy in mind, what would it look and feel like to be in flow with your emotions?
94. Are you willing to ride the river of your emotions, rather than try to bend this river to meet your preferences?
95. What is the payoff, for you to remain NOT in flow with your emotions?
HH: If this feels confusing, complete this sentence: I don't want to be in flow/ more in touch with / feel my emotions, because then I'd have to _____, which I'm unwilling to do. (I.E. finally admit I hate my job, do a bunch of cheesy personal work, be vulnerable -which I hate, take responsibility for my life, do things that scare me, quit drinking, etc.) Keep looking until you find at least 4-10 payoffs.

96. What is the cost, for you to remain NOT in flow with your emotions?

HH: If this feels confusing, complete this sentence: If I don't become in flow/ more in touch with / feel my emotions, I will stay stuck _____ forever, which is intolerable. (I.E. in my bad job forever, not being able to connect to others, feeling half alive, never taking responsibility for my life, drinking my problems away, etc.) Keep looking until you find at least 4-10 costs.

97. Are the costs of not being in flow with your emotions right now, greater than the payoffs?

HH: If this feels confusing, just notice which is the better choice for you right now, not dealing with your emotions and all that implies, or dealing with your emotions and all that implies. I'm asking this questions because I've found that -regarding emotions- people won't change their relationships with them, unless they have to. Given this, only when the costs exceed the payoffs, will you commit to making a change?

98. Right now, are you willing to commit to making the effort to feel your emotions, rather than think about them?

HH: If you think about your emotions, you are dealing with them- intellectually. This is a form of resistance, and it keeps you in your head. If you feel them, you are dealing with your emotions- emotionally. This is what you're going for, and it keeps you instead, in your body.

99. Are you willing to become more aware of / in touch with what it is that you feel, on a regular basis?

SQ: If yes, what would it take for you to accomplish this?

100. Are you willing to be fully present when you feel your emotions, instead of remaining detached?

HH: Similar questions are: when you pet (aka feel) a dog or cat, are you fully present or are you somewhat detached? When you eat a meal, are you fully present or are you somewhat detached?

101. What can you commit to, that you'll actually do rather than procrastinate about, to be in flow/ more in touch with / feel your emotions, in a fully present way, from this moment forward?

Thank you. Now, go do it.