



## Emotional Pain Is Not A Sickness

### Here Are Some Good Ways To Feel Bad:

Give yourself permission. Most of us have been taught, from the time we were little, not to feel bad. Send yourself a reverse message. Say to yourself, out loud if you can, “It’s all right for me to feel the way I do,” or “I feel bad and that is good.”

Don’t worry about reasons. Sometimes we allow ourselves to feel bad if we have a good reason. “Well, I feel very sad, but that is because my best friend is moving to Cleveland.” It’s all right to know the reason that you are sad, and it’s fine not to know. You can feel bad for no apparent reason. And, the reason doesn’t matter.

Set a time limit. If you are concerned about feeling bad, if you are worried that you need to “fix it”, give yourself a little time. Before you force yourself not to feel the way you feel, set a time limit. Say to yourself, “I am going to give myself until Monday at noon, and if I don’t feel better by then, I am going to try to fix myself.” Sometimes, it is very appropriate to fix a bad feeling. There might be a problem that needs a solution. You can use feeling bad as your motivation to solve the problem. And, sometimes you just need to feel bad for awhile.

Tell others. Often, other people (friends, family) have a hard time letting us feel bad. They are usually worried that they did something wrong, so they want to make it better. They want you to quit feeling bad. Tell them you will. Assure them that you will feel good again, but for now you just want to feel bad.

Sometimes students think this whole idea of allowing yourself to feel bad is a joke, reverse psychology, or something. It isn’t. It is a suggestion that is based in the notion that good mental health is only possible if you allow yourself to feel bad as well as good. So, have a rotten day.

*Source: Ellis, Dave. Becoming a Master Student; Canadian Third Edition; p. 306. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000.*