

Handling Our Emotions

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Women and their emotions!! God, what were You thinking?? We can be happy, outraged, mad, hurt and confused in a 2-minute period! We can love on people, then turn on them with a shrug. How can we ever manage or even control our feelings?

- Should we be stoic and logical like men?
- Should we “let it all hang out and be real?”
- Should we ignore our emotions totally and be hard and self-protective?
- When God commands us to love, does that mean passion or commitment?
- Do I love with my head, my heart, my hands or my will?
- And what about “follow your heart”?? Yes or No?
- Are my emotions bad or sinful?
- Is anger a sin? Is worry a sin?

For much of my life, I was run by my emotions (think angry teenager). I had lots of REAL feelings, but they had no stopping point. When I realized I was hurting people with my sarcasm and “tell-it-like-it-is” bluntness, I flipped a 180° and had no emotions. I really tried to have zero emotions. I wasn’t REAL, but I thought it was better than sinning and being a mean girl. I was tormented inside, but I couldn’t let feelings out.

BUT GOD...popped the sterile bubble where I had shoved my emotions.

At a women’s retreat, I started crying at 9 pm, out of hurt, misery and frustration. I couldn’t stop crying until 3 am. I was helpless to put all the mess back in the can again, so I had to cry out to God to clean up the spill. He very gently did, and has been ever since.

How do We Handle our Emotions?

‘Emotions are God-given, but they also must be God-guided.’ (*Hope Ahead* book) God created women with emotions, but we lean on Him to show us how to express our emotions with love.

1. I read Ephesians 4:26—*Be angry, but do not sin.* (That was a shock! God knew I would be angry sometimes.)
2. Galatians 5:22-23—The fruit of the Spirit is in *actions*, but also *feelings*. The Spirit of *gentleness* lives in me, so I don’t have to pretend. I can ask Him to fill me to overflowing, and *choose* to act like He would.
3. You can act differently than you feel. (*Hope Ahead*) Admit the feeling, then be loving.
4. Doing the right thing—even if you *feel* differently—doesn’t make you a hypocrite. It is the **right** thing to do. Who *feels* like getting up at 2 am. to feed your baby? But do you do it? Yes. Why? Because it’s the *right* thing to do. (*Hope Ahead*)
5. I forgave people who hurt me...and forgave and forgave and forgave!! I gave the pain and frustration to God, let Him deal with the “bad” people, and asked Him to soften me inside.
6. I put a guard over my mouth (*Psalms 141:3*). I asked God to help me speak nicer words, with love.
7. Repeat and refine...apply to fear, bitterness, hopelessness, sadness, loneliness, etc.

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