



PYT Weekly Training & Support

Lesson #56 Emotional Patterns & Triggers

by Jim Katsoulis

Hello, and welcome to this week's lesson. This week, let's talk about emotional triggers because this is essential. If you get this down, you're going to find it much easier to influence your behavior.

You know how important emotions are, but what we don't realize is that on an unconscious level, a lot of our emotions are triggered by things we're not even aware of. And what this means is that it creates patterns – patterns of emotions that we're experiencing. And if some of these emotions are harmful and we don't recognize it, it can be very difficult to change our behaviors.

So, what I'm talking about is going to be kind of two sections: one is becoming aware of the emotional patterns we have; and the other side is changing the emotional patterns that we have. When we combine these two things together, you have a very, very powerful tool in order to create the results you want.

So, the first thing to understand is triggers. What emotional triggers are there in your life? Now, think about it. There are people, there are times, and there are places that make you feel a certain way. This isn't anything new; but you want to realize that this goes much deeper. This is going on constantly. Your emotions are constantly being triggered by the surroundings, by the time of day, and by the different external factors going on.

So, if you look at your regular week or a regular month, you're going to notice that there's a pattern of behavior there. A typical week runs in kind of a certain way. You know what to expect to a certain degree in most weeks.

So, what you want to start noticing (and, again, this is the part of becoming aware) is you want to take a little bit of time and step back – step out of yourself – and look at a typical week or a typical day or a typical month. You can try different time frames, and you'll notice different things. And pay attention to the typical emotional ups and downs you have during a week.

So, for example, say, you work a typical Monday through Friday job, maybe going on a Monday, you notice yourself being kind of down; maybe, on a Friday, you notice yourself being really elated and excited.

Now, both of these emotions ... again, we want to take the judgment out of it; there's no, necessarily, good or bad; there are just effects of those emotions. So, for example, with a lot of people I've worked with, what happens is that if they feel down

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on Monday, they're down and they eat a lot. It helps them get through the kind of the down cycle emotionally.

Then, on Friday, maybe they're going to get out of work and they're really excited; and, now, they're celebrating; and they're in a celebration mood and in a reward mood; and they're eating everything. So, this is how emotions can truly impact us.

So, what we want to do is we want to tweak those emotions a little bit. Now, this isn't about, "Oh, Monday is coming. I'm so excited that it's Monday, and I've got the whole week of work ahead of me." It's not about fooling yourself or tricking yourself.

It's about saying, "Okay, on Mondays, I'm a little bit down because I've got the week ahead of me; it's a long week," or whatever. And what we want to say is, "I'm a little bit down on this time. How can I make it better? How can I still feel a little down, that's fine, but how can I be more in control of my eating and more focused and aware of what I'm looking to accomplish here?"

And when you make that the focus, now, what you do is you program that in; you program it in by going in your mind and imagining that Monday morning – waking up and feeling different that Monday morning, and you're going to work, you're walking differently, you're sitting differently, and you're breathing differently. And you imagine yourself going through the day feeling the way you want to feel and acting the way you want to act.

Now, I'm using this as a real blatant example. But you're going to notice that this is the process you go through regularly. There are certain people ... and maybe you talk to me and you get really upset; and when you get upset, it's harder to control your eating.

So, what we want to do is we want to recognize it and change it. So, we recognize, "Okay, when I see this person, I get crazy. He make me nuts, and I don't care what I eat."

What we want to do is we want to prepare for that because a lot of that is programming. Notice that people that you maybe fight with or kind of have butt heads with, the responses in the conversations and the actions are very similar time after time.

So, what we're looking to do is change that up, and we're going to be looking to bring emotions into the situation that we normally don't experience.

So, for example, there's this person (maybe it's a boss, maybe it's a co-worker) and you just don't like him; and as soon as you see him, he sets you up into the wrong mood and the wrong state.

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What we want to ask ourselves is, again, not, “Oh, I wanna love this person. This person’s the greatest. He’s my best friend.” We’re not looking to trick ourselves. We’re looking to be realistic and mature about it.

“I don’t like this person. He upsets me. He says dumb things that get me worked up. I wanna be able to respond better to it. I wanna be more in control so I’m more in line and congruent with what my ultimate goals are.”

So, what would those emotions be? “Maybe I’d like to bring a sense of calm into the situation. Maybe I’d like to bring a sense of focus and awareness of what my ultimate goals are, so that they’re very clear in front of me and I don’t lose sight of them.

Maybe I wanna bring a sense of humor, a sense of laughter that this person is a jerk. And he’s upset me in the past, but when I bring a sense of humor in, I’m able to kind of let it go. It’s really not that important.”

Again, it’s up to you to figure out which emotions are going to work for you. What I would suggest is that you go to class number 4 in *Program Yourself Thin*, and print out that menu of emotions, and pick the emotions that would help you in that situation or with that person.

And so, this is the process – identifying and reprogramming how you want to act so that you act the way that’s going to get you the results you want.

So, for example, if there is that person who sets you off, and you just lose control, and you pig out, and you don’t even care, you’re giving them more power by consistently going through that pattern.

So, you take control back when you decide how you’re going to respond because, remember, regardless of what situation you’re in or what person you’re with, you’re the one who always has the ultimate say in how you’re going to respond to it. And that’s what a lot of this is about.

But, again, so much of our emotional patterns are unconscious things. They just happen automatically, and we don’t even realize it.

So, it’s very, very, very valuable to take a step back regularly and reflect on the day, the week, the month, and to notice and get a view of our patterns from a different angle. And once we get an idea, then, we figure out patterns that aren’t serving us. We go through this program, and think – what would be a better response?

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And then, we put ourselves into that situation in a very deep way. You imagine yourself there. You're talking to them. You can feel yourself getting tense and worked up; and then, you can feel yourself relaxing as you feel a wave of calm come over you.

That's how you do this. And it's extremely effective because you not only will find that you're getting into these situations where you start acting a little different naturally, but every time you do this process of programming your mind, you're reinforcing your ability to change your state in a moment. You're reinforcing that idea that you can shift yourself instantly as soon as you want to.

That's what this program of practice is about. You're practicing that ability so you can use it in the real world.

So, do this. Take some time and think about the emotions that aren't serving you. And, again, you have to take a step back from it because if you just go through your weeks and your months, and you never take a step back, and you just are in the moment, and you get all upset, it's very difficult to stop or change it at that point.

You want to have some awareness of the patterns so that as they're coming towards you, you can prepare for them. That's what's so important about recognizing the patterns of it so that you can prepare for it before it's upon you where you're already feeling those emotions that are destructive to you.

So, do this, practice, and I'll talk to you next week.

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