



Exercise: Expressing Emotions Constructively

Unpleasant and negative emotion states are an unavoidable part of the human experience, including in the workplace. We are never “wrong” to experience any emotion – even intense or uncomfortable states. It is best not to judge yourself for your emotions, but rather to remain mindful of the manner in which your emotion states are manifested, particularly when interacting with others. This means being aware of the language we use at work, the tone/manner in which we speak, and the behaviours we demonstrate. How you choose to express your emotions can have an important impact on how workers respond to you.

Think about the types of language and behaviours that accompany the three core emotion states of anger, fear and sadness (including hurt) for you. What are examples of appropriate language and behaviour you have used when interacting with others? What are examples of less appropriate language and behaviour you have used?

	Anger	Fear	Sadness
Appropriate Manifestation (language, tone/manner of speech, behaviour)	<i>e.g., requesting a conversation with someone you believe is spreading untrue gossip about you</i>		
Less Appropriate Manifestation (language, tone/manner of speech, behaviour)		<i>e.g., calling in sick when you are not, to avoid seeing a worker whose performance issues you have to address</i>	

Think of times that you expressed each of these emotion states in a less appropriate manner. Reflect on what prevented you from displaying your emotion state more appropriately. What barriers did you encounter and how can you problem-solve these in the future?