



What to Do When Feeling Down

Today, I want to talk to you about an email I just got from a client. He and I are working on some of his issues of depression and stress. I'm not a therapist anymore, I am coach now, so I can't diagnose, and I'm not speaking to you today about clinical depression, but I do want to talk to you about low moods. We all have low moods, everybody has low moods. My client is really concerned about his low mood. He starts to feel better and then he starts to feel worse, and he gets very, very concerned about it. I totally understand. After all, I spent decades being depressed and anxious.

You can imagine as a former therapist and now as a coach, how much I might want to analyze these things. I can tell you that I spent many, many years analyzing my moods. It's part of my personality, it's part of my profession, and it just kind of comes naturally to me to go into overdrive with the analysis.

So, what I shared with my client is that low moods are normal. It's a normal part of being human. We all have low moods. The difference I experience now with my low moods versus back in the day when I was just overwhelmed by them, is that back in the day, if I woke up in a low mood, I would get terribly concerned about it. I would really worry about it. I would analyze it to death. I would judge it. I would judge myself. I would tell myself there was something wrong with me, that I was damaged, that I was broken. And I would explore what had happened the day before the week before or decades before in my family. What I have come to understand is that this process of analyzing to death, judging, and trying to resist it and trying to overcome it actually feeds that emotional storm. It feeds it, it actually gives that emotional storm more power over me until the point where I'm just in the middle of a horrible, horrible storm and can't find my way out.

What I know now is that waking up in a low mood tells me nothing about myself, and nothing about my situation. It doesn't tell me that I've got a problem. It's just part of the human condition to wake up sometimes in a low mood. That's just the way it is. And when I leave it alone and don't analyze it, don't judge it, don't try to overcome it... If I just simply leave it alone and get up and go about my day, then I find is that a few hours after I've gotten up, I realize that the low mood is gone. Other days, I may look up and the low mood is still there and then I just carry on with my day.

I notice that when I don't focus on my low mood and just get on with my day without analyzing it to death, then I don't add to the intensity of it. I know that it will move along in time. And so today, if you wake up in a low mood or even in an anxious mood, be gentle with yourself. If you can, simply allow whatever mood is there without worrying about it, judging it, or analyzing it



too much. Then, carry on with your day. It may be that you need a little more rest that day and that's fine, but just carry on and don't see it as a problem. You could see it as a mood that's moving through you.

When we have nature storms, we don't see them as problems. We see them as just part of nature. We may not like them some days and it may be that we love them on other days but we know that they are a normal part of life. It's just what nature does, and our emotions are the same. It's just what our emotions do.

I want to invite you to drop the *story* about your moods and just allow it. Allow the mood without feeding it with your stories, narrative, analysis, or judgment. And see what happens for you. I want you to I encourage you to experiment with this and see how it is for you when you do that. Now again, I'm not talking about clinical depression here, if you've if you've got severe clinical depression then go see your doctor or therapist for certain.

I'm just talking about the normal low moods, low anxiety that comes in and out of our days. Listen, we are in the middle of a lot going on collectively and that contributes as well so I would recommend that you label what you're feeling. Label it . I'm not saying to ignore it. I'm not saying don't notice it. I'm saying label how you feel and then carry on with your day and see what happens for you.