



University of
South Australia

Bupa Wellbeing Competition

Understanding your emotions

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Have you ever experienced a sudden, inexplicable low mood?

One winter evening, I walked home after an ordinary day at university, feeling a wave of melancholy. I couldn't clearly identify the feelings – a blend of loneliness, sadness, and perhaps even a touch of depression. Maybe it was the cold weather or the shortened daylight hours of winter, but I was too busy to reflect on it. Still, the heaviness lingered, making me distant from others. I avoided conversations at uni, not wanting to face anyone.

Later, a friend visited me on campus. She gave me a warm hug, shared stories about her holiday, and asked how I was. We ended up having a long, comforting conversation. That day, I went home feeling much lighter. The moment helped me realise the reason for my unshakable mood: a lack of social connection. This surprised me because I have always considered myself an introvert who prefers solitude. But in the past, I lived with a housemate, and we often shared dinner and long conversations. Perhaps her moving out had left an emptiness I hadn't noticed.

This experience taught me how important it is to acknowledge emotions. I believe many of us struggle with the same challenge, especially today, when technology can make us more isolated even while we appear "connected." If life is a journey, emotions act like a GPS, guiding us toward our destination. By paying attention to them, we can tune in to essential signals from our body and mind, supporting our wellbeing and our ability to succeed, take care of ourselves, and make intentional choices.



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Emotional awareness is one of the most valuable skills we can cultivate. Our emotions deserve as much attention as our intellect. It is important to learn how to recognise, respond, and let them shape us in ways that help us grow. Here are some simple tips:

- » **Name your emotion:** Be honest with yourself – it's okay to feel sad, angry, or anxious.
- » **Trace the source:** Reflect on where the emotion comes from and give yourself time to process it.
- » **Share your feelings:** Talking with a trusted friend or loved one can provide relief and support.
- » **Acknowledge your effort:** Give yourself credit for each small step toward emotional growth.

Understanding our emotions is not about avoiding negative feelings, but it's about embracing them as part of being human. When we listen to ourselves, we build resilience, deepen our connections, and create a healthier, more balanced life.

*It is important to understand
your emotions*

