

Dealing with the Feeling of Frustration - a practical method

Post by “Kalosyni” of March 8, 2023 at 10:34 AM

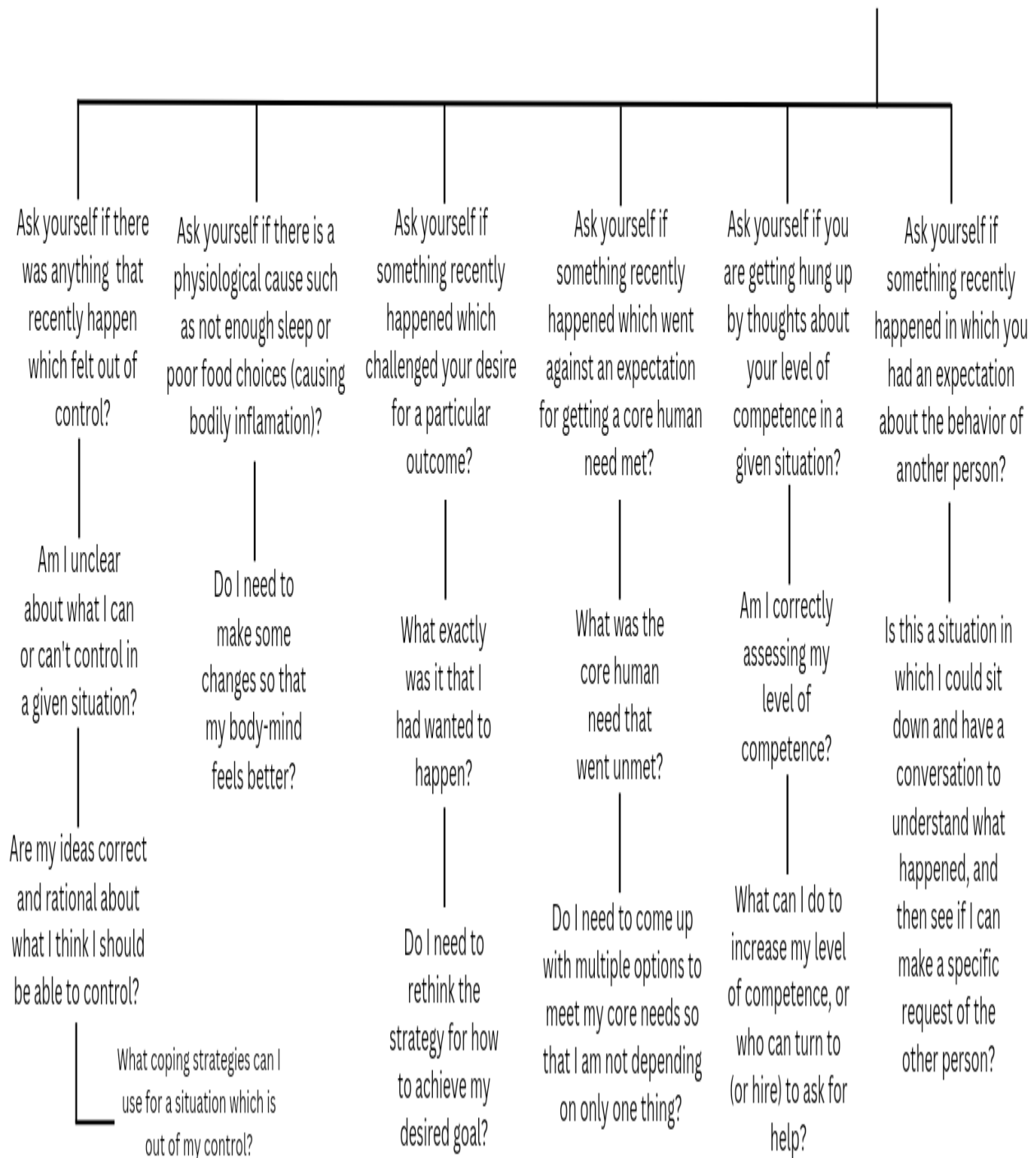
I created a flow chart to illustrate possible ways to deal with the feeling of frustration.

Wikipedia: "In psychology, **frustration** is a common emotional response to opposition [or unexpected obstacles to goal fulfillment], related to anger, annoyance, and disappointment. Frustration arises from the perceived resistance to the fulfillment of an individual's will or goal and is likely to increase when a will or goal is denied or blocked." ([Wikipedia article](#)).

Is the following chart helpful? Is there anything which should be added or changed?

For When You Are Feeling Frustrated:

I am noticing some tension and anxiety that is best described by the word "frustration"



Post by “Cassius” of March 8, 2023 at 10:43 AM

What about a column for "Did something undesirable happen which I could have prevented but for some reason did not?"

Post by “Matteng” of March 12, 2023 at 4:36 PM

It would be interesting to compare that with Stoic advice.

For example, dealing with emotions. That was a core subject in Stoic ethics/psychology (therapy of the passions).

Stoics tend to see the happy life as erasing frustrations ((a)pathe).

What would be the alternative in Epicurus' philosophy?

What is the difference between the feelings of pleasure/pain and emotions?

Emotions that cause suffering (pain ?)such as anxiety/obsessive-compulsive disorders should probably be countered as the Stoics or CBT envisage, but perhaps in a milder form?

In the end, probably the advice would be to learn the most prudent /wise way to deal with emotions. But which one would that be?

I think Philodemus once wrote about it, right?

Post by “Cassius” of March 12, 2023 at 6:11 PM

Matteng in my view these questions get resolved through a common sense basic observation of all that we find to be desirable, mental or physical, it that way because the feeling of pleasure tells us it is so. There are no bright line categories that apply to everyone because the universe doesn't give us categories -those are in the mind - the universe just gives us the faculty of

pleasure and pain by which to evaluate everything.

It is up to each one of us to decide what level of pain we are willing to accept in return for what amount of pleasure. All of us accept the pains of daily life in order for us to continue to live and experience pleasure.

The implicit presumption in some arguments that all pain is unacceptable is simply not what Epicurus taught. He said we explicitly choose pain at times in order to avoid more pain or attain greater pleasure.

It therefore seems to me that every discussion of choices needs to state that emphatically at the beginning.

Yes you want to minimize pain, but you also want to maximize pleasure, and how you choose to strike that balance has no rules except your own decision as to how to live your life.

Post by “Kalosyni” of March 12, 2023 at 6:11 PM

[Quote from Matteng](#)

Stoics tend to see the happy life as erasing frustrations ((a)pathe).

What would be the alternative in Epicurus' philosophy?

Here is the Vatican Saying 21:

"Nature must be persuaded, not forced. And we will persuade nature by fulfilling the necessary desires, and the natural desires too if they cause no harm, but sharply rejecting the harmful desires."

For Epicureans it is important to pay attention to needs -- needs of the body and needs for happiness. And to find practical solutions -- by asking "What is in my power to change?"

And in the Letter to Menoeceus: "...keep in mind that some desires are natural whereas others are groundless; that among the natural desires some are natural and necessary whereas others are merely natural; and that among the necessary desires some are necessary for happiness, some for physical health, and some for life itself."

So for practical application, from modern psychology:

Painful emotions and painful feelings are like a warning light that a need of the body or of the soul is not being met, or we are in danger of losing something we believe that we need. The problem being that when we only have one way to meet a need, than we are stuck if we don't get that one way (or can't use that one strategy). So getting unstuck requires us to see other strategies for meeting our needs, as well as making peace with situations in which can't be changed.

Signs that a need is going unmet, or may go unmet in the future:

sadness

frustration

anger

fear

anxiety

worry

Signs that a need is being met effectively:

happy

enthusiastic

thankful

peaceful

satisfied/content

Some universal human needs:

food/water/shelter/clothing

safety/trust

competence/skills

rest/play

belonging/understanding

respect/consideration

autonomy/choice

etc.

I haven't yet studied Philodemus, so can't add anything from that.

[Quote from Matteng](#)

Emotions that cause suffering (pain ?)such as anxiety/obsessive-compulsive disorders should probably be countered as the Stoics or CBT envisage, but perhaps in a milder form?

OCD is a complex issue and is a separate issue than just anxiety (and different than phobias) -- there is probably a lot about what kinds of modalities of modern psychotherapy work for these issues, but haven't researched.

In another thread, there was something about CBT having some problems, and could make some conditions worse.

Quote

Philosophical concerns with CBT methods

The methods employed in CBT research have not been the only criticisms; some individuals have called its theory and therapy into question.[\[225\]](#)

Slife and Williams write that one of the hidden assumptions in CBT is that of [determinism](#), or the absence of [free will](#). They argue that CBT holds that external stimuli from the environment enter the mind, causing different thoughts that cause emotional states: nowhere in CBT theory is agency, or free will, accounted for.[\[215\]](#)

Another criticism of CBT theory, especially as applied to major depressive disorder (MDD), is that it confounds the symptoms of the disorder with its causes.[\[218\]](#)

Side effects

CBT is generally regarded as having very few if any side effects.[\[226\]\[227\]](#) Calls have been made by some for more appraisal of possible side effects of CBT.[\[228\]](#) Many randomized trials of psychological interventions like CBT do not monitor potential harms to the patient.[\[229\]](#) In contrast, randomized trials of pharmacological interventions are much more likely to take adverse effects into consideration.[\[230\]](#)

A 2017 meta-analysis revealed that adverse events are not common in children receiving CBT and, furthermore, that CBT is associated with fewer dropouts than either placebo or medications.[\[231\]](#) Nevertheless, CBT therapists do sometimes report 'unwanted events' and side effects in their outpatients with "negative

wellbeing/distress" being the most frequent.[232]

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive...ith_CBT_methods

Display More

Post by “Matteng” of March 13, 2023 at 5:15 AM

Thanks.

I think it depends on the circumstances (pain/pleasure) how much if at all the emotions should be controlled/manipulated.

The Stoics are there extreme to want to eliminate the "passions" as illness. (Which is not to say one cannot learn from them (like Seneca learned from both schools))

The Epicureans see them more natural I think.

Better: Accept the emotions and control the behavior after the emotions prudently (when there is no disease of the soul)

Found this here:

[Epicureanism: Philodemus on anger \(first part\) - Epicurus Today](#)

[Philodemus on irrational anger \(second part\) - Epicurus Today](#)

[Epicurean therapy for anger \(last part\) - see other two parts below - Epicurus Today](#)