

Do you wonder if you're oversensitive, or you're a mess, or you're just out there and don't get it?

If that's you - pinkies up! (Mine are up with you!)

When we get our feelings hurt, the area of our brain that's responsible for pain is activated. You're not overreacting - you're reacting to a brain signal.

Several things happen when our feelings are hurt:

There's a chemical reaction effect - researchers have actually said that an NSAID (Advil, Tylenol etc.) will help because PAIN of any kind is inflammatory! Can you believe that? I know my jaw dropped when I heard that-- can you imagine taking a pill when your feelings are hurt?

*HINT --> Use InflaCrusher instead and protect your liver!

Research also suggests that hurt feelings include - in particular - people's PERCEPTION of their hurt feelings.

In other words, perception is the driver.

Psychologists say that women tend to hold onto these hurt feelings more intently than men.

A lot of us deal with our hurt by stuffing it--this is how I reinforced my own food addiction, btw.

We try to please people even harder.

We try to seek approval from everyone.

We accept that it is us and not them.

And...hurt feelings often shift our perception, and that is dishonest -

They go unaddressed.

The proper response sometimes is anger, and women (are mostly) unfamiliar with constructive anger - it's more of a volcanic thing than an emotion that simply needs processing.

Psychologist Emilie Raphael says, "We are in hiding. We don't know who we are."

SO, what do we do?

If we express our anger appropriately, that means we stop trying so hard and instead SPEAK it (using the guidelines we discussed on Wednesday).

We also learn to set limits - after all, hurt feelings are usually the result of unheld boundaries.

We need to learn to move approval INWARD (from the outward dog and pony show we've exhaustively been performing.)

We need to calm the Inner Critic, who is forever discounting us and keeps pushing us down to maintain low self-esteem.

The biggie is, however, that hurt feelings are often anger that has been silenced--this floored me. How true is that?

Anger needs an outlet - here's how to express it constructively:

1. Analyze your hurt feelings - are they just the tip of the iceberg? How long have you been carrying them? If you're hurt because your spouse is going out with his pals to play poker, is it THAT, or is it that he doesn't get excited to go out with you?
2. Woman up. Can't say it? Then write it out. Sure, send an email, but remember to use appropriate "I feels" and not "you always" - we spoke about this on Wednesday's show.

3. Blaming is shaming. DO NOT GO THERE. Listen, express your hurt, and allow for a conversation. When it's blame-free, there's room for getting past the hurt.

4. Take responsibility for your part. Ask yourself, "How did my actions play into this? Did I say something or neglect to say something?"

5. How can WE fix this? You want to make it better? SAY SO! Do you need to apologize, or talk it through?

"I've learned that people will forget what you've said, people will forget what you did, but they will never forget the way you made them feel."

-Maya Angelou