

Leanne, today don't think or say, "I'm tired," "I'm hurt," "I'm angry." Don't even think or say, "I'm happy."

Instead, think and say, "I've chosen to be tired, hurt, angry." Or better still, "I'm choosing to be happy."

You don't get "hit" by feelings, you feel them based on your perceptions, and you perceive based on your beliefs, and you believe as you choose.

You are your words.

This was in my inbox this morning and it got me thinking how important this message is and how true, so I want to break it down. It's one thing entirely to say all of this, but it always comes back to HOW.

The Power of Choice: How to Take Control of Your Emotions

Let's be real.

It's easy to feel like our emotions control us.

But what if the secret to mastering our feelings ***lies in the language we use to describe them?***

This idea isn't just philosophical—it's backed by science. By reframing how we express our emotions, we can ***shift our mental state and influence our emotional health.***

Let's look at five science-backed steps to practice this transformative approach.

1. Understand the Science of Self-Talk

Our self-talk—the inner dialogue we have with ourselves—profoundly influences our emotional state. Research in cognitive behavioral therapy shows that negative self-talk can lead to emotional distress and even mental health disorders like depression and anxiety. Conversely, positive self-talk can boost your mood and overall mental health. By **consciously choosing** the words that define our feelings, such as saying **"I'm choosing to be happy" instead of "I'm happy,"** we empower ourselves to take control of our emotions rather than letting them control us.

2. Practice Mindful Awareness

Mindfulness involves maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment. This practice helps you

become more aware of your internal dialogue and its impact on your emotional state. Studies have found that **mindfulness can reduce emotional reactivity and improve emotional regulation**. In other words, this isn't just a bunch of platitudes, it's science! **Start by observing your thoughts and feelings without judgment and reframe them to reflect your choices.**

3. Employ Cognitive Reframing

Cognitive reframing is a technique used to change the way you look at a situation, yourself, or others to manage stress more effectively and reduce negative emotions. When you catch yourself automatically declaring an emotional state—like "I'm tired" or "I'm hurt"—pause and rephrase it to reflect a choice: "I'm choosing to feel tired because I stayed up late working." This method not only **puts you in charge but also prompts you to consider changing your behavior** next time.

4. Cultivate an Attitude of Gratitude

Gratitude shifts your focus from what's lacking to what's abundant in your life. By cultivating gratitude, you're choosing to focus on positive emotions and experiences, which enhance well-being and happiness. Research supports that **gratitude can improve psychological**

health by reducing toxic emotions ranging from envy and resentment to frustration and regret. Each day, write down or mentally note things you are grateful for, framing them as choices you appreciate.

5. Set Intentions for Emotional Ownership

Setting intentions is a powerful practice that involves clearly stating how you choose to feel or react in certain situations. Instead of being at the mercy of unpredictable emotions, decide in advance how you will choose to feel about whatever the day may bring. This proactive approach is supported by research suggesting that intention-setting can enhance emotional self-regulation and increase resilience.

By understanding that emotions are not things that happen to us but are experiences we can actively shape through our choices and beliefs, we gain significant power over our emotional lives.

You are not passively experiencing the world; you are actively participating in it through your perceptions. Next time you find yourself on the verge of saying "I'm tired" or "I'm angry," remember that **you have the choice to see and feel differently**. You are indeed your words, and you have the power to choose wisely.