



## The Difference Between a Feeling and an Emotion

Understanding the difference between a feeling and an emotion helps us better navigate our inner experiences. Though they are closely related and often used interchangeably, they are not the same.

### Emotion

- An emotion is an automatic, physical response to a stimulus (internal or external).
- It is generated unconsciously by the brain and felt in the body.
- Emotions are fast-acting and universal (e.g., fear, anger, joy, sadness).

### Feeling

- A feeling is the conscious awareness and interpretation of an emotion.
- It is how we mentally label and experience the emotion.
- Feelings are shaped by personal experiences, beliefs, memories, and thoughts.

### Summary Comparison

Emotion:

- Automatic and instinctual
- Occurs in the body
- Short-lived
- Often unconscious

Feeling:

- Conscious experience
- Occurs in the mind
- Can last longer
- Shaped by thoughts and meaning-making

### Why This Matters

Recognizing this distinction allows us to:

- Tune into our body's signals (emotions)
- Name and process what we're experiencing (feelings)
- Respond with more self-awareness and regulation