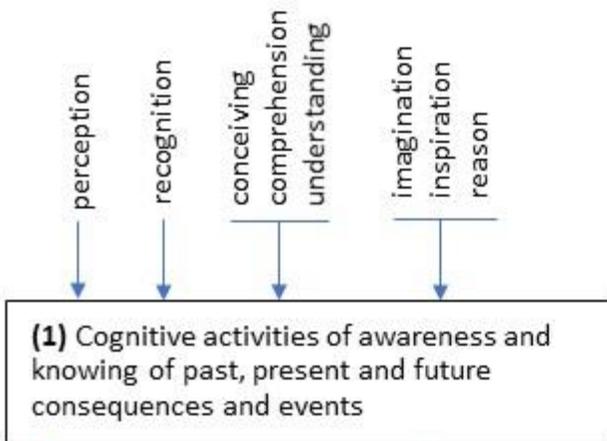
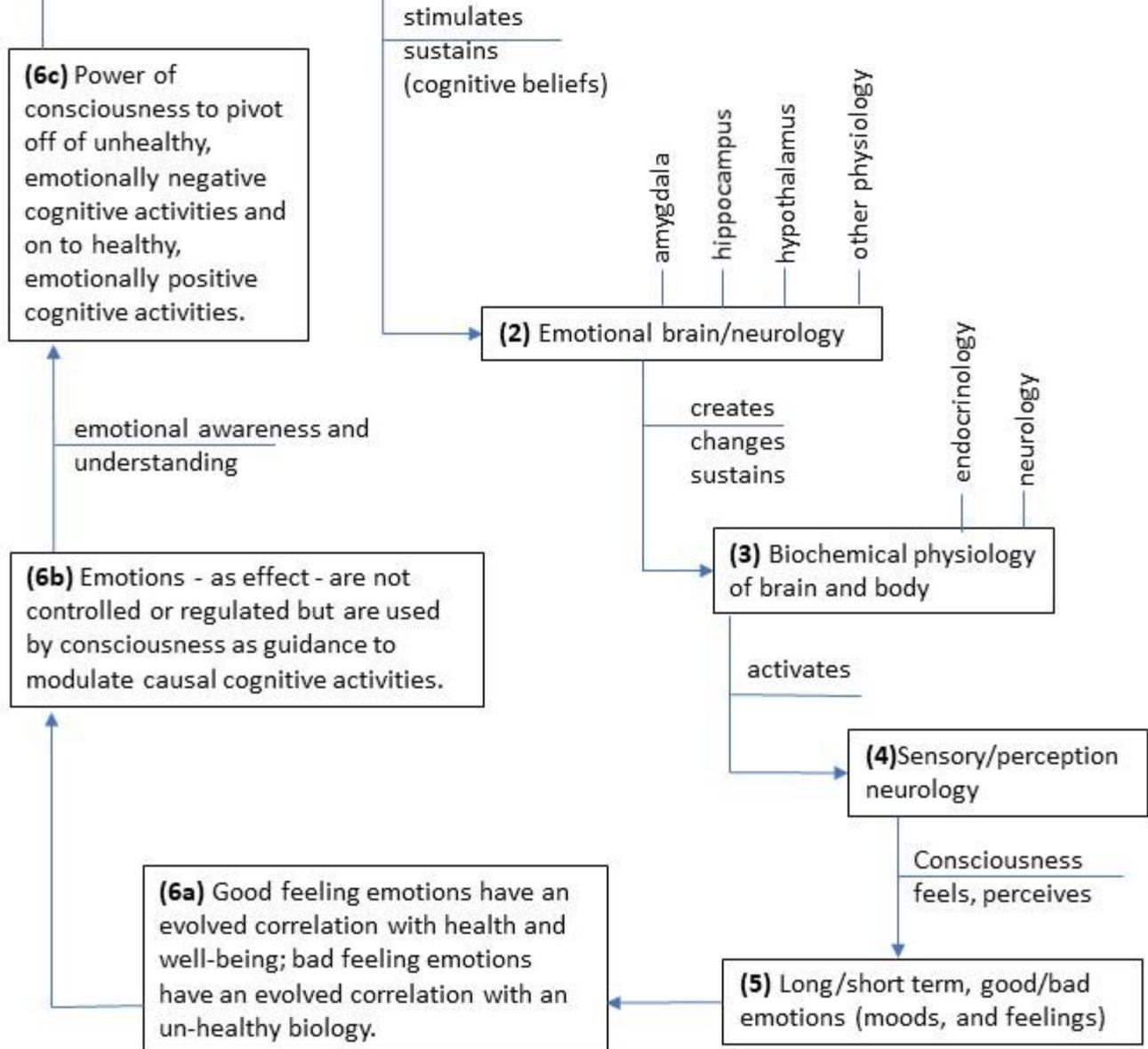


## Emotional Guidance Theory: Cognitive-Emotional Process Flow Chart



- (1) Cognition stimulates the
- (2) emotional neurology that creates, changes, and sustains the
- (3) biochemical physiology of the brain and body that activates a
- (4) sensory neurology that consciousness perceives as
- (5) good/bad feeling emotions (moods, and feelings).
- (6) Consciousness uses this cognitive-emotional feedback to modulate cognitive activities which stimulates....

Andrew O. Jackson 2020-03-21a



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**Emotional Guidance Theory: Defining Cognition as Causal to Neurological and Biological Changes in the Brain and Body and Good and Bad Feeling Emotions as the Effect of Said Same Changes**

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*What if emotions are more than a stimulus for song, poetry and drama  
where poets bend and sway their audiences' emotions up and down,  
as a roller coaster excites and thrills for the pleasure,  
or dismay, of its breathless riders?*

Is it possible to think of emotions as being separate from the evolutionary process of the human species? If emotions have been run through the evolutionary mill, i.e., not separate from the evolutionary process, what would some characteristics of the resultant design be? Is it possible to use the ideas and concepts found within evolution to form logical deductions and conclusions about emotions and feelings as they pertain to biological functions?

The notion that species develop by naturally selecting attributes that are advantageous for survival is the cornerstone of the theory of evolution. If any human is to live or even thrive to maturity where offspring will continue the survival of the species, might there be an evolved link or correlation between emotions and an individual's cognitive activities and the body's physiology?

**Synopsis:**

- 1) Literature and religion, for thousands of years, has used emotion as (1) causal to neurological and biological changes of the brain and body that drive a character's behavior and (2) the perceived effect of said same changes that a character feels and perceives. The mind has neurolinguistically created a cognitive construct that defines emotions as both (1) causal to neurological and biological change within the brain and body and (2) the perceived effect of said same neurological and biological

change. This confusion may be acceptable in literature and religion, but it is not appropriate for science. Science must reconstruct an appropriate definition.

- 2) Emotional Guidance Theory defines emotions as the good and bad feeling perception of neurological and biological changes within the brain and body precipitated by cognitive activities stimulating an “emotional” neurology.
- 3) Evolution has orchestrated, biologically speaking, a what feels good is good and what feels bad is bad morality. Now humanity must nurture new algorithms that pivot emotionally negative cognitive activities onto emotional positive cognitive activities that reflects a healthy biology and a compassion and respect for self and others.

**Definition Notes:**

- 1) “cognition” deals with the processes of knowing and awareness, namely, perception, recognition, conceiving (which includes imagination and inspiration) and reasoning (Encyclopedia Britannica, Cognition: thought process) where understanding and comprehension can project future consequences and events.
- 2) “emotional valance” is not used because in the definition, “...the value associated with a stimulus as expressed on a continuum from pleasant to unpleasant or from attractive to aversive...” (APA Dictionary), “stimulus” lacks definition and typically refers to an exterior environmental factor/event and not to the cognitive activities within the individual’s mind.
- 3) relationships between emotion and arousal, motivation, and behavior cannot be discussed nor understood until a scientific understanding of emotions as an effect of neurological and biological changes in the brain and body precipitated by causal cognitive activities is realized.

**Emotions in Science, Religion, and Literature**

A shared cultural and linguistic development of core beliefs and conceptual understandings about emotions is required for young students to comprehend and follow the emotional twists and turns within popular English literary works such as Dickens’s *Great Expectations*, Poe’s *The Raven*, and Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*. As students mature and are introduced to the

more advanced works of William Shakespeare and others, comprehension is even more dependent upon prior assimilation of cultural and linguistic emotional paradigms. Conceptions of emotions are further reinforced by the logic and reason applied in today's scientific literature, research, and discussions about emotions. But, have English speaking researchers' core beliefs of emotions severely, and critically, impacted their current understanding and scientific research about emotions and cognition?

Emotions are perceived in science, religion, and literature as potentially aberrant and destructive and in need of management and control, even with the use of pharmaceuticals because emotions are understood and defined as causal to neurological and biological changes that can have a great effect on driving behavior. Mind has neurolinguistically combined (1) the cognitive activities of awareness, (2) the changes in the body's/brain's neurology and biology, (3) the feelings and perceptions of said same changes, and (4) the outward behavior all into (5) one cognitive construct called emotions. Within religion and literature this confusion only adds to the color and mystery of their dissertations, but within science, this muddle is unacceptable.

If emotions are causal to neurological and biological changes in the body and brain, then what term does a professor of psychological science use when discussing the good and bad feeling effects of said same changes that a person feels and perceives? The overwhelmingly commonly used and neurolinguistically programmed terminology is emotions. But then what of the perceived causal nature of emotions? Is it reasonable for psychology as a science to use the same terminology as both causal to biological change and the effect of said same biological change? This is not science. One word, emotions, cannot be defined as both the cause of neurological and biological change and the perceptual awareness of said same neurological and biological change.

### **Defining Emotion as Effect Only**

Let's retain the definition of emotions as the effect of neurological and biological changes in the brain and body that consciousness then feels or perceives and not define emotions as

causal to these said same changes in neurology and biology. This runs counter to thousands of years of neurolinguistic programming of a cognitive construct that says emotions are causal to neurological and biological changes that drives behavior. Emotion terminology cannot be used as both the cause of neurological and biological changes and the perceived result, that is effect, of these said same changes. If emotions are not defined as causal, then what reasonable terminology can be used?

Neurological and biological changes of the brain and body that are felt emotionally cannot occur until the cognitive neurological processes of the brain are actualized. That is, there cannot be an emotional reaction to a hand being mutilated by a table saw until the event is – consciously or unconsciously – cognitively perceived, conceived, and understood. The cognitive processing of an event activates an “emotional” neurological network that precipitates any of a number of different combinations of neurological and biological changes that may then – depending upon one’s emotional acuity – be perceived by consciousness as a variety of good and bad feeling emotions. As such, emotions are the perception of neurological and biological changes precipitated by cognition.

**Dashboard Analogy:**

Emotions are akin to the check-engine-light on the dash of a car. The light signifies problems within the mechanical physiology of the engine. The light is not the cause of the problem. The light is not aberrant nor destructive, but has mechanically evolved to bring to conscious awareness any potential problems within the engine, that if left unresolved, will lead to mechanical breakdown and failure – akin to what is observed in the biology of depression and anxiety that leads to suicide. Are people also ignoring, covering up, or taping over an emotional check-engine-light that signals biological susceptibility to illness, disease, and cancer?

The “check engine” light on the dash of a car is not causal but an effect. The issue is within the engine not the light. The light is the messenger informing the operator – if remedial action is not taken – of potential engine damage because of existing physical conditions. The

light is not destructive and does not need control, management, nor regulation. The light provides an invaluable service for the health and well-being of the engine. To ignore the light or to take action upon the light, that is, to control, manage, or regulate the light itself would be detrimental to the survival of the engine.

### **Defining Cognition as Cause**

The neurological network that activates neurological and biological changes in the brain and body – that is emotionally perceived – is referred to as the “emotional brain” or “emotional neurology”. This emotional neurology is not the perception of emotions but identifies the neurology involved – amygdala, hippocampus, hypothalamus, etc. – as the actuator of neurological and biological changes in the brain and body that are then perceived as emotions. Since it is the (1) cognitive acts of perception, conception, and comprehension of, for instance, a mutilated hand in a table saw that (2) initiates activity within the “emotional” neurology that (3) precipitates changes within the brain and body that (4) are perceived as emotions, (1) cognition can be defined as causal and (4) emotions are the perceived effect.

These definitions differ from today’s contemporary academic psychology where emotions are defined as both causal to and the effect of neurological and biological changes within the brain and body. In Emotional Guidance Theory, emotions are defined as the good and bad feeling perceptual awareness of these said same neurological and biological changes that are precipitated by cognition. This is not a 3000-year-old neurolinguistic emotional construct as used in literature and religion. This is science. A person being driven by anger, jealousy, or greed may be emotionally driven in a movie or book but in science, these neurological and biological induced states would be a product of cognitive activities. The significance of teaching a scientific definition and understanding of emotions – separate from the literary and religious conceptualization – in our educational institutions cannot be overestimated.

A person is not emotionally out of control, but cognitively out of control. A person is not suffering from depression because of an emotional disorder and in need of emotional regulation but is suffering because of science’s ignorance of how emotions have evolved to

guide cognitive activities. He/she has a cognitive disorder and in need of cognitive rehabilitation to develop their abilities and skills necessary to self-manipulate one's own cognitive activities. (Note: illness and diseases that affect emotional biology is another discussion.) Emotions are the good and bad feeling perception of neurological and biological changes precipitated by cognition. Cognition initiates or is causal to the changes in neurology and biology that is then perceived as good or bad feeling emotions. As such, emotions may be used as a natural emotional biofeedback mechanism and aid in guiding the individual away from aberrant and destructive cognitive behavior and towards behavior promoting personal health, wealth, and well-being.

### **The Illusion of Emotions as Aberrant and Destructive:**

Because the cognitive construct of emotions has been neurolinguistically programmed to include the cognitive activities associated with (a) biological changes, (b) the same said biological changes that drive behavior, and (c) the perception of these same said biological changes, emotions can be deemed aberrant and destructive. But an emotional reaction to a hand being mutilated in a table saw cannot not even be had until the cognitive perception, conception, and comprehension of the event were not first actualized. That is, there isn't an emotional effect to a yet-to-exist causal cognitive awareness of said events.

Because cognition is causal to activating the emotional neurology that precipitates biological changes in which consciousness perceives and conceives as emotion, cognition can be aberrant and destructive, not emotions. Emotions are an effect. Cognition is cause.

Emotions from a scientific point of view – *not from the literary or the religious paradigm we have learned from birth* – cannot be destructive nor aberrant because they are not causal.

Emotions are the effect of causal cognitive activity. It is cognitive activity that can be destructive and aberrant. Emotions are but a reflection of that activity. And most important, emotions can be used to understand, guide, reframe, and refine emotional and biological negative cognitive activity into emotional and biological positive cognitive activity. (Note: emotions as being perceived by consciousness does affect cognition and therefore does influence biology, but this perceptual awareness of emotions *is* a cognitive activity.)

**The Significance of Emotionally “Feeling Good” or “Feeling Bad”**

The following scenarios are indicative of evolution’s impact on the development of an emotional guidance system:

- (1) If feeling good correlates with a well-balanced and physiologically vital body then feeling good while climbing a tree to gather food or while balancing on slippery rocks in a rushing stream to fish may not be hazardous. But if feeling good were to correlate with a weakened and lethargic physiology/biochemistry, such challenging actions would tend to be deadly. Such a false/positive correlation between emotions and a vital biochemical physiology would be disadvantageous to survival.
  
- (2) How would a genetic line survive if feeling good correlated with (1) a cognitive knowing of strength, vigor, and adeptness with (2) an actuality of weakness and ineptitude? Such a correlation has a limited survivability when climbing trees or foraging across the savannahs in search for food or, in a modern example, when in an inebriated state, a person confidently gets behind the wheel of a car to navigate through rush hour traffic. And where is the motivation to act when there is an actuality of vitality, vigor and strength but emotionally there is a feeling of illness, lethargy and weakness? It is logical to conclude that, evolutionarily speaking, feeling good correlates with vitality, vigor, and strength and feeling bad correlates with illness, lethargy, and weakness.
  
- (3) Imagine that such basic life behaviors as breathing or eating were so emotionally painful – or the lack thereof were so pleasurable – as to bring about suffocation, starvation and death. Such an emotional/ physiological correlation would lead to the demise of an individual and his or her genetic line. Whether this were a genetically predisposed or an inherited condition, or

whether there even existed a genetically developed predisposition to learn such a behavior, such a false/positive correlation between emotions and physiology would hinder personal and genetic survival. Therefore, there is a natural correlation between feeling good with healthy physiological behavior and the way the body functions.

From an evolutionary perspective, feeling good means there is a positive correlation between the neural networks that activate (1) a cognitive awareness of strength, vigor, and well-being, (2) an actualization of a physiology of strength, vigor and well-being, and (3) the neural networks associated the emotions of pleasure. Biochemistry, both at the molecular level and the neural network level, must sustain the correlations between (1) the cognitive knowing of, (2) the actualization of, and (3) the feeling of strength, vigor and well-being. Simply put, if these correlations did not exist in this way a person would have a low probability of survival.

### **Cognitive Imagination and Evolution**

How would a genetic line survive (1) if the body's need for water did not stimulate the mind's imagery of obtaining water or (2) if this imagery of obtaining water correlated with negative emotions? If the body needs water, this need must correlate with the mental act of imagining water and correlate with positive emotions associated with finding and drinking water. That is, there is a correlation between imagining the necessities of life and positive emotions. If, instead, there was a correlation such that the imagery of food, water, and shelter brought about negative emotions, then these basics of life would be avoided, leading to an evolutionary dead end. So, for the survival of the species, there must be an evolved correlation between (a) the evolved neural networks of the cognitive brain of imagination and (b) the neural networks of the emotional system such that it (c) feels good when (d) the individual's imagination dwells upon the presence of the food, water, and shelter, which (e) is wanted and desired by the body in order to survive.

*A person dwelling upon the presence of that which is wanted triggers a healthy biochemical/physiological condition within the brain and body which activates an emotionally positive neural network. A person dwelling upon the lack of that which is wanted triggers an unhealthy biochemical/physiological condition within the brain and body which activates an emotionally negative neural network.*

How would a genetic line survive if the idea of *not* obtaining food, water, and shelter correlated with feeling good? Or, how would a person (and his or her genetic lineage) survive if cognitive imagery dwelt upon that which is not wanted, and this mental activity did not correlate with negative emotions? A person dwelling upon that which is not wanted triggers an unhealthy biochemical/physiological condition within the body which activates an emotionally negative neural network perceived by consciousness. There must have been an evolutionary development that resulted in these correlations or we wouldn't have survived as a species.

To succeed, and even thrive, in life comes from bringing a “healthy attitude” to life and its daily, moment to moment decisions, especially with those cognitive choices that are made about what to think, imagine and dwell upon. “Healthy attitude” means having the desire and intention to choose cognitive activities (ideas, thoughts, beliefs, concepts, awarenesses, deductions, reasons, dreams, and imaginations) that feel good.

People who are successful and enjoy life are such because they have made a decision to use emotionally negative cognitive activities as motivation to find, allow, develop, and dwell upon those emotionally cognitive activities that feel better. Physical health and well-being are dependent upon cognitively working towards better and better feeling thoughts until cognitive activities that feel good dominate one's internal conversation. Mental health and well-being depend upon having the motivation, intention, and ability to cognitively work at emotionally feeling good. But problems occur when a “what feels good is good” attitude doesn't reflect a self that lives with strength, vigor, adeptness and a compassion for others to realize the same.

**Managing Cognition with Emotional Guidance**

Cognition is cause; emotion is effect. Aberrant and destructive cognition must be managed and controlled, *not emotions*, because cognitive behavior precipitates neurological and biological changes within the brain and body that drive behavior. Emotions have evolved to guide cognitive activity for personal health, prosperity, and well-being. Literature and religion may not understand this, but science should.

When factoring in evolution, the emotional perception of biochemical/physiological states of the body become an integral part of the brain's neural network for maintaining the body's health, strength and vigor. Emotions bring another attribute of awareness to a person's consciousness as to the nature of his or her cognitive and physical activities. For simplicity, emotions can be divided into two areas of awareness: those emotions that feel good and those emotions that feel bad.

Because of these evolved mind/body/emotion/consciousness correlations, feeling good or feeling bad has a significant meaning as to the biological health of an individual. Cognitively activating the physiological neural networks pertaining to strength, vigor, adeptness, and well-being activates an emotional positive neural network. The perception of negative emotions is a warning signal that the continuation of such cognitive and physical activities is having a negative impact on the physical health and genetic survival of the individual.

The simple arguments above are constructed to illustrate how evolution brings about specific relationships between the mind, body, and emotions and consciousness. Many more complex scenarios can be developed for the variety of relationships people have with their physical and social environment. Also, the element of time and the relativity of strength and vigor are not discussed but easily can be factored in for added layers of complexity. The moral and ethical debate of a 'feels good is good' behavior guide has been going on for thousands of years and will continue for thousands more, but ultimately it is an individual's debate that continues throughout a person's lifetime of experiences and, hopefully, a lifetime of continual growth and greater understanding.

**Conclusion:**

Mental health and well-being of a society is determined by the mental health and well-being of its individual inhabitants. A culture that is ignorant of emotions' evolutionary role in guiding individual cognitive and physical behavior is subject to all kinds of forces that can mis-direct cognitive activities towards nefarious ends. Continual distortions of emotions' evolved nature by current psychological, psychiatric, and pharmaceutical institutions only further sabotage emotions' guiding influence towards mental health and well-being of a society and its inhabitants.

Until emotions' true nature is understood, individual emotional behavior will be continually preyed upon by people who wish to control and subjugate individuals towards their own intentions, good or bad. Until emotions' true nature is understood, life's hardships can easily be assimilated into a tragedy of ill begotten intent to control and dominate others to conform to one's own ignorant selfish needs, desires, and behaviors. Unless emotions' true nature is understood, those who do not conform to one's own ignorance may be deemed of a lesser God and subject to destruction.

The pain and hardships of life events plant seeds of intent. Whether these seeds nurture or destroy can be influenced by a formal education of emotions' evolved role within human behavior. Society's institutions – be they parenting, education, religious, political, or some other organization – all have a responsibility to empower individual intent and resulting behavior with an emotional guidance that pivots off of negative feeling cognitive activities and onto feeling good cognitive activities for the health and well-being of the individual as a member of a culture and society among many on this planet Earth where humans are but one species of many. Humanity's future resides within the empowerment and understanding of individual intent, decision making, and following behavior and their relationships to “feels-good” or “feels-bad” biologically evolved emotional guidance system.

This paper and my current and full presentation of these arguments may be found and downloaded on: <https://emotional-evolution.com/> or <https://symbioticpsychology.com/> .

Passionately,

Andrew O. Jackson



*The “science” of emotional regulation kept me imprisoned in a living hell for nearly twenty years. The “logic” of cognitive regulation through emotional guidance set me free. Emotions and feelings have evolved as a fantastic and wonderful personal bio-feedback system where emotions work in a symbiotic harmony with mind, body, and consciousness for the health, wealth, and well-being of the individual.*