



Misconceptions affecting your mood?

Feeling down or experiencing low mood can come about for many reasons, some which are more difficult to resolve than others. Negative perceptions and not being able to tolerate ambiguity commonly underlie feelings of disappointment, low self worth and being 'down in the dumps'. Simply recognising that your thoughts may be playing tricks on you and taking some practical steps will get you feeling better right away.

Things are not always as they appear

Have you heard the saying, "When I assume I make an ass out of u and me"? It's so easy to make assumptions... Someone doesn't call you back or return your email and you assume they don't want to keep in touch. Your child isn't invited to a birthday party and you assume that they are being excluded. You don't get the promotion you hoped for and assume your manager doesn't appreciate your contribution. Assumptions, usually based on a previous negative experience unrelated to the current situation, form a slippery emotional foundation for both adults and children.

Minimise the damage

Close your eyes for a moment and remember a time when you jumped to a wrong conclusion about something or someone. How much energy did you spend worrying about something that turned out to be a misconception? Did you feel relieved when you found out your assumption was wrong? How did you get the facts?

Minimise the damage of misinterpretation by asking, "Is there clear evidence for how I'm feeling right now or is there another possible explanation for what has happened?" e.g. Is it possible that your email wasn't received, the phone message was accidentally deleted, the birthday child was only allowed to invite two friends this time or the boss has another opportunity in mind for you? Of course it's possible!

Maximise the opportunity

If you've been feeling down or stewing over something, see it as an invitation to get curious about what may be going on. Don't assume your negative perceptions are correct. It takes a great deal of honesty and courage to admit that you may have misinterpreted something that was said or done, but it's a wonderful example for your family and friends and a sure fire way to lift your mood.

Bare Hands is run by allied health professionals committed to helping women embrace positive change by providing access to practical education. To find out more give us a call, email us or visit www.barehands.com.au.

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- ✓ Assumptions make an 'ass out of u and me'.
- ✓ Misconceptions and faulty interpretations will sap your energy and leave you feeling blue.
- ✓ Your feelings could be leading you astray. Ask, "How do I know this to be true?"

"Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in."

Isaac Asimov

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