



Jealousy vs. Envy:

Using These Natural Emotions as Fuel for Growth

Understanding the Difference Between Jealousy and Envy

According to researcher Brené Brown:

- **Envy** is when we want something that someone else has. (*i.e. someone's beautiful vacation*)
- **Jealousy** is when we're afraid of losing something we already have to someone else. (*i.e. losing your significant other to someone else*)

Recognizing the difference between these two emotions is essential for self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and well-being. Both are natural feelings, but how we respond to them can determine whether we grow or become stuck. *Let's use these natural emotions as fuel for growth!*

STEP 1: Reflecting on Envy and Jealousy

Use the questions below to reflect on how envy and jealousy show up in your life:

1. Can you recall a time you felt **envy**? What triggered that feeling?

2. What was your emotional response in that moment to **envy**?

3. Did this feeling of **envy** lead to avoidance, motivation, comparison, or connection?

4. Can you recall a time you felt **jealousy**? What triggered that feeling?

5. How did **jealousy** affect your thoughts or actions toward the person involved?

6. Did the **jealousy** bring out any protective instincts, insecurity, or fear of loss?

STEP 2: Choosing Growth-Based Reactions

Envy and **jealousy** can inspire growth if we approach them with curiosity and compassion.

When I feel envy or jealousy, do I tend to:

- Rise alongside the person doing more?
- Avoid or distance myself from them?
- Try to outdo them or prove myself?
- Turn inward with self-judgment?

Knowing that you are experiencing **envy** or **jealousy**, what could a positive and productive response look like?

STEP 3: Transforming Envy and Jealousy Into Flourishing

Positive psychology teaches us that emotions, even challenging ones, can serve as teachers.

- **Envy** can guide us to new goals or desires we haven't honored.
- **Jealousy** can point to our values or highlight what matters most to us.
- Both can spark self-reflection and clarity about what we want to protect, nurture, or grow.

TAKING ACTION:

- How can I productively respond next time I am feeling **envy** or **jealousy**?
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- What personal values or dreams are hidden inside these emotions? What do I care about?
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- How can I honor those values and dreams in a way that helps me flourish?
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STEP 4: Positive Psychology-Based Practices

Try incorporating these strategies to help handle **envy** and **jealousy**:

1. **Gratitude Practice:** Write down things you're already grateful to have or do each day.
2. **Set Clear Goals:** Use what you truly value to work towards growth in those areas.
3. **Connect Instead of Compare:** Celebrate others' wins as inspiration, not competition.
4. **Values Recognition:** Reflect on what matters most to you and how your daily actions align.

Step 5: Final Reflections

1. How might being more aware of **envy** and **jealousy** contribute to your overall happiness and well-being?
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2. How can **envy** and **jealousy** help you flourish if approached with honesty, curiosity, and compassion?
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