Principle No. 2

No-one else can control our feelings.

This one originally read; "We are each of us in control of, and responsible for, our feelings", but people wouldn't buy that. In the long run, we still believe that to be true, but in the short run we have to recognise that people have psychological buttons that other people can press. However, only if we let them. It is always us choosing what response to have.The old psychological paradigm used to be

$$S \rightarrow R$$

a stimulus leads automatically to a corresponding response, and that would suggest that one person could control another's feelings.And then about fifty years ago academic psychologists got really sophisticated and realised that the full picture was:

$$S \rightarrow \boxed{O} \rightarrow R$$

a stimulus goes into an organism, which is effectively a black box and we don't know what goes on inside it, and then a response comes out of the organism, but it may not always be the same even when the stimulus is the same.So we may give a number of people the same stimulus, and they will have different emotional responses, or the same person may have different emotional responses to the same stimulus on different occasions.
This means we can give someone a pretty strong invitation to feel something, but they are in charge of how they respond.

The Eight Principles

1. We are each of us in control of and responsible for our actions.
2. No one else can control our feelings.
3. People are different: they experience the world differently; they feel different things; they want different things.
4. However you **are**, and they **are**, is OK. (Though this does not mean that whatever you and they **do** is necessarily OK.)
5. Feelings and behaviour are separate. (Being in touch with our feelings does not mean being out of control of ourselves and our behaviour.)
6. All feelings are justified, acceptable and important.
7. Change is possible.
8. All people have a natural tendency towards growth and health.

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