

Do you know how I feel?

Exploring emotions with people who have PMLDs



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In this workshop

- Introduction - what we want to achieve
- Short talks - what we know about feelings..feelings and well being
- 10.20 Group discussions - share your experiences
- 10.40 Whole group discussion -
- What have we learned - quick summary
- What would emotional development look like? What range of emotions would we want people to be able to access and express
- 11.15 Where next - a toolkit project
- 11.30 End

Vocabulary

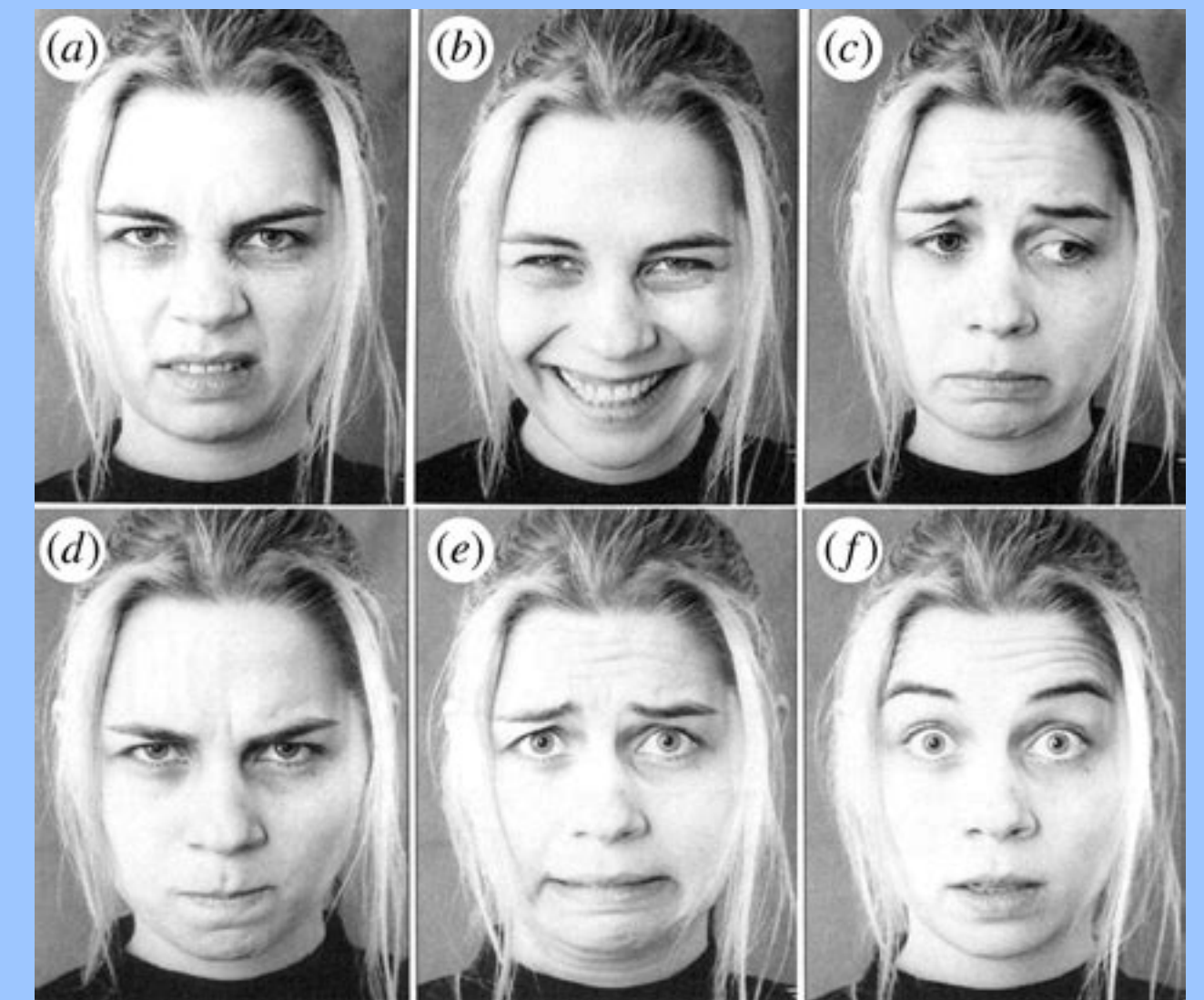
- * Affect
- * State
- * Feelings
- * Emotions
- * Sensations
- * Perceptions
- * Consciousness
- * Empathy
- * Drive
- * Instinct

States and feelings

- ✿ Sensations: touch, smell, taste, hot/cold; wet/dry;
- ✿ States - comfort/discomfort; pain; hunger; thirst; tired; sensual pleasure; arousal; calm; alert; sick
- ✿ Emotions/feelings: excited; enjoyment; fearful; angry; insecure, anxious; love; surprise; disgust;

Universal emotions

- The following seem to be universal, although how they are expressed may differ between cultures:-
- joy, surprise, anger, sadness, fear, disgust*
- anxiety, love, depression, contempt, pride, shame, jealousy.*
- Feelings are connected to bodily sensations cross-culturally



Volynets, S., Glerean, E., Hietanen, J. K., Hari, R., & Nummenmaa, L. (2020). Bodily maps of emotions are culturally universal. *Emotion*, 20(7), 1127–1136

Emotional development

- **There is still a lot to learn about how we begin to express emotions**
- **There are recognised stages of emotional development**
- **By 3-4 months infants seem to distinguish pleasant/unpleasant**
- **by 12 months, infants can recognise differences between happy, sad, angry in images - but this may simply be consistent response to positive or negative.**
- **They need vocal cues as well as facial expressions**
- **Infants learn about emotions when caregivers respond to their behaviours, name them and pair them with expressive behaviours**

Hoemann, K. Xu, F. & Barrett, L. (2019). D, Emotion words, emotion concepts, and emotional development in children: A constructionist hypothesis. *Developmental Psychology*, 55 (9), 1830–1849

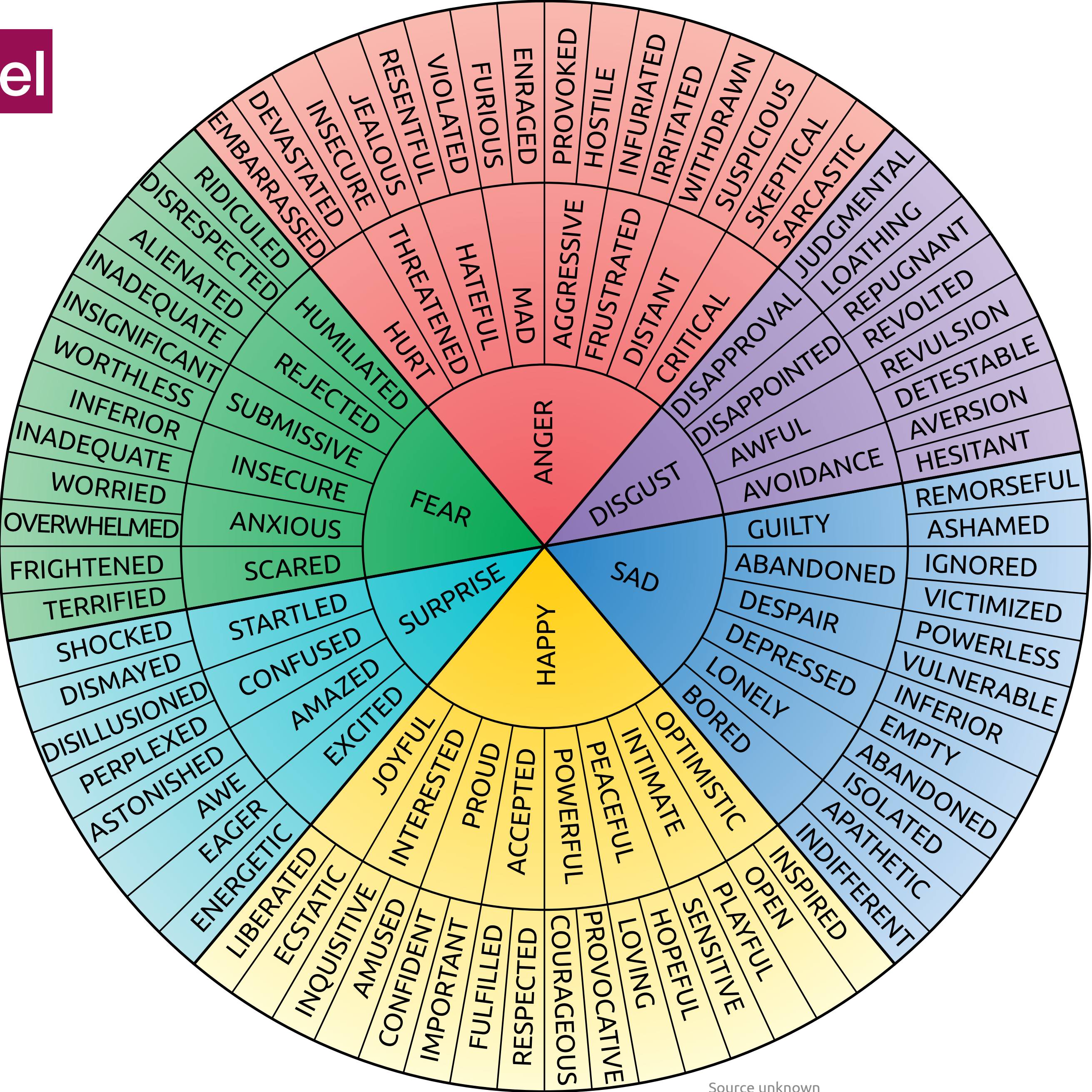
How are feelings and judgements conveyed?

- **VERBALLY-** any words that are related to feelings or attitudes; reported speech in dialogues, repetitions for effect
- **NONVERBALLY**
 - **Vocal** - intonation, stress, pausing
 - **Gestures** - that reinforce, emphasise or depict
 - **Body language** and facial expression
 - **Actions** eg. Turning away, turning towards, walking away, reaching, pushing

What do we know?

- Staff try to interpret the behaviour of people with PMLDs to find out how they are feeling. They rely on facial expressions, vocalisations, gestures and movement like turning away or turning towards (Antaki et. al., 2020. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jar.12707>)
- Sometimes they come up with different answers
- Signals can be ambiguous especially if you don't know the person well
- There is a lot of pressure to keep people happy and avoid “negative” emotions
- Many of the tools that SAY they are for assessing feelings and emotions in fact only record

The Emotion Wheel



Upcoming events

Embodied Memory: the practice of Bodily Emotional Traces Gunnar Vege, specialist in Deaf Blindness
2/12/21 16.00 • <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/embodied-memory-narrativererecall-for-complex-needs-tickets-174993669777>

Exploring loss, grief & PMLD 11/1/22 with NAC and Sarah Helton For families & primary carers

Neuroscience, Narrative & PMLD

- Neuroscientist Mark Solms has explored consciousness and intention in persons with severe brain damage (*The Hidden Spring*, Profile Books, 2020)
- His view is that emotional consciousness is real and important to considering their humanity and agency
- Upcoming seminar organised by PAMIS with Mark.... Save the date
- 21st 2022 19.30

Next steps

- We all agreed a toolkit would be useful - one that is simple, practical, draws on parent knowledge, and enables professionals to reflect on THEIR responses and the demands of the setting or context
- We've invited you to join a working group if you are interested.
- We are collecting your observations as a first step
- We'll share our findings and thoughts in a follow up meeting early in 2022

Thanks for coming!