



Plutchik's (1980) psychoevolutionary theory of basic emotions has ten postulates.

1. The concept of emotion is applicable to all evolutionary levels and applies to animals as well as to humans.
2. Emotions have an evolutionary history and have evolved various forms of expression in different species.
3. Emotions served an adaptive role in helping organisms deal with key survival issues posed by the environment.
4. Despite different forms of expression of emotions in different species, there are certain common elements, or prototype patterns, that can be identified.
5. There is a small number of basic, primary, or prototype emotions.
6. All other emotions are mixed or derivative states; that is, they occur as combinations, mixtures, or compounds of the primary emotions.
7. Primary emotions are hypothetical constructs or idealized states whose properties and characteristics can only be inferred from various kinds of evidence.
8. Primary emotions can be conceptualized in terms of pairs of polar opposites.
9. All emotions vary in their degree of similarity to one another.
10. Each emotion can exist in varying degrees of intensity or levels of arousal.

	<b>Basic Emotions</b>	<b>Basis for Inclusion</b>
<b>Plutchik</b>	Acceptance, anger, anticipation, disgust, joy, fear, sadness, surprise	Relation to adaptive biological processes
<b>Arnold</b>	Anger, aversion, courage, dejection, desire, despair, fear, hate, hope, love, sadness	Relation to action tendencies
<b>Ekman, Friesen, and Ellsworth</b>	Anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness, surprise	Universal facial expressions
<b>Frijda</b>	Desire, happiness, interest, surprise, wonder, sorrow	Forms of action readiness
<b>Gray</b>	Rage and terror, anxiety, joy	Hardwired
<b>Izard</b>	Anger, contempt, disgust, distress, fear, guilt, interest, joy, shame, surprise	Hardwired
<b>James</b>	Fear, grief, love, rage	Bodily involvement
<b>McDougall</b>	Anger, disgust, elation, fear, subjection, tender-emotion, wonder	Relation to instincts
<b>Mowrer</b>	Pain, pleasure	Unlearned emotional states
<b>Oatley and Johnson-Laird</b>	Anger, disgust, anxiety, happiness, sadness	Do not require propositional content
<b>Panksepp</b>	Expectancy, fear, rage, panic	Hardwired
<b>Tomkins</b>	Anger, interest, contempt, disgust, distress, fear, joy, shame, surprise	Density of neural firing
<b>Watson</b>	Fear, love, rage	Hardwired
<b>Weiner and Graham</b>	Happiness, sadness	Attribution independent
	<b>Basic Emotions</b>	<b>Basis for Inclusion</b>

(This table is taken from [Ortony](#) and Turner, 1990.)

---

## References

Ortony, A., & Turner, T. J. (1990). What's basic about basic emotions? *Psychological Review*, 97, 315-331.

Plutchik, R. (1980). A general psychoevolutionary theory of emotion. In R. Plutchik & H. Kellerman (Eds.), *Emotion: Theory, research, and experience: Vol. 1. Theories of emotion* (pp. 3-33). New York: Academic.