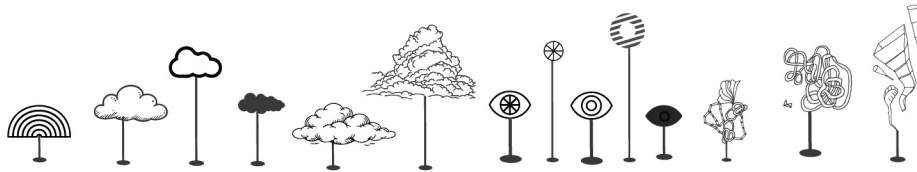


/ EMOTIVE OBJECTS



by Carrie A. Dyer

A non-literal, form-based visual system designed to evoke somatic, cognitive, and emotional states through abstract representation, allowing for projection, recognition, and relational engagement rather than fixed interpretation.

/ Introduction

The Emotive Objects intervention is an expressive, experiential approach designed to support emotional awareness, externalization, and regulation through the use of symbolic and sensory-based objects. This practice draws from expressive arts therapy (Malchiodi, 2020), which emphasizes nonverbal modalities for accessing and processing emotional experience, as well as narrative and constructivist approaches that support meaning-making through symbolic representation (White & Epston, 1990).

The use of objects as representations of emotional experience is also consistent with trauma-informed and somatic frameworks, which recognize that emotions are often held and expressed through the body and sensory systems (Ogden et al., 2006; van der Kolk, 2014). Externalizing internal states into physical or visual form can reduce overwhelm, create psychological distance, and support increased clarity and self-compassion.

This intervention is further informed by parts-based approaches such as Internal Family Systems (Schwartz, 2021), in which emotional experiences can be understood as distinct parts of the self. Emotive Objects provide a concrete and accessible way to represent, differentiate, and relate to these internal experiences without requiring immediate verbal articulation.

A distinguishing feature of this practice is the use of a visual object library, which allows clients to recognize rather than generate representations of their internal states. This process reduces cognitive load and supports engagement for clients who experience overwhelm, difficulty with emotional identification, or limited access to language.

Through selecting, creating, or assigning meaning to objects, clients are able to engage emotional complexity in a way that is tactile, visual, and relational—supporting integration, regulation, and deeper self-understanding.

References

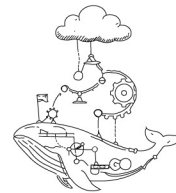
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CLOUDWHALE COLLECTIVE
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EMOTIVE ORGANS / NUMBERED SYSTEM

Patterns you may notice:

[] Dense / clustered
forms → overwhelm,
pressure

[] Spiky / radiating
forms → anxiety,
activation

[] Soft / cloud-like
forms → sadness,
dissociation

[] Structured / geomet-
ric forms → control,
protection

[] Fragmented / chaotic
forms → dysregulation,
confusion

Row 1 (01-12): Core Cognitive + Signal Systems

- 01 - Memory Thread > stored experiences, looping recall
- 02 - Emotional Density > heaviness, buildup, unprocessed feeling
- 03 - Core Self / Identity Node > sense of "me," grounded presence
- 04 - Signal Channel > internal signals trying to move upward
- 05 - Somatic Stack > layered body sensations, held tension
- 06 - Stress Ladder > rising activation, escalation
- 07 - Diffuse Thought Field > scattered thinking, cognitive drift
- 08 - Expansive Emotion > big feelings, swelling states
- 09 - Pattern Recognition > noticing meaning, connections
- 10 - Belief Structure > fixed ideas, internal frameworks
- 11 - Defensive Shield > protection, emotional guarding
- 12 - Emotional Spike > sharp reaction, sudden overwhelm

Row 2 (13-24): Emotional + Survival Systems

- 13 - Drop Response > shutdown, collapse, low energy
- 14 - Grounded Presence > stability, rootedness
- 15 - Adaptive Growth > development through challenge
- 16 - Anxiety Network > tangled worry, recursive loops
- 17 - Trauma Imprint > stored survival memory
- 18 - Observer Self > awareness, witnessing
- 19 - Internal Echo > self-reflection, repetition
- 20 - Muted Affect > numbness, blunted emotion
- 21 - Social Self > relational identity, presentation
- 22 - Radiating Energy > activation, vitality
- 23 - Sensitivity Node > attunement, emotional receptivity
- 24 - External Signal > awareness of environment, vigilance

Row 3 (25-36): Emotional Landscape / Relational States

- 25 - Calm Field > safety, grounded ease
- 26 - Focused Awareness > attention, precision
- 27 - Emotional Cluster > mixed feelings, complexity
- 28 - Relational Awareness > connection to others
- 29 - Protective Canopy > safety-building, boundaries
- 30 - Emotional Weather > shifting moods
- 31 - Soft Regulation > gentle calming
- 32 - Support System > connection, holding environment
- 33 - Uncertainty Cloud > ambiguity, not knowing
- 34 - Accumulated Stress > buildup over time
- 35 - Burden Load > overwhelm, carrying too much
- 36 - Complex System State > layered life dynamics

Row 4 (37-48): Growth, Structure, and Agency

- 37 - Cognitive Framework > mental models, structure
- 38 - Reframing Lens > shifting perspective
- 39 - Core Belief Unit > foundational assumptions
- 40 - Emerging Self > becoming, identity growth
- 41 - Activated Change > disruption, transformation
- 42 - Small Step Action > manageable effort
- 43 - Containment Vessel > holding emotion safely
- 44 - Progression Path > forward movement
- 45 - Effort Climb > exertion, pushing forward
- 46 - Gradual Build > steady development
- 47 - Expansion Path > growth outward
- 48 - Acceleration > momentum, rapid change

/ Select an Object

01. Choose an Object That Feels Familiar.

Look at the shapes in front of you. You don't need to understand why, just notice which one you are drawn to. Which object feels closest to what you're experiencing?

[_____]

02. What About This Object Feels Accurate?

Instead of abstract emotion labeling, you anchor to visual qualities: Is it: dense or light? sharp or soft? tangled or structured? contained or expanding?

[_____]

03. Name the Feeling

Now, if words come:

[_____]

04. Locate the Object

Where does this live? In your chest? Behind your eyes? Around you? Nowhere / floating?

[_____]

05. Relationship to the Object

Is it overwhelming? Distant? Protective? Trying to get your attention?

[_____]

06. What Does This Object Need?

[_____]

07. This object might represent a part of you.

Could this be a protector, a younger part, a thinking part, a feeling part? What part might this be?

[_____]