

Understanding Alexithymia After Brain Injury

What Is Alexithymia?

A common difficulty in identifying, understanding, and putting words to emotions

What people with alexithymia might say ...



I'M CONFUSED.



I DON'T KNOW HOW I FEEL.



ALL I FEEL IS ANGRY!

Impact of Alexithymia

- Disconnected from self & others
- Loneliness
- Trouble managing emotions
- Increased anxiety, depression, PTSD, or anger
- Suicidal ideation
- Headaches & stomachaches
- Trouble engaging in psychotherapy



Recognition is the first step toward help.

Strategies to Improve Emotional Awareness and Labeling

TIP 1

Pay Attention to Body Cues

Changes in heart rate, muscle tension, and breathing — or feeling weighed down, suddenly hot, or sweaty — are physical signals of your emotions.



TIP 2

Wake Up Your Emotions

Use familiar sights, sounds, and smells — like an old photo, a favorite song, or a certain perfume — to bring feelings to the surface.



TIP 3

Explore Your Thoughts

What you tell yourself about a situation can help you figure out your emotions.

TIP 4

Take a Closer Look at Anger

Anger is the tip of the emotional iceberg.

ANGER

Taking note of these feelings can help.

**fear • worry
concern • disappointment
shame • jealousy
embarrassment**

brainline

All about brain injury and PTSD

You are not alone.

Visit [BrainLine.org/alexithymia](https://www.brainline.org/alexithymia) to find free resources for people with TBI and those who care about them, including family, friends, and professionals.

