



Delft University of Technology

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### Holistic typology of human mood states

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# 20 Moods

## A Holistic Typology of Human Mood States

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**Twenty Moods**  
A Holistic Typology of Human Mood States  
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# 20 Moods

A Holistic Typology of Human Mood States

# Introduction

*Some days we are cheerful; other days, we are gloomy. Likewise, we can be nervous, relaxed, excited, or perhaps irritable - but we are always in some mood. Our mood provides the affective colouring for all our day-to-day events and activities; when cheerful, we see the world through rose-coloured glasses; when gloomy, we see the same world, and everything in it, as dim and grey.*

We all *know* moods because we all have them. We experience our mood dynamics, and we can observe them in the people around us. But what if we are asked to describe our moods? That proves to be surprisingly difficult. Even though our mood is a faithful companion during all of our waking moments, our understanding of the mood phenomenon remains mostly tacit and instinctive. Mood is literally a gut-feeling.

## Moods as Syndromes

One reason why it is difficult to describe moods, is that they come with a variety of manifestations. Moods influence, for example, our feelings, our perceptions, our behaviour, and our likes and dislikes. None of these manifestations is, but together they represent the mood state. In other words, mood is a multi-componential phenomenon. This booklet presents descriptions of 20 different mood states. Some of these moods are pleasant (e.g., cheerful, jubilant, and relaxed), others unpleasant (grumpy, gloomy, anxious), and some are a bit of both (e.g., sentimental and rebellious).

## Holistic Narrations

Each page describes a different mood. As you will see, our approach is holistic – describing moods from various angles. The advantage of this approach is that the narrations are rich and inclusive. They aim to paint

a complete picture by including both words and images. Depending on your interest, you can focus on particular manifestations (such as the feelings or the perceptions) on modality (verbal or visual). You can compare this to how you would describe an object, like a table. You can say it is made of wood, it has four legs, it has a round table-top, and it fits four people. It is the combination of these features that provide us with a clear image. To support such a comprehensive understanding of mood states, we describe six mood ingredients (or manifestations), an everyday example, and four (metaphorical) images.

## Mood Prototypes

When browsing the booklet, you will find that some of the mood explanations sound strong or even radical. For example, the description of miserable includes the following: “You feel awful and powerless. You feel crushed, worthless, and almost unable to breathe.” In most cases, the experience of being in a miserable mood is not that extreme. You may recognize milder forms from your own experiences, like feeling somewhat discouraged and inadequate. It is therefore advised to consider the descriptions in the booklet as archetypical. While people can experience such strong archetypical moods, most real-life mood experiences are milder forms of the archetypes, experienced as subtle background feelings.



FEELING

This ingredient describes how it subjectively feels to be in this mood. This includes physical feelings (e.g., feeling energetic) and mental feelings (e.g., feeling alert). The mood can be described with literal sensations (e.g., "my heart is pounding") or with metaphors (e.g., "I feel the weight of the world on my shoulders").



PERCEPTION

Our mood colours our perception of the world. Depending on our mood, we can see the glass as half full or half empty; we see the good or the bad in ourselves, situations, and other people. This ingredient is mostly described with metaphors (e.g., "the world is a playground") because our actual perception depends, evidently, on the specifics of the situation at hand.



REACTION

Our mood influences how we react to people and situations. This includes our general willingness to react (e.g., reluctantly or eagerly), our speed of reaction (e.g., slowly or directly), and the quality of our reaction (e.g., hostile or kindly). Depending on our mood, we can react with enthusiasm or with scepticism to the same requests and initiatives.



TENDENCY

Moods come with certain behavioural tendencies. They can influence how we move our body (e.g., abruptly or sluggishly), they can stimulate gestures and behavioural patterns (e.g., smiling or nail biting), and they can affect our overall readiness for certain qualities of action (e.g., tend to take risks or tend to procrastinate).



LIKING

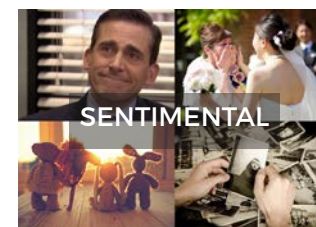
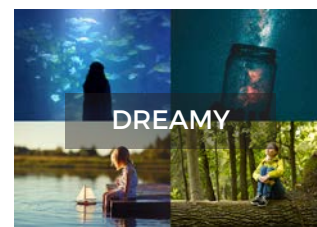
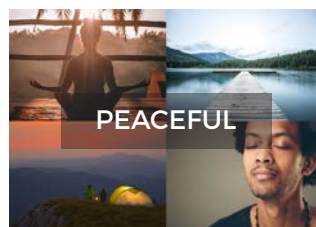
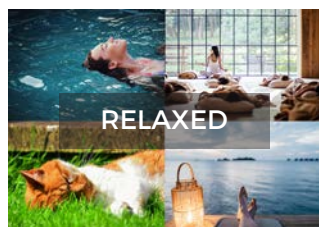
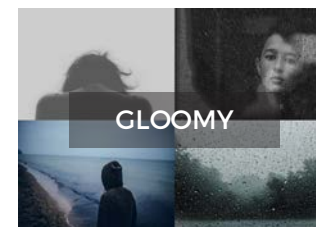
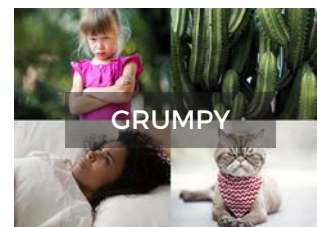
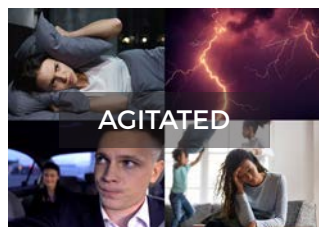
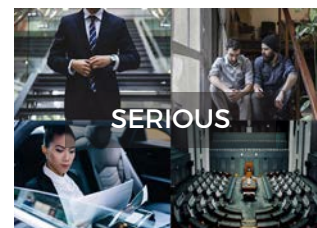
Our mood influences what we are 'in the mood for'. Some activities become more attractive when we change from one mood to another. This ingredient can be described with concrete activities (e.g., "I feel like reading" or "I feel like staying in bed") or with qualities or features of activities (e.g., "I feel like doing something challenging" or "I feel like to do something calm").



DISLIKING

A common way of expressing that we don't want to do something is by saying "I'm not in the mood for ...". Our mood can make certain activities unattractive. Similar to "Liking", this ingredient can be described with concrete activities (e.g., "I don't feel like working" or "I don't feel like helping someone") or with qualities or features of activities (e.g., "I don't feel like doing something frivolous" or "I don't feel like spending time alone").

# An Overview of the 20 Mood States





# 1. CHEERFUL



## FEELING

You feel light-hearted, carefree and vibrant. You feel as if you are floating, and as though all your actions are effortless. You are confident, optimistic, and full of energy.



## PERCEPTION

You see the world as a pleasant and sunny place without obstacles. You are free to go wherever you please. The future is bright and promising. There may be some clouds on the horizon, but you see everything in a positive light. You notice other people who are also in a cheerful mood. Time seems to fly.



## REACTION

You react in a friendly and tolerant way to people and events. You are talkative and attentive. You greet any negativity with patience and resilience.



## TENDENCY

You tend to hold your head high and smile. You may hum, whistle, or sing. You look around and really take things in. You may be easily distracted by something new.



## LIKING

You feel like participating in a large range of activities that you enjoy. Overall, you like to be active and try out new things. You like to indulge. You enjoy spontaneous activity where you can just go with the flow. You want to spread your good cheer.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like engaging in activities that involve negativity or negative people. If possible, you prefer to avoid highly organized or structured activities.

## EXAMPLE

Tom had a demanding week at work. Luckily, he eventually managed to meet all his deadlines by Friday, and no strict deadlines are scheduled for next week. He spent yesterday (Saturday) winding down and enjoying the sunshine on his home balcony with his partner. Today, again, is a sunny day. He feels like going out, visiting a museum or flea market, enjoying some street food and meeting friends for coffee.



# 2. AMIABLE



FEELING

You feel tender and gentle. You have a warm feeling inside. You feel connected and compassionate with the people and other living beings in the world.



PERCEPTION

You see the world as a warm and soft place, full of friends. There may be some issues and troubles, but ultimately people are good-natured and well-meaning.



REACTION

You react kindly and tolerantly to people and events. If people need something, you react generously and benevolently. Your demeanour is warm and informal.



TENDENCY

You tend to make eye contact and smile at people. You notice other people's concerns and state of mind. You are open for new encounters. You listen attentively and nod when people talk. You tend to (gently) touch people.



LIKING

You feel like spending time with other people. You like activities that involve sharing, bonding, or exchanging stories. You enjoy doing nice things or favours for other people.



DISLIKING

You do not feel like spending time alone, or spending time with negative or unfriendly people. You avoid situations in which you have to judge, criticize, or harm other people.

EXAMPLE

Tom has been having an easy Friday morning at work, because he completed an important project a day early. He notices that his colleague John, who is working on another project, is getting stressed because some difficult technical problem is slowing him down. Seeing John struggle, Tom feels a strong impulse to offer his help.

# 3. GIGGLY



## FEELING

You feel light-hearted and exuberant. You are full of positive, volatile energy that is impossible to contain. You are alert and hyper-aware of what is going on around you.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems a silly or absurd place, like a circus or a comedy club. Everything around you seems to be a good target for jokes or pranks.



## REACTION

You react to people and events abruptly, impulsively, and uninhibitedly. You do not take people or things too seriously. Because of this, others may find your behaviour inappropriate or impolite.



## TENDENCY

You tend to snigger, giggle, or laugh out loud. You make jokes, fool around, and make fun of people and things. You are drawn to people who are also in a giggly mood and you avoid those who are in a serious or negative mood.



## LIKING

You are drawn to playful and light-hearted activities. You feel like playing existing games or, if none are available, you will invent them. You want to team up with like-minded people and extend the silliness.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like engaging in activities that require a lot of effort or planning. You do not want to do anything for which you have to act appropriately or seriously. You do not feel like taking part in activities that are predictable or boring.

## EXAMPLE

On a Friday evening, after a lovely dinner out together, Tom is enjoying a small spontaneous party at home with three of his best childhood friends. They are enjoying snacks and beers, and start bringing up funny anecdotes about shared childhood adventures. They are creatively joking about these memories, and have lots of things to laugh about.

# 4. JUBILANT



## FEELING

You feel very excited, 'hyper', and blissful. You have extremely high energy and you are ecstatic. Any frustration, uncertainty or self-doubt you may have had are now vanished.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems to be a beautiful and vibrant place. The sky is blue and the sun is warm. If it is raining, there must be a rainbow somewhere. Your future is bright and clear.



## REACTION

You react to people and events exuberantly, enthusiastically and unrestrained. You are talkative and eager to initiate conversations. You want to share your stories and mood with others.



## TENDENCY

You have a tendency to move briskly and creatively, like dancing with unusual movements. You tend to behave tempestuously. You talk faster and louder than normal. You tend to laugh loudly.



## LIKING

You want to celebrate. You feel like spending time with people you love. You like to do active things, to use your energy in an exciting way.



## DISLIKING

You do not want to sit still, be alone, or go to bed. Despite your abundance of energy, you do not feel like task-oriented or planned activities.

## EXAMPLE

This morning, Lily jumped out of bed with great energy and excitement. Yesterday, her ideal company offered her a dream position. Last night, she called her parents and siblings, and she celebrated with her partner. The sun is out, and her partner is making her breakfast. She is now sending group messages to her close friends, proposing a spontaneous weekend trip to celebrate her success.



# 5. BOISTEROUS



## FEELING

You feel rowdy, exuberant, and unrestrained. There is an explosive energy inside you that needs to be released through physical activity.



## PERCEPTION

You see the world as a big playground. People and objects are there to be grabbed or pushed; surfaces are there to be jumped on or sat on. Life seems like a big adventure.



## REACTION

You react to people and events brashly and enthusiastically. You react to like-minded people by showing camaraderie and joviality. You are not bothered about what others think of you. You show little concern for those who are in a different mood.



## TENDENCY

You tend to be physically active and to enthusiastically touch people and things. You are loud and make big gestures. You behave overconfidently and recklessly. You express yourself without inhibition.



## LIKING

You feel like engaging in activities in which you can be physically active and outgoing. You feel like singing, shouting and making a mess of things. You do not avoid activities that are dangerous or risky.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like participating in activities that require you to be calm or to sit still. You do not want to be tidy or organized. You avoid activities where you have to be thoughtful or respectful.

## EXAMPLE

Tonight, Tom's local football team will play in the final for the championship. Together with 200 fans, he is walking towards the football arena. He is singing the team song at the top of his voice. His mates are there with him and they jokingly play-fight with each other, expressing their thrill and high energy.

# 6. REBELLIOUS



## FEELING

You feel passionate, devoted and recalcitrant. You feel misunderstood. You have a restless energy inside you that seeks an outlet. You feel the determination and conviction of the underdog.



## PERCEPTION

You see the world as an uptight place, full of nonsensical rules. There is an oppressive order or status quo that needs to be challenged. People seem to want to control or suppress you.



## REACTION

You react recklessly, stubbornly and uncooperatively. If things are not according to your wishes, you can be disrespectful or juvenile. If you think that people are trying to thwart you, you become disruptive or destructive.



## TENDENCY

You tend to act rather than think. You give people dirty or mischievous looks. You resist other people's opinions and involvement. You constantly challenge and provoke people.



## LIKING

You feel like carrying out activities that break rules or challenge conventions. You want to go out and be active. You seek like-minded people. You enjoy spontaneous activity.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like engaging in activities that are highly planned or structured. Most of all, you do not want to conform with or comply to other people's rules and norms.

## EXAMPLE

This month, Lili has made several travel arrangements. To comply with company rules, she has been using the preferred travel agency. She has been dissatisfied several times with the high costs of their services, which she has reported to management. For some unclear reason these complaints have never been followed up. Today, she decides to take a stand against the illogical rule: she books her flight with an agency that is cheaper and better.

# 7. VIGOROUS



## FEELING

You feel forceful, confident, and in control. You feel ambitious, determined and ready to take on the world. Your body is strong and your mind is sharp.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems ready to be conquered by you. It is full of opportunities, ready to be seized. There may well be challenges and obstacles but you are able to overcome them.



## REACTION

You react to people and things directly, resolutely and decisively. People may find you dominant and rude because you are not in any way restrained by politeness or caution.



## TENDENCY

You tend to gaze ahead and be fixated on one thing. You sit or stand upright with your head held high. You make brisk movements and talk loudly. You look people directly in the eye.



## LIKING

You feel like doing things that challenge your abilities. You want to pursue things that you are passionate about. You want to work in a goal-oriented way and finish things.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like being idle, passive or postponing things. You do not want to think things through a lot or fuss about details. You do not feel like taking part in idle or aimless activities.

## EXAMPLE

This morning, a mild and clear day in April, after a good night's sleep and a nutritious breakfast, Tom is on his bike to work. After two minutes, his smart watch indicates that he is cycling at 30 km/h, a speed he has not reached since last autumn. Now he feels all conditions are right for him to achieve a new personal record today. With resolution he starts increasing his speed.



# 8. PRODUCTIVE



## FEELING

You feel sharp, focused, alert, and confident. You have a calm, robust energy that keeps you going. You feel like nothing can stop you; you are ready to take on challenges.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems to be full of challenges, but you are the ideal person to tackle them. There is purpose and direction to your activity. You have things under control.



## REACTION

Because you are engrossed in an activity, you may react to people and events in a concise and straightforward way – but not unfriendly.



## TENDENCY

You tend to move in a fast and determined way. You sit or stand straight. You tend to talk in a louder voice. Your face has a neutral or serious expression.



## LIKING

You gravitate towards activities that are challenging and meaningful. You want to solve problems and accomplish things.



## DISLIKING

You do not want to be distracted and waste your time on meaningless, aimless, or non-urgent activities.

## EXAMPLE

At the end of her lunch break, Lily took a refreshing walk in the park next to her office building, and enjoyed a double espresso. She got back to work feeling super-sharp. An hour later, she looks at her watch and is surprised about how much she has managed to do in the last hour. She feels she is ready to complete the challenging project plan that she has struggled with for a month.

# 9. SERIOUS



FEELING

You feel earnest, composed, and focused. You do not feel any particular strong emotions.



PERCEPTION

The world seems a straightforward and functional place. Everything will function properly and in an orderly fashion as long as everyone abides by sensible norms and rules.



REACTION

You react to people and things rationally and moderately. Your responses are efficient and to the point. People who are in a different mood to you may find your reactions aloof and formal.



TENDENCY

You tend to sit up straight and make moderate, controlled movements. You have a neutral expression and look people in the eye.



LIKING

You feel like undertaking task-oriented activities. You feel like solving important problems in a controlled and conventional manner.



DISLIKING

You do not feel like carrying out activities that are not conducive to achieving goals or are not constructive. You do not feel like doing things that will involve you in frivolous or emotional situations.

EXAMPLE

Tom’s grandfathers, father and uncles were all veterans. Today is the yearly V-J day. At a military cemetery, he is attending a formal public ceremony for remembering and paying tribute to all the soldiers who died in all previous wars. Tom is dressed in dark clothing, feeling the magnitude of the moment, and standing straight among veterans and their families.

# 10. STRESSED



## FEELING

You feel hurried, restless and uncomfortable. Your mind is alert and activated. You feel a weight on your shoulders. Your heart pounds.



## PERCEPTION

You see the world as a demanding and cold place. Your surroundings seem busy and crowded. Your life is little more than a long 'to do' list. You have tunnel vision and only notice things that are relevant to the task in hand. Time seems to be ticking away at a merciless pace.



## REACTION

You react to people and things reluctantly and impatiently, because you do not want to be distracted from your task. Your responses are efficient and goal-oriented. They radiate little warmth or grace.



## TENDENCY

You tend to be serious and target-focused. You move restlessly. Your breathing is quick and shallow. You tend to close yourself off from other people, especially if they are not relevant to the task in hand.



## LIKING

You feel like being efficient and effective. You want to finish what you are doing, sometimes compulsively so.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like wasting time, even if the activity is pleasant. You do not feel like taking time for things or reflecting very much. You do not feel like conducting unfamiliar or unproductive activities.

## EXAMPLE

After lunch, Tom's manager gave him an urgent task. But just before that, a colleague reminded him of two project deadlines due tomorrow morning, which will require his full attention. Now, he has been working on the urgent task for three hours. He thinks he still may be able to complete both the task and the projects, but he will be short of time. He is seriously considering cancelling tonight's dinner with a friend.



# 11. ANXIOUS



## FEELING

You feel nervous, tense, and jittery. You sweat, your hands are clammy and your muscles are tight. You feel removed from the present moment. You feel highly alert and vulnerable.



## PERCEPTION

You see the world as an uncertain place full of insurmountable obstacles and indistinct threats. You feel that you have no control over events in your life.



## REACTION

You react to people and things impatiently. You respond absent-mindedly.



## TENDENCY

You tend to pace about or tap your fingers or toes frantically. You fidget with things or bite your nails. You dwell on things. Your focus is narrow, and shifts rapidly from one matter to another.



## LIKING

You feel like finishing or getting over whatever is making you nervous. Or, if that is not possible, you want to escape from it. You want to do something, but since little can be done, you resort to unproductive actions.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like seeking distraction in things that do not relate to your anxiety. You do not feel like trying non-urgent, new, or exciting things.

## EXAMPLE

This morning, Lily woke up realising that she has been too optimistic about the progress of her Master thesis. The submission deadline is in two days, but it is not yet in a good shape. She starts doubting whether she has done things right, not least because her advisor has not replied to her email for three days, which is unusual. Meanwhile, she needs to prepare for an important job interview scheduled for tomorrow – but she cannot focus her mind.

# 12. AGITATED



## FEELING

You feel tense, restless, and overstimulated. You are full of pent-up negative energy. You feel like a time bomb that is about to explode.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems offensive, dangerous, and out to get you. Your life is filled with obstacles and points of irritation that need to be removed.



## REACTION

You react to people and things in a hostile way, aggressively, and intensely. You are impatient, snappy, and judgemental. You respond to disturbances with violence and destruction.



## TENDENCY

You tend to make yourself big and to be very loud. You find it difficult to sit still. You lean forward and move briskly. You push, grab or lash out at people. You tend to treat objects roughly. You may even throw, hit, or kick them.



## LIKING

You feel like engaging in activities in which you can be active and where you can let off steam. You want to confront and fight others – physically or verbally. You feel like attacking everyone and everything that stands in your path.



## DISLIKING

You avoid activities where you have to be friendly, patient, or quiet. You do not want to do deal with sweet or frivolous things. You do not feel like taking the time to reflect on matters.

## EXAMPLE

Tom has just had a troubling day at work. His new project plan, which he is passionate about, was rejected by his boss for some nonsensical political reason. After work, he noticed a scratch on his car. On his way home, several drivers were getting on his nerves on the motorway. At home, he decides to listen to some peaceful music to calm himself down. Suddenly, his next-door neighbour starts practising his electric guitar.

# 13. MISERABLE



## FEELING

You feel awful and powerless. You feel crushed, worthless, and almost unable to breathe. The feeling is so bad that it can manifest itself as a physical pain, like a headache or nausea. You feel trapped in a seemingly endless preoccupation with negative things.



## PERCEPTION

You see the world as a grim, cruel place devoid of hope or joy. You see your hopes and dreams crumbling around you.



## REACTION

It is virtually impossible for people and events to affect you; you do not react at all. If you do react, it is irrationally or self-destructively. Your voice is weary.



## TENDENCY

You tend to be idle, for example, by staying in bed. You may stare, be blank, ruminate, or wallow in self-pity. You let your body and head hang. You may cry.



## LIKING

You feel like curling up in a corner and doing nothing. You want to end or abandon any ongoing activities and responsibilities. You withdraw from any social contact.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like doing anything. You especially shun new, challenging, task-oriented or social activities. You are not interested in constructive advice or solutions.

## EXAMPLE

Lily was invited to participate in a series of interviews and exams that could lead to her ideal new job. She dedicated two months to preparing for them, neglecting her friends and family. Hoping for that job, she turned down several other good opportunities. This afternoon she received a message that her application had been rejected. Now, at night, Lily lies curled up in bed, alone, staring into the darkness.



# 14. GRUMPY



## FEELING

You feel vexed, bad-tempered, and ungratified. You have a smouldering feeling in your chest and head.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems unfair and turned against you. Things are not going as they are supposed to. Everything around you is annoying. You view people's actions and intentions in a cynical light.



## REACTION

You react snappily and curtly. If people say something, you roll your eyes. You react stubbornly to suggestions. Your responses are petulant or sarcastic. You do not make an effort to be friendly, patient, or polite.



## TENDENCY

You tend to frown, grumble, and sulk. You blame others for unfortunate events. You cross your arms and close yourself off from social interaction. You remain quiet and passive.



## LIKING

You feel like doing things on your own. You enjoy activities that are destructive or annoying to others. You want other people to treat you nicely and 'put things right'.



## DISLIKING

You are not in the mood for anything that requires much effort or activity on your part. You do not feel like pleasing, helping, or accommodating other people.

## EXAMPLE

Lily feels that she was mistreated by her colleagues in a meeting yesterday. She has been ruminating on the experience, while forcing herself to behave in a friendly manner. At least she has something to look forward to for tonight: dinner at her favourite restaurant. However, a minute ago, her partner sent her a message saying that he had changed the reservation to a new restaurant that he would like to try. She is not amused; today is not her day.

# 15. GLOOMY



## FEELING

You feel sombre, down, or 'blue'. You see everything through a grey veil. You feel isolated. The weight of the world is pressing down on you.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems dark, cold, joyless, and without colour. It seems as if your life is predominantly touched by sorrow and bad fortune. You do not expect things to improve.



## REACTION

You react to people and events with little or no enthusiasm. When you do react, it is sluggishly and sadly.



## TENDENCY

You tend to sit alone somewhere, hang your head and be quiet. If you feel really gloomy, you may cry. You are inclined to dwell upon the negative things in your life.



## LIKING

You feel like retreating, isolating yourself from other people and other impulses. You want to 'cocoon'; curl up in a comfortable corner with something warm around you. You seek physical and mental comfort in familiar things.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like being active or outgoing. You shun other people, especially if they are cheerful. You dislike anything that is new or unfamiliar. You do not feel like working or doing other task-oriented activities.

## EXAMPLE

Tom hasn't been performing very well at work for the last couple of months. On top of that, his financial situation could be better and his relationship isn't really flourishing. He wants to make a change in life, but he doesn't really know where to start. He should talk about it, but he doesn't have the energy to reach out. Today is a grey day and Tom is alone at home, staring out of the window.

# 16. LETHARGIC



## FEELING

You feel sluggish, extinguished, and 'brain dead'. It seems as though your body has been drained of all its life force. Your limbs feel weak and you have trouble making even the smallest movement.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems desolate and barren. Nothing is interesting or appealing. People, things and events seem boring, predictable and meaningless.



## REACTION

You react reluctantly to people and events, because you do not expect anything to be interesting or relevant. If you react, it is listlessly and apathetically: slowly and without any interest or enthusiasm.



## TENDENCY

You tend to adopt a passive pose, like sitting or lying down. You do not make an effort to keep your body or head upright. You sigh and stare aimlessly. You tend to procrastinate.



## LIKING

You feel like engaging in passive activities that require the minimum of effort or enthusiasm. You feel like engaging in simple, mindless entertainment, like watching uncomplicated movies or checking social media. You prefer doing things alone.



## DISLIKING

You avoid activities that require any effort, passion, sociability, or animation. You do not feel like starting something new, making plans, or getting yourself organized.

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## EXAMPLE

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For the last three hours, Tom has been working on a simple repetitive task. The job is mentally tiring, lacking any form of intellectual challenge. He is now about halfway through the task. He decides to take a break, but he cannot think of anything interesting or refreshing to do. He feels numb, just sitting at his desk, procrastinating and staring blankly into the void.



# 17. RELAXED



## FEELING

You feel content, laid-back and mellow. Your mind is occupied with simple things. Your body feels comfortable and somewhat lazy.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems a simple and sympathetic place. You feel the sun on your face and a breeze through your hair. There may be challenges in the future but, right now, you are carefree.



## REACTION

You react to people and things patiently and with a smile. You are unconstrained, open-minded, and take time to formulate your responses. When you are faced with challenges or complex matters, you may react reluctantly.



## TENDENCY

You tend to sit or lie back. Your eyes are closed or half-closed. If possible, you put your feet up. If you move, it is slowly and steadily. You tend to be idle and oblivious to time.



## LIKING

You feel like doing activities that are calm, pleasant and familiar, like talking, reading or watching something. If the activity is physical, you prefer something small and simple, like stone skimming across calm waters. You want to enjoy the moment and take time for things.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like doing anything that is demanding or exciting. You are not motivated to get going or to change activities. You do not want to exert yourself mentally or physically.

## EXAMPLE

Yesterday, Lily completed a two-week intensive project, for which she had worked for 10 hours every day. She delivered the results on Friday afternoon. Today is a cold but very sunny Saturday. She is enjoying the moment just on her own at home, sitting next to her south-facing French windows for a winter sunbathe.

# 18. PEACEFUL



## FEELING

You feel tranquil, serene and connected to the moment. Your body is comfortable and your mind is calm and clear. You are in harmony with the world and your surroundings. You feel safe and free of worry.



## PERCEPTION

You see the world as a vast place. You are merely a tiny part of that whole. There are many forces at work in the world but they are in balance and do not require your intervention or involvement.



## REACTION

You react to people and events in a graceful and dignified way. You react to challenges with patience and an open mind. You react to pleasant things by giving them your attention and by showing appreciation.



## TENDENCY

You have a tendency to remain motionless and keep yourself comfortable. Your breathing is slow and steady. You move slowly and deliberately.



## LIKING

You gravitate towards calm and dignified activities, such as reading, reflecting, or walking in nature. You enjoy using all your senses to observe and explore things. You like to take time for things and let your mind wander.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like engaging in activities that are stressful or exciting. You avoid activities that require too much physical effort. You want to keep away from violence or aggression.

## EXAMPLE

After two extremely busy months at work, Lily is enjoying a 10-day offline holiday in a Nordic forest by a lake. Today is the third day. She started the day with some unwinding jogging along the lake accompanied by the sound of singing birds. Then, after a sauna, a shower and eating some wild blueberries, she is now sitting by the lake, enjoying the breeze and sunshine with her eyes closed.

# 19. DREAMY



### FEELING

You feel detached, relaxed, and comfortable. Your mind drifts. You feel as though you are floating though time and space.



### PERCEPTION

The world seems a pleasant and unthreatening place. You do not see obstacles or limitations.



### REACTION

You react to people and things passively and lazily. You are easily distracted from what is happening around you.



### TENDENCY

You tend to be vague. You relax your muscles and let your head rest. You have a slight smile. You close your eyes or gaze into the distance.



### LIKING

You feel like forgetting the world around you and escaping. You prefer to be idle. You want to remain in your fantasy world.



### DISLIKING

You do not feel like doing anything that requires physical activity, mental effort, or social interaction. You avoid task-oriented activities.

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## EXAMPLE

On a sunny Saturday morning, Tom is taking a long and slow walk alone in the woods next to his home. Somewhere in the woods, his mind starts to wander, and he loses track of time. Only when he is walking out of the woods, back into the civilised world, does he start to become aware again of himself and his environment.

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# 20. SENTIMENTAL



## FEELING

You feel nostalgic, melancholic, or 'bittersweet'. You feel simultaneously vulnerable and connected to the world. You have a lump in your throat and tears are welling up in your eyes.



## PERCEPTION

The world seems to be both a beautiful and a painful place full of touching stories. You sense the finiteness and fleeting nature of existence. Your past seems full of missed opportunities and beautiful things that will never return.



## REACTION

You react slowly and distractedly to people and events. If something attracts your interest, you react to it thoughtfully and emotionally.



## TENDENCY

You tend to be quiet and sit still. You smile and have watery eyes. You ponder on past events and the world at large. You are inclined to idealize the past.



## LIKING

You want to engage in calm activities, like listening to music or watching a slow-paced film. If you are with others, you feel like exchanging beautiful stories or reflecting on the past.



## DISLIKING

You do not feel like participating in activities that are very organized or goal-oriented. You do not want to concentrate to an arduous or difficult task. You do not feel like thinking about the future or making plans.

## EXAMPLE

Lily had a wonderful summer with her family and best friends. She will soon move to another country for her new job, which she has been looking forward to. Yet, with the departure date getting closer, she starts to wonder when she will be able to enjoy such a summer again, what her life will be like without her family and friends. She notices that the leaves have started turning yellow and falling.

# Typology Development and Image Selection

## Typology Development

The holistic mood typology was generated by combining the results of two studies. The first study combined a lexical analysis and researcher introspections. Three researchers examined 135 mood words found in the literature, which resulted in an initial typology of 18 mood states and corresponding descriptions. The second study was a phenomenological inquiry that validated and enriched the initial typology. A two-week mood diary study with a group of nine co-researchers generated 159 introspective mood samples. The inquiry resulted in the final typology of 20 mood states and refined descriptions. The details of the typology development can be found in the following paper:

Xue, H., Desmet, P.M.A., & Fokkinga, S.F. (2020). Mood granularity for design: Introducing a holistic typology of 20 Mood States. *International Journal of Design*.

## Image Selection

The 80 images in this booklet were selected with a two-staged procedure. The first step was to select a broad collection of 200 images from online image databases. Next, a questionnaire study (N = 66) determined the degree to which each of the 200 images expresses the target mood. Respondents rated each image for the degree to which it is a good representation of the target mood. The final image collection was selected from those images that were found to be good representations. The details of the selection procedure can be found in the following report:

Desmet, P.M.A., Xue, H., & Fokkinga, S.F. (2020). *Developing a collection of 80 mood-expressive images*. Internal report. Delft: Delft University of Technology.

# Colophon

This publication was created by researchers at the Delft Institute of Positive Design. It was based on insights obtained in a previously published phenomenological mood inquiry: Xue, H., Desmet, P.M.A., & Fokkinga, S.F. (2020). Mood granularity for design: Introducing a holistic typology of 20 mood states. *International Journal of Design*.

*Design researchers at the Delft Institute of Positive Design (TU Delft) seek to advance our understanding of the ways products and services can be designed to foster human happiness. We develop tools that designers and organizations can use to tap into the vast potential of lasting wellbeing. On our website, you will find more tools and a rich library of open-access research. See [www.diopd.org](http://www.diopd.org).*

## Evolving Platform

This holistic mood typology is an open and evolving platform for the exploration of mood granularity for design research and practice. Previous versions can be obtained upon request.

## Photos and Graphics

Images were selected from copyright-free image banks and purchased from Shutterstock.com. Mood manifestation icons were created by Alev Sönmez. If you believe that image usage infringes established copyrights, please contact us (H.Xue@tudelft.nl) and we will correct accordingly.

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