



MENTAL HEALTH Worksheets

**Journaling prompts &
exercises to increase your
self-awareness and improve
your emotional resilience.**

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Manage Your Distressing Emotions

What the Emotion Is Trying to Tell You

The following is a quick guide to the messages that basic emotions can convey to us.

Grief.

Grief helps us take time to slow down, process loss, and make the transition more smoothly. It also signals to others that we need support and empathy.

Anger.

Anger motivates us to solve conflicts, make things right, and remove threats. Anger releases extra energy so we can take action.

Fear.

Fear signals that we're perceiving a threat. It makes us alert and focused on finding out what's wrong and how to protect ourselves from danger.

Shame.

Shame helps us fit in. It warns us and prevents us from doing something or saying something that is possibly offensive, or punishable within the prevailing culture and norms.

Guilt.

Guilt tells us that we've done something we regret. It motivates us to apologize and make amends. It also prevents us from making the same mistake again.

Sadness.

Sadness tells us that we lost something important to us, or were unable to get or achieve what we want. Sadness can help us slow down to reflect and motivate us to make changes in life.

Disgust.

Disgust helps us stay away from potentially hazardous situations (germs, foul-smelling objects that could present a danger, etc.)

1. Name Your Emotion

The process of labeling your emotion and cognitively interpreting it will help you experience less intense and more short-lived strong emotions.

Here is a list of emotions to help you identify your emotions better:

Anger

Disgust: Contempt, disgust, revulsion

Envy: Envy, jealousy

Exasperation: Exasperation, frustration

Irritation: Aggravation, agitation, annoyance, grouchiness, grumpiness, irritation

Rage: Bitterness, dislike, ferocity, fury, hate, hostility, loathing, outrage, rage, resentment, scorn, spite, vengefulness, wrath

Torment: Torment

Fear

Alarm, fear, fright, horror, hysteria, mortification, panic, shock, terror

Nervousness: Anxiety, apprehension, distress, dread, nervousness, tenseness, uneasiness, worry

Joy

Cheerfulness: Amusement, bliss, cheerfulness, delight, ecstasy, elation, enjoyment, euphoria, gaiety, gladness, glee, happiness, jolliness, joviality, joy, jubilation, satisfaction

Contentment: Contentment, pleasure

Optimism: Eagerness, hope, optimism

Pride: Pride, triumph

Relief: Relief

Zest: Enthusiasm, excitement, exhilaration, thrill, zeal, zest

Love

Affection: Adoration, affection, attraction, caring, compassion, fondness, liking, love, sentimentality, tenderness

Longing: Longing

Lust: Arousal, desire, infatuation, lust, passion

Sadness

Disappointment: Disappointment, dismay, displeasure

Neglect: Alienation, defeat, dejection, embarrassment, homesickness, humiliation, insecurity, isolation, insult, loneliness, neglect, rejection

Sadness: Depression, despair, gloom, glumness, grief, hopelessness, melancholy, misery, sadness, sorrow, unhappiness, woe

Shame: Guilt, regret, remorse, shame

Suffering: Agony, anguish, hurt, suffering

Sympathy: Pity, sympathy

Surprise

Amazement, astonishment, surprise

2. Distance Yourself From Your Emotions

By distancing yourself from your emotions, you recognize that emotions are meant to be fleeting and temporary.

Start Using “I Am Feeling” Statements Instead of “I Am” Statements

Refer To Yourself In The Second Person Or Even The Third Person

Another language shift that can help you distance yourself from your emotions is to refer to yourself in the second person (“You are feeling anxious right now”) or even the third person (“[my name] is feeling anxious right now”).

2. Identify the cause behind your emotions

- What event triggered the emotion (be specific)?

- Can I solve or lessen the problem? Is there any action to take?

- If there is nothing I can do but the problem is time-limited, how can I comfort or distract myself?

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Challenge Your Negative Thoughts

Relieve emotions of guilt and anger by addressing negative thoughts that are fueling them.

1. Identify your negative thoughts

2. Challenge your negative thoughts by answering the following questions:

- What evidence do I have that what I believe is actually true?

- Do I know for certain that the worst will happen?

- Is there another possible explanation for that person's behavior that isn't about me?

- Am I confusing a thought with a fact?

- Am I falling into a thinking trap (e.g., catastrophizing or overestimating danger)?

- How many times has happened before?

- Is so important that my future depends on it?

- If it did happen, what could I do to cope with or handle it?

- Am I condemning myself as a total person on the basis of a single event?

- Am I concentrating on my weakness and forgetting my strengths?

- Am I blaming myself for something which is not really my fault?

- Am I taking something personally which has little or nothing to do with me?

- Am I assuming I can do nothing to change my situation?

- What would I tell a friend if he/she had the same thought?

Manage Your Anger

Because anger usually builds up, it's important to be tuned in to our feelings in order to notice when we begin to feel irritated and address that.

Anger Feelings

Amazed	Defensive	Offended
Accused	Exacerbated	Outraged
Aggravated	Frustrated	Rebellious
Agitated	Furious	Resistant
Angry	Hostile	Scorned
Annoyed	Impatient	Spiteful
Bitter	Infuriated	Vengeful
Contemptuous	Insulted	
Cross	Jealous	

1. Using the list above, what are some words that you would use to describe being:

slightly angry? _____

moderately angry? _____

really angry? _____

2. Track your anger levels every day.

- On a scale from 0 to 10 my anger is _____

- What is contributing to this level of anger?

3. What feelings other than anger are you experiencing?

4. What do you think contributed to your feelings of anger?

5. Do you notice any unmet expectations that are contributing to your anger?

6. What can you do that will help resolve this issue?

7. What would make you feel better?

8. Who are the safe people that you can talk to when you're angry?

9. What physical activities can you do that will help relieve anger? The following are some suggestions. You can circle the items that you find comforting and add your own ideas:

- Getting some sunlight.
- Doing some yoga poses.
- Meditating or practicing mindfulness.
- Taking a walk.
- Taking slow, deep breaths.
- Making a cup of tea.
- Taking a bath or shower.

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Manage Your Anxiety

Identify Your Symptoms

Think about a situation that triggered your anxiety. How did you react? What did you feel in your body? Write down what you remember about the situation.

2. Have you been diagnosed with any medical conditions or other mental health conditions that might contribute to your anxiety? Do you sleep well? Do you eat healthy foods? Do you exercise regularly? These areas can also impact your anxiety and vice versa.

3. Have you tried medication for your anxiety before? If so, did it improve your symptoms and did the improvement last over the long haul? Write down your thoughts about medications.

4. What motivates you to overcome your anxiety? Answering this question will help you work on overcoming your anxiety.

Develop Trigger Awareness

Think about times you experienced intense feelings of anxiety. List the triggers that may have provoked anxiety and rank its degree of intensity on a scale of 1 to 10 (0 being the lowest degree of anxiety and 10 being the highest degree of anxiety).

Write down any thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, and behavioral responses that you then experienced.

Situation	Physical sensations	Degree of intensity	Thoughts	Behavioral responses
Example: Giving a presentation in front of my work colleagues	Tightness in chest, accelerated heart rate	7/10	Imagining my boss thinking I'm incompetent	I went quiet

1. Reflect on the consequences of anxiety. What problems did it cause? And what problems does it generally cause in your life?

2. Describe the various areas of your life that are potentially impacted by anxiety? (e.g., relationships with friends and family, work, education, recreational activities, health, etc.)

3. What is the worst thing about being anxious, worried, or fearful?

Challenge Your Anxious Thoughts

The following are some common thought patterns you may experience when you're anxious.

WHAT IF?

Thoughts such as, "What if I say the wrong thing?" or "What if I start sweating and shaking when I am at dinner?" usually involve jumping to conclusion about what could happen in the future and imagining the worst-case scenario.

Do you experience a lot of "what if" thoughts? Write down some examples:

THE CRITIC

Reviewing situations that happened and focusing on what went wrong can cause us to become critical of ourselves. Such thought can go something like, "That was stupid," or, "I'm such a failure."

You may start thinking in terms of black and white. Things are either good or bad, right or wrong, nothing in between. For example, if you spill a drink at a party, then it means the whole party is ruined and you'll never be invited back again.

Write some of these thoughts below:

Evidence for my thought	Evidence against my thought

Safety Behaviors

Safety behaviors refer to actions you may use to reduce fear and anxiety in a specific situation, such as leaving the room, or taking meds to reduce your physical reaction.

Although these behaviors reduce anxiety in the short term, they prolong it over the long term and may even limit your life. For example, if you avoid social situations to reduce your anxiety, you may eventually isolate yourself, or miss out of career and life opportunities.

Following are examples of safety behavior. Check the ones you tend to use and add ones of your own:

- Avoiding situations by staying at home
- Carefully monitoring your bodily symptoms in an effort to control them
- Escaping from situations that make you feel anxious, such as leaving a party early
- Looking at your phone to avoid people
- Needing a companion along with you for support
- Over-rehearsing a presentation
- Seeking constant reassurance from others
- Other: _____

Face Your Fears

1. Consider anxiety-provoking situation you tend to avoid. Make a list of these situations and rank them from the least anxiety-provoking to the highest anxiety-provoking.

2. Choose the least anxiety-provoking item on your hierarchy.

Set a realistic goal for how long to stay in the situation – 5 to 10 minutes can be ideal for you to feel your anxiety decreasing.

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS

The S.M.A.R.T. goals acronym refers to goals that are specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-based.

Specific. A goal should be well-defined and easy to understand.

For example, the general goal “feel less anxious” could be transformed into the specific goal “deliver a presentation without feeling significant anxiety.”

Measurable. A goal should allow you to track your progress and know when it has been achieved. For example, a measurable goal may be to keep a log of your anxious thoughts so you can later reframe them.

Action-oriented. Goals should also state actions that you can take to make progress. Rather than setting a goal to “feel less anxious in social situation,” you may try, “Have a small talk with the clerk in the next week.”

Realistic. It wouldn’t be realistic that you will never have another anxious thought. But a more realistic goal could be to have an effective plan to help you manage anxious thoughts.

Time-based. This means setting a time frame for your goal to be achieved. For example, “Saying hello to a neighbor once in the coming weekend.”

Need More Help Managing Your Anxiety?

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<https://payhip.com/b/yTR9q>

Get to Know Yourself

Use the following journaling prompts to get to know yourself better:

1. If I could talk to my younger self, I would say ...

2. When times get tough I want to remember that ...

3. If I didn't have any fear I would ...

4. Right now my greatest challenge is ...

5. I feel most energized when...

6. Things I would like to say no to are...

7. Things I would like to say yes to are...

8. What are my strengths?

9. What is my proudest accomplishment?

10. What new activities am I interested in or willing to try?

11. If I had only one wish, what would it be?

12. What do I like about my job?

13. What am I worried about?

14. What am I ashamed of?

15. Where do I feel safest?

Self-Exploration

Try to practice self-exploration with bother questions and answers coming directly from you. Think of it as being interviewed by yourself.

Questions	Answers

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Practice Self-Care

1. What do you usually do to fill your self-care cup?

2. When you don't have the time or energy to follow through with these activities, do you notice a difference?

Here are 100 examples of self-care ideas to choose from:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend a concert• Attend a sporting event• Bake• Breathe deeply• Call a helpline• Call an old friend• Care for a houseplant• Clean• Collect things• Color• Cook a healthy meal• Craft• Create an affirmation• Dance• De-clutter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hydrate• Journal• Knit• Light a candle• Light incense• Listen to a podcast• Listen to music• Listen to the radio• Listen to your favorite song• Look at old photos• Look at the sky• Make a gratitude list• Make a positive playlist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rearrange furniture• Relaxation techniques• Run• Set a goal• Sing• Sit in the sun• Smile• Solve a puzzle• Stretch• Take a bath• Take a shower• Take pictures• Take your vitamins
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do crossword puzzles • Do something nice for someone else • Donate • Eat a healthy meal • Embrace silence • Exercise • Forgive someone • Garden • Get a haircut/hair done • Get a manicure • Get a massage • Get a pedicure • Give a compliment • Give a hug • Go for a bike ride • Go outside • Go to a church function • Go to a garage sale • Go to a park, fair, or zoo • Go to the library • Groom yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make travel plans • Meditate • Meet a friend • Nap • Organize your room • Paint • Plan a trip • Play a game • Play a sport • Play an instrument • Play videogames • Play with a pet • Practice assertiveness • Practice mindfulness • Pray • Read affirmations • Read books or magazines • Read something inspiring • Reading through old letters or journals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think positively • Try a DIY project • Try a new recipe • Unplug from social media • Use a fidget toy • Use essential oils • Use visualization • Volunteer • Walk • Watch funny videos • Watch the sunset • Watch your favorite movie • Watch your favorite show • Work • Write a letter • Write a poem • Write a song • Write a story • Yoga • Other_____ _____ _____ _____
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Need More Help Practicing Self-Care?

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Boost Your Self-Esteem

1. Write down about personal causes and experiences that affected your self-esteem. (e.g. Repeated experience of being put down, Possible experience of being treated in a particular way within a family framework, Criticism and negative messages from parents or school environment, Bullying from a parental figure or school peers, etc.)

2. Were there times when your self-esteem was a little better than it is now? Was there anything you were doing before, that you are not doing now (reading, writing, sport, cooking, meeting friends, gardening, taking a walk, traveling, painting, etc.)?

3. Consider the strengths below and choose the ones that describe you. You can add ones of your own:

accepting of others, brave, cheerful, committed, composed, confident, self-assured, cooperative, creative in problem-solving, curious, reliable, moral, honest, forgiving, generous, grateful, humble, fair, kind, compassionate, loving, loyal, open-minded, optimistic, patient, persistent, wise, punctual,

rational, self-accepting, able to regulate emotions, sensitive, peaceful, sincere, spontaneous, consistent, trustworthy, warm, friendly.

4. Write down five positive statements about yourself that are meaningful, realistic, and true. (e.g. “I am a responsible member of my family,” or, “I am a supportive listener,” or, “I treat others with respect and I am open to new ideas.”)

Once you’ve completed your list, meditate on each one of these statements and the evidence for its accuracy for a minute or two

5. Create a list of positive affirmations personal to you.

Following is a list of statements of a positive inner dialogue:

- I accept myself because I realize that there is more to me than my current skill levels and shortcomings.

- I examine criticism for ways to improve, without questioning my worth as a human being.
- I notice and enjoy each achievement or progress, no matter how insignificant it may seem to me or others.
- I expect others to like and respect me.
- I can laugh at some of the ridiculous things I do every now and then.
- I enjoy making others feel happier and glad for the time that we share.

Practice saying these affirmations to yourself at least once a day.

6. Challenge limiting beliefs about yourself.

- Identify your limiting beliefs about your abilities, personality, how you ought to act, other people, or even the world in general such as telling yourself “good things never last.”

- What would be a less extreme belief (or beliefs) that I might hold?

- What would be the advantages for me of holding the new belief(s) rather than the limiting one(s)?

- What would be the potential disadvantages for me of holding the new belief(s) instead of the old one(s)?

Need More Help Boosting Self-Esteem?

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Quit Your Addiction

1. What function does your addiction serve in your life? Is it keeping you from having to deal with difficult emotions?

2. What was going on in the period prior to the addiction?

3. If you persist in this addiction, what are the top three worst consequences?

4. If you give up this addiction, what can you gain?

5. What do you want my life to look like a year from now? What do you need to do to get there?

6. What can you learn from this experience?

Need More Help Quitting Technology Addiction?

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Gratitude Journaling Prompts

1. What's your definition of gratitude?

2. How easy is it for you to express your gratitude? Why you think that is?

3. Do you or have you ever kept a gratitude journal?

4. Do you think that expressing gratitude affected your emotional health? If so, how?

5. Do you think that expressing gratitude affected your stress levels? If so, how?

6. List any other benefits that you noticed as a result of expressing gratitude.

7. When you experience or witness someone being ungrateful, how does that make you feel? Write down some examples.

8. What are you most grateful for at this very moment?

9. What are you most grateful for on a regular basis?

10. Write about the following:

- A simple pleasure that you're grateful for.

- Something that you're grateful to have today that you didn't have a year ago.

- A happy memory.

- An accomplishment you're proud of.

- A possession that makes your life easier.

- Something or someone that makes you feel safe.

- Someone who inspires you.

- What you like most about your job.

- A public service or organization that you are grateful for.

- Book(s) are you grateful for.

- A teacher or mentor that you're grateful for.

- A family member that you're grateful for.

- A tradition that you're grateful for.

- A mistake or failure that you are grateful for.

- Skill(s) you have that you're grateful for.

- A time when you felt overwhelmed with gratitude.



I AM GRATEFUL



THINGS THAT MAKE ME FEEL LOVED

1.
2.
3.

THINGS I FEEL GRATEFUL FOR

1.
2.
3.

WHAT WAS THE BEST THING THAT
HAPPENED TO ME TODAY?



Affirmations

Affirmations are practical, positive self-talk statements that can empower you and increase self-love.

Here are some examples. Select the ones that resonate with you:

- I can learn from my mistakes.
- I can make a difference.
- I am enough.
- I am worthy of love.
- I am lovable.
- I choose kindness.
- I am in charge of how I feel and I choose to feel happy.
- I am open to healing.
- I am peaceful and whole.
- I am still learning so it's okay to make mistakes.
- I am worthy of investing in myself.
- I breathe in trust, I exhale doubt.
- I celebrate the good qualities in others and myself.
- I nourish myself with kind words and joyful foods.
- I speak my needs and I receive them abundantly.

- I open my mind to endless opportunities surrounding me
- I have the ability to change anything in my life
- I have confidence in myself and my abilities

Create an affirmation of your own:

Practice saying these affirmations to yourself at least once a day.

After Therapy Journaling Prompts

If you're seeing a therapist or a counselor, use these prompts after your therapy session for reflection:

1. How are you feeling after your therapy session?

2. What was the hardest part about the session?

3. What did you learn about yourself in the session?

4. What is one thing you wish you could have told your therapist?

5. Was there something you wanted to discuss today but it didn't come up?

6. What are some practical tools that you learned today that will help you when you are struggling?

7. How do you feel therapy is helping you move toward your goal?

8. How could your experience in therapy be improved?

9. What skills can you practice before your next therapy session?

10. Did you have any intrusive thoughts or fleeting sensations during or after the session?

100 Feeling Words

Agitated	Enthusiastic	Optimistic
Alert	Excited	Ostracized
Alienated	Fearful	Passive
Amazed	Focused	Peaceful
Angry	Fortunate	Perplexed
Annoyed	Frustrated	Playful
Apathetic	Furious	Powerful
Appalled	Grateful	Productive
Appreciated	Happy	Proud
Apprehensive	Heartbroken	Rejected
Astonished	Honored	Remorseful
Awed	Hopeful	Resentful
Betrayed	Hopeless	Sad
Bored	Horrified	Safe
Calm	Humiliated	Scared
Caring	Inadequate	Sensitive
Chipper	Independent	Serene
Committed	Inferior	Shocked
Compassionate	Infuriated	Stressed
Concerned	Insecure	Submissive
Confident	Inspired	Sullen
Confused	Intrigued	Thoughtful
Content	Irate	Threatened
Creative	Irritated	Trustful
Curious	Joyful	Uninterested
Dedicated	Listless	Unworthy
Defensive	Lonely	Vigilant
Dejected	Loving	Vulnerable
Disappointed	Mad	Weak
Disgusted	Miserable	Weak
Eager	Motivated	Withdrawn
Embarrassed	Neglected	Worried
Encouraged	Nervous	
Enraged	Offended	

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- *Hadijah*, Counselor/ IneffableLiving Founder + Editor