



EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING · CLIENT HANDOUT

Understanding your emotional responses

A guide to noticing your feelings, listening to your signals, and tracking your responses over seven days.

An emotion can arrive before you find words for it. You do not have to fix it right away. Start by noticing what happened, how it felt, and what you need now.

A RESPONSE HAS SEVERAL PARTS



SITUATION

Something happens

A silence, a conversation, a worry, or an expectation. The context matters, too.



EXPERIENCE

Something shifts inside

Feelings, sensations, and thoughts arise. Sometimes you can name them. Sometimes you cannot yet.



RESPONSE

You try to protect yourself

You may reach for closeness, defend yourself, or pull away. Notice the effect your response has.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDOUT

01

Pause for a moment

Use the check-in to name what you feel, without needing an exact answer.

02

Record one moment

Explore one situation and keep a brief record over seven days, at your own pace.

03

Notice what repeats

Look for patterns and choose one small thing to practice or bring to a session.

KEEP IN MIND

The goal is not to feel less or get it perfect. It is to understand yourself better and have more choices in how you respond.

Choose experiences you can recall without feeling overwhelmed. You can skip questions or stop. This handout is educational and does not replace an individual assessment or treatment.

EMOTIONAL CHECK-IN

How am I feeling right now?

Take a moment to notice. You can check more than one option or use your own words.

Date: _____ Time: _____

WHAT I FEEL

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ☐ Joy | ☐ Calm | ☐ Sadness |
| ☐ Anger | ☐ Fear | ☐ Worry |
| ☐ Shame | ☐ Guilt | ☐ Loneliness |
| ☐ Frustration | ☐ Confusion | ☐ Relief |

Another feeling, or something I cannot name yet: _____

HOW STRONG IT FEELS

Circle the number that best describes how strong the feeling is. This is a personal reference, not a test.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0 · barely noticeable				5 · moderate intensity			10 · very intense			

SIGNALS I NOTICE

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Tension in my jaw or shoulders | ☐ Tightness in my chest or throat |
| ☐ Restlessness or an urge to move | ☐ Tiredness or heaviness |
| ☐ A change in my breathing | ☐ Difficulty concentrating |
| ☐ Trouble noticing what I feel | ☐ No clear signal |

Another signal: _____

WHAT I MIGHT NEED

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ☐ Rest | ☐ Clarity | ☐ Support |
| ☐ Space | ☐ Closeness | ☐ A boundary |

Right now, I need...

A word or a short phrase is enough.

Feeling an emotion does not mean you have to act on it immediately. You can acknowledge it and give yourself time to decide what to do.

ONE SPECIFIC MOMENT

From what happened to what I need

Choose a recent situation you can reflect on with some steadiness. Speak for yourself; you do not have to guess what someone else was thinking.

A BRIEF EXAMPLE

What happened: my message went unanswered. **My interpretation:** "I don't matter to them." **Feeling:** sadness. **Urge:** to confront them. **Another option:** asking when we can talk.

1. What happened?

Describe what you saw or heard before adding conclusions.

2. What did I feel and think?

Name a feeling, a body signal, and the meaning that came to mind.

3. How did I respond?

What did I do, say, or avoid? How did it affect me or the situation?

4. What did I need?

Perhaps support, respect, rest, clarity, safety, or closeness.

5. What would I like to try next time?

Choose one small action: ask for time, ask a question, or express a boundary.

Understanding a response does not excuse hurting someone. If there are threats, coercion, or violence, put safety first and seek appropriate support. You do not have to resolve it by changing how you communicate.

DAILY TRACKING

Seven days of noticing

Record one moment each day in a few words. If you miss a day, continue the next day. You do not need to catch up.

Example: sadness · 6/10 | my message went unanswered | I asked for clarity and spoke with someone I trust.

Day	Feeling and intensity 0–10	What happened? What did I notice?	What did I do? What helped?
Day 1 Date: _____			
Day 2 Date: _____			
Day 3 Date: _____			
Day 4 Date: _____			
Day 5 Date: _____			
Day 6 Date: _____			
Day 7 Date: _____			

CONSIDER THE CONTEXT

Rest, stress, and what happens in your relationships can affect how you feel. This record is for noticing, not judging yourself or making a diagnosis.

If you like, add a word about what you needed. The numbers do not have to go down for this practice to be useful.

AT THE END OF THE WEEK

What I am beginning to understand

Return to your record with curiosity. Look for connections without needing to explain everything.

What feeling or situation came up more than once?

Notice what repeated and what was different.

What signals helped me recognize what I was feeling?

Think of a signal you might notice a little earlier next time.

What helped, even a little?

A pause, a conversation, a boundary, rest, or another resource.

ONE STEP FOR NEXT WEEK

When I notice _____

I would like to try _____

I can ask for support from _____

You can bring these pages to a session and share only what you want to. One small observation can open an important conversation.

If distress is intense, persistent, or disrupts daily life, consider professional support. If you are in immediate danger, call 911. In the United States, call or text 988 if you are in crisis.