
Exercise: Emotional Record

To help you recognise your emotions, it's often helpful to say how you're feeling out loud. This method of labeling might sound silly at first, but the act of saying how you feel out loud will highlight your emotions for you and help you pay extra attention to what you're experiencing. Describing your emotions aloud, especially your overwhelming emotions, can also help deflate your distressing feelings. So the more you can talk about an emotion, the less urge you might have to do something about it. You do not have to scream how you feel; it might be enough to say your emotion quietly to yourself. Just find what works best for you. Say to yourself: "Right now I feel...". And remember to pay attention to your pleasant and joyful emotions too. The more you're able to recognise them and say them out loud, the more fully you'll be able to enjoy those feelings.

Then, in order to further reinforce the experience, record your emotions in your Emotional Record. Recording your feelings throughout the week will help you recognise, label and describe your emotions. Use the example of the Emotional Record to help you make a note of how you felt, whether or not you describe your emotion out loud, and what you did in response to your emotion.

EXAMPLE: EMOTIONAL RECORD

When Did It Happen and Where Were You?	How Did You Feel? ("Right now, I feel...")	Did You Say How You Felt Out Loud?	What Did You Do After You Recognised How You Felt?
<i>Thursday night, at home</i>	<i>I feel angry.</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>I went to the kitchen and had a glass of wine.</i>
<i>Thursday night, at home</i>	<i>I feel sad.</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>I tried to go to sleep, but I kept thinking about how sad I was.</i>
<i>Friday morning, on the bus</i>	<i>I feel agitated.</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>I tried to calm down by distracting myself and reading the newspaper.</i>
<i>Friday morning, at work</i>	<i>I feel pissed off.</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>I went outside and had a cigarette.</i>
<i>Friday afternoon, at work</i>	<i>I feel jealous.</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>I continued to ignore my friend who's dating a guy that I like.</i>
<i>Friday night, at home</i>	<i>I feel lonely.</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>I decided to go to the movies by myself and have a good time.</i>
<i>Saturday afternoon, at the park</i>	<i>I feel happy.</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>I stayed at the park with my friends.</i>
<i>Saturday night, at Ben's house</i>	<i>I feel cheerful.</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>I didn't say much to anyone because I didn't want to mess up my feelings.</i>

EMOTIONAL RECORD

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