UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS

Understanding My Emotions

A gentle guide to noticing, naming and responding to feelings

Emotions are information, not instructions

Emotions can tell us something about our needs, experiences, relationships and surroundings. They can feel pleasant, uncomfortable, mixed or difficult to name. There is no correct way to feel.

The emotion pathway

Situation or trigger > Body sensations > Emotion > Thoughts > Urge or action. These parts influence one another; noticing them can create space for choice.

A useful question

Instead of asking “Why am I like this?”, try “What might this feeling be telling me?”

More than one emotion can be present

You might feel relieved and sad, excited and frightened, or angry and hurt at the same time. Emotions also change in intensity. You do not have to identify them perfectly.

When feelings become intense

Pause if possible. Ground yourself in the present, loosen your shoulders, take a comfortable breath and seek support when needed. You can return to reflection later.

WORKSHEET 1

Name the Feeling

Recognise the emotion without judging yourself

What happened just before I noticed the feeling?

What emotion words might fit? (e.g. disappointed, worried, lonely, hopeful)

Where do I notice this feeling in my body?

How strong is it right now, from 0 to 10?

WORKSHEET 2

My Emotional Signals

Explore how emotions show up in body, thoughts and behaviour

What sensations do I notice? (e.g. tension, warmth, restlessness)

What thoughts appear alongside this emotion?

What do I feel an urge to do?

What might I need right now?

WORKSHEET 3

Respond With Care

Choose a supportive response rather than reacting automatically

Which feeling or situation would I like to respond to differently?

What would a compassionate response sound like?

What is one small action that might help?

Who or what could support me if this feels difficult?

REFLECTION & SUPPORT

My Emotional Check-In

Bring together what you have noticed and what helps

My check-in sequence

Notice > Name > Allow > Explore the need > Choose a response

An emotion I understand a little better now:

One early signal I want to notice:

One supportive action I can try this week:

A compassionate reminder

Emotions are not problems to fix. You can acknowledge a feeling without acting on every urge. If emotions become unmanageable, or you feel unsafe, seek support from a trusted person or appropriate professional.