

Feeling

When we are able to recognize the physiological and thought patterns associated with our feelings, it increases our ability to respond in a compassionate and mindful way to those experiences. Initially identifying and understanding how our minds, bodies, and emotions interact can help us feel more connected, alive, and in tune with our true self. This activity is intended to help you recognize the interrelated nature of these experiences and to work towards responding in a more caring and empowered way, regardless of what emotions or feelings are present.

ACTIVITY

As a way to become more aware of and in tune with your emotional experiences, it can be beneficial to associate your emotional experiences with how you think and feel (physically) when those emotions are present. As you begin to recognize these experiences, I also encourage you to come up with compassionate responses that will help you kindly and lovingly respond to yourself when the emotions come up. As you respond with compassion and care, you value and honor your experiences, learn more about yourself and the world around you, and acknowledge challenges without assuming that there is something “bad” or “wrong” with you.



For the following emotions, identify 1-2 (or more) of the following for each:

- Where/how this feels physically (I often ask, “how do you know you’re feeling [insert emotion]?”)
- What typical thoughts are present (What ways are you thinking about yourself, others?)
- Compassionate statement to respond with (What might you say to a loved one or best friend going through the same thing?)

EXAMPLE: ANGER

PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE(S):

Feeling hot in face and ears, clenched jaw, elevated heart rate

THOUGHTS:

“I’m being treated unfairly” “I can’t believe they think that’s ok” “I’m being disrespected/undervalued/ignored”

COMPASSIONATE STATEMENT:

“I’m really upset about this situation because I care a lot.”

“How can I respond to this in a way that I’ll feel proud of myself when I look back at it?”

“Anger is a natural response when I feel like something’s wrong or bad.”

SADNESS

Physical Experience

Thoughts

Compassionate Statements

FEAR

Physical Experience

Thoughts

Compassionate Statements

IRRITABILITY

Physical Experience

Thoughts

Compassionate Statements

STRESSED OVERWHELMED

Physical Experience

Thoughts

Compassionate Statements

REMINDER: Don't forget about those compassionate statements. If you think you're doing it "wrong" or "bad," try another compassionate statement. If you find you don't know an answer, challenge yourself to learn the answer instead of beating yourself up for not knowing it. Do your best to respond with curiosity, and continue to explore and challenge yourself to learn more.