
AFFLICTIVE EMOTION WORKSHEET – Moving from Self-knowledge to Self-Awareness to Peace

SELF KNOWLEDGE PRE-WORK:

Self-knowledge is a building block for self-awareness. Being explicitly aware of your values, beliefs, temperament, triggers and default reactions provides you a better chance of “catching yourself in the act” (self-awareness). As you strengthen your catching-yourself muscle, you create freedom of choice for yourself. You will *respond* in the moment, rather than simply *react*.

- A. List a total of 4 roles or adjectives that others admire about you or that you believe you embody well:
(Role examples: I am a good: Parent, Partner, Peacemaker, Advocate, Achiever, Creator, Scholar, Supporter, Fun maker, Producer/doer) (Adjective Examples: I am: Easy going, principled, helpful, friendly, persuasive, one-of-a-kind, practical, frugal, loyal, dependable, fun, spontaneous, strong willed, goal-oriented)

- B. List a total of 4 roles that could use development or adjectives that describe you that you are not proud of: (Examples of not proud of adjectives: Lazy, Workaholic, Depressed, Arrogant, Suspicious, Manic, Gluttonous, Mean, Short tempered, Judgmental, Unreliable, Dishonest, Needy, Manipulative, Vengeful, Passive aggressive.)

THE EPISODE

Step one is to capture the event that has upset you. Keep it to a single episode that happened on a day, at a time. Briefly tell the event as if a camera were recording it. Keep the emotions out and simply tell the events. What happened that caused your afflictive emotion?

FEELINGS

Our culture has trained us to ignore emotion. As you re-lived the event by writing it above, retell the physical reaction and emotion. What happened inside your body, what sensation, which emotion? (View a feelings list on our website: Get Involved > Self Awareness & Self Disclosure → Scroll to Additional Materials #1 Feeling Words)

When a word nudges you, write it down.

Next, go over your list word by word. Why did that feeling word ping you? Make sure you can tie it to the episode. If you can't, dig deeper for why it pinged you.

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MY STORY

What story am I telling myself about this episode? What does the experience mean to me?

Focus on what happened to you versus what someone else did. (e.g.: I was cut off versus that person cut me off)

To help unearth the story, try finishing these sentences:

What happened is a problem because...

What happened is upsetting because...

To help unearth the story, consider these questions:

What did I want that I did not get?

What did I expect that didn't happen?

What obstacle stood in my way?

How was I misunderstood, misrepresented, judged or accused?

How was my self-image threatened or called into question?

(See self-knowledge A list above)

Where was my need for development exposed?

(See list B above)

FEELINGS REVISIT

To help explore your story more deeply, try to answer these additional questions about common emotional triggers we all experience...

Did I feel weak, powerless, impotent, unnecessary?

Did I feel vulnerable, unsafe, at risk, in danger?

Did I feel shame, rejection, unloved, un-valuable?

Did I feel less successful?

Did I feel less loveable?

Trace each of these feelings, and those on your earlier list. How has your story evoked each feeling?

Are there feelings with no clear link to your story? (An invitation to dig more deeply.)

Finally, distill story and feelings down. What about this episode most disrupted your well-being?

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PATTERN?

If you remove the person or circumstance that precipitated this episode, have you told yourself this story before? Have you felt un-empowered like this before? Insecure? Afraid of the same kinds of things? Have you seen this pattern before? When? Where? In what circumstances?

Describe the pattern. If you take out the specifics of this episode, what would be a fitting title for the pattern? Have you discovered you hold either a core belief, core identity, or “rule about how life is” that you can now put words to? *Examples:* If I’m not careful, I will get taken advantage of. If I don’t do X, people won’t love me. All injustices must be fought. If I do or don’t do X, I will lose something dear. I am all alone. I am not Ok, unless everyone is Ok. I am what I do. (View sample patterns on our website: Get Involved > Self Awareness, Self Disclosure → Scroll to Additional Materials #2 Sample Patterns)

Well done! This is the end of your pre-work. The rest of the worksheet is completed with a spiritual partner.

MAKE APPOINTMENT WITH A SPIRITUAL PARTNER FOR SELF DISCLOSURE

Doing this practice together is a powerful way to build spiritual friendships. We start out tentatively. We sanitize our stories at first – until we begin to feel safe together. But doing the practice forms deep, abiding, and safe spiritual friendships. Who will be your spiritual friend to share this practice with?

Make a confidential appointment with a trained, spiritual partner on our website:

CommonThreadChurch.org

Navigate: Get Involved > Self Awareness & Self Disclosure→ Scroll past the introduction and the worksheet to click on the [Make an Appointment button](#).

Appointment Request Form URL: <https://commonthreadchurch.org/sasd-worksheet-sign-up/>

PARTNER WORK - CHALLENGING THE STORY

In this last section, together with our listening partners, we try to poke holes in the well-worn stories we tell ourselves. Instead accepting our stories as the one-and-true Truth, we explore other ways to see things.

Is the story you tell yourself true?

- Always true? 100% true? In what ways is it not?

- Would it be true if someone you care for dearly was telling it to themselves?

What is life like believing your story is true?

- How does that story invite you to live your life? How does it cause you to think, act, feel, and react?

What would life be like if it weren't completely true?

- How would you live, think, act, feel, and react differently if it weren't completely true?

How might you have responded to this episode if the story were less true?

- Different thoughts, feelings, words, actions?

MOVING FORWARD

As you conclude, your spiritual friend may have a few last questions for you to consider:

- What have you seen in telling your story, that you had not seen before?
- And having seen it, how could you live differently the next time you have this afflictive emotion?
- If nothing changes, can it be OK? If not, is there a clear want, need or ask you can articulate and pursue?
- Notwithstanding your hurt, is there anything you can “give” the offender in terms of intentions, motivations, mitigating circumstances? Would it be possible to find a way to defend (maybe partially) the offender or offense?