



# FEELING MY FEELINGS

The first step in processing our emotions is being able to identify what we are feeling. Fostering awareness of our bodies and emotions often takes intentional practice. The following steps, developed by Rosenbloom and Williams (2010), will help you practice being mindful of your body, emotional experience, and accompanying needs:

1. Stop whatever activity you might be doing.
2. Sit quietly for a short period of time.
3. Turn your attention inward and ask your body how it feels in this moment.
4. Notice if you feel any tension anywhere in your body (e.g., in your shoulders, stomach, jaw, or back).
5. Notice if you are holding your breath.
6. Notice if you are engaging in any behaviors that suggest tension (e.g., biting your nails or picking at your skin).
7. Notice any emotions you are feeling. If this is difficult, it may help to start by identifying what you are not feeling and working backwards.
8. Allow yourself to feel enough of the emotion to get in touch with it, without either feeling out of control or detaching yourself from it.
9. Use the experience of feeling the emotion as a way to learn more about yourself. What other emotions are present? Which are secondary and which are primary?
10. Identify the source of the original emotion (e.g., other times you remember feeling this way that this current experience may be tapping into).

*Building awareness—of all kinds—is often the first step in our foundation toward healing.* Body awareness helps you feel your emotions and then identify ways to self-soothe. Practice acknowledging and validating the emotions you are feeling and then find ways to return to the present moment and your day ahead. Here are a few things you can try:

- **Relax Your Mind and Body.** Take some time to engage in deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or other calming forms of self-care. Check out calming self-help apps on our website for more ideas!
- **Write it Out.** Journaling can provide a positive outlet for our emotions and can help build our awareness of ourselves and our experiences. Try free writing or explore prompts at this website: <https://advice.shinetext.com/articles/32-journal-prompts-for-self-reflection-and-self-care/>
- **Get Connected.** Contact the Counseling and Testing Center by stopping by calling or visiting our website to learn more about the many services available.

The above information is modified and compiled from the original works of Mary Beth Williams and Soili Poijula. See the following reference: Williams, M. B., & Poijula, S. (2016). *The PTSD Workbook: Simple, Effective Techniques for Overcoming Traumatic Stress Symptoms*. New Harbinger Publications, Oakland, CA.

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