

Facts vs Feelings Workbook



Welcome and thank you for showing up for you! I am excited that you signed up to receive this workbook. There is no better time to fully understand the various thoughts and feelings you are experiencing and find out if they truly represent the facts in your story.

The main goal of this workbook is to help you differentiate between FACTS and FEELINGS. You will learn new ways to examine your thoughts and feelings in order to get to the truth behind them. You will then be able to disrupt old habits

that no longer serve you and replace them with new habits.

With these exercises, you will start to increase your awareness of how you feel in a given moment as well as how your feelings play a role in perceiving the facts in any situation. You will develop tools on how to re-frame information. And the most exciting part of this workbook, you will take control of your own story.

WHAT YOU NEED TO BEGIN:

- 1) Space. Give yourself permission to be in a quiet space so you can sit with your thoughts.
- 2) Writing material. When we write our thoughts and feelings down on paper or type them out, we allow all of those amazing transmitters in our brain to pause and focus.
- 3) "GET TO" mindset. Give yourself permission to *get to* be present with yourself. This mindset shifts negative thoughts and habits into positive thoughts and patterns, for example: I *get to* do this for me; I *get to* take time for myself; or I *get to* find purpose.

As you are going through these exercises, make sure to pause and breathe with the uncomfortable feelings that come up. Allow the energy of that emotion to show up, but also know that you have the control to allow the energy of that emotion to flow through you.

Be kind to yourself during this process. Be gentle to the ones around you while you are creating new energy. Let these exercises serve you in creating new habits.

Let's get started!

EXERCISE 1: Feeling your Feelings

The brain will process thousands of thoughts within a day. There is no end to the amount of feelings those thoughts create, both positive and negative. How we think becomes how we feel and how we feel leads to how we act.

Let's break down what it is you are experiencing.

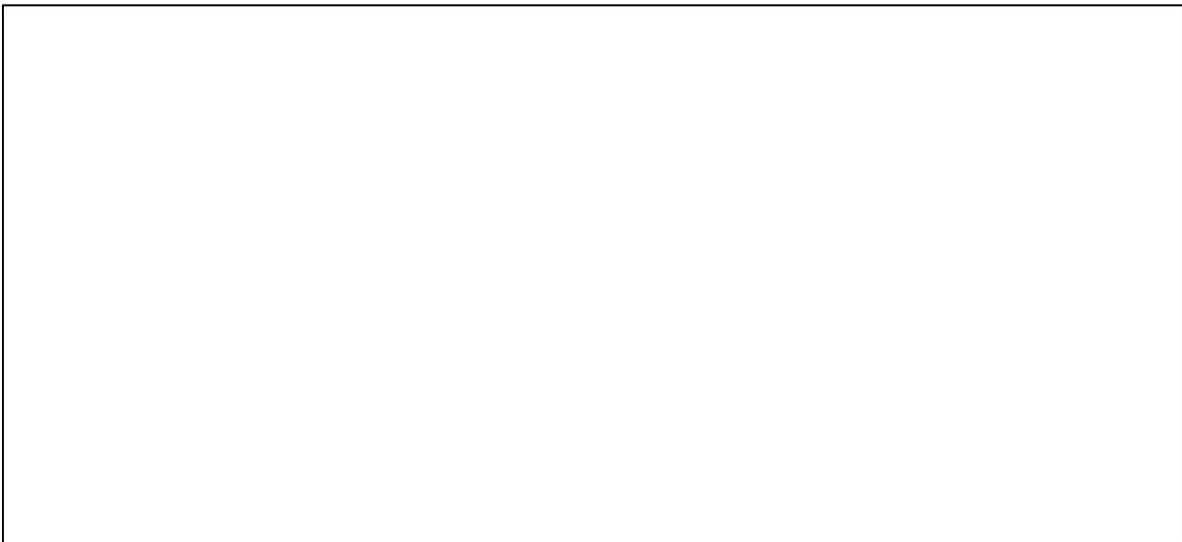
Think of a moment you have replayed over and over in your mind that continues to bring up certain uncomfortable feelings. This could be an event from childhood, an experience from several years ago, or even a conversation you had with someone last week. Close your eyes and step back into that moment. Write down the feelings that come up for you in the area below.

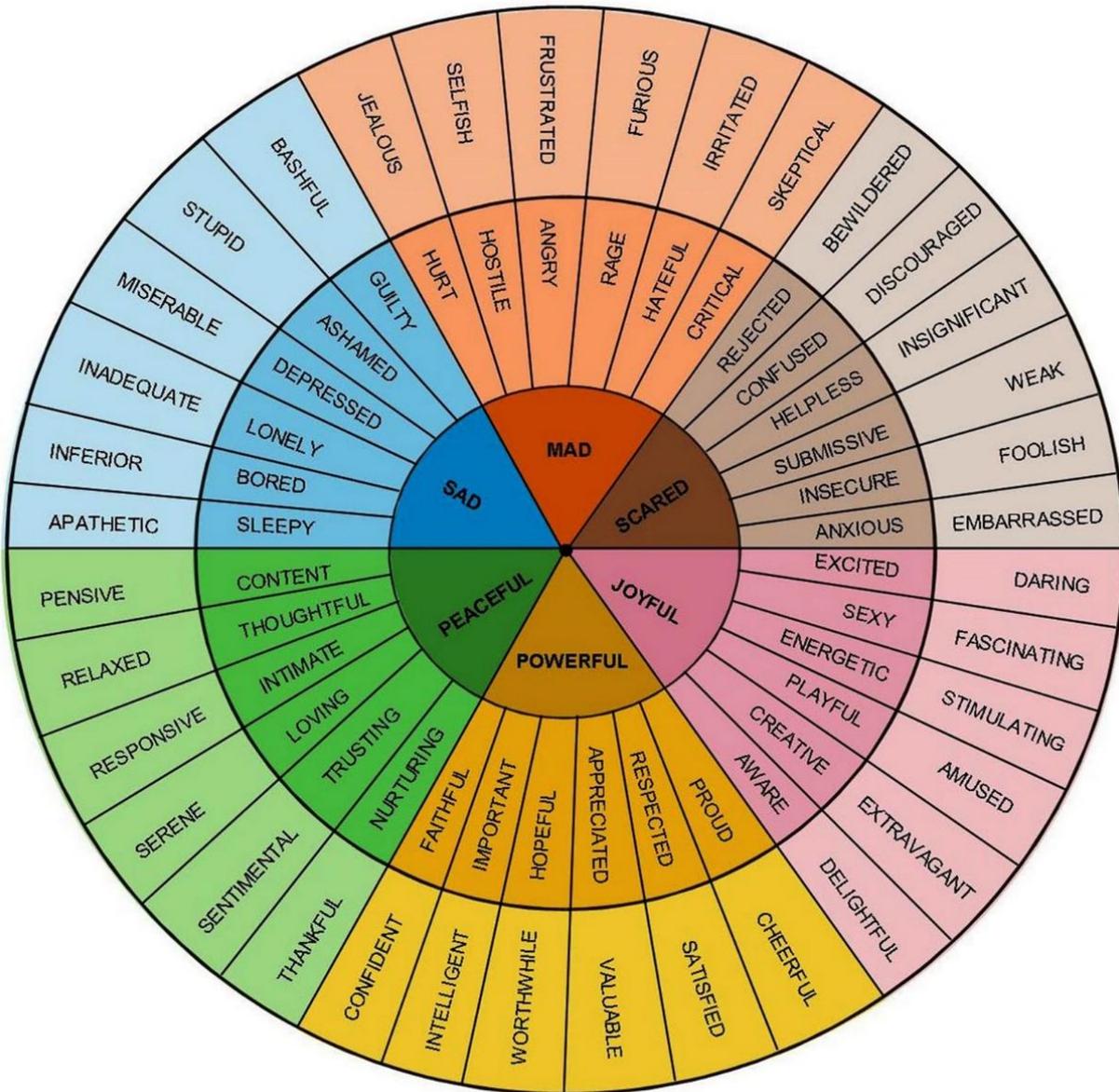
On page three, you will see a feeling wheel created by Dr. Gloria Willcox. Use this wheel to locate the feelings you noted. What are the root feelings (at the center of the wheel) that are related to your feelings? For example: foolish is a complex feeling rooted in sadness.

Now ask yourself if the label you are giving a certain feeling is accurate to what you are actually feeling or if one of the other feelings on the wheel is actually more true to how you feel. For example, if you said, "I feel stupid," the feeling could actually be shame, sadness, or possibly hurt. Labeling your feelings helps you manage your feelings.

It is also important to note that when you slow down and explore a story/situation, you might experience multiple feelings, such as anger mixed with resentment, fear, and sadness. This complex web of feelings can be taken one feeling at a time in order to really look at all the thoughts surrounding each feeling.

Having the power and ability to name your feelings and identify the reasons for them becomes important in reframing your thoughts—which we will explore a little later. By being aware of your feelings related to a given thought, you can begin to tear away at all of those false beliefs you have been piling onto our story.

A large empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to write down their feelings and reflections on the exercise.



EXERCISE 2: Highlighting the Facts

Part 1:

Take that same moment from the first exercise or choose another one that continues to bring up specific feelings for you. Again, this could be an event from childhood, an experience from several years ago, or even a conversation you had with someone last week. Take a few minutes to describe this memory in writing. Give yourself time to be descriptive and detailed.

Part 2:

After a break, read through what you wrote and highlight only the facts. Leave the questions, judgements, opinions, feelings, and emotions alone.

What do you notice about how many facts are on the page? Chances are, there are very few things highlighted.

Facts don't hurt us; however, the story we tell ourselves related to these facts sometimes can. Everything else in the writing of your event is your perception, your reaction, or your definition of self and others. These added elements are very powerful in defining how this story is remembered and told over and over to ourselves and others.

In order to take control back of your own story, it helps to understand that sometimes our thoughts and feelings are not based in truth. A thought about a fact can ignite an emotion that causes untrue feelings. When a situation involving a conflicting belief or behavior produces feelings of mental discomfort leading to an alteration in an attitude or action in order to reduce that discomfort and restore balance is called cognitive dissonance. In other words, you want to believe what you want to believe because it is more comfortable. But it is important to get uncomfortable with your feelings to reframe your thoughts. This will help you create a habit of *responding* to your feelings instead of *reacting* to your feelings.

A *reaction* is typically quick, aggressive, and without much thought, while a *response* is thought out, calm, and non-threatening. The moment you feel you want to react to a situation, your brain will go straight into protective mode. That is what the brain is for, to protect. When you react, you are giving away your power of control. When you start feeling reactive, you're not taking the time to make sure what you're feeling matches the story. However, by responding to your situation/story your pausing to figure out and what is best for you, you're choosing to feel calm, your choosing to stay in control of you!

Take this moment to reflect on ways you have *reacted* to your story. Then brainstorm ways you can now choose to *respond* to your story. Feel free to write them down so you can come back to them.

Exercise 3: Reflecting

Part 1:

Reread the story you wrote from the last exercise. As you replay the situation, ask yourself: What lesson am I supposed to learn? What growth or new understanding can I walk away with? Continue to write your answers down as they come. There might be several answers to these questions.

How does gaining a new insight or lesson learned shift how you view this moment within your life's story? How does this new perspective on the actual facts of the situation make you feel now? Have your feelings shifted?

Part 2:

Find somewhere quiet and get comfortable. Take a deep breath in. As you exhale, reflect on your story and focus on the things that you are grateful for from it. Take a moment and write down these moments of gratitude.

Your story can be seen as a positive meaning that leads to personal growth. There is a lesson in every experience and in every story. The moment you can see the positive in an experience is the moment you begin to let go of the pain that was caused from it. Affirmations of gratitude remind us not to take anything for granted and to appreciate the smaller things in life. Reflecting on the positive from your story gives it new meaning. Such reflection brings positive intent, whether your story is about weight loss, shifting of habits, taking on regular exercise, work goals, study habits, or relationships. Feeling the energy of gratitude will boost areas of your life and shift you from a victim to a warrior.

For example: My story is that, as a young girl, I was verbally, physically, and emotionally abused by my stepmother. She ridiculed me for being stupid and fat. She despised me for resembling my biological mother. For this, I was nothing to her and she told me so in every fashion imaginable. From her dislike of me and from the scars (inside and out) she put on me, I knew that if I did not let go of the pain of the story she told me, I would always talk to myself the same way she did. Things shifted for me when I took back control. I began to write why I was grateful for her, which opened my eyes to loving myself deeper than I could possibly imagine. I was grateful for her words of negativity because they challenged me to become the best self. I was grateful for her fist because it made me see how not to treat others. I was grateful for her ridicule because it gave me the understanding and strength of how not to speak to myself or others.

You see, finding the positives and being grateful for the lesson can release the uncomfortable feelings that we had no control over. What you do have control over is the decision making of how your story affects you. Finding gratitude = letting go of the pain.

Here is one of my favorite gratitude affirmations that I listen to every morning and even times when the story of my past begins to tear into me.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v5GynqbjYcw>.

Exercise 4: Re-Framing

Part 1:

Think of a time when someone looked at you in a funny way, spoke to you with a sharp tone, or treated you in a way that you were uncomfortable with. What decisions did you make in that moment about yourself and/or about the other person?

Now take a moment to re-evaluate the facts. It is good to recognize that sometimes others are having a bad moment and they project that onto you. It is also important to acknowledge that it is possible to misinterpret the words of others based on our own frame of mind. Ask yourself if the decision you made about the other person is based in facts. Also check to see if the “facts” you declared about yourself are really based in truth.

These questions can be asked every single time you play out a scenario in your mind in order to stop a spiral of feelings from claiming the facts of your story. Re-framing the facts can help regulate your feelings.

Part 2:

The best thing to do when you are feeling like something isn't right is to first check in with yourself and ask the question: Is this true? For example, you might ask yourself self: “What are the facts related to this moment you are examining?” “Was there something that I need to address about how I acted or responded?”

Check in with that person. Yes, you read that right. This is the dig deep part. It is important to be gentle (not accusatory) when questioning the related person. You might ask the other person: “I want to make sure we are on the same page. Can you give me some facts of why you are saying that?” (If the person offers an emotional reaction instead of offering facts, that is one of the signs of it being about them, not you.)

Example: I asked my stepmother why she treated me that way she did and she said: “I didn't know how to express the fact that I could not bond with you.”

Ok, your turn. Write down a few questions that you can ask yourself to recognize the facts and then write down a few comments you can ask the other person to receive facts.

WOW! How amazing does the shift in your mindset and the transformation you tackled today with your story make you feel? Take a moment and feel accomplished that you just did some extremely hard work by reflecting, reframing, and breaking down the FACTS vs FEELINGS.

As you take a deep breath of joy, let's talk about balance.

Ignoring a feeling when it arises will only force it to creep up at a later date. Don't sit *on* your feelings, sit *with* them. Don't push them down or ignore them; let fear push you in order to address them.

How do you balance it all out? We all have to make a choice. We can hope or wish for things to happen to us or we can be intentional, take action, and make behavior and mindset shifts that will create change. The objective is to invest in yourself!

When you invest your time, your energy, and your commitment to self, that investment will stick. Communicate your feelings and make reasonable decisions that effectively guide you towards growth.

Sometimes a feeling is so strong that it feels like reality, but once you become aware of your feelings, you provide clarity to help differentiate, fact from feelings. From these exercises you NOW have tools in your tool box to create that clarity. You have the tools to stand up in your warrior pose and be able to reflect, respond, and reframe your story and the stories to come. Re-write your story, add more chapters to your story, and above all, become the author of your life.

Thank you for showing up for you! Each day gets better when we remember to **Embrace Life Boldly**.

