

Compassionate Connection Therapy

○ Welcome to Your Reflection Space

This space was created with care — for anyone moving through something tender, uncertain, or quietly important. Whether you're processing pain, seeking clarity, rebuilding trust, or simply needing a moment to breathe, you're welcome here. You don't need to arrive with answers or be in a particular emotional state. You're invited just as you are.

These worksheets offer gentle tools for reflection: soft places to land, explore, and reconnect with yourself. They're designed to meet you where you are, without pressure, urgency, or expectation. You can move through them slowly, skip parts, return later, or simply sit with the questions. Your pace matters. Your wellbeing matters.

The mission behind these resources is simple: to make emotional support more accessible at a time when many people are carrying more than they can say. These worksheets are offered freely, with no hidden agenda — just the hope that they might help you feel a little more understood, a little less alone, and a little more connected to your own voice.

If this mission resonates, you're welcome to share these resources. Print them, post them, pass them along. Your share might be the moment someone realises they deserve gentleness too.

These worksheets are here to support your healing — not to rush it. You don't need to complete every section. You don't need to "get it right." Take what feels supportive. Leave what doesn't. Let this be a companion, not a task.

You're not alone in this. Even if we've never met, these resources are offered with quiet solidarity — holding space for you, believing in your capacity to heal, and honouring the courage it takes to turn inward.

● A Gentle Note on Safety

These worksheets are designed for personal reflection. They are not a substitute for therapy or professional support.

If you're currently in therapy, you may wish to share this resource with your therapist before exploring. If you're not in therapy, please take care to reflect in a space that feels emotionally and physically safe.

You might choose to explore alongside someone you trust — a friend, partner, or support person. If that isn't available right now, this worksheet can still be a quiet companion. Go gently. In your own time. In your own way.

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Where to Find the Worksheets

If this resource feels meaningful, please share it. Healing is communal — and your share might be someone's first step toward feeling less alone.

You can find these worksheets freely across platforms:

Website: <https://CompassionateConnectionTherapy.co.uk>

Facebook: Compassionate Connection Therapy

TikTok: @rosa.tomassi.bella

Instagram: @connectiontherapyrhyl

Together, we can make emotional support tools free, gentle, and accessible.

A Note on Contact

These worksheets are shared freely, but individual support cannot be offered through messages or comments. If you need support, please reach out to a therapist or someone you trust. These tools are here to guide gentle exploration — not to replace professional care. Thank you for understanding, and for sharing with kindness.

If You're in Crisis

These worksheets are not for emergencies. If you feel overwhelmed or unsafe, please reach out:

- **Samaritans — 116 123** (free, 24/7)
- **NHS 111** — urgent mental health advice
- **999** — if you or someone else is at immediate risk

You deserve support, safety, and care.

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Free & Low-Cost Support in the UK

If you'd like additional support, the organisations below offer free or low-cost help across the UK. You don't need a diagnosis, a referral, or the "right" words — just reach out in whatever way feels manageable. Many offer phone, text, email, or online support.

- **Cruse Bereavement Support** Free support for anyone grieving, at any stage. Helpline: 0808 808 1677 Website: <https://www.cruse.org.uk>
- **Sudden Bereavement UK** Support for sudden or unexpected loss. Website: <https://www.sudden.org>
- **One in Four** Specialist support for survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Website: <https://www.oneinfour.org.uk>
- **Rape Crisis England & Wales** Free, confidential support for anyone affected by sexual violence. Helpline: 0808 500 2222 Website: <https://www.rapecrisis.org.uk>
- **NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood)** Support for adult survivors of childhood abuse. Helpline: 0808 801 0331 Website: <https://napac.org.uk>
- **Mind** Information, guidance, and local low-cost services. Website: <https://www.mind.org.uk>
- **SANEline** Emotional support for anyone struggling with mental health. Helpline: 0300 304 7000 Website: <https://www.sane.org.uk>
- **Shout** 24/7 free text support for anyone in distress. Text: SHOUT to 85258 Website: <https://giveusashout.org>
- **Refuge** Support for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. Helpline: 0808 2000 247 Website: <https://www.refuge.org.uk>
- **Men's Advice Line** Support for men experiencing domestic abuse. Helpline: 0808 801 0327 Website: <https://mensadviceline.org.uk>
- **Switchboard LGBT+ Helpline** Support for LGBTQ+ people, family, and friends. Helpline: 0300 330 0630 Website: <https://switchboard.lgbt>
- **Galop** Support for LGBTQ+ people facing abuse or violence. Website: <https://galop.org.uk>
- **Beat Eating Disorders** Support for anyone affected by eating difficulties. Website: <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>
- **Citizens Advice** Free guidance on benefits, debt, housing, employment, and legal issues. Website: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>
- **Shelter** Support with housing, homelessness, and unsafe living situations. Helpline: 0808 800 4444 Website: <https://www.shelter.org.uk>
- **The Mix** Support for anyone under 25 — mental health, relationships, money, housing. Helpline: 0808 808 4994 Website: <https://www.themix.org.uk>
- **Hub of Hope** A national database of local mental health support. Website: <https://hubofhope.co.uk>

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You are welcome to share this resource with others for support, as long as:

- You credit **Rosa Tomassi-Bella** and **Compassionate Connection Therapy**
- You do **not** alter the content in any way
- You do **not** use it for commercial purposes or financial gain

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◆ Exploring Feelings and Emotional Regulation

A gentle, universal guide to understanding and working with your emotions

◆ Introduction

Emotions are part of being human. They rise, fall, shift, and sometimes collide with one another in ways that can feel confusing, overwhelming, or unexpectedly tender. This worksheet is here to offer a calm, steady space where you can explore what you're feeling without pressure, judgement, or the need to "get it right". You are welcome to move through it slowly, pause whenever you need to, or return to it at a later moment. There is no correct pace.

Many people were never taught how to recognise or work with their emotions in a way that feels safe. If that's true for you, you're not alone. Emotional regulation is not about suppressing feelings or forcing yourself to be calm — it's about understanding what your emotions are trying to communicate and responding in ways that support your wellbeing. This worksheet invites you to approach your inner world with curiosity, compassion, and choice.

◆ How to Use This Worksheet

Each section offers a gentle guide, open questions, sentence starters, a mindfulness practice, and a sciency bit. You can use all of them or choose the parts that feel most helpful today. There is no expectation to complete everything in one sitting.

You'll find two types of prompts:

- **Open questions** — spacious, reflective questions that invite exploration.
- **Sentence starters** — softer, more guided beginnings you can complete if open questions feel too big or overwhelming.

Both options are equally valid. Some days you may prefer the structure of a sentence starter; other days you may want the freedom of an open question. You can switch between them at any time.

Each section includes:

- A gentle guide
- Six or more open questions
- Six or more sentence starters
- One mindfulness practice
- One sciency bit

Move through the sections in any order. Let your needs lead the way.

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◆ Section One: Noticing What's Happening Inside

Gentle Guide

Before we can understand or regulate our emotions, we often need to slow down enough to notice what's happening within us. Many people experience emotions first in the body — a tight chest, a fluttering stomach, a heaviness behind the eyes — long before they find words. This section helps you tune into those early signals with kindness rather than judgement. Think of it as learning the language of your inner world.

Open Questions

- What physical sensations am I aware of right now?

- How does my energy feel — steady, low, restless, or something else?

- What thoughts are showing up alongside these sensations?

- What emotions might these clues be pointing towards?

- What feels most noticeable or persistent in my body?

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- What feels unfamiliar, surprising, or unclear?

Sentence Starters

- In my body, I'm noticing...

- My energy feels...

- A thought that keeps appearing is...

- This sensation might be connected to...

- I'm wondering if the emotion underneath might be...

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- What stands out most right now is...

○ Mindfulness Practice: “Three Points of Contact”

Sit or stand comfortably. Gently bring your attention to **three places where your body makes contact** — for example, your feet on the floor, your back against a chair, or your hands resting on your lap. Spend a slow breath or two with each point of contact. Notice pressure, warmth, texture, or weight. Let your awareness settle without trying to change anything. This simple grounding practice helps anchor you in the present moment.

✧ Sciency Bit

Our bodies often register emotional shifts before our conscious minds do. This is linked to the interoceptive system — the network of brain regions that help us sense internal states such as heartbeat, breath, and muscle tension. When we pay attention to these signals, we strengthen the brain pathways involved in emotional awareness, making it easier to recognise what we’re feeling.

Noticing bodily cues also supports the regulation centres of the brain, including the prefrontal cortex. When we observe sensations with curiosity rather than fear, the nervous system receives a message that we are safe enough to explore what’s happening. This gentle awareness can reduce reactivity and create space for more intentional responses.

◆ Section Two: Naming the Feeling

Gentle Guide

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Finding the right words for your emotions can be grounding and clarifying. Naming a feeling doesn't make it bigger — it often makes it more manageable. You might notice more than one emotion at once, or you may feel unsure. That's completely normal. This section helps you explore possibilities without pressure to be precise.

Open Questions

- What emotion words feel closest to my experience right now?
- Am I feeling one emotion or several layered together?
- What emotion feels strongest?
- What emotion feels quieter or underneath?
- What words feel almost right, even if not perfect?

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○ Mindfulness Practice: “Emotion Scale Check-In”

Choose two emotions you might be feeling (e.g., anxious and hopeful). Give each a number from 0–10. Notice how the numbers shift as you breathe slowly. There’s no goal — just observing the movement of your inner landscape.

✧ Sciency Bit

Naming emotions activates the brain’s language centres, which helps reduce activity in the amygdala — the part of the brain involved in threat detection. This process, sometimes called “affect labelling”, can create a sense of calm and clarity. It doesn’t remove the emotion, but it helps the brain organise it.

Using scales or mixed-emotion language also supports emotional granularity — the ability to distinguish between similar feelings. Research shows that people with higher emotional granularity often experience less overwhelm and more effective coping, because they can respond more precisely to what they’re feeling.

◆ Section Three: Understanding the Message

Gentle Guide

Emotions are messengers. They often point towards needs, boundaries, values, or past experiences. Understanding the message behind a feeling can help you respond in ways that support your wellbeing. This section invites gentle curiosity rather than analysis or self-criticism.

Open Questions

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- I think a boundary might be...
- This reminds me of...
- Part of this feeling seems connected to...
- If this emotion could speak, it might say...
- What I'm learning from this feeling is...

○ Mindfulness Practice: “Hand on Heart, Hand on Belly”

Place one hand on your chest and one on your stomach. Breathe slowly and notice which hand rises first. Let your breath soften into the lower hand. This gentle movement supports the parasympathetic nervous system and can create space for emotional insight.

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✧ Sciency Bit

Emotions often arise from the interaction between the limbic system (which processes feelings and memories) and the prefrontal cortex (which helps us make meaning). When we pause to explore the message behind an emotion, we strengthen the connection between these systems. This helps us respond with intention rather than reflex.

Understanding emotional messages also supports boundary awareness. The brain uses past experiences to interpret present situations, sometimes triggering old emotional patterns. When we recognise this, we can differentiate between what belongs to the present moment and what echoes from earlier times, allowing for more grounded decision-making.

◆ Section Four: Regulating with Care

Gentle Guide

Regulation isn't about "fixing" emotions — it's about supporting yourself through them. Different moments call for different strategies. Some emotions need soothing, some need movement, and some need connection. This section helps you choose what feels right for your energy and comfort.

Open Questions

- What does my body need right now — soothing, movement, or connection?

- What feels manageable in this moment?

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- What has helped me in the past?

- What feels too much or not enough today?

- Who or what helps me feel grounded?

- What small step could support me right now?

Sentence Starters

- My body might need...

- A small, manageable step could be...

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- Something that has helped before is...

- I feel drawn towards...

- I'm noticing I need less of... and more of...

- Support could look like...

○ Mindfulness Practice: “Gentle Pendulum Movement”

While seated or standing, slowly sway your upper body a few centimetres side to side, like a soft pendulum. Keep the movement small and comfortable. Notice how your breath responds. This rhythmic motion can help regulate the nervous system and release tension.

✦ Sciency Bit

Regulation strategies work by influencing the autonomic nervous system — the part of the body that manages stress responses. Soothing practices activate the parasympathetic system, which supports rest and recovery. Movement-based practices help discharge excess energy from the sympathetic system, which becomes active during stress.

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Connection-based strategies stimulate the social engagement system, a network involving the vagus nerve and facial muscles. When we feel safe with others, our bodies naturally shift towards regulation. Having multiple types of strategies gives the brain flexibility, which is linked to resilience and emotional adaptability.

◆ Section Five: Reflecting with Compassion

Gentle Guide

Reflection helps you understand what supports you, what doesn't, and what you might want to try next time. This isn't about judging yourself — it's about learning gently from your experience. Every emotional moment offers information that can guide future choices.

Open Questions

- What helped me feel more settled or supported?

- What didn't feel helpful today?

- What surprised me about my emotional experience?

- What did I learn about myself?

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- What do I want to remember for next time?

- What would future-me appreciate?

Sentence Starters

- Something that supported me was...

- Something that didn't feel right was...

- I learned that I...

- I want to remember that...

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- Next time, I might try...

- I'm proud that I...

○ Mindfulness Practice: “Soft Gaze Reflection”

Choose a point in front of you and let your gaze soften, as though you're looking *through* it rather than *at* it. Allow your breath to slow. Let reflections come and go without grabbing onto them. This gentle visual softening can help quieten internal noise and support clarity.

✧ Sciency Bit

Reflection strengthens metacognition — the brain's ability to think about its own processes. This skill helps us recognise patterns, make intentional choices, and respond more flexibly to future emotional moments. It also supports the integration of emotional experiences, which is linked to long-term wellbeing.

Self-compassion during reflection activates neural pathways associated with safety and connection. When we treat ourselves kindly, the brain reduces threat responses and increases openness to learning. This creates a supportive internal environment where growth can happen without pressure.

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◆ Closing

You've taken time to explore your inner world with gentleness, and that matters. Emotional work is not always easy, and yet you've shown up for yourself in a way that deserves recognition. Whether you completed one section or all of them, your effort is meaningful.

Remember that emotions are not problems to solve — they are experiences to move through. Some days will feel clearer than others. Some feelings will make sense immediately, while others may take time. You are allowed to take up space, to rest, to feel deeply, and to seek support when you need it. Your emotional world is worthy of care, patience, and understanding.