

DO Therapy

Name What You're Feeling

We often know that we feel *bad*, *stressed*, *overwhelmed*, *upset*, or *off* without knowing much more. But different emotions provide different information and may call for different responses. This exercise helps you practice **moving from a general sense that something is wrong toward identifying what you may actually be feeling**.

NOTICE

Choose a recent moment when you noticed an emotional reaction.

Maybe you felt:

- Stressed
- Upset
- Overwhelmed
- Irritated
- Uncomfortable
- Off
- Emotional

Instead of stopping with the first word, ask: **“What am I actually feeling?”**

Try becoming more specific.

Maybe *stressed* includes:

- Anxious
- Pressured
- Uncertain
- Overwhelmed
- Frustrated
- Afraid
- Exhausted

Maybe *upset* includes:

- Hurt
- Disappointed
- Rejected
- Embarrassed
- Lonely
- Angry
- Sad

Choose **one or two words** that seem to fit more accurately.

REVIEW THE GAME TAPE

Get curious about the emotion rather than immediately trying to make it disappear.

Ask:

- What happened just before I noticed this feeling?
- What seems important to me about what happened?
- What am I worried about, wanting, needing, or protecting?
- Is there another emotion underneath the first one I noticed?

For example:

- **Anger** may also include hurt.
- **Anxiety** may include uncertainty.
- **Frustration** may include disappointment.
- **Overwhelm** may include pressure, fear, or exhaustion.

Then ask: **“If this emotion could give me information without making the decision for me, what might it be telling me?”**

PRACTICE

When you notice a broad emotional label, practice becoming **one level more specific**.

Instead of: “I’m stressed.”

- Try: **“I’m feeling pressured because I don’t think I have enough time.”**

Instead of: “I’m upset.”

- Try: **“I’m disappointed because I expected something different.”**

Instead of: “I’m anxious.”

- Try: **“I’m uncertain about what is going to happen, and I’m noticing fear around that uncertainty.”**

You don’t need the perfect word.

Practice moving from: **GENERAL FEELING → MORE SPECIFIC EMOTION → WHAT IT MAY BE ABOUT**

BUILD REPS

Practice naming emotions during everyday moments—not only when feelings become intense.

Notice:

- Am I recognizing emotions sooner?
- Am I becoming more specific?
- Are certain emotions easier for me to identify than others?
- Do I tend to call several different experiences by the same name?
- Does naming the emotion change what I think I need to do next?

The goal isn’t to analyze every feeling.

It is to develop a larger emotional vocabulary so that: **“Something feels wrong” can gradually become “I have a better idea of what’s happening inside me.”**