

## Checking in with Emotions

During times of high stress we may not be aware of how we are feeling; this may cause us to respond in ways we normally would not. We may have a shorter temper or find ourselves withdrawing. If we can slow down and check in with how we are feeling, we can increase our emotional awareness. Emotional awareness helps us to find out what we want and need, and can reduce the chances of us reacting in ways that we don't like or don't understand. Acknowledging how we are feeling, even just to ourselves, can also help reduce the intensity of an emotion.

If checking in with your emotions is not something you are used to doing, it will just take a bit of practice! Take some time to figure out how this might fit into your life. Could you set an alarm to check in with yourself each day? Could you practice with a friend or family member each day (check in with other)?

People often answer the question of “how are you feeling?” by saying “good”, “okay”, “fine”, “tired”, or “hungry”. However, these words don't actually give us much information about our emotions. If checking in with your feelings is new to you, you might find you aren't actually sure how you are feeling. That's okay! Try the worksheet below to help you explore your emotions.

### **What am I feeling?**

Stop what you are doing and take a moment to ground yourself in the present. Plant both feet on the ground, notice your breath entering and exiting your body and try to focus your attention inward.

Ask yourself how you are feeling. If you aren't sure, try the following:

1. How does your body feel? Are there any clues there? Are you smiling? Do you notice any tension? Is your body jittery?

What I notice in my body:

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2. What are you thinking about? Are there any clues there? Are you replaying an embarrassing moment? Are you thinking about doing something fun? Are you thinking ahead to a task you don't want to do?

What I notice in my thoughts:

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3. If you have a general sense of how you might feel now, look at the centre of the feeling wheel. Do any of those seven feelings fit? If one does, work your way out and find other words that fit for you.

I am currently feeling:

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I know this because:

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Something I can do is:

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