

A Guide for Self-Learning for Women

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Disclaimer

This guide is not for professionals, but for all those women, who would like to understand more the situation they are in, themselves, their emotions, and are looking for helping themselves or peer women, like friends, relatives.

This guide is a support material for our online tools. Therefore most of the information provided here can also be found in our online tool. However this guide can also be used as a stand-alone guide for working with yourself offline.

Why and how to work with our guide?

Reflecting on one's previous life and dealing with pleasant and unpleasant memories are essential features of our personality and identity. Knowing one's own abilities and resources and being able to realistically assess developmental needs is the basis for successful coping strategies. This enables us to be better supported in dealing with contradictions and failure and in building resilience.

The path in search of "self" often makes people realize what they are capable of and what opportunities are open to them. We would like to help you in this process.

In the upcoming pages you will find three tools to work with. The first, the safety barometer is a simple tool for determining your sense of safety.

The second tool helps you to think through and develop an emergency list and resource guide. The third tool – with a longer guide – will help you to identify your feelings which occur during a situation, and gives advices about how to deal with them.

In creating the emergency kit we encourage you to use symbols. Symbols can help to clarify one's wishes and needs. Associations that arise in this process allow suppressed memories to be recovered. Interventions that appeal to all the senses are therefore particularly fruitful. We therefore suggest you to use as creative symbols as you wish, in case you work offline. They have to have a meaning for YOU, and it does not matter if they would mean anything for others.

The third tool is related to your feelings. Assess your situation with our simple questions, and find out how complex and several feelings occur even in a visibly simple situation. Finally we are giving you advices to identify and deal with the several feelings you face during your life.

We wish you a great self-learning journey!

Safety barometer – How safe do you feel now?

This tool is for supporting you to assess your situation, and to collect and come up with ways of dealing with your issues in case of need.

Before starting to work with this tool, assure that you have

- enough time: at least 30-50 minutes of undisturbed time
- enough and safe space to work without interruptions and being disturbed in your process
- you can use this tool alone or if you have a person of confidence, you can also invite others to do it with you.

The tool has two separate tools, a safety barometer and an emergency kit:

a) Safety barometer

This is a self-assessment tool on your feelings of security. Here we ask you, if you feel safe in general, and right now (actual). Feeling safe means you are not tensed, or anxious, you are not very worried, and you believe that you can deal with the issues of your life.

Please choose a number from 1 to 10 for how you feel, where 1 is the feeling of very unsafe (of future, present, life danger etc.), and 10 is the perfectly safe.

How would you evaluate your sense of safety in general?

How would you evaluate your sense of safety right now?



General sense of safety



Sense of safety right now

Feedback on your results:

0-2: You feel very unsafe in general, or in the present situation.

In case you feel threatened, in danger right now, we encourage you to turn for help as soon as possible! Here are the support lines and organizations you can turn to:

3-5: You feel unsafe. In case you feel anxious, and a sense of unsafety, our recommendation is:

Try to find out why are you feeling unsafe. Is there any real danger around you? In that case turn for support, see options in the previous section.

Or you don't have an exact fear, rather something triggered you and made you anxious? In this case, contact someone close to you for support and feedback. It is normal to feel afraid even without a concrete reason. Talking with a trusted person can help you to calm down, and maybe also to find out the reasons behind your anxiety.

Close your eyes. Try to locate the place in your body, where you feel the tension and fear. Take deep breaths, and breath into it, also you can touch, stroke, or massage that part of your own body. Sports, yoga, exercising, massage, hot bath or meditation – any practice where you can connect with your own body - can also help to decrease the feeling of anxiousness.

In case you generally and often feeling unsafe and anxious without understanding why, it can be a result of previous experiences and trauma. If so, we recommend you to turn for help to a counsellor.

6-8: You feel stable with challenges. We recommend you to go and continue to work with our emergency kit, it is especially made for you.

9-10: You feel perfectly safe and stable. There is no urgent need to go on, but our emergency kit can be good as a prevention activity for the future.

Creating an emergency kit for yourself

The next step is to create an emergency kit for your further use.

Task1:

Think about it! What can you do, when someone around you feels upset or is in a crisis? How can you support them, or what can you suggest them to do? Think also about how you can support yourself in such situations.

List as many ways as possible (it can be as simple as drinking a hot tea, taking a shower, or going out to nature, but also more complicated). Write them down in a paper.

Task 2:

Think about it! What outside help is available for you or others who feel upset and / or in crisis? Where and to whom can you turn for help? List as many as possible, and as concrete as possible, as this will be emergency kit information. Write them down in the same paper you started with.

Task 3:

In case you work offline, look around in your home, and find a small physical symbol for each resource you have listed above! Keep them together with your list somewhere safe and close to you.



Finding out your feelings – the Wheel of Feelings and Emotions

To work with this tool we invite you to think of a concrete situation, which caused you difficulties. We are going to show you different emotions. We ask you if you felt that emotion in that concrete situation. Please respond all emotions for the same situation. You can only choose yes or no. If you feel uncertain, that means that maybe you felt some of that feeling, so click yes.

Please describe your chosen situation in maximum 2-3 sentences here:



Now take a look at the list of feelings. Choose the first answer which pops up in your mind. You don't have to have a detailed understanding of how we define a feeling. The question is did YOU feel the following feeling in your described situation?

Anger	YES	NO
Anxiety	YES	NO
Depression	YES	NO
Grief	YES	NO
Guilt	YES	NO
Happiness	YES	NO
Loneliness	YES	NO
Love	YES	NO
Rage	YES	NO
Serenity	YES	NO
Shame	YES	NO

Guide to understand and deal with your feelings:

According to your choice of feelings, here you can find some more information, as well as advices developed by professionals to deal with / cope with the certain feeling.

**Disclaimer: Each emotion can manifest differently from person to person, here you will find a large definition of most usual symptoms or manifestation. There can be others.*

ANGER

Anger is defined as "a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility." It's important to note that anger is a normal, universal human emotion. There are a series of instances and events in life which can cause someone to become angry. Typically, anger arises when someone feels threatened, disturbed, or otherwise interrupted from a peaceful emotional state. Anger can also be combined with other emotions, such as jealousy, sadness, or hopelessness.

How to get aware of this feeling (physical symptoms etc):

- A churning feeling in your stomach.
- Tightness in your chest.
- An increased and rapid heartbeat.
- Legs go weak.
- Tense muscles.
- You feel hot.
- You have an urge to go to the toilet.
- Sweating, especially your palms.

How to cope / deal with this feeling:

- Count down
- Take a breath
- Go walk around
- Relax your muscles
- Stretch
- Mentally escape
- Listen to music
- Take a time out
- Take action
- Talk to a friend
- Try to take it with humor

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion (3-5 sentences).

Irene was quite frustrated with work and a recent misstep by a coworker made her quite angry. She felt too overwhelmed and about to explode. So she decided to sit back, get a coffee and send a text message to her friend, making fun of the situation. Feeling quite a bit less tense, she went back to work to fix the situation. Later she would calmly make a point to her coworker about the matter to effect more lasting improvement in her work.

ANXIETY

Anxiety refers to a sense of physical and psychological tension manifested by a feeling of concern and insecurity. It usually occurs as a response to a situation that is perceived as threatening (a state of anxiety) but can also become a permanent and change an individual's overall perception of certain situations (a personality trait).

How to get aware of this feeling:

Physical symptoms: increased heart rate, sweating, trembling, generalized muscle tension, shortness of breath, fast breathing.

Psychological symptoms: intrusive thoughts, worries, negative apprehension about upcoming events.

How to cope / deal with this feeling:

Mobilize inner resources:

- Emotional and physical regulation technique through breathing: *Focus on your breathing. Take a deep breath through your nose and inflate your stomach. Hold your breath for 3 seconds. Breathe out for a long time through your mouth while deflating the belly.*
- Meditation
- Try to identify the precise source(s) of the current feeling and write about it
- Learn how to identify the physical and psychological symptoms of anxiety so that you can prevent the crisis more quickly in the future

Use of external resources:

- Intuitive mobile applications offering different breathing techniques.
- Turn your attention away from the anxiety-provoking situation by focusing on an activity that you enjoy and that you have already identified as a source of well-being: a walk, music, etc.

More information:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gmuplg5fo5Y&ab_channel=%C3%A9lanInterculturel

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion:

James, a new employee at a start-up company, had an oral presentation at work a month ago; that he believes went badly.

Today, he must give another presentation and he is worried that he won't make it. A few hours before, he feels his hands get sweaty, his breathing accelerates, and his heart rate

increases. He decides to go for a walk outside while listening to his favorite music. A few minutes before the presentation, he takes 5 minutes to relax by breathing and repeats to himself a dozen times "you can do it, it will be okay", which helps him calm the tension he feels.

DEPRESSION

Depression, as a clinical term refers to a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act. Fortunately, it is also treatable. However in everyday life, we also use the term to a complex feelings of sadness and/or a loss of interest in activities a person once enjoyed. This is a milder way of the clinical depression – it's called dysthymia – and according to statistics, about 1 in 10 person is coping with this feeling right now, and nearly everyone faces this emotion during his or her life for shorter or longer periods. It can be related to the feeling of loss / grief, feeling of loneliness, feeling of being overwhelmed and loosing control. If it stays longer, it can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems and can decrease your ability to function at work and at home.

How to get aware of this feeling:

Depression and dysthymia symptoms can vary from mild to severe and can include:

- Feeling sad or having a depressed mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed
- Changes in appetite — weight loss or gain unrelated to dieting
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Loss of energy or increased fatigue
- Increase in purposeless physical activity (e.g., inability to sit still, pacing, handwringing) or slowed movements or speech (these actions must be severe enough to be observable by others)
- Feeling worthless or guilty
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating or making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide

How to cope with this feeling:

In case of suicidal thoughts we recommend you to turn to a therapist or to your doctor ASAP! In case you have

If you have milder syndromes (dysthymia):

- **Exercise:** Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity 3 to 5 days a week. Exercise can increase your body's production of endorphins, hormones that improve your mood. If you don't like exercise, yoga and / or dancing can also do the job. You could also look for someone accompanying you to these activities.
- **Massage/ Bodywork:** being touched helps a lot in feeling better in our bodies, feeling accepted and more anchored. It also helps in relaxing tense muscles. You can go to a professional, but it can also be enough to ask a friend to give a hug, touches, massage for you.
- **Talking to someone about your problems:** Instead of turning inside, even it is hard, try to find someone to talk about your problems. Being listened to, "to be seen" by others are useful to avoid clinical levels of depression.
- **Avoid alcohol and substance use:** Drinking alcohol or misusing substances may make you feel better for a little bit. But in the long run, these substances can make depression symptoms worse.

- **Learn how to set limits:** Feeling overwhelmed can worsen depression symptoms. Setting boundaries in your professional and personal life can help you feel better.
- **Take care of yourself:** You can also improve symptoms of depression by taking care of yourself. This includes getting plenty of sleep, eating a healthy diet, avoiding negative people, and participating in enjoyable activities.
- **Supplements:** Several types of supplements may have some positive effect on depression symptoms.

In case of clinical depression:

Clinical treatment:

- **Medications:** Many types of antidepressants are available, prescribed by healthcare professionals.
- **Psychotherapy:** Psychotherapy is a general term for treating depression by talking about your condition and related issues with a mental health professional.
- **Hospital and residential treatment:** In some people, depression is so severe that a hospital stay is needed.

Alternative therapies, including:

- **Meditation:** meditation practices can help improve symptoms of depression and lower your chances of a depression relapse.
- **Acupuncture:** Acupuncture is a form of traditional Chinese medicine, using needles to stimulate certain areas in the body in order to treat a range of conditions.

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion

Erika (32 year-old woman) was feeling overwhelmed, and lost. She lost interest in most things, including her jobs or meeting others, she was upset, unmotivated and in general depressed. A friend of her recognized this, and asked about it. Even talking about her problems released some of the stress, and after that they started to go to yoga practice together, which was followed by having a tea at a cosy place and talk. Sometimes it was really hard to get up and go, but the friend was there and helped. Erika started to look forward to these meetings, which made her more focused and motivated.

GRIEF

Grief is a reaction to loss. It can be a loss of a person, but there are other kind of losses (like of a job, a home, a country, our dreams, etc.). The way we experience grief is very individual, yet grief often includes physiological distress, separation anxiety, confusion, yearning, obsessive dwelling on the past, and apprehension about the future. Intense grief can become life-threatening through disruption of the immune system, self-neglect, and suicidal thoughts.

Grief may also take the form of regret for something lost, remorse for something done, or sorrow for a mishap to oneself.

While we usually consider grief as a hard feeling, it is also a complex and natural process to close a relationship, or a period of life. is a necessary step to create new healthy links and relationships after a significant lost.

Source: <https://www.apa.org/topics/grief>

How to get aware of this feeling:

Some of the physical symptoms of grief that you may experience are:

- a hollow feeling in your stomach
- tightness, or heaviness, in your chest or throat
- oversensitivity to noise
- difficulty breathing
- feeling very tired and weak
- a lack of energy
- dry mouth
- an increase or decrease in appetite
- finding it hard to sleep or fear of sleeping
- aches and pains.

How to cope / deal with this feeling:

1. **Talk about your loss** in the context of safe and close relationships.
2. **Accept your feelings.** You may experience a wide range of emotions from sadness, anger or even exhaustion. All of these feelings are normal and it's important to recognize when you are feeling this way.
3. If you feel stuck or overwhelmed by these emotions, it may be helpful to **talk with a psychologist or other mental health professional** who can help you cope with your feelings and find ways to get back on track.
4. **Take care of yourself.** Eating healthy foods, exercising and getting plenty of sleep can help your physical and emotional health. The grieving process can take a toll on one's body.

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion (3-5 sentences).

Lauren experienced loss as she went through an abrupt break-up with her ex-boyfriend . For weeks she felt tired and weak, had a constant pain in her stomach and did not manage to sleep well at night. All she could think about, obsessively and constantly, was moments she shared with her boyfriend in their past relationship. She decided to talk about what she was experiencing with a friend, and she also decided to dedicate some hours of her day to meditate and prepare the food that she liked.

GUILT

The feeling of guilt is a result of our thoughts; this means that people experience this emotion when they think they have caused harm or when they feel responsible for someone else's suffering or misfortune. Guilt is a complex feeling, hard to bear, being always linked to the experience of suffering, with characteristics and implications much more extensive than we realize at first glance. Some of the most common symptoms of a guilt feeling are: shame, guilt towards others, guilt towards oneself, taking responsibility for the thoughts, feelings and behaviors of other individuals.

How to get aware of this feeling:

You apologize for everything, you lack initiative, you forget your own needs, you are defensive and, often, you try to control everything that surrounds you. On a physical level, you may feel a continuous tension, an accelerated heart rate, or a feeling of suffocation.

How to cope with this feeling (list of coping mechanism):

- **Awareness of guilt** - The first step towards reducing this experience is the awareness of the fact that guilt is a message, a symptom of some deep and old wounds, which will be revealed and healed.
- **Analyze the patterns of prohibitions** - Take a sheet of paper and write down the situations in which you tried the feeling of guilt. Then analyze the prohibitions that you violated - you raised your voice to the elderly, ate a large slice of cake, slept more on the weekend.... Thanks to this exercise you will be able to untie or at least loosen many knots, which have choked you lately.
- **Learn from the past** - Before you can leave the past behind, you have to accept it. Looking back and ruminating on memories will not fix what happened. You can't rewrite the past, but you can always take into account what you've learned
- **Forgive yourself** - Self-forgiveness is a key component of self-compassion. When you forgive yourself, you admit that you made a mistake, just like all other people do. Then, you can look to the future without letting this mistake define you. You give yourself love and kindness by accepting your imperfect self.
- **Talk to people you trust** - Friends and family can also help you feel less alone by sharing their experiences. Almost everyone has done something they regret, so most people know what it's like to feel guilty.
- **Talk to a therapist** - A therapist can provide guidance helping you identify and address the causes of guilt, explore effective coping skills, and develop greater self-compassion.

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion

Sabina feels guilty for the fact that, as her husband says, instead of staying at home to cook, she went out to the park with her best friend. The feeling of guilt crushed her so much that she started to cry and apologized for the "mistake" she had committed and promised not to repeat it. To fade the feeling of guilt, Sabina talked to her sister, who helped her realize that she did not make a mistake considering that there were already two kinds of food in the refrigerator.

HAPPINESS

Happiness is an emotional state of well-being and contentment characterized by feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment, and fulfilment.

The two key-components of happiness are:

- The balance of emotions: Everyone experiences both positive and negative emotions, feelings, and moods. Happiness is generally linked to experiencing more positive feelings than negative ones.
- Life satisfaction: This relates to how satisfied you feel with different areas of your life including your relationships, work, achievements, and other things that you consider important

How to get aware of this feeling:

- Lips smiling
- Eyes smiling
- Lowered eyebrows
- Lowered eyelids
- Squinting Eyes
- Side of lips symmetrical along with smile
- Raised cheeks
- Showing of teeth

How to deal with this feeling (how to use it as a resource):

- ENJOY 😊 If your situation also includes happiness, than put it into the focus sometimes, and let it work out its own magic.
- Try to find out what makes you feel happy. Make a list of it. It can be a good resource in more upsetting times.
- Share your happiness with those you love. We only tend to share our bad feelings, as we might feel it inappropriate to share the happy moments too.
- Use your strength coming from the happiness to do things that you planned to do for a long time, and cause you good feelings.

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion

Ana was happy about the fact that school was out and holidays started. She felt relieved and totally free from all pressure. She was smiling and enjoying herself on the walk home.

LONELINESS

We feel lonely, when we feel, nobody is interested in our thoughts, life, and there is no one to turn to with our problems. Loneliness is not the same as being alone – we can still feel lonely in the company of others, and if being alone is an own choice, it might not be accompanied by loneliness. At different levels, but all people experience loneliness sometimes. From social perspective, loneliness is a difference between the wanted and the existing relationships – let it be romantic, or any other types of relationships. Experts define two types of loneliness: the emotional loneliness, when there is no close, really available and committed relationship, while social loneliness is, when there is no satisfying social circle. While social loneliness can cause frustration and boredom, emotional loneliness can lead to negative feelings about ourselves.

How to get aware of this feeling:

When we are lonely, we feel unhappy with ourselves and others, unconnected with society. Often we lose interest and motivation to do anything. It can also be accompanied by the feeling of being rejected, and unwanted. It can lead to the decrease of self-love and acceptance, as well as anger about our social circles.

Loneliness often leads to unhappy coping mechanisms as escaping techniques, like binge-watching tv-shows (living the life of others), reading as an escape mechanism, or drug / alcohol abuse. Also according to research, lonely people tend to perceive other people more negatively, which in turn increases their loneliness.

How to deal with this feeling:

- Take active measures to meet other people. Go to regular group activities (such as a yoga class, or any class), or connect to other people with same interests in social media (such as Facebook groups).
- Initiate relationships, take the first step. Listen to the others, and show interest in the other person.
- Pet animals can also help to decrease the feeling of loneliness, as well as can be a good source to connect others about them (such as cat-lover groups etc).
- Get in contact with lost friends. We often avoid to reach back to other people, because we are afraid of hard feelings of the others towards us. However in reality, a lot of people are lonely, and feel very happy, if someone reach out to them.
- Think of yourself as your best friend. You can write your problems for yourself, drink a coffee, give self-massage.

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion –

Milena felt very lonely. She just moved to a new city after a break up, and here she was without friends, working in home office, rarely meeting anyone. When she recognized that she lonely, she started to make deliberate steps. She took a lovely puppy from the shelter, started to walk the dog, and talk with the people who were also walking dogs. She met the same people more and more times, until with one they started more serious relationship.

LOVE

When you love another person – either in a romantic, or in a friendly, or family way, you experience pleasurable sensations in their presence and are sensitive about their reactions to you. According to Robert Sternberg, the three components of love are intimacy, passion, and commitment. **Intimacy** encompasses feelings of attachment, closeness, connectedness, and bonding. **Passion** encompasses drives connected to both limerence and sexual attraction. **Commitment** refers, in the short-term, to the decision that one loves a certain other, and in the long-term, to one's commitment to maintain that love and closeness.

How to get aware of this feeling:

When you are together, or think about another person, you love (let it be a romantic interest, a friend, or a family member), you feel a content feeling, and some happiness. There is also a curiosity about the other person, a desire to be with him or her, and a sense of empathy towards them, and a benevolence, a desire to help them grow. You feel welcome, and safe, “home”. Love is a healthy way of bonding to another, getting attuned with another and having common plans.

However, it is not exchangeable with the feeling of familiarity, when you also feel “homey”, but in reality you only have an understanding of the situation based on previous (often negative) experiences! When “feeling home” is closely connected with the experience of being hurt, we often exchange these feelings with each other.

How to deal with this feeling (how to use it as a resource):

- *Choose the mindset* - When looking for a relationship, approach it from an attitude of “What can I bring to the relationship?” rather than “what can I get out of it?” This is the attitude that fosters healthy relationships.
- *Take care of your own well-being* - If you don't, you will only attract someone at the same emotional level or lower. If I am healthy, I will attract a healthy partner. If I am emotionally unhealthy, I will attract emotionally unhealthy partners.
- *Take responsibility for your own emotions* – not the emotions of others around you. You can only control yourself and the way you react to certain events. - *Don't assume* you know how your partner feels. If you don't know how he or she feels – ask.
- *You can feel sorry for your partner if he or she is hurting* – but you don't have to be the person who feels guilty for causing the pain. If your partner EVER expects you to feel guilt or tries to play on your susceptibility toward guilt, reevaluate your relationship with your partner.
- *Expressing feelings and communication techniques* - When talking about your emotions to your partner, learn to explain these emotions without placing the blame on your partner – take responsibility for being insecure or defensive.

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion –

Loredana - 34 years old, has been in a relationship with Mircea for 12 years. Since they got married, "it's like everything has changed". Loredana feels that she no longer communicates with her husband in the same way and the disputes have intensified. "Mircea has started to be distant, he is irritated at

every step and I feel that I cannot satisfy him with anything". Loredana used specific communication methods to express her emotions and encouraged her husband to do the same. Thus the relationship between the two improved, Loredana finding out the reasons why her husband was distant, she was able to support him emotionally, which was helpful. The two turn much more often to specific communication methods, realizing that in this way they can obtain understanding, empathy and support from their partner.

RAGE

Rage is best described as a fit of violent anger and fury. It is the most extreme expression of anger. Anger can actually be good and lead to positive outcomes either by acting as a motivator to perform and succeed or acting as a means to overcome some personal difficulties. Rage is excessive anger that is often violent.

How to get aware of this feeling:

Some signs and symptoms may indicate that you are about to have a rage attack. These include:

- Feeling suddenly angry or irritable for no apparent reason
- Physical tension or feeling “on edge”
- Difficulty concentrating or thinking clearly
- A sense of being overwhelmed or out of control
- An increase in physical activity, such as pacing or fist-clenching
- A decrease in self-control, such as yelling or saying things you later regret
- Feeling like you are about to explode or lose control
- Feeling very agitated or restless
- Physical aggression, such as hitting or punching objects (or people)
- Destructiveness, such as throwing things or breaking objects

How to cope with this feeling (list of coping mechanism):

While Having An Attack: If you find yourself in the middle of a rage attack, there are some things you can do to stay calm:

- **Breathe:** Take slow, deep breaths and focus on your breath going in and out.
- **Visualize:** Visualize a peaceful scene or place to help relax your mind and body.
- **Move:** Go for a walk or run, or do some other form of exercise to release tension from your body.
- **Talk:** Talk to someone you trust about what is going on, or write down your thoughts in a journal.

After An Attack : If you are struggling to cope with the aftermath of a rage attack, there are some things you can do to get help:

- **Talk to your doctor:** can help you identify any underlying medical or mental health conditions that may be contributing to your rage attacks, and provide you with information on treatment options.
- **See a therapist:** can help you deal with the emotions and behaviors that contribute to your anger.
- **Try reflecting on your behavior:** Although it is impossible to undo what has already happened, you can always do a self-reflection on what was your trigger, what you did or said, or who you hurt. This will help you recognize a pattern in your behaviors and emotions.

- Practice grounding or relaxation exercises: Exercises such as mindful breathing, meditation, grounding, rekindling with your senses can help you bring yourself to a calmer and more neutral emotional balance.
- Indulge in self care: After-effects of a rage attack can be emotionally draining. It can be really helpful to engage in self care activities to make you feel better and calmer. You can try things such as going for a walk, sleeping, taking a shower, eating, simply laying down, or trying your favorite hobbies.

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion

“I found I was yelling at my children all the time and sometimes even spanked them. Only when my older child began bedwetting did I realize it was time to cope with my rage,” says Mary, a 34-year-old management consultant, who turned to a parenting group for help. A couple of sessions there convinced her to meet a psychotherapist and now she has learned to identify her and deal with rage triggers.

SERENITY

Serenity refers to a state of well-being resulting in a certain tranquility of mind and body. It is often associated with notions of calm, peace, and freedom, and can also be understood as an absence of psychological agitation.

How to get aware of this feeling:

Physical symptoms: lack of body tension, relaxed facial muscles, generalized feeling of lightness, well-regulated breathing.

Psychological symptoms: lack of invasive thoughts, positive apprehension about upcoming events, better efficiency, and focus.

How to deal with this feeling:

Realizing and being aware of your own state of serenity can be a useful resource to make it available when needed. Identifying and writing down the origin(s) and manifestations of this "pleasant feeling" for example can make it concrete and accessible at any time.

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion:

For the past few months, Mia, a young 25-year-old woman, has been going through a challenging period due to her job search and numerous job interviews.

In order to stay active and motivated, she started taking yoga classes and noticed the feeling of well-being she felt after each session, such as a sense of lightness, a lack of muscular tension and more confidence regarding her research. Mia then adopted a regular exercise routine, followed by a work session each time, during which she managed to be efficient and focused on the preparation of her job interviews.

SHAME

Shame is defined as a self-conscious emotion arising from the sense that something is fundamentally wrong about oneself. With shame, we often feel inadequate and full of self-doubt, yet these experiences may be outside of our conscious awareness. That makes shame hard to identify and label.

Source: <https://www.berkeleywellbeing.com/shame.html>

How to get aware of this feeling:

Shame produces an implosion of the body: head lowered, eyes closed or hidden, and the upper body curved in on itself as if trying to be as small as possible (the bodily acting out of the wish to disappear). Shame brings with it a subjective sense of time slowing down which serves to magnify anything that occurs during a state of shame. It also is accompanied by physical symptoms such as blushing, sweating, and increased heart rate.

Source: https://traumaticstressinstitute.org/wp-content/files_mf/1276631745ShameandAttachment.pdf

How to cope with this feeling:

Recognise shame as it arises. Keeping a log of shame-related thoughts can give you insight into how you relate and talk to yourself.

1. **Understand the origins of your shame.** Many kinds of experiences, from mistreatment in childhood to social stigma, can contribute to chronic shame. It can be helpful to acknowledge circumstances that were outside of your control.
2. **Check in with yourself to build self-compassion.** When you're distressed, ask yourself: "What can help me now?", "What do I need?" and discover your best ways to cope.
3. **Try writing yourself a self-compassionate letter.** A letter written to someone you care about – later reframed and read as a letter to yourself – can help awaken a capacity to relate to yourself in a gentler, more caring way.
4. **Acknowledge the different parts of yourself that are present.** Identify the various reactions you might be having in a difficult situation and craft a validating, self-compassionate response for each.
5. **Share in the context of safe relationships.** Shame feeds on silence, and one of the most effective strategies to take power back from shame is to talk about your experience of it with people you trust.

<https://psyche.co/guides/how-to-cope-with-shame-by-understanding-where-it-comes-from>

Case example of the coping mechanism for this emotion (3-5 sentences).

After a negative comment from a relative on the way she behaved, Sally immediately felt inadequate and that there was something wrong with her and her personality. She started sweating, her heart rate increased, and she started experiencing a sense of time slowing down. Sally decided to speak about her feelings and the situation that triggered those feelings with a very good friend of her. As soon as she got home, she dedicated some time to write herself a self-compassionate letter to be kinder to herself.