

Dealing With an Unhealthy Relationship

Recognize qualities of unhealthy relationships, learn healthier responses, and prioritize your wellbeing through boundaries and self-care.

- Recognizing Toxic Behavior
- Setting Healthy Boundaries
- Practicing Self-Care
- Plus 2 More Helpful Worksheets

Dealing With an Unhealthy Relationship Workbook

Navigating unhealthy relationships and unwanted behaviors can stir up a range of emotions, from frustration and sadness to guilt and confusion. **Whether you're managing someone's need for control, enduring emotional manipulation, or recognizing toxic patterns, these dynamics can heavily impact your mental and emotional well-being.** It's common to feel stuck or unsure of how to move forward when dealing with these challenging behaviors.

This workbook is designed to help you unpack the complexities of such relationships. Through guided reflection, practical exercises, and helpful strategies, you'll learn how to set boundaries, manage difficult emotions, and reclaim your sense of self. The aim is not to fix the relationship but to empower you to create healthier responses, prioritize your well-being, and take control of your life.

Here is a brief introduction to each worksheet included in this workbook:

Recognizing Toxic Behavior

This worksheet helps you identify patterns of toxic or overbearing behavior in challenging relationships, allowing you to better understand their impact on your emotional and mental health. By gaining clarity, you can begin taking steps toward healthier interactions and protect your well-being.

Setting Healthy Boundaries

This worksheet guides you through the process of defining and communicating clear boundaries in challenging relationships to maintain your emotional safety. Setting boundaries is essential for reducing the negative impact of overbearing behaviors and fostering mutual respect.

Practicing Self-Care

Focusing on self-care helps you manage stress and emotional burnout caused by challenging interactions in difficult relationships. This worksheet encourages you to prioritize activities that restore your mental and emotional energy, promoting resilience.

Setting SMART Goals

This worksheet focuses on setting personal goals to reclaim your identity, especially when facing controlling or overbearing behaviors in challenging relationships. By defining clear, achievable goals, you can assert your autonomy and build a stronger sense of self.

Personal Strengths Inventory

This worksheet encourages you to reflect on your strengths, helping to rebuild your self-confidence and resilience in the face of overbearing behaviors. Recognizing your own capabilities can empower you to stand firm in your boundaries and emotional needs.

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*



Recognizing Toxic Behaviors

Toxic behaviors in any close relationship can deeply impact your mental, emotional, and even physical well-being. This worksheet is designed to help you identify these harmful patterns, understand their effects on you, and develop strategies to cope. **By becoming aware of these behaviors and their impact, you can take steps to protect your well-being and establish healthier boundaries.**

PART 1: Identify Toxic Behaviors

Below is a list of common toxic behaviors. For each behavior, check how often you observe it in the person you are reflecting on.

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS
Frequently putting you down or finding fault in everything you do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Denying your reality or making you question your own memories or perceptions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refusing to take responsibility and always placing the blame on you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expressing hostility indirectly through sarcasm, backhanded compliments, or avoidance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring your actions or whereabouts, and demanding that things be done their way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using guilt, shame, or fear to control your actions or decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refusing to communicate, ignoring your concerns, or giving the silent treatment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Becoming overly jealous or possessive, making you feel guilty for interacting with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dismissing your feelings, telling you you're being "too sensitive" or "overreacting."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using hurtful or degrading language during disagreements or arguments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restricting access to money or controlling financial decisions without discussion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequently hiding the truth, exaggerating, or lying about their actions or intentions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using threats or intimidation (verbal or physical) to maintain control or get their way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discouraging or preventing you from seeing friends, family, or doing things you enjoy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Recognizing Toxic Behaviors

PART 2: Assess the Severity of the Impact

Now assess how each toxic behavior affects different areas of your life. Consider how it impacts your mental health, emotional well-being, relationships, work, and overall quality of life.

	Not At All	Very Little	Somewhat	A Lot
Frequently putting you down or finding fault in everything you do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Denying your reality or making you question your own memories or perceptions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refusing to take responsibility and always placing the blame on you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expressing hostility indirectly through sarcasm, backhanded compliments, or avoidance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring your actions or whereabouts, and demanding that things be done their way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using guilt, shame, or fear to control your actions or decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refusing to communicate, ignoring your concerns, or giving the silent treatment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Becoming overly jealous or possessive, making you feel guilty for interacting with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dismissing your feelings, telling you you're being "too sensitive" or "overreacting."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using hurtful or degrading language during disagreements or arguments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restricting access to money or controlling financial decisions without discussion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequently hiding the truth, exaggerating, or lying about their actions or intentions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using threats or intimidation (verbal or physical) to maintain control or get their way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discouraging or preventing you from seeing friends, family, or doing things you enjoy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Assessing the impact of toxic behaviors is crucial because it helps you understand how these actions are affecting your emotional, mental, and physical well-being. By recognizing the severity of the impact, you can prioritize which behaviors need the most attention and develop appropriate coping strategies.

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Recognizing Toxic Behaviors

PART 3: Explore the Impact

Below are examples of the emotional, mental, physical, and behavioral impacts that toxic behaviors can have on your everyday life. For each toxic behavior that impacts you somewhat to a lot, describe in more detail how it affects you emotionally, mentally, and physically.

Emotional Impact

- **Increased Anxiety:** Constant worry or nervousness.
- **Feelings of Insecurity:** Questioning your self-worth or doubting your abilities.
- **Sadness:** Persistent feelings of hopelessness, sadness, or isolation.
- **Anger:** Frustration that builds up.
- **Guilt or Shame:** Feeling guilty or responsible for the other person's behavior.
- **Emotional Numbness:** Disconnecting from your feelings.

Mental Impact

- **Self-Doubt:** Continually questioning your decisions, feelings, or perceptions.
- **Difficulty Concentrating:** Trouble focusing or staying present.
- **Intrusive thoughts:** Replaying hurtful conversations or worrying about potential conflicts.
- **Mental Exhaustion:** Feeling mentally drained.
- **Low Self-Esteem:** Erosion of self-confidence.
- **Overthinking:** Constantly second-guessing your actions or being overly cautious.

Physical Impact

- **Fatigue:** Feeling physically tired or drained.
- **Tension or Headaches:** Physical tightness or pain in the neck, shoulders, or back. Frequent headaches.
- **Changes in Appetite:** Overeating or loss of appetite.
- **Sleep Problems:** Difficulty falling or staying asleep.
- **Stomach Issues:** Digestive problems like nausea, stomach aches, or indigestion.

Behavioral Impact

- **Withdrawal:** Avoiding friends, family, or social situations.
- **Avoidance:** Steering clear of places, situations, or conversations that might provoke toxic behaviors.
- **People-Pleasing:** Trying too hard to avoid conflict by constantly appeasing or accommodating.
- **Emotional Outbursts:** Becoming more reactive or irritable in situations unrelated to the toxic behavior.
- **Loss of Interest in Activities:** Disengaging from hobbies or interests that used to bring joy.

Behavior:

Ex: Constant Criticism

Emotional, Mental, Physical, & Behavioral Impact:

- I start to doubt myself and feel like nothing I do is ever good enough
- I overthink everything I say or do and I feel mentally exhausted
- I have tension in my neck and shoulders

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Recognizing Toxic Behaviors

Behavior:	Emotional, Mental, Physical, & Behavioral Impact:
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Recognizing Toxic Behaviors

PART 4: Develop Coping Strategies

Now that you've identified the toxic behaviors and how they impact you, let's develop strategies to cope with them.

Emotional Coping Strategies

- **Practice Self-Compassion:** Remind yourself that you deserve respect and care, especially after being exposed to hurtful behavior.
- **Acknowledge Your Feelings:** Allow yourself to fully experience emotions like anger, sadness, or frustration without judgment, validating your feelings as a natural response to toxic behavior.
- **Journal Your Feelings:** Write down your thoughts and emotions to process and release them, reducing the emotional weight you carry.
- **Engage in Positive Self-Talk:** Counteract negative effects by affirming your self-worth and challenging the internalized messages of toxic behaviors.
- **Allow Time for Emotional Recovery:** Give yourself space to recuperate emotionally after interactions with toxic individuals, whether that means alone time, rest, or talking with a friend.

Mental Coping Strategies

- **Challenge Negative Thoughts:** Try to replace irrational thoughts caused by toxic behaviors with more balanced, realistic perspectives.
- **Mindfulness Practices:** Use mindfulness to stay grounded in the present moment, reducing overthinking or anxiety triggered by toxic situations.
- **Shift Focus:** Redirect your mental energy towards positive, constructive activities or relationships rather than dwelling on toxic interactions.
- **Mental Breaks:** Take mental breaks by engaging in light, enjoyable activities like puzzles, reading, or listening to music to prevent burnout from constant stress.
- **Reframe the Situation:** Shift your perspective by seeing the toxic behavior as a reflection of the other person's issues rather than your own inadequacy.

Physical Coping Strategies

- **Engage in Physical Exercise:** Physical activity like walking, running, or yoga can reduce stress hormones and improve your mood.
- **Deep Breathing Techniques:** Practice deep breathing exercises to relieve physical stress symptoms like a racing heart or tight muscles.
- **Use Grounding Techniques:** Focus on physical sensations (like touching a textured object or feeling your feet on the ground) to bring yourself back to the present moment and manage anxiety.
- **Walk Away from Conflict:** Remove yourself from conflicts to avoid getting pulled into unnecessary drama or emotional harm.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Gradually tense and relax different muscle groups to reduce the physical stress and tension.

Relational Coping Strategies

- **Set Firm Boundaries:** Clearly communicate and enforce boundaries, letting them know what behavior you will not tolerate and what consequences will follow if they cross those boundaries.
- **Limit Exposure:** Reduce your time spent with toxic people when possible, especially in environments where their behavior is most damaging.
- **Prepare Responses:** Plan calm, assertive responses to common toxic behaviors, such as calmly stating, "I don't appreciate that comment," when criticized or disrespected.
- **Practice Assertiveness:** Stand up for yourself without being aggressive by clearly stating your needs and expectations in a calm, respectful manner.

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Recognizing Toxic Behaviors

Behavior:	Coping Strategies I Will Use:
Behavior:	Coping Strategies I Will Use:
Behavior:	Coping Strategies I Will Use:
Behavior:	Coping Strategies I Will Use:

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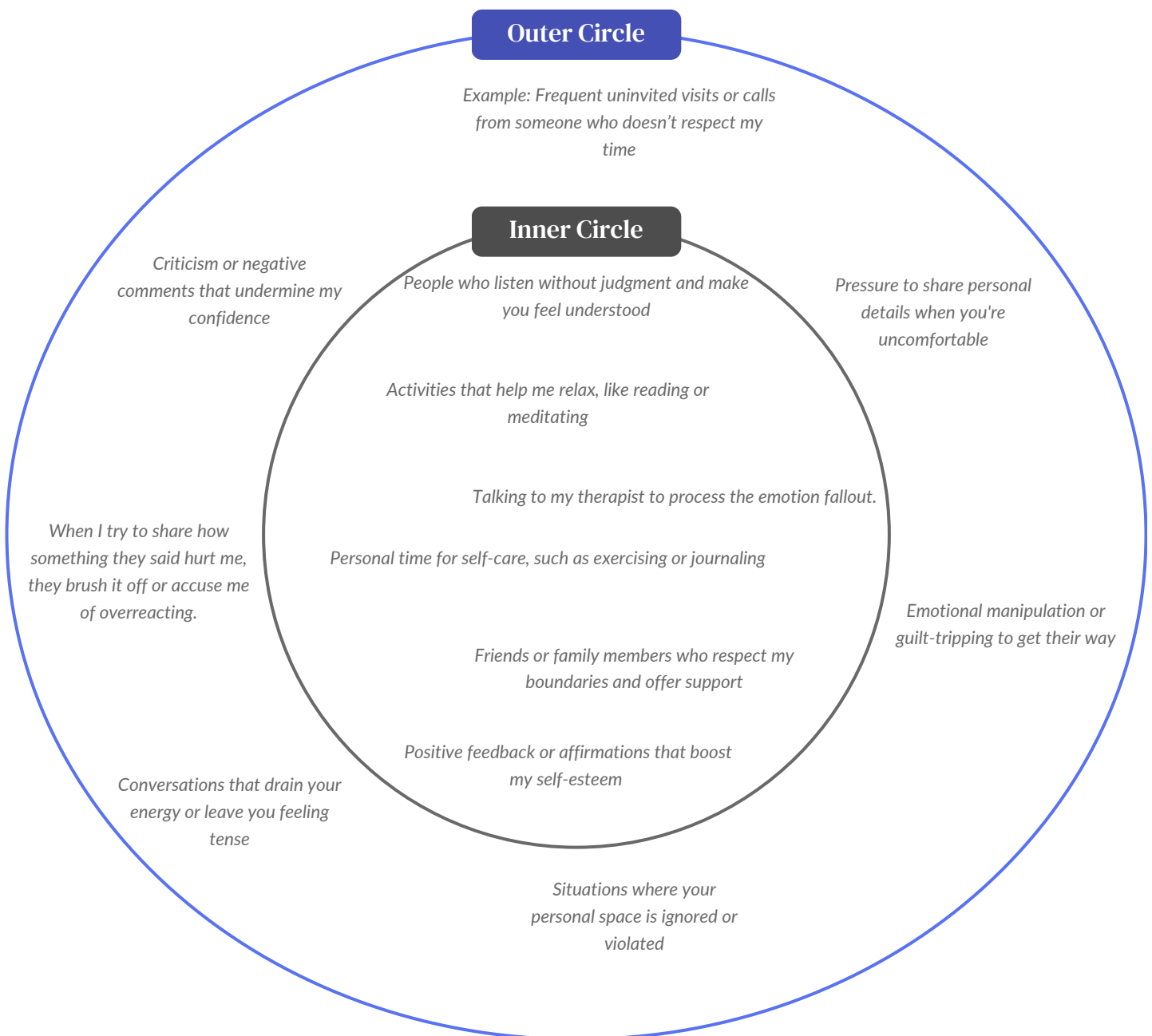


How to Set Healthy Boundaries

[Setting boundaries in relationships is essential for protecting your mental and emotional health.](#) This worksheet is designed to guide you in identifying areas where boundaries are needed, understanding what healthy boundaries look like, and developing practical strategies to enforce them. By setting and maintaining these limits, you empower yourself to create a safer space that supports your well-being and sense of self.

PART 1: Visualize Your Boundaries

Inside the circle, write everything that makes you feel relaxed and safe. On the outside of the circle, write down anything or anyone that makes you feel stressed, uncomfortable, or unsafe. These are people or situations that are pushing your boundaries and need further attention.



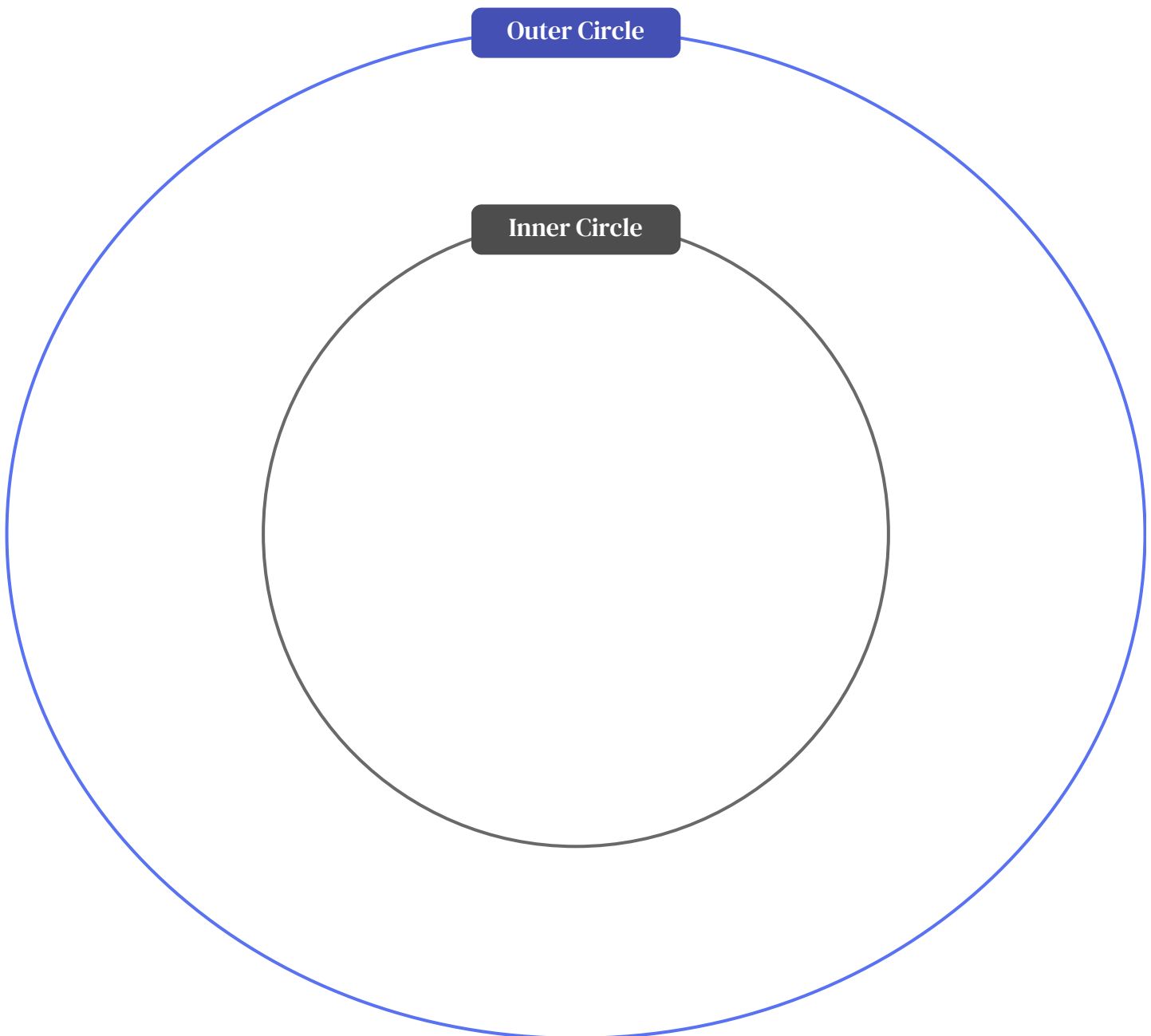
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How to Set Healthy Boundaries

When filling out your inner and outer circle, here are some questions to consider:

- What boundaries do I currently have in place to protect my mental well-being in challenging relationships?
- Who or what helps me feel understood, calmer, or safer when dealing with difficult interactions?
- How do I take care of myself after encounters that leave me feeling drained or upset?
- What specific behaviors from others make me feel disrespected or uncomfortable?
- What actions or words from others make me feel guilty, criticized, or ashamed?
- What types of conversations leave me feeling emotionally drained, anxious, or overwhelmed?
- In what ways do others try to control my decisions or push me to act against my own needs?



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How to Set Healthy Boundaries

PART 2: How to Establish Your Communication Boundaries

Here are some basic rules and examples for communicating your boundaries effectively.

Use Confident Body Language

Stand or sit up straight, maintain eye contact, and use firm but calm gestures to convey confidence and assertiveness.

Be Clear & Set Consequences

Be specific about what behavior you want to change and clearly state what will happen if your boundary is not respected.

Keep Your Tone Calm and Respectful:

Speak calmly and assertively, avoiding raised voices or aggressive tones to maintain a respectful atmosphere.

Practice Active Listening:

Listen to the other person's response without interrupting and acknowledge their perspective while staying firm on your boundary.

Verbal Boundaries

- "I need you to speak to me in a calm, respectful tone."
- "I need you to avoid using sarcasm."
- "I need you to focus on the issue at hand and not make personal attacks."
- "I need you to clearly and honestly communicate without being evasive."

Emotional Boundaries

- "I want to feel that my feelings are acknowledged and validated."
- "I want you to apologize if you hurt my feelings during the argument."
- "I need you to avoid using my vulnerabilities against me."
- "I want to take breaks when I start feeling overly emotional."

Physical/Time Boundaries

- "I will visit on weekends, but I need my weekday to focus on my own family and work."
- "I can't attend every family gathering, but I will make time for the ones that are most important."
- "If the conversation becomes disrespectful, I will leave or take a break."

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How to Set Healthy Boundaries

PART 3: Develop Strategies for Maintaining Boundaries (Example Page)

Use the following prompts to create a plan for reinforcing your boundaries consistently and effectively.

Situation:

My friend often disregards my personal space and privacy by reading messages on my phone without permission. She'll make comments like, 'I just wanted to see what you're up to' or 'What's the big deal? We're close friends.' This typically happens when we're out together, and it leaves me feeling exposed, uncomfortable, and disrespected.

Boundary I will set:

I will let my friend know that I value my privacy and prefer to keep my phone and messages private. I'll explain that it's important to me to feel secure when we're together and that reading my messages without permission crosses a boundary. I will kindly but firmly ask her not to look at my phone without asking.

Any potential challenges:

- *Pushback or Justification – Your friend might dismiss your boundary as "not a big deal."*
- *Repeated Behavior – Your friend may continue to check your phone despite your request.*
- *Guilt or Self-Doubt – You may feel guilty or wonder if you're overreacting.*
- *Fear of Conflict – You might worry that setting this boundary could lead to tension.*

How I will handle these challenges:

- *Pushback or Justification – I'll calmly reaffirm my boundary and explain that my privacy is important to me.*
- *Repeated Behavior – I'll remind my friend each time it happens and be consistent in enforcing the boundary.*
- *Guilt or Self-Doubt – I'll remind myself that setting boundaries is healthy and necessary for my well-being.*
- *Fear of Conflict – I'll focus on staying calm and assertive, understanding that respectful friends will respect my boundary.*

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How to Set Healthy Boundaries

PART 3: Develop Strategies for Maintaining Boundaries

Use the following prompts to create a plan for reinforcing your boundaries consistently and effectively.

Situation:

Boundary I will set:

Any potential challenges:

How I will handle these challenges:

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Self-Care Inventory

Caring for yourself is essential when navigating the emotional strain of challenging relationships. Self-care includes any practice that helps restore your well-being and protects your mental, emotional, and physical health. For example, setting boundaries, taking time for yourself, and seeking support from trusted friends or professionals can create space for you to process and recover from difficult interactions.

This worksheet is designed to help you explore a variety of specific self-care activities that can improve your well-being. You will be asked to rank each activity on a scale from 1-3 to determine how well you are currently engaging in these practices. After ranking, you can “star” the activities you would like to do more often. The goal of this worksheet is to help you recognize the different types of self-care available to you, identify what you are doing well, and pinpoint areas where you can improve to feel better overall.

Ranking

- 1 I rarely engage in this, and it is not a regular part of my routine.
- 2 I occasionally engage in this, but it is not consistent.
- 3 I regularly engage in this, and it is a frequent part of my routine.
- ★ I want to do this more frequently.

1 2 3 ★ Physical Self-Care: Improving your physical health.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engaging in regular physical activity such as walking, running, yoga, or strength training.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensuring you get enough restful sleep each night to rejuvenate your body.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eating a balanced and nutritious diet, including plenty of fruits, vegetables, and grains.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drinking enough water throughout the day to stay hydrated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintaining good hygiene practices such as bathing, brushing teeth, and grooming.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attending regular check-ups and following medical advice from healthcare professionals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taking time to relax and unwind, through activities like taking a bath and getting a massage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Limiting or avoiding the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spending time outdoors in natural sunlight to enhance vitamin D levels and improve mood.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paying attention to your body's needs, such as stretching when tense or resting when tired.

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Self-Care Inventory

1 2 3



Emotional Self-Care: Processing & expressing your emotions.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Participating in activities you enjoy to boost your mood and provide a sense of fulfillment.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Spending time with friends and family to build support and reduce feelings of isolation.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Practicing mindfulness to stay present and manage negative thoughts.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Writing down thoughts and feelings to process emotions and gain insights.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Keeping a gratitude journal or reflecting on things you are thankful for.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Using positive affirmations to counter negative self-talk and build self-esteem.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Using music to relax, uplift your mood, or express your emotions.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Expressing your emotions through art, music, writing, or other creative outlets.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Set achievable goals and celebrate your progress, no matter how small.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Regular sessions with a therapist or counselor to explore and address emotional challenges.

1 2 3



Social Self-Care: Fostering & maintaining healthy relationships.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Spending time with people you like and make you feel good about yourself.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Asking for help from friends or family when you're feeling down or overwhelmed.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Learning to say no and establishing boundaries to protect your emotional well-being.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Participating in support groups to gain insight and emotional support from others.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Participating in clubs or organizations that align with your interests to meet new people.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Giving your time to help others in your community to foster connection and purpose.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Going to social gatherings, parties, or community events to build your social network.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Scheduling regular get-togethers, such as a weekly coffee date, or a monthly dinner.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Actively listening when talking with others, which helps strengthen your relationships.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Scheduling intentional alone time with your romantic partner.

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Self-Care Inventory

1 2 3



Professional Self-Care: Maintaining a healthy work-life balance and pursuing career development opportunities.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Clearly defining work hours and sticking to them to ensure a healthy work-life balance.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Stepping away from work to recharge, through daily short breaks and using vacation time.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Talking to a supervisor or HR about mental health challenges (if it feels safe).

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Exploring available support options, such as employee assistance programs (EAP).

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Organizing and prioritizing work tasks to manage workload effectively and reduce stress.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Ensuring your work environment is comfortable and conducive to productivity.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Establishing achievable work goals and celebrating small accomplishments.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Being kind to yourself during work and avoiding excessive self-criticism.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Building positive relationships with coworkers for mutual support and camaraderie.

1 2 3



Spiritual Self-Care: Nurturing your spirit and providing purpose.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Practicing meditation to connect with your inner self and find peace and clarity.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Engaging in prayer or other forms of communication with a higher power.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Spending time in nature to experience connection to the world around you.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Regularly reflecting on what you are thankful for to cultivate an appreciative mindset.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Reading inspirational books, scriptures, or quotes to uplift and inspire your spirit.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Participating in spiritual or religious community activities.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Engaging in artistic activities, such as painting, music, or writing.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Performing acts of kindness and service to others, fostering a sense of purpose.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Acting in accordance with your morals to create a sense of integrity in your life.

☐ ☐ ☐
☐

Spending time with the people who give your life meaning.

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SMART Goals

SMART Goals is a structured goal-setting method that breaks down larger, overwhelming personal goals into manageable steps, empowering you to take ownership of your life and make decisions that reflect your true self. By setting clear, measurable, and time-bound goals, you can regain control over your choices, build independence, and focus on living authentically—free from the influence of challenging relationships or external pressures.

S

Specific

What is your goal? Write down exactly what you want to achieve. Be clear and detailed about what you expect to accomplish.

Example: I want to establish firm boundaries with a friend who often disregards my privacy, within the next 3 months. This will allow me to feel more respected and create space for healthier interactions, supporting my overall mental well-being.

M

Measurable

How will you measure your progress? Determine how you will track your progress and know when you have achieved your goal.

I will track my progress by noting each time I successfully communicate my boundaries in a journal. I will review my entries weekly to see if my friend's behavior changes and if I feel more comfortable and respected in our interactions. I'll consider the goal achieved when I've consistently enforced my boundaries without feeling the need to apologize or back down

A

Achievable

Is your goal achievable? Consider what might make this goal difficult and plan how you can overcome those challenges.

This goal may be challenging because my friend might resist or push back against my boundaries, possibly making me feel guilty for enforcing them. To overcome this, I'll prepare specific phrases to assert my boundaries calmly and seek support from a trusted friend or therapist to stay consistent and confident in maintaining them.

R

Relevant

Why is this goal important to you? Ensure that your goal is relevant and meaningful to your overall life or career goals. Reflect on the value and impact of achieving this goal.

This goal is important because maintaining my boundaries will help me feel respected and valued in my relationships. Achieving it will boost my self-esteem and protect my mental well-being, allowing me to focus on building healthier, more supportive connections in my life.

T

Time-Bound

What is your deadline for achieving this goal? Set a specific date by which you plan to achieve your goal.

I plan to achieve this goal within 3 months from today. By [insert specific date], I will have consistently enforced my boundaries, assessed my comfort level in this relationship, and determined if further adjustments are needed.

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SMART Goals

S**Specific**

What exactly do you want to accomplish? Be clear and detailed about what you expect to accomplish.

M**Measurable**

How will you measure your progress? Determine how you will track your progress and know when you have achieved your goal.

A**Achievable**

Is your goal achievable? Consider what might make this goal difficult and plan how you can overcome those challenges.

R**Relevant**

Why is this goal important to you? Ensure that your goal is relevant and meaningful to your overall life or career goals. Reflect on the value and impact of achieving this goal.

T**Time-Bound**

What is your deadline for achieving this goal? Set a specific date by which you plan to achieve your goal.

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SMART Goals

Be Flexible

If you're struggling to reach a goal, don't be afraid to adjust it. It's okay to change the timeline, make the goal smaller, or alter the steps as needed.

Celebrate Milestones

Reward yourself for every step or milestone you reach, no matter how small. This could be as simple as taking a break, enjoying a favorite treat, or planning a fun activity.

Give Yourself Enough Time

Make sure you have enough time to achieve your goals without feeling overwhelmed. It's better to allow extra time and feel accomplished than to set an unrealistic deadline and feel discouraged.

Stay Patient & Be Kind to Yourself

Progress may be slow, and setbacks can happen. Remind yourself that change takes time, and be kind to yourself if things don't go perfectly.

What obstacles have I encountered, and how have I handled them?

What progress have I made so far? What am I proud of?

What support or resources might help me continue making progress?

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Personal Strengths Inventory

Constant criticism, controlling behavior, or unrealistic expectations from others can lead you to internalize negativity, creating a harsh inner dialogue. Over time, this self-criticism can take a toll on your mental health, making you feel inadequate and increasing stress and anxiety. When you're consistently telling yourself you're not good enough, you may fall into a cycle of self-doubt, focusing only on perceived flaws and failures, which blocks you from recognizing your strengths and moving forward in life.

Creating a personal strengths inventory is a powerful tool to combat the effects of self-criticism, especially when it stems from challenging relationships. By identifying and acknowledging your unique strengths, you can start to shift focus away from negative external influences and toward your positive qualities. This practice helps you reframe your self-perception, building a more balanced and realistic view of yourself.

PART 1: Discovering Your Strengths

Take some time to read through the list of attributes carefully and circle at least 6 strengths that you believe apply to you.

Because difficult relationships can change how you think about yourself, you may feel you do not have the strengths below unless you match the description *100%, all the time*. **Challenge yourself to push back against those thoughts.** One way to do this is to identify the strengths of someone you know and admire, and consider whether you hold them to the same impossible standard.

Self-Control

I manage my emotions and impulses, which allows me to make thoughtful choices.

Confidence

I believe in my abilities and have positive expectations of success.

Flexibility

I adapt to change, adjust my approach, and think creatively in new situations.

Ambition

I have a strong desire and determination to achieve success and accomplish my goals.

Wisdom

I use knowledge and experience to make sound judgments and decisions.

Creativity

I think outside the box and generate original ideas.

Curiosity

I desire to ask questions, discover new things, and expand my knowledge.

Bravery

I face fear, uncertainty, or danger with determination and resolve.

Fairness

I believe in just treatment, and that everyone has equal opportunities.

Forgiveness

I let go of resentment and anger, choosing to understand and move on from a hurtful experience.

Gratitude

I appreciate and am thankful for the positive aspects of life.

Honesty

I am truthful and sincere in my words and actions.

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Personal Strengths Inventory

Optimism

I expect the best possible outcome and believe in a brighter future.

Humility

I have a modest view of my importance, which allows me to learn from others.

Humor

I have the ability to find and share amusement, and create a lighter perspective on challenges.

Kindness

I am caring, considerate, and desire to help others.

Patience

I stay composed while waiting or facing challenges, without getting frustrated or giving up.

Love of Learning

I have an enthusiasm for acquiring knowledge and skills, driven by a desire for understanding.

Perseverance

I am committed to see things through, despite obstacles and setbacks.

Open Mindedness

I am willing to consider new ideas and perspectives with receptiveness.

Teamwork

I collaborate effectively with others to achieve a shared goal.

Social Awareness

I understand the emotions, needs, and perspectives of others.

Spirituality

I believe in a purpose or connection to something larger than myself.

Enthusiasm

I have a zest and passion that fuels my excitement and motivation.

Generosity

I give my time, resources, or skills to help others without expecting anything in return.

Problem-Solving

I am able to analyze situations, identify solutions, and overcome challenges effectively.

Dependability

I am reliable and others can count on me to fulfill my commitments and responsibilities.

Authenticity

I live and express myself genuinely, being true to my values and beliefs.

Adventurousness

I am eager to experience new and exciting things, with a sense of curiosity and daring.

Assertiveness

I communicate my needs, wants, and opinions clearly and confidently.

Independence

I am self-sufficient and resourceful, taking responsibility for my own well-being.

Logic

I am able to think clearly and reach sound conclusions based on reason and evidence.

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Personal Strengths Inventory

PART 2: Applying Your Strengths to Relationships

Use the prompts to explore how you currently use your strengths in your romantic relationship(s), friendships, and family. Then, discover how you can apply your strengths in new ways to achieve relational growth.

Lists the strengths you possess that help you in your relationships:

Describe a specific time your strengths were able to help your relationships:

Describe two new ways you could use your strengths to help you in your relationships:

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Personal Strengths Inventory

PART 3: Applying Your Strengths to Your Profession

Use the prompts to explore how you currently use your strengths in your professional endeavors (at work or school). Then, discover how you can apply your strengths in new ways to achieve professional growth.

Lists the strengths you possess that help you in your profession:

Describe a specific time your strengths were able to help your profession: ent

Describe two new ways you could use your strengths to help you in your profession:

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Personal Strengths Inventory

PART 4: Applying Your Strengths to Achieve Personal Fulfillment

Use the prompts to explore how you currently use your strengths to increase your sense of purpose and enjoyment. Then, discover how you can apply your strengths in new ways to achieve personal growth.

Lists the strengths you possess that help you achieve personal fulfillment:

Describe a specific time your strengths were able to help you with personal fulfillment:

Describe two new ways you could use your strengths to help you with personal fulfillment:

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Additional Resources to Support Your Mental Health Journey

It can be hard to know where to begin looking for support in your mental health journey. Getting a referral from a primary care physician is a reliable first step. Also, sometimes family and friends have experienced similar issues and have professionals they would recommend. The experts at ChoosingTherapy.com are here to help as well, with resources we have reviewed and recommend. Our [strict editorial standards](#) ensure our reviews are fair, honest, thorough, and based on firsthand experience.

You Can Trust ChoosingTherapy.com



325+
Companies Reviewed



3,625+
Hours of Firsthand Experience



1,545+
Data Points Analyzed



[Best Online Therapy for Depression](#)

Online therapy is a convenient way to connect with a licensed therapist to address mental health issues, reduce unhealthy behaviors, develop effective coping skills, and get more satisfaction out of life. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.

[Best Online Psychiatry](#)

Online psychiatry providers enable patients to consult with licensed psychiatrists and other mental health professionals. They can evaluate, diagnose, and prescribe medication to help manage mental health issues. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.



[Best Mental Health Apps](#)

Apps can be great way to monitor mood, track sleep, journal, and practice healthy coping skills like mindfulness and meditation. There are apps specifically designed to help people reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, ADHD, chronic stress, and burnout.

[Therapist Directory](#)

When you're looking for a mental health provider with a very particular skill set, level of experience, or personality type, a therapist directory can be very helpful. Using the filters, you can refine your search until you find a therapist who feels like a perfect fit.

