

Journal

The Journal is both a tool for self-reflection and a practice of connecting to Life, supporting growth and clarity after difficult interactions and aiding us in channeling energy towards life-enriching actions. This journal can also be used as a Gratitude Journal (see **Gratitude Journal variation** on back), a tool for revitalizing our connection to Life by celebrating moments where our lives were enriched.

Suggestions for What to Include in Your Journal:

- **Situation:** Free write about what happened.
- **Stimulus:** State the specific observation of what stimulated your reaction.
- **Translating:**
 1. Divide your page into 4 columns – Thoughts, Feelings, Needs, and Empathic Guess.
 2. In the Thoughts column, write down all the charged stories, judgments, interpretations, and beliefs you have around the situation. When you sense that you've named them all, take time to sink into the sensations now in your body.
 3. Take one thought at a time staying connected to the body sensations. Next to each thought, note the related Body Sensations and Emotions in the Feelings column.
 4. Drop deeper into the experience listening for the needs that arise connected to the body sensations. Guessing the needs behind each of the listed thoughts write them in the Needs column.
 5. In the Empathic Guess column, write out a full empathic guess for yourself around that particular thought, using the needs you listed. Read the guess aloud and take a moment to receive the empathy in your body, letting it land inside of you. Savor any releasing that occurs.
- **Sitting with the Needs:** Pick one or two needs that speak to you most of all the ones you listed. Write them down and take some time to reflect on them. Staying close to your body sensations, meditate silently on what those needs mean to you, what it feels like and what qualities are present when those needs are fully met. Don't rush this step – you may want to take a walk or even go out of town for the weekend to make space for this reflection.
- **Insight:** Write down any insights that you have into this situation after reflecting on it.
- **Action Request:** Being in touch with the needs, write down any life-enriching actions you'd like to take - the clearer and more defined the action, the easier it will be to act on.

(example on next page)

Journal

***** Gratitude Journal variation:** Celebrate a moment in your life where you or somebody else in your life said/ did something that reconnected you to Life. State a specific observation of what the words or action you're enjoying was. Write down all the pleasant thoughts you're having around the situation. List the feelings and needs that are met behind each thought, and write an empathic guess around that need. Sit and savor the appreciation (see **Sitting with the Needs**). Write down any insights and life-enriching actions you'd like to take.

Example Journal:

Situation: I was so exhausted after working all day and I came home wanting some ease and rest. John was acting really weird and I didn't want to deal with it. Finally he started going into how I never spend time with him anymore, and I just about lost it.			
Stimulus: John saying to me, "You never spend any time with me".			
Thoughts	Feelings	Needs	Empathic Guess
John doesn't have any idea how hard I work to support us!	Tension in shoulders, Annoyed	Appreciation, Understanding	Are you feeling annoyed because you'd like some appreciation and understanding?
I should've never moved in with him.	Hot in face, Deflated, Exasperated	Shared Reality	Are you feeling exasperated and wanting some sense of shared reality?
He's so irresponsible.	Angry, Tight chest	Support	Are you feeling angry and needing support?
We wouldn't survive if I lived like him.	Tight in belly, hurt back, worry	Security, Well-Being	Are you feeling concern around your needs for security and well-being?
I have to work hard for us to survive.	frustrated, tired	Ease, Security	Are you wanting ease in how you meet your need for security?
Sitting with the Needs: Ease and Security			
Insight: I realize that I'm putting a lot of pressure on myself by believing that our basic survival depends on me working really hard. That pressure is really what's triggering my anger. By acknowledging that I also have a need for ease, I feel more wholeness in myself and more willingness to connect with John.			
Action Request: I'll ask John if he'd be willing to hand me my Journal (with a kiss!) next time I look stressed. I'd also like to spend 10 minutes at lunch tomorrow sitting with the need for Ease so I can connect to the quality of that life energy more readily in my work day.			