I think I feel...

A pocket therapy guide to understanding your thoughts and feelings, and what to do with them.

This guide was created by a being named Tea.
For other free printable guides, visit their website:
takeyourtimewithtea.ca

Feelings Chart

Amused	Hopeful	Confused	Anxious	Rejected
Curious	Happy	Surprised	Fearful	Insecure
Ashamed	Sad	Disgusted	Angry	Distant
Vulnerable	Apathetic	Horrified	Irritated	Resentful

Remember: Your feelings are always valid, but that doesn't mean that you can express them however you want

Thoughts VS Feelings

Your mind is composed of two different parts, your thoughts and your feelings. They dictate your behaviours and are deeply connected.

Your thoughts are your interpretation of situations, past events, or the actions of others.

Your feelings are how your body reacts to situations, past events, or the actions of others.

How to Write an Affirmative Statement

- **Focus on Change-** Write down what you would like to work on, being sure it aligns with your values.
- **Acknowledge Your Circle of Control-** Be sure that what you are affirming yourself of is realistic and achievable. You can't guarantee success but you can affirm that you are prepared and will try your best.
- **Challenge Cognitive Distortions**- Affirm the opposite of any distortions you may have.
- **Use Present Tense-** Speak as if the affirmation is currently happening. Say "I am well-prepared" instead of "I am going to be prepared"
- **Speak Confidently and Often-** Be sure you can say your statement with feeling. It should resonate with you every time you say it.

Your thoughts and feelings are formed as a way of protecting and preserving your well-being.

Your brain uses your past experiences as a way of evaluating your new experiences. If a new situation is similar to an old one, your brain will draw the conclusion from the old one as a way of understanding the new.

This can be useful in some cases like learning that touching a stove can lead to burns, but harmful in others, like not trusting people because of a painful break up.

Mind Reading- Assuming another person's thoughts based on their behaviour/nonverbal communication without adequate evidence.

Fortune Telling- Anticipating something will go badly to the point that it is considered an established fact without adequate evidence.

Emotional Reasoning- Feeling something so strongly that it is believed to be the true nature of things.

Magnification/Minimization- Either exaggerating the importance of a perceived failure/weakness (magnification) or putting less weight to a perceived success/strength (minimization)

For example, your primary emotion could be hurt or disappointed.

Your secondary emotions are learned. They are influenced by your beliefs and past experiences.

This causes your thoughts to tell you things like:

"This is your fault for trusting other people"

"That person doesn't really care about you"

Your brain then responds to those thoughts by making you act cold and angry.

Cognitive Distortions

Cognitive Distortions are habitual ways of thinking that are inaccurate and often negatively based. They alter how you perceive your reality.

It is important to be aware of cognitive distortions (and which you are prone to) to ensure that you are properly evaluating situations you are in.

Validating Emotions

To validate your emotions is to accept them as they are and understand what they are trying to communicate.

Steps to validating your emotions:

1. Label what you feel.
2. Understand why you are feeling how you are.
3. Acknowledge that the feeling makes sense and what it is communicating.

Tip: Avoid using the word "but". Instead use the word "because"

Instead of invalidating yourself by saying:
"It makes sense I feel this way, <u>but</u> I shouldn't be so hung up on this."

Validate yourself by saying:
"It makes sense I feel this way <u>because</u> I care a lot about it."

Your feelings aren't good or bad. They are not something that can be controlled, and vary from person.

Both thoughts and feelings are influenced by past events.

How you feel can intensify your thoughts and what you think can dictate how you feel.

Your thoughts are conclusions gathered by brain. They can be subject to distortions.

Thoughts and feelings can easily get intertwined. Be mindful of the words "that" and "like", if you are saying "I feel *like*.." or "I feel *that*..", often those are thoughts and not feelings!

Affirmation Examples:

- *"I am working on myself and am getting better every day."*
- *"I am grateful for the life that I have built for myself"*
- *"I am well-rehearsed and I am capable of giving a great presentation"*
- *"I accept myself for who I am and forgive myself for my mistakes."*
- *"I am worthy of love."*
- *"I give myself the space to rest and recover."*

Primary & Secondary Emotions

Primary Emotions
Authentic feelings to the issue at hand.

Secondary Emotion
A feeling fueled by another feeling.

Secondary emotions include:

Jealousy, Paranoia, Anxiety, Coldness, Anger, Worry, Distrust, Hatred, Insecurity

Magical Thinking- Believing that certain acts will influence unrelated situations, often in reference to a person's character and desired outcomes.

Should Statements- A set of unwritten rules a person has that they use to criticize themselves and others. They often lead to a large sense of shame if they are not followed regardless of how helpful they may be.

Personalization- Taking responsibility for the outcome of an event that is outside of a person's control. They might blame themselves for not acting differently or not being able to predict the outcome of the situation.

Dealing with Secondary Emotions

- Make note of all your feelings around the situation, even if they are conflicting. Use a Feelings Chart/Wheel if it helps.
- Notice how you are reacting to those feelings. What thoughts you are having? What is your brain telling you?
- Challenge those thoughts with self affirming statements. If it helps, use resources such as "Check the Facts" or a Cognitive Distortions list.
- Understand that your thoughts are a pattern your brain has formed to try to protect you and will take some time to unlearn.

Black and White Thinking- Thinking in absolutes. Things are either perfect or a complete failure with no in-between.

Overgeneralization- Taking a single trait/moment and drawing larger conclusions without more evidence or experience.

Negative Filter- Only focusing on the negative aspects of a situation.

False Positive- Excusing or discrediting positive experiences. Achievements are belittled by saying things like "it wasn't that good" or "anyone could do it".

Friend a Feeling Activity

Use this activity as a way to properly feel your feelings. View your feelings as a friend needing help, rather than a problem to be solved.

Find- Locate where in your body the feeling is living.

Feel- Describe the physical sensations you are experiencing.

Form- Draw your feeling, give it a physical form to associate with.

Befriend- Talk to the feeling with empathy and kindness.