



FIELD MANUAL



WEEK 3

THE STEADY MAN

Rewiring Your Nervous System for Emotional Regulation

YOUR THREE BODY STATES

Target Outcomes

- Name the three states of your nervous system.
- Understand that your body reacts before your brain.
- Learn what each state feels like inside you.
- Know that these states are trainable, not fixed.
- Map your own patterns using the autonomic ladder.

Belief Reframe

“Your reactions are biology, not character flaws.”

Critical Points

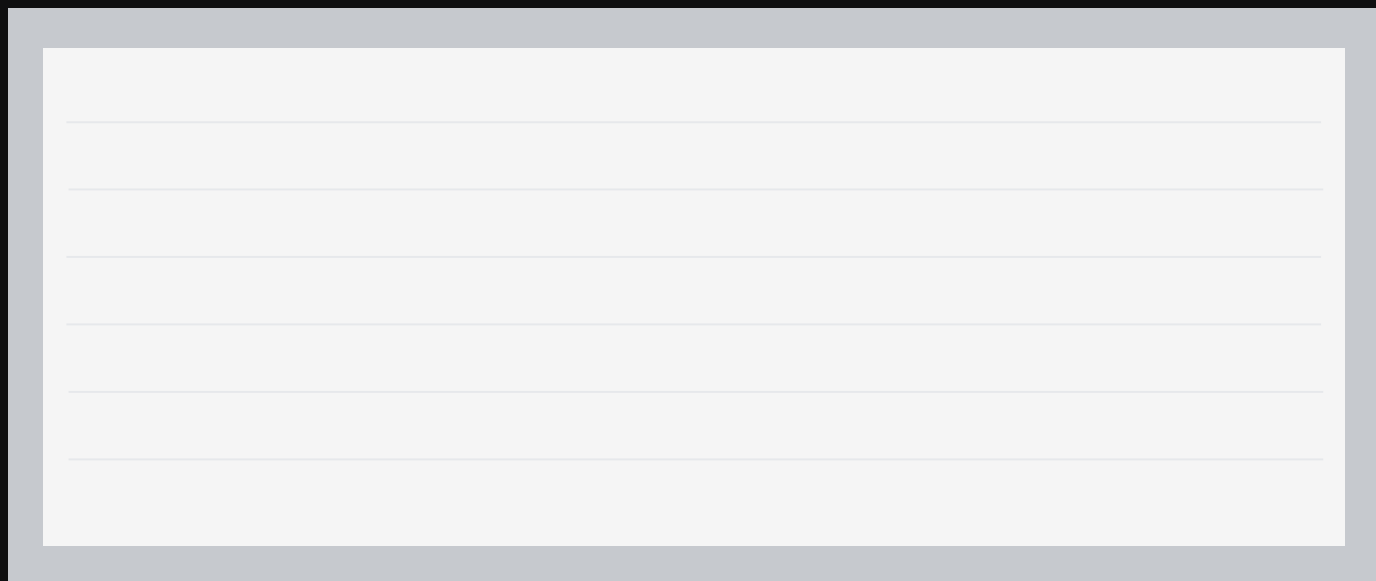
- Your nervous system scans for danger without asking you.
- Ventral vagal means you feel safe and connected.
- Sympathetic means you fight, argue, or get defensive.
- Dorsal vagal means you shut down or go numb.
- These are body responses, not choices you made.
- You can train your body to respond differently.

Key Takeaway: You cannot think your way out of a reaction.

Directives

Fill out your autonomic mapping worksheet in writing. Write what each state feels like in your body.

Notice which state you are in three times today.

A large rectangular box with a light gray border and a white interior. Inside the box, there are seven horizontal lines for writing, spaced evenly apart. The box is designed for a user to write their observations about the state they are in during the day.

Share your map with a trusted person this week.

WHY YOUR CALM MATTERS

Target Outcomes

- Understand that partners regulate each other's nervous systems.
- Learn what bio-behavioral synchrony means for you.
- Know why heart rate over 100 kills good listening.
- See how your calm helps her body settle down.
- Recognize common barriers men face with co-regulation.

Belief Reframe

“Your calm is medicine her nervous system needs.”

Critical Points

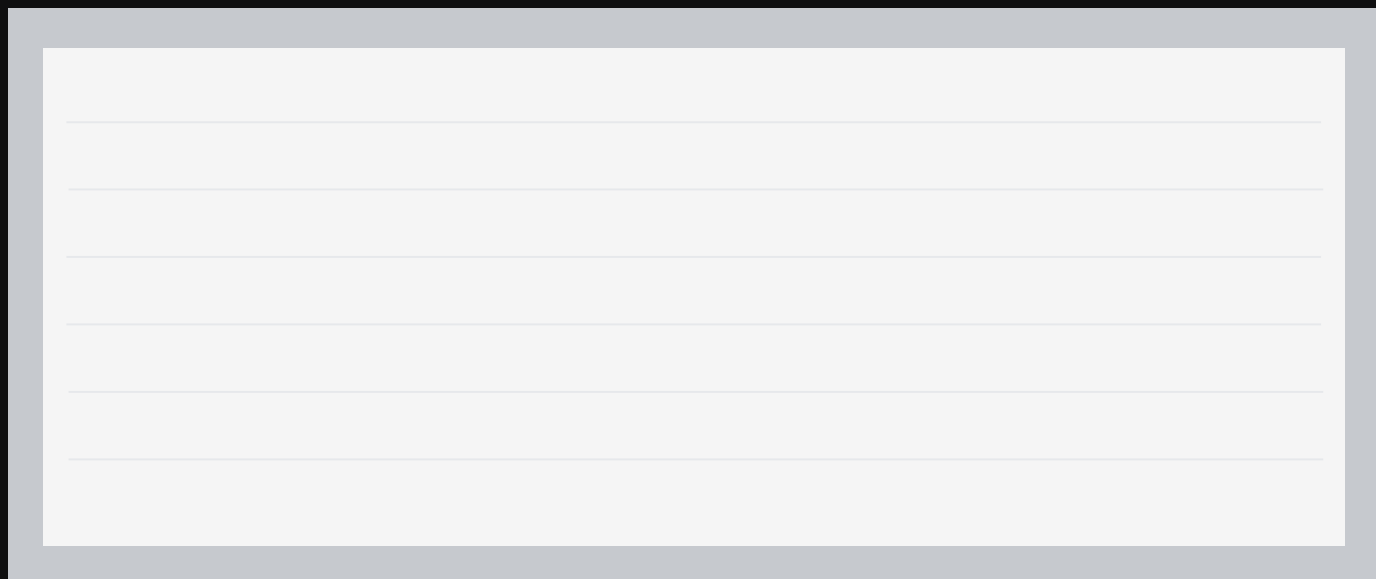
- Her body reads your body constantly without thinking.
- Your heart rates and stress hormones can sync up.
- Above 100 beats per minute, empathy shuts off.
- Her hormones already make self-regulation harder right now.
- Your steady presence helps her system feel safe.
- Co-regulation is not codependence or walking on eggshells.

Key Takeaway: Your regulated presence is your most powerful relationship tool.

Directives

Write about one time your mood affected hers.

Write about one time your calm helped a situation.

A white rectangular box with a light gray border, containing seven horizontal lines for writing.

Notice your body state before your next partner interaction.

Practice sitting quietly near her for five minutes tonight.

FOUR TOOLS TO CALM YOUR BODY

Target Outcomes

- Learn the physiological sigh for quick calm.
- Practice extended exhale breathing to build daily tone.
- Use somatic resets when you feel stuck or frozen.
- Try cold exposure to lower activation in emergencies.
- Know which tool fits which situation best.

Belief Reframe

“Simple tools done daily create the deepest changes.”

Critical Points

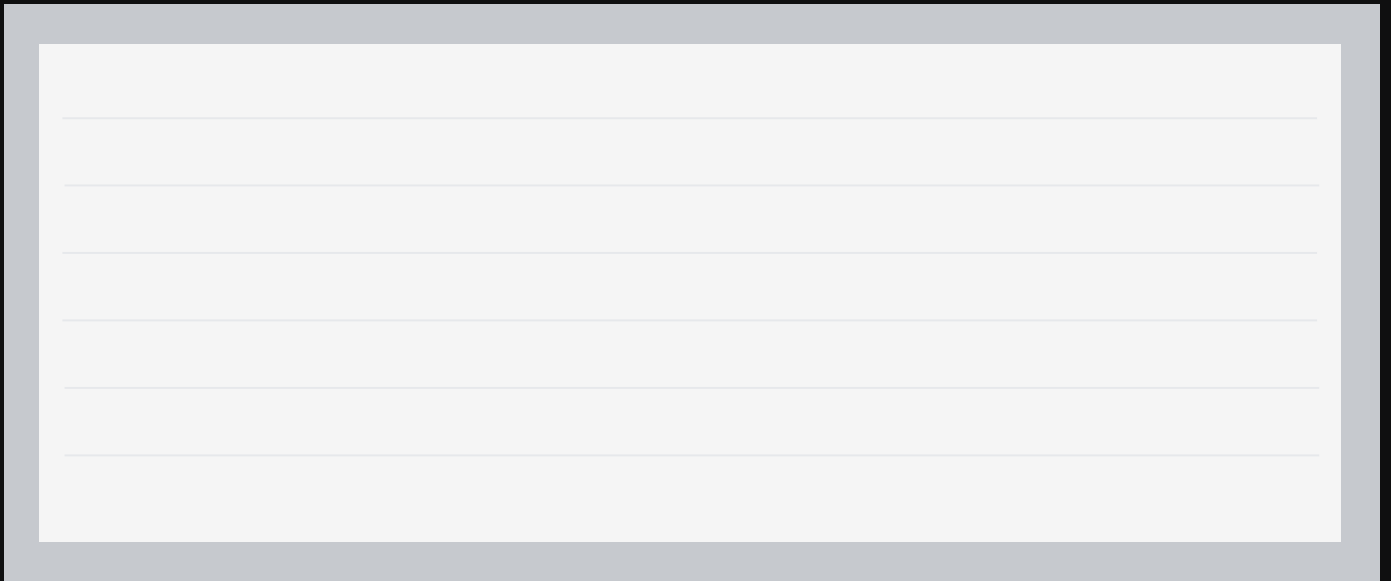
- The physiological sigh is your fastest calming tool.
- Extended exhale breathing builds your calm baseline over time.
- Oriented attention and tapping help when you feel stuck.
- Cold water on your face triggers an instant reset.
- The sigh is for emergencies; breathing is for training.
- Consistency matters more than perfection with these practices.

Key Takeaway: Your body is the instrument; these practices tune it.

Directives

Write which tool felt most natural and why.

Try each of the four tools at least once today. Write what you noticed in your body after practicing.

A large rectangular box with a light gray border. Inside the box is a white area with horizontal lines, resembling a notepad or a space for writing. The box is intended for the user to write their observations after practicing the four tools.

Do five physiological sighs before seeing your partner tonight.

SEE WHAT'S INSIDE YOU

Target Outcomes

- Learn the four SIFT channels: sensations, images, feelings, thoughts.
- Understand that thoughts are not always facts about reality.
- Practice naming emotions to reduce their intensity automatically.
- Build the observer self that watches without reacting.
- Use SIFT in real moments, not just calm ones.

Belief Reframe

"Awareness creates the space where better choices live."

Critical Points

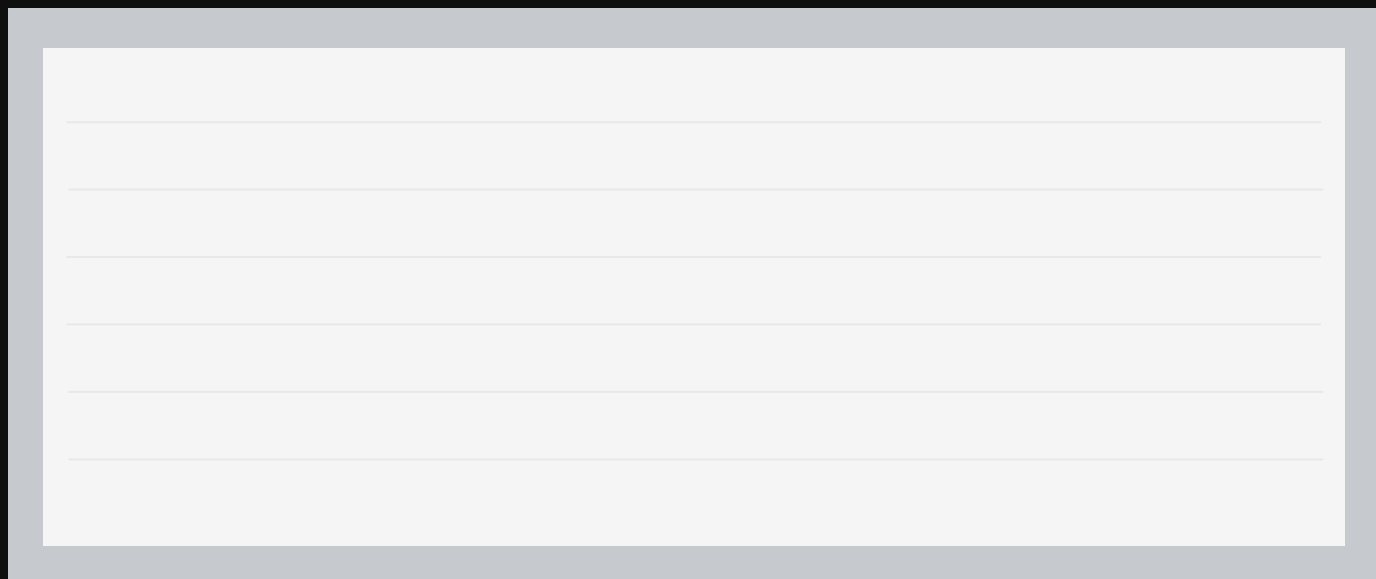
- Sensations are the first signals your body sends you.
- Images and memories reveal deeper meanings behind your reactions.
- Naming a feeling actually reduces its power over you.
- Your thoughts change depending on your nervous system state.
- The observer self watches reactions without getting swept away.
- Practice SIFT in calm moments before using it live.

Key Takeaway: You cannot choose your response until you see yourself.

Directives

Do a full SIFT and write down all four channels.

Write about one triggering moment using the SIFT framework.

A large rectangular box with a light gray border and a white interior, containing seven horizontal lines for writing.

Practice SIFT three times today in low-stress moments.

BUILD YOUR DAILY PRACTICE

Target Outcomes

- Set up a simple daily practice that takes eight minutes.
- Learn that habits take about sixty-six days to stick.
- Use a daily one-to-ten rating to track your progress.
- Map your top five triggers before they surprise you.
- Document at least one regulated response this week.

Belief Reframe

“Eight minutes daily can rewire your entire nervous system.”

Critical Points

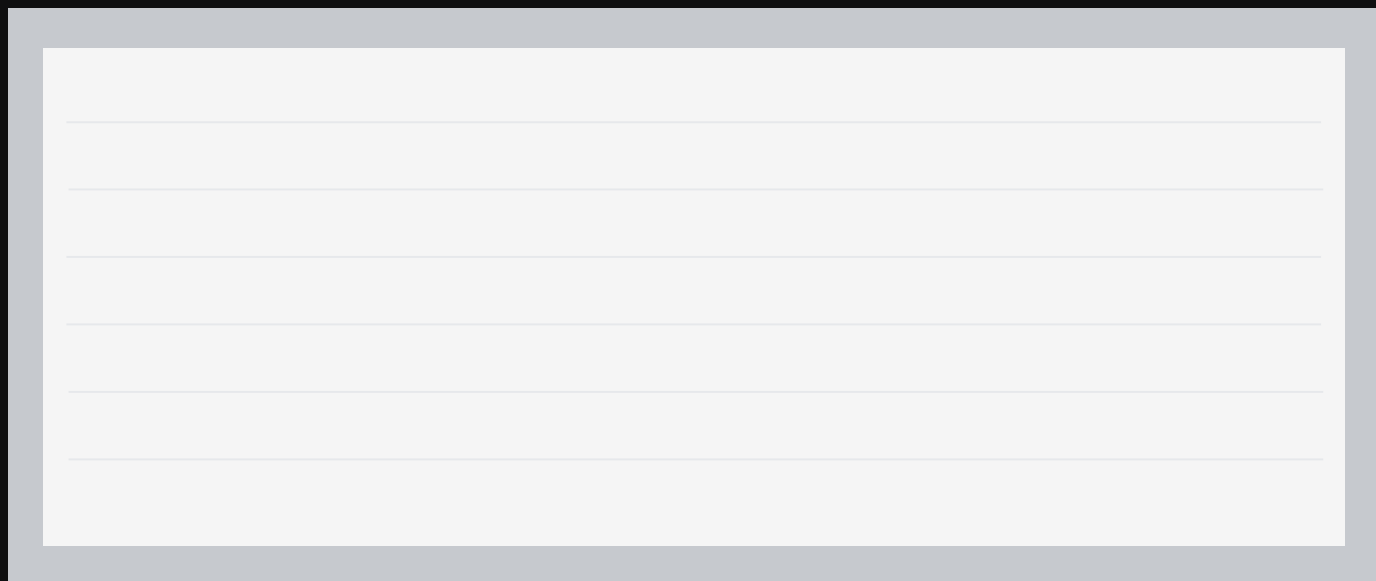
- Morning: five minutes of extended exhale breathing daily.
- Midday: two-minute SIFT check-in with yourself anywhere.
- Evening: five physiological sighs before seeing your partner.
- Rate your regulation one to ten every single night.
- Journal once a week about triggers, reactions, and growth.
- Never miss two days of practice in a row.

Key Takeaway: Consistency over weeks changes who you are inside.

Directives

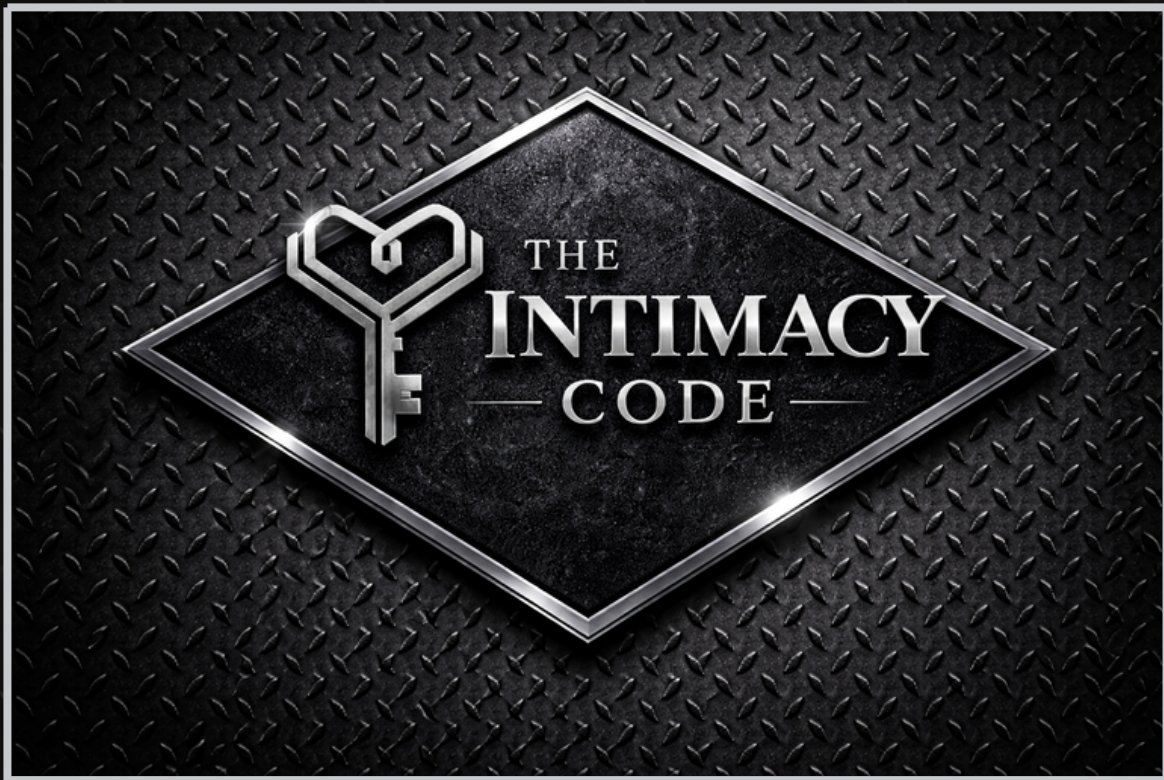
Write your top five triggers on the inventory worksheet.

Write one regulated response you had this week in detail.

A large rectangular box with a light gray border and a white interior, containing seven horizontal lines for writing.

Complete your daily regulation log every night this week.

Do all three daily practices for seven straight days.



EXECUTION RESOURCES

Autonomic Mapping Worksheet

State 1: Safe and Connected (Ventral Vagal)

This is your baseline. When you are here, you feel open, calm, and able to listen. Your voice is steady. You can think clearly. You feel like yourself.

What does this state feel like in your body?

Where in your body do you notice it most?

What does your voice sound like in this state?

What do other people see when you are in this state?

How often are you in this state during a normal day? (circle one)

Rarely | Sometimes | About half the time | Often | Most of the time

State 2: Fight or Flight (Sympathetic Activation)

This is your alarm state. When you are here, your heart speeds up. You may feel hot, tense, or restless. You might want to argue, defend yourself, fix the problem, or leave the room. Your body is preparing to protect you from a threat, even if the threat is just a hard conversation.

What does this state feel like in your body?

Where in your body do you notice it first?

What do you usually do when you are in this state? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Raise my voice
- ☐ Get sarcastic or short
- ☐ Try to fix the problem immediately
- ☐ Defend myself or explain my side
- ☐ Pace, clench my jaw, or tighten my fists
- ☐ Leave the room or walk away
- ☐ Shut the conversation down
- ☐ Other: _____

What does your partner usually see when you are in this state?

What situations tend to push you into this state?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Autonomic Mapping Worksheet

State 3: Shutdown (Dorsal Vagal)

This is your collapse state. When you are here, you feel numb, foggy, or disconnected. You might zone out, go quiet, or feel like nothing matters. Your body has decided the threat is too big to fight, so it shuts things down to protect you. This can look like laziness or not caring, but it is actually your nervous system trying to survive.

What does this state feel like in your body?

Where in your body do you notice it most?

What do you usually do when you are in this state? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Go silent
- ☐ Stare at my phone or a screen
- ☐ Feel like I cannot think of words
- ☐ Agree just to end the conversation
- ☐ Feel heavy, tired, or foggy
- ☐ Emotionally disappear even though I am still in the room
- ☐ Stop caring about the outcome
- ☐ Other: _____

What does your partner usually see when you are in this state?

What situations tend to push you into this state?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Your Personal Autonomic Ladder

Think of your nervous system like a ladder. You move up and down it all day long. Draw or describe your personal ladder below by filling in each level.

TOP OF THE LADDER: Fight or Flight

My early warning signs: _____

My body signals: _____

I usually get here when: _____

MIDDLE OF THE LADDER: Safe and Connected

I feel this way when: _____

I know I am here because: _____

I can stay here longer by: _____

BOTTOM OF THE LADDER: Shutdown

My early warning signs: _____

My body signals: _____

I usually get here when: _____

Autonomic Mapping Worksheet

Putting It Together

Which state do you spend the most time in right now?

Which state do you go to first when your partner is upset?

What is one thing you already do that helps you return to safe and connected?

What is one thing you want to learn to do differently after watching this video?

Tools to Calm Your Body

- **Physiological Sigh** — A double inhale through the nose followed by a long exhale through the mouth. Described as the fastest calming tool, meant for emergency or high-activation moments.
- **Extended Exhale Breathing** — Breathing where the exhale is longer than the inhale. Described as a daily training tool that builds your calm baseline over time.
- **Somatic Resets** — Specifically oriented attention (slowly looking around your environment) and tapping. Described as tools for when you feel stuck or frozen, targeting the shutdown state.
- **Cold Exposure** — Cold water on your face. Described as triggering an instant nervous system reset, meant for emergency moments of high activation.

SIFT Card

1. What sensations do I notice in my body?
2. What images or memories are present?
3. What feelings am I experiencing?
4. What thoughts are running through my mind?

Trigger Inventory

	Trigger	Trigger	Trigger	Trigger	Trigger
What happens?					
How often?					
Where do you feel it in your body?					
Fight/flight or shutdown?					
Your automatic reaction?					
The deeper feeling underneath?					
First body signal it is starting?					
Tool you will use?					
How you want to respond instead?					

Autonomic Mapping Worksheet

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Which state do you spend the most time in right now?

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Emotion Word List

UNPLEASANT — HIGH ENERGY

Angry
Frustrated
Irritated
Agitated
Enraged
Defensive
Hostile
Resentful
Impatient
Overwhelmed
Panicked
Anxious
Worried
Nervous
On edge
Stressed
Restless
Threatened
Alarmed
Rattled
Jealous
Envious
Disgusted
Contemptuous
Provoked
Exasperated
Infuriated
Bitter

UNPLEASANT — LOW ENERGY

Sad
Hurt
Disappointed
Dejected
Defeated
Hopeless
Helpless
Powerless
Inadequate

Ashamed
Embarrassed
Humiliated
Guilty
Regretful
Rejected
Abandoned
Unwanted
Invisible
Ignored
Lonely
Isolated
Disconnected
Empty
Numb
Flat
Drained
Exhausted
Heavy
Resigned
Stuck
Lost
Confused
Uncertain
Doubtful
Insecure
Vulnerable
Small
Unappreciated
Taken for granted
Used
Dismissed
Misunderstood
Unheard
Irrelevant
Useless
Broken

Emotion Word List

PLEASANT — HIGH ENERGY

Happy
Excited
Hopeful
Energized
Proud
Confident
Brave
Inspired
Motivated
Passionate
Playful
Amused
Alive
Joyful
Enthusiastic
Eager
Relieved
Grateful
Amazed
Surprised
Encouraged
Empowered
Determined
Strong
Capable
Bold
Optimistic
Thrilled
Lighthearted
Free

PLEASANT — LOW ENERGY

Calm
Content
Peaceful
Relaxed
Safe
Secure
Comfortable
Tender
Warm
Affectionate
Loving
Connected
Appreciated
Valued
Respected
Understood
Seen
Accepted
Grounded
Centered
Steady
Patient
Gentle
Compassionate
Satisfied
Fulfilled
Settled
Open
Trusting
At ease
Soft
Still
Quiet inside
Rested
Whole

Emotion Word List

MIXED / COMPLEX FEELINGS

(These don't fit neatly — and that's normal)

Ambivalent — pulled in two directions

Nostalgic — missing something that's gone

Bittersweet — happy and sad at the same time

Protective — wanting to shield someone from pain

Torn — wanting two conflicting things

Wary — cautious, not sure if it's safe

Guarded — holding back on purpose

Tender but scared — open and vulnerable at once

Grieving — losing something that hasn't fully ended

Longing — wanting something you can't have right now

Conflicted — knowing what to do but not wanting to

Dutiful — doing the right thing without feeling it

Suspended — waiting, not sure what comes next

FEELINGS MEN COMMONLY MISIDENTIFY

What you say: "I'm fine."

What you might actually feel: Numb. Resigned. Disconnected. Guarded.

What you say: "I'm frustrated."

What you might actually feel: Hurt. Rejected. Helpless. Scared.

What you say: "I don't care."

What you might actually feel: Defeated. Exhausted. Protecting yourself from more pain.

What you say: "Whatever."

What you might actually feel: Dismissed. Unheard. Invisible. Giving up.

What you say: "I'm angry."

What you might actually feel: Disrespected. Afraid. Grieving. Lonely.

BODY CLUE → POSSIBLE FEELING

Tight jaw → anger, frustration, holding back words

Chest pressure → anxiety, grief, fear

Stomach dropping → rejection, dread, shame

Hollow chest → sadness, loneliness, loss

Hot face/neck → embarrassment, shame, rage

Lump in throat → grief, words unspoken, hurt

Heavy limbs → defeat, exhaustion, hopelessness

Restless legs → anxiety, trapped feeling, urge to escape

Clenched fists → anger, helplessness, readiness to fight

Shoulders up/tight → stress, bracing, hypervigilance

Numbness anywhere → overwhelm, shutdown, dorsal vagal

Daily Regulation Log

Week3 | Video5:BuildYourDailyPractice

Name: _____

Week of: _____

Your daily practice has three parts: five minutes of extended exhale breathing in the morning, a two-minute SIFT check-in at midday, and five physiological sighs before seeing your partner in the evening. Track each one honestly. Never miss two days in a row.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Morning breathing (5 min)?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Midday SIFT check-in?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Evening sighs before partner?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Regulation rating (1–10)							
Primary state today							
Was I triggered today?	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Did I use a tool?	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N

Regulation Rating Guide

1–3: Spent most of the day in fight/flight or shutdown. Reacted before I could catch myself.

6–7: Caught myself more than I missed. Used my tools at least once.

4–5: Noticed my state but struggled to shift it. Mixed results.

8–10: Stayed regulated through a difficult moment. Responded instead of reacted.

Weekly Reflection

My average regulation rating this week: _____

What was my best moment this week?

What was my hardest moment this week?

Did I catch a trigger before it caught me? What happened?

Which daily practice felt most helpful and why?

What do I want to do differently next week?

Progress is not a straight line. A bad day does not erase a good week. Just keep showing up.