



DENVER WELLNESS COUNSELING

CLIENT WORKBOOK | Current Symptoms

Please answer the following questions regarding the symptoms that brought you into therapy or that you'd like to see shift/change.

1. Are there any behaviors that you would like to see yourself doing MORE of?
2. Are there behaviors you would like to see yourself change or reduce?
3. Are there emotions you would like to have better access to?
4. Are there emotions you would like to manage better, tolerate, or reduce their severity?
5. Are there body/somatic experiences that you feel may be linked to mental health?
6. What are some thoughts or beliefs about yourself that you want to change, reduce, or eliminate?



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CLIENT WORKBOOK | Small t Trauma

In therapy we often talk about “big T” or “little t” traumas. A big T trauma is something that is obviously and objectively traumatic, such as an incident of abuse, or an experience where we thought we may die. Little t traumas are less obvious, but just as powerful and influence how we think/feel/act in the present. Little t traumas are often repetitive and build over time.

Look through the following examples of “small t trauma” and circle any that apply to you:

- Bullying by family or peers
- Lack of eye contact by primary caregivers
- A shortage of love or affection by primary caregivers
- Lack of emotional attunement by primary caregivers (emotional experiences are not validated, nor responded to with empathy)
- Emotional abuse, criticism, name-calling, being yelled at or threatened
- Being adopted
- Having parents who have unrealistically high standards, are overbearing, or critical
- Being ignored or neglected
- School problems or lack of success in academics
- Infidelity by a partner – either physical or emotional
- Being in a controlling/abusive relationship
- Divorce – either parents or self
- Feeling alienated, or separate/different from the social group for any reason, including disabilities, sexual orientation, sexual identity, cultural issues, weight, etc.
- Moving multiple times as a child/adolescent
- Repeated conflict or estrangement from family
- Illness – physical or mental/emotional
- Legal troubles, and/or being incarcerated
- A parent with legal troubles or incarceration
- A parent with substance abuse issues
- A parent with mental health issues (PTSD, depression, trauma, narcissism, borderline)
- Poverty
- Oppression
- Racism



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CLIENT WORKBOOK | Resources

Emotional resources are symbols, memories, mantras, strengths, and skills that provide access to positive emotion and protection against poor responses to negative life events. Please answer the following questions to start to identify your resources.

1. In your lifetime, when hard things happened, what helped you cope and or provide support?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2. Identify a symbol, person (fictional, historic, or real), animal, or image from nature that represents the following (you can pick more than one):

1. Protection:
2. Wisdom:
3. Nurturing:

3. List 3-5 Mastery Memories - times when you felt proud, loved, special; times when you felt connected to your unique gifts; times when you felt connected to others/nature/community.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

4. First identify what you would like to feel/think MORE of in difficult situations (relaxed, safe, confident, in control, compassionate). When is a time in your life that you experienced this skill, strength, or resource? Do this for more than one difficult situation.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



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CLIENT WORKBOOK | Defenses

Defenses (or defense mechanisms) are clever ways that our mind will aid us in avoiding painful or potentially overwhelming emotion. Defense mechanisms can be good or bad. For example, if your feelings are hurt at work, a defense can help you to not cry at an inappropriate time. On the other hand, spending too much time in defense-mode can prevent you from being your authentic Self and prevent you from expressing, learning from, and working through important emotion.

Look at the following list of common defenses and circle some that you are aware of:

- An “I don’t care” attitude about things/life
- Misplaced aggression (anger towards the wrong person)
- Being “glued to technology” (social media, game sites, gambling, news)
- Smiling, laughing, or joking
- Worrying, ruminating (being stuck on a worry)
- Being a perfectionist
- Procrastinating
- Being judgmental towards others, criticism, prejudice
- Feeling numb or spaced out
- Exhaustion or tiredness
- Arrogance, or acting better than others
- Over-indulging (food, alcohol, drugs)
- Obsessive exercising or restricting food
- Over-working or being “obsessed with work”
- Being overly productive with no down-time or time to relax
- Cutting or suicidal gestures/ideation
- Talking too much, or talking over people
- Changing the subject
- Isolating, not talking, or avoidance of a topic
- Self-criticism (judging ourselves)
- Secret keeping

Any that were not listed above? _____