

The logo for 'think recovery' is a teal circle with a white outline, containing the text 'think recovery' in white lowercase letters.

How to Process Feelings

www.thinkrecovery.ca

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To effectively process your feelings, follow these five simple steps:

1. **Acknowledge** your feelings: Practice taking the time to notice your feelings and identifying them.
2. **Allow** your feelings: Give yourself permission to experience your feelings without judgment. Avoid asking yourself "Why" you feel a particular way as this invites judgment.
3. **Accept** your feelings: Understand that your feelings are valid and normal responses to your experiences and that fighting your feelings will only make things more difficult.
4. **Assess** your needs: Check-in with yourself. Ask yourself, "How am I feeling?" And, "What do I need to support myself through this experience?"
5. **Attend** to your needs: Intentionally take time and space to connect with yourself and your needs. Whether it's seeking professional support, reaching out to social supports, or self-care activities such as journaling, meditation, yoga, time in nature, exercise, etc.

Rather than getting caught up in trying not to experience your feelings, can you instead focus on how you can build capacity within yourself to more effectively deal with your feelings?

The intention with following the above steps is to be able to support yourself in being able to **gradually increase your capacity to identify, feel, express, tolerate, and release your feelings**, rather than get stuck in the common trap of *avoiding, stuffing, suppressing, and numbing feelings* which drives unmanageability as well as flipping between the extremes of emotional disconnection and emotional overwhelm.

Processing feelings can be surprisingly simple, yet it is not always easy.

It is the intentional and consistent practice of applying this framework on a daily basis that will light the path to **emotional freedom** for yourself.

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