



## Chapter 5 Home Practice

### Working with Feelings Flowchart: STOPP



**115** **STOP!** Give yourself **distance** from the situation by pausing. The mindful process illustrated in this flowchart is often done after the fact. It may be done alone, or by talking it out with someone you trust.

**13** **TAKE A BREATH.** Come into the present. Where are you on the **Dial of Activation**? If outside the **Zone of Workability**, do a **DIAL Skill**, **grounding** skill, or other **self-care** skill.

**6** **OBSERVE THE TRIANGLE, MINDFULLY AND WITH COMPASSION:**

- notice automatic thoughts
- notice automatic urges
- name the emotion: observe sensations, facial expressions, tone, posture

**129** **PERSPECTIVE USING CURIOSITY.** Get distance and ask yourself, "What is this **emotion's function**? What message is it signalling, and what may be helpful about its urge?" Spot what is valid about the emotion and related thoughts (the **kernels of truth**). "It makes sense that I feel this emotion because...". Notice if the emotion is primary or secondary.

**130** **PROCEED WITH CHOICE.** Choose to invite and allow **primary emotions** in the Zone of Workability. Be mindful of the emotion internally and notice bodily sensations. If helpful in the situation, express the emotion externally. If urges are in a helpful direction, act on them to respond effectively.

Try using the **STOPP Skill** to help you explore and allow feelings. After the fact, sit down, think about the situation, and imagine it as vividly as possible. Then go through the STOPP steps, lingering in **OBSERVE with compassion** and **PERSPECTIVE** as you explore the feelings. You can fill out the table in any order that makes sense to you. Specifically, explore the emotion, its associated physical sensations and other bodily aspects, and its action urge(s). Notice if any **secondary emotions** arise (such as shame or fear about feeling a primary emotion), and notice these too without judgment, as best you can. Try these explorations with everyday events rather than with charged situations, because you want to be able to stay within your **Zone of Workability** on the **Dial of Activation**.

130 ↗

13 ↗

Once you've noted how the emotion showed up for you, consider its messages about the situation. **Validate** ways the emotion makes sense, and spot and get **distance from thoughts** that aren't helpful. Consider if the emotion can motivate some helpful actions.

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While allowing the emotion, consider whether the *Practical Skills for Help with Allowing Emotions* discussed in this chapter may be of use.

148 ↗

Examples on the following page.



## Working with Feelings Worksheet: STOPP

**EXAMPLE: Being with a feeling that is uncomfortable**

<b>S</b>	<b>Describe the situation.</b>	I went to an extended care home to visit a loved one whom I haven't seen in awhile. I was struck by how frail they looked compared to the last time I saw them.
<b>T</b>	<b>Take a breath.</b>	Practice something for a few moments/minutes to help ground you and bring you into the present moment. If you are outside the <b>Zone of Workability</b> , give yourself time, do a <b>DIAL Skill</b> , or engage in self care until you are in the Zone of Workability.
<b>O</b>	<b>What emotions did you feel?</b> Circle the one you want to work with.	Sadness                      Shame                      Fear
	<b>What were the associated bodily sensations, facial expressions, tone, posture, and/or gestures?</b>	Cold hands, hollowness in my abdomen, stooped posture, teary eyes, lump in the throat.
	<b>What urges were present (what did you feel like saying or doing)?</b>	I had an urge to cry as soon as I saw them. I wanted to leave.
	<b>What thoughts or images were going through your mind?</b>	I am losing my loved one. They do not even look like the person I knew. They look so frail and sick.
<b>P</b>	<b>What message is the emotion signalling? What parts of this are helpful/accurate in the moment?</b> <i>"It makes sense that I feel this because..."</i>	It makes sense that I feel this way. I am experiencing a significant loss in this moment. My life right now is different from what I had hoped.
	<b>Spot the kernel of truth in thoughts, and step back from unhelpful interpretations.</b>	My loved one <i>has</i> changed a lot.
	<b>Which aspects of the urge(s) may be helpful? Which are unhelpful?</b>	My urge to cry is telling me to express my sadness and to feel it. It's an indication of how much this person means to me. I don't necessarily want to cry in front of my loved one. It might be helpful to reach out to someone who can appreciate my sadness and support me to feel it. My urge to leave the facility is a wish to not feel this sadness, and that is not going to be helpful.

## EXAMPLE (cont.): Being with a feeling that is uncomfortable

<b>P</b>	<b>Behaviour. If this has already occurred, what did you say or do?</b>	I stayed for a short visit, and talked with the care aids more than I talked to my loved one because I felt so uncomfortable.
	<b>How would you choose to proceed?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Allow the emotion mindfully.</b></li> <li>• <b>Express it when and in as much as that is helpful.</b></li> <li>• <b>If urges are towards a helpful direction, act on them. Problem solve the situation if possible.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Allow and Express:</b> I am going to accept the hollowness in my abdomen as a reminder of this important relationship and the loss that is unfolding. Tears can come when they come. I'm going to encourage <b>self-compassion</b> by reminding myself that all humans experience loss, and although it is hard, it is also important. I can fully live these moments of my life.</p> <p><b>Urges:</b> I am going to speak with another relative who has also gone to visit. We can share our sadness together, which I know will make it easier for me.</p> <p>I left quickly before, but now I have an urge to spend quality time with my loved one. I am going to bring in a book that I can read to them. I will also bring one of my knitting projects, which will make it easier for me to sit with them.</p>
	<b>Are there any secondary emotions?</b>	I feel shame for feeling so much sadness. I feel the need to be more stoic to support them right now. I also feel fear about whether I will be able to cope with this amount of sadness.

# Chapter 5: EMOTIONS



## Working with Feelings Worksheet: STOPP

**EXERCISE:** Analyze one of your own situations using the STOPP steps

<b>S</b>	<b>Describe the situation.</b>	
<b>T</b>	<b>Take a breath.</b>	
<b>O</b>	<b>What emotions did you feel?</b> Circle the one you want to work with.	
	<b>What were the associated bodily sensations, facial expressions, tone, posture, and/or gestures?</b>	
	<b>What urges were present (what did you feel like saying or doing)?</b>	
	<b>What thoughts or images were going through your mind?</b>	
<b>P</b>	<b>What message is the emotion signalling? What parts of this are helpful/accurate in the moment?</b> <i>"It makes sense that I feel this because..."</i>	
	<b>Spot the kernel of truth in thoughts, and step back from unhelpful interpretations.</b>	
	<b>Which aspects of the urge(s) may be helpful? Which are unhelpful?</b>	

**EXERCISE (cont.):** Analyze one of your own situations using the STOPP steps

<b>P</b>	<b>Behaviour. If this has already occurred, what did you say or do?</b>	
	<b>How would you choose to proceed?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Allow the emotion mindfully.</b></li><li>• <b>Express it when and in as much as that is helpful.</b></li><li>• <b>If urges are towards a helpful direction, act on them. Problem solve the situation if possible.</b></li></ul>	
	<b>Are there any secondary emotions?</b>	



## How Judgments take us from Primary to Secondary Emotions

130 ↗

Practice identifying **primary** and **secondary emotions**. Notice your primary and secondary emotion patterns with friendly curiosity. It's OK if you are not sure about the thoughts/judgments, emotions, and urges for all boxes in the chart; fill out what is apparent to you now, and be curious about the rest.

Situation	Primary emotion	Ways I may be judging the primary emotion	Secondary emotion	Unhelpful action-urge arising from the secondary emotion
My grade on my assignment was lower than what I was expecting	Fear	"There's something wrong with me for the fact that I got upset over a grade."	Shame	Hide, don't check in with instructor

## Mapping Emotions

Choose one emotion to examine in-depth. Notice what types of situations prompt this emotion for you. It may help to look back at **Triangles of Experience** that you have explored earlier in this course. Recall one situation where this emotion was activated. Notice physical ways the emotion shows up for you, what urges arise, and where you sense them in the body. Notice what the emotion may be telling you about the situation, along with responses that could be helpful in the situation you have remembered or imagined. Ask yourself how you could use the energy of emotion-related urges to act in a way that is helpful. You are encouraged to fill out the boxes in this table in any order that makes sense to you, and in your preferred language.



To try this exercise with other emotions, photocopy this page or download the table from [mind-space.ca](http://mind-space.ca)

<b>EMOTION:</b>		
<b>Situations where this emotion comes up for me:</b>		
<b>Automatic Thoughts</b>	<b>Emotion</b>	
	<b>Bodily Experiences</b>	<b>Urges</b>
<b>Potential Messages of the Emotion</b>		
<b>Potentially Helpful Responses</b>		





## My Good for Me(s) This Week



I can give myself credit that I invested time, energy, or effort in: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Notes