

What Is This Emotion?

This is especially useful when you feel overwhelmed by emotion and unable to articulate what's going on.

You will need a pen and paper or a journal for this exercise.

Set aside 10 minutes for this practice.

You can use this practice anytime during your day, but it is especially useful when you notice a strong emotion present.

You might be experiencing anxiety and stress, or something pleasant, like joy or gratitude.

With the eyes open, drop your awareness into the body.

Acknowledge the points in the body where you can feel this emotion.

For example, many people experience anxiety in the chest, stomach, and limbs.

Anger or fear often arises in the stomach, causes tension in the shoulders, and results in a scrunched brow.

Recognizing the emotional experience in the body, write what you feel.

Jot down where you are feeling something and what it feels like.

Continue alternating between observing the body and writing your observations down.

Be as specific as you can.

When you have covered the experience in the body, turn your awareness toward the mind.

Look for both individual thoughts and overall mental states.

A mental state may be something like anxiety, hope, or the craving to fix something.

The individual thoughts may be about a person, an event, or a problem that needs solving.

Again, write these down as you notice them.

Finally, allow the eyes to close for a minute or two.

Tune in to the sense of sight with closed eyes.

Notice if the sight feels dark or light, if there is movement, or if the mind is visualizing something.

There isn't a correct answer.

As you open the eyes and write your experience on paper, let go of any judgment.

Read what you have written carefully and slowly.

When you finish, see if you feel more clarity around your emotions.