



Instructions

This is a tool designed to help people better understand their emotions and how their emotions influence their thoughts and behaviors. It is designed to foster insight, separate self from emotions, and increase self-worth. When starting the book report, you can take an emotion from any event, whether it be 10 years ago or 10 seconds ago. It is not critical to focus only on painful emotions, but those can be the most challenging so be thoughtful as to why you are avoiding them. This can also be used to strengthen relationships and remind us of pleasurable emotions we have experienced. Don't let the name Book Report fool you, there are no grades involved and worrying about doing it the right way can detract from the benefits.

The primary and secondary emotions

The primary emotion should be treated as a character in a story. For instance, "fear was working hard to avoid what he saw as danger" or "anger decided that he was not going to listen to anyone no matter how thoughtful or concerned they sounded, he needed to win".

These are the characters (emotions) who interacted with the main character during the story. Humans almost never experience just one emotion at a time. These are not as crucial as the primary emotions but their interactions with the main character do influence the story and recognizing their impact is valuable. What effect did they have on the main character? Where they trying to talk the main character out of doing something stupid or egging them on? Maybe they were just bystanders. Either way it is useful to note their involvement.

The Main Character, aka The Primary Emotion and the Story

If you are having trouble identifying the emotion that you are feeling use the emotion wheel at the bottom of these instructions to help put a name to your feeling.

The primary emotion should be treated as a character in a story. For instance, "fear was working hard to avoid what he saw as danger" or "anger decided that he was not going to listen to anyone no matter how thoughtful or concerned they sounded, he needed to win". The story is designed to do a few

important things. First, separate our emotions from our person. This allows us to isolate the emotion and explore the specific needs and wants of that particular emotion. What is it trying to accomplish? How is it trying to get its needs met? What does it care most about? Second, the story can help us move from a reactive place to a place of understanding and insight. In a reactive place we say things like, “it just happened to me”, or “you made me feel...” but when we have more understanding, we can take more ownership of our emotions which gives us more power over the thoughts and behaviors influenced by the emotion. This, in turn, allows us to find the purpose of the emotion. We become more emotionally productive. Third, the story allows us to examine whether the emotion was able to achieve the desired outcome or accomplish its mission. We can objectively look at the result of the emotions “behaviors”.

Supporting Cast

These are the characters (emotions) who interacted with the main character during the story. Humans almost never experience just one emotion at a time. These are not as crucial as the primary emotions but their interactions with the main character do influence the story and recognizing their impact is valuable. What effect did they have on the main character? Were they trying to talk the main character out of doing something stupid or egging them on? Maybe they were just bystanders. Either way it is useful to note their involvement.

The Setting

This section needs to be objective. In this part of the book report you will write about what, when, where, and who. When was the emotion being experienced? Was this yesterday? Five minutes ago? Or a year ago? Where were you? Was this place familiar? What were you doing when the emotion was present? Who were you with? Were you talking to a colleague? At home putting kids to bed? Or taking a test?

The Story

The story is where you get to tell what happened. A simple format to remember when writing this section is, beginning, middle, and end. What happened in the beginning? Maybe the emotions had been present at school or work? Or the emotion heard something familiar that triggered them? The middle should be the peak of the story, the high point. This is when the emotion(s) was the strongest or most noticeable. What was the motivation of the emotion? What was it trying to accomplish? What was happening around the emotions that they were ignoring or focusing on? While you write the

ending think about how everything worked out for the emotions. Was this a tragedy, love story, comedy, drama, ect...

The Conclusion

The conclusion serves as a summary. Think about the last movie you saw or book you read. How would you describe this story to a friend? That is the way you want to approach the conclusion. The conclusion can be simplified to contain the main themes and plots so don't worry about including all the details.

The Alternative Ending

Some movies, when they are purchased, contain two endings. The ending seen in the theater and an ending that almost made the cut. In this section of the book report you get to change the ending. Do not get caught up in what really happened and avoid writing things like, "I wish I would have...." And "What I should have done...". Remember, this is an alternate ending to the story above. You can create any ending you want but it is focused on the main character, not you. One question you can ask yourself to help write this section is, "what could the main character have done to better achieve the desired outcome"?

Remember, this is not about you, this is about the main character. No one includes themselves in a book report. That would just confuse the reader and change the whole story. When you are finished, consider sharing the book report with someone supportive who you trust.

Feelings Wheel

