

# NAVIGATING

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# FEELINGS

EMOTIONAL REGULATION FOR  
NEURODIVERGENT MINDS





Do you struggle to understand or express your emotions, especially during overwhelming moments? For many neurodivergent individuals, emotional regulation can feel impossible—whether it’s due to sensory overload, social pressures, or difficulty putting feelings into words.

Walk away with a personalized emotional toolkit that fits your needs and supports you when life feels overwhelming. If emotional regulation has been a struggle, this course will give you the tools and confidence to manage your emotions on your terms. Enroll today and take the first step toward understanding yourself better. Your emotions matter, and you deserve tools that work for you.

# WELLBECOME

# USING THIS

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# RESOURCE

This is your personal space to explore, learn, and grow as you move through the course. You can either answer the reflection prompts online, or print out your journal depending on what feels right for you.

## **Why Reflect?**

Reflection helps you uncover insights, revisit lessons, and develop strategies that work for you. While optional, journaling is a powerful way to connect with the material on a deeper level.

## **Getting Started**

After each lesson, use the prompts provided to guide your reflections. If you prefer, print the journal to create a keepsake you can revisit whenever needed.

## **What's Inside**

The journal includes lesson-specific prompts and resources to help you recognize patterns and build strategies. There's also space for additional thoughts.

## **A Gentle Reminder**

Be kind to yourself. Write honestly and take your time. Some insights come quickly; others take reflection. This is your journey. Your journal is a living resource. Looking back can reveal growth, patterns, and strategies to reinforce what works for you. Journaling is an act of self-care - a tool to enrich your learning long after the course ends.

# Lesson 1: Welcome to Navigating Feelings

*Reflection Prompt: “What have I noticed, at a general level, about my emotional experience?”.*

Do I find it difficult to identify or name my emotions. If so, what issues have I noticed?

Are there specific feelings or situations that overwhelm me. If so, what feelings or situations are they?

What strategies, if any, have worked for me in managing emotions?

# Lesson 1 Continued

What would I like to achieve by the end of this course?

What strengths do I have regarding managing my emotions?

What specific areas would I like to work on?

# Lesson 2: Understanding Neurodivergence & Emotional Regulation

*Reflection Prompt: “How Does My Emotional Experience Differ from Those Around Me?”*

How do my emotional responses differ from those of people around me?

Are there specific situations where I notice that my feelings are stronger, more muted, or expressed differently than others might expect?

How do I think my sensory sensitivities or unique thought patterns influence the way I experience emotions?

# Lesson 3: Learning About Your Emotional Timeline

*Reflection Prompt: “What does my emotional timeline look like?”.*

What external or internal factors typically trigger strong emotional responses for me?

How does the intensity of my emotions vary based on different triggers?

During the recovery period, what strategies or environments feel most supportive?

# Lesson 3 Continued

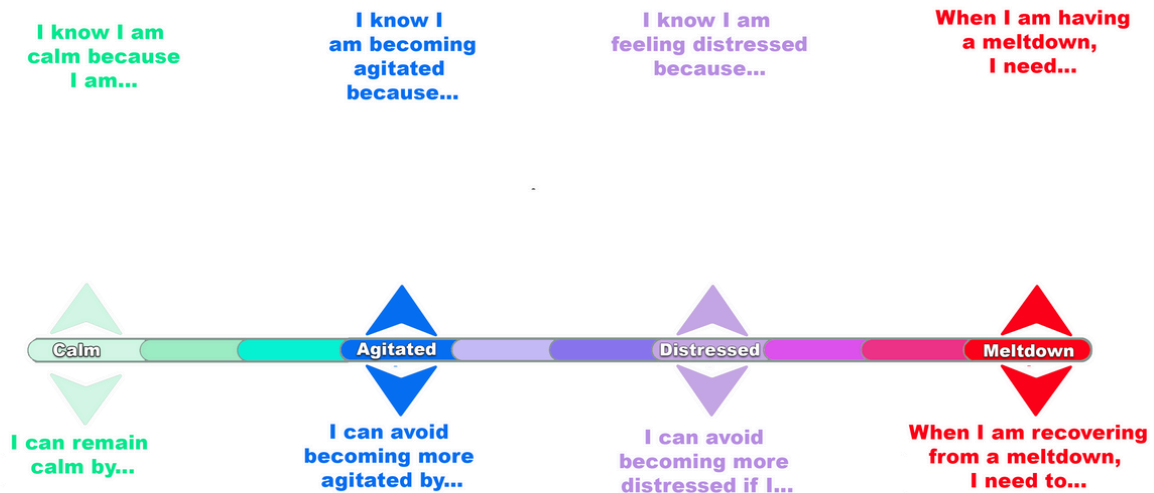
Are there early signs that my emotions are building, and how can I act on them?

How can I communicate my needs to others during or after emotional highs?



## Emotional Timeline for Meltdowns

Your timeline will help you recognise some of the earlier stages in a meltdown and what can help you recover from a meltdown. If the earlier stages don't match with your experience, simply replace them with what you feel in the leadup to a meltdown.



The concept of an emotional timeline is developed from Mazefsky et al. (2013)

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# Lesson 4: The Impact of Deep Empathy and Emotional Boundaries

*Reflection Prompt: "How Does Deep Empathy Affect Me and How Can I Create Healthy Boundaries?"*

When did I last feel someone else's emotions strongly? How did it affect me?

Are there specific people or situations that leave me emotionally drained?

What is one boundary I can set to preserve my emotional energy?

# Lesson 4 Continued

What emotions or needs of my own have I been ignoring?

How do I usually cope when I feel overwhelmed by others' emotions?

# Lesson 5: Accepting and Normalising Your Emotional Responses

*Reflection Prompt: "How Can I Begin to Accept My Emotional Responses as Part of My Neurodivergent Experience?"*

How do I typically experience emotions, and in what ways might they feel more intense or different compared to others?

What past experiences or messages have shaped the way I view my emotional responses? How do those messages impact me now?

What are some strategies or activities that help me feel grounded and supported when my emotions feel overwhelming?

# Lesson 5 Continued

What unique strengths or insights do my emotional sensitivities bring to my life and relationships?

How can I show more compassion toward myself when I experience intense emotions or feel misunderstood?

# Lesson 6: Practical Suggestions for Emotional Regulation

*Reflection Prompt: "What Practical Measures Would I Like to Explore Around Regulating My Emotions?"*

From the list of ideas provided, or other ideas I can think of, what strategies stand out as being fun ways to introduce emotional regulation into my life?

What helped me feel safe, calm or grounded as a child? How can I bring elements of this into my adult life?

What emotional regulation strategies are working well for me now?

# Lesson 6 Continued

What emotional regulation strategies aren't working, and why?

How can I ensure I make time in my life to include activities that help me feel more regulated?

# Lesson 7: Getting “Stuck: - Understanding Cognitive Perseveration

*Reflection Prompt: "How Does Cognitive Perseveration Affect Me and What Helps Me Cope With Feeling Stuck?"*

What does it feel like in my mind and body when I’m “stuck” on a thought or emotion?

When I feel stuck, who or what provides the most support and comfort?

What specific thoughts, emotions, or situations do I tend to fixate on the most?



# Lesson 7 Continued

How do I know when I've reached a point where I've moved on from perseverating (think about how it feels in your mind or body when you move on from feeling stuck on a particular issue)?

# Lesson 8: Navigating Emotional Meltdowns

*Reflection Prompt: "How Can I Gain More Understanding About My Meltdowns?"*

What do I notice about the triggers that most often lead to my meltdowns?

Are there specific early signs or feelings that indicate a meltdown might be building up?

How do I feel during a meltdown? What thoughts or emotions tend to dominate the experience?

# Lesson 8 Continued

What happens immediately after a meltdown, both physically and emotionally? How do I typically respond?

How do I think my meltdowns are perceived by others, and how does that affect me emotionally?

If you have experienced meltdowns, you'll know how horrible they feel. Most people describe a sense of being out of control and, with hindsight, they realise that some very small triggers have caused them to experience that loss of control. When you are in the middle of a meltdown, it is impossible to describe what you're feeling. However, after a meltdown, you can use the Meltdown Wheel to help you identify what you were feeling beforehand. This can help you identify those feelings at an earlier stage in future. It can also help you explain to other people what led to a meltdown and help you identify areas where you might need help or to make changes in response to what your emotions are telling you.



# Lesson 9: Understanding and Managing Emotional Shutdowns

*Reflection Prompt: "How Can I Learn to Cope With Emotional Shutdowns?"*

What situations, environments, or experiences typically lead to emotional shutdowns for you?

What changes can you make to your routines, environment, or self-care practices to reduce the likelihood of shutdowns?

What boundaries or proactive conversations could you initiate to help people around you better understand and support you?

# Lesson 9 Continued

Are there grounding techniques or sensory adjustments you find particularly helpful in managing shutdowns?

Shutdowns often happen when we feel overloaded at a sensory or emotional level. When things become too much, we cannot cope and feel ourselves withdrawing and shutting down. Most people find they cannot communicate at this stage. They may need to completely withdraw from a situation, including a complete sensory withdrawal. Being able to look after ourselves whilst we are shutting down and identify what is underlying a shutdown can help us learn our triggers and explain at an earlier stage in the process to other people what we are experiencing.



# Lesson 10: Expressing Your Emotions Effectively

*Reflection Prompt: "How Can I Learn to Express My Emotions in the Way I Want To?"*

How do you currently describe your emotions, and are there unique words or sensations that feel natural to you?

How do sensory experiences, like physical sensations or environmental factors, affect your ability to express emotions?

How can you practice self-compassion when expressing emotions feels challenging or different from others' methods?



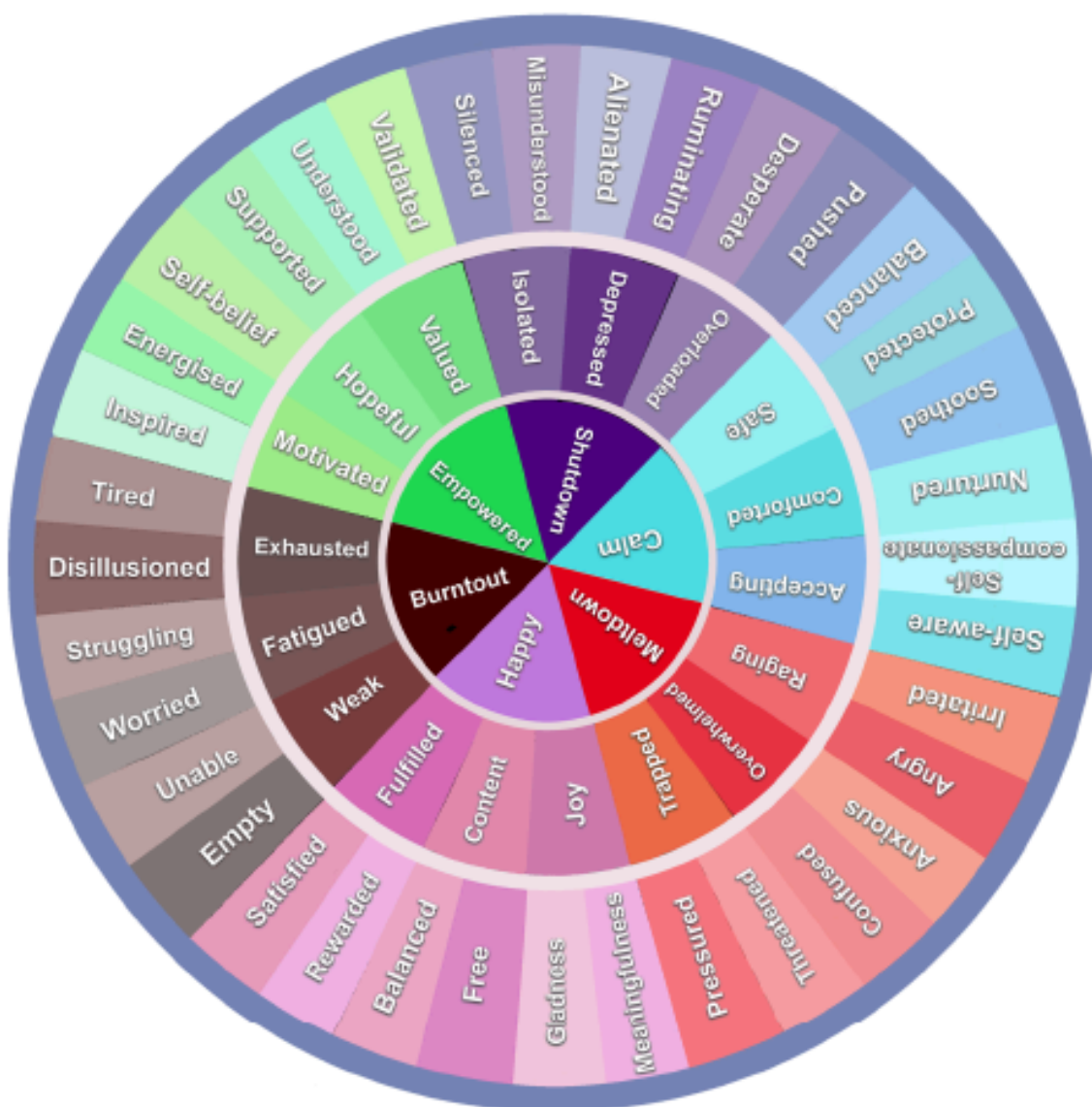
# Lesson 10 Continued

How can tools like the Meltdown Wheel or Shutdown Wheel help you better understand and share your feelings?

What support or understanding do you need from others to feel safe and confident in expressing your emotions authentically?

Emotions Wheel © Claire Jack 2025

It is often very difficult to know what we are feeling or to name what we feel. We sometimes just know we feel mad, depressed, raging, or joyful, content or happy. Being able to identify what is underneath these big emotions can help us identify when we are starting to feel overloaded, angry or exhausted and can help us explain to other people how we feel and what we need from them. Working with an Emotions Wheel can help you think about some of the other emotions you're experiencing when you feel really good or bad. Once you've learned how to name the emotions in this wheel, you can move onto exploring what a "Meltdown" or a "Shutdown" really mean to you and how to explain it to other people.



# Lesson 11: Building Your Emotional Toolkit for the Future

*Reflection Prompt: "How Can I Ensure That I Keep Putting the Tools and Strategies That I Have Learned Into Place?"*

Which tools or strategies from your emotional toolkit do you find most helpful, and why?

How do you plan to use your toolkit during moments of stress or emotional overwhelm?

What steps can you take to communicate your emotional needs to others more effectively?

# Lesson 10 Continued

How will you continue to build self-compassion as you develop your emotional skills?

In what ways can you make your emotional toolkit a regular part of your daily life?

# NEXT STEPS



Congratulations on completing the Navigating Feelings Journal! By reflecting on and processing your emotions, you've taken an important step in understanding yourself. This journal is more than a one-time activity—keep it safe and revisit it to reflect on your progress or navigate new emotions.

This journal is part of a broader series to support your journey. If you found it helpful, explore other courses to deepen your self-awareness, build new skills, and uncover more ways to thrive.

Thank you for investing in yourself. Keep moving forward with curiosity and compassion—you're doing amazing work!

*Thank you!*