Return to Basic Needs: Make a concerted effort and commitment to a regular routine of sleep, healthy eating, exercise or physical activity, socializing, and leisure and relaxation.

Notice and Label your Feelings/Emotions: Notice how emotions impact your mind and body and realize that like any sensations they eventually pass. Remember that emotions serve the purpose of preparing us to handle life situations and communicating/expressing what we feel. Emotions are often trying to also tell us something – it’s a matter of listening and trying to understand their meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loneliness</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Depressed</th>
<th>Excited</th>
<th>Passionate</th>
<th>Guilty</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joyful</td>
<td>Bored</td>
<td>Surprised</td>
<td>Depressed</td>
<td>Excited</td>
<td>Passionate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hopeful</td>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>Interested</td>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
<td>Unproductive</td>
<td>Connected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intimate</td>
<td>Suicidal</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>Motivated</td>
<td>Playful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lazy</td>
<td>Embarrassed</td>
<td>Trusting</td>
<td>Hopeless</td>
<td>Numb</td>
<td>Weak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empty</td>
<td>Shy</td>
<td>Confused</td>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>Involved</td>
<td>Loved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worried</td>
<td>Disconnected</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Ashamed</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Write out a Behavior/Chain Analysis: What thoughts/feelings/behaviors/situations are causing me problems? What led to or created these thoughts/feelings/behaviors/or situations? What are my typical reactions or ways of dealing with these problems? What are the outcomes or consequences of these reactions?

Identifying Stuck Thinking Patterns: Notice more and more when you are in cycles of unhelpful or confused thought, like all-or-nothing thinking, catastrophizing, overgeneralizing, focusing only on the negative, or assuming that other people are critical or disliking of you. Know that it is common and natural to be consumed with negative trains of thought since they serve the function of survival and self-protective instincts. You can learn to identify the pattern, settle your mind, let thoughts pass, and refocus on what is important to you. See handout on “Cognitive Distortions” for more ideas.

Defusing Thoughts & Thought Piercing: Try to examine a painful thought fully and repeatedly ask yourself what is at the center or core of this thought? Where does this thought come from? How old is this thought? What are the different layers of this thought or what is underneath this thought? Have I learned through experience that this thought is not as true as it seems or that I can handle this thought more than I think? See if you can appreciate both the power of thought and how impermanent, fluid, and insubstantial thoughts are.

Focused Breathing: Imagine breathing into the areas of the body that you are experiencing your stress or difficult emotions. See if you can soften around the feeling and hold it gently, loosen up and allow the feeling to be there, and allow yourself to open and expand around it - as if you’re creating space and gentleness in and around the feeling.

Deep Breathing Practice: Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your belly, and then practice breathing deeply through your nose and into the belly area, allowing only your lower hand to move and not your upper hand. Breathing helps to oxygenate the brain and helps to signal the parasympathetic nervous system, which allows you to relax and recover from stressful states.

Radical Acceptance (“Emotional Stretching”): Set aside short periods of time on a regular basis to be somewhere without distractions and let yourself think and feel whatever is going on for you. This is a means by which we learn to be more flexible, open, and confident with what is happening - by letting it be exactly how it is without trying to ignore it or fix it. See handout on “Emotional Acceptance” for more ideas.

Dropping the Storyline: Try what it feels like to let go of concepts, ideas, and narratives about the emotion and focus on feeling the energy or physical sensations of the emotion - the immediate, felt experience in the body, mind, and heart.

Power of Language: Journal about your experience, make a regular practice of writing to simply express your thoughts and feelings, write as if you are having a conversation with yourself or with someone that you consider wise and caring.

Simple Acknowledgment: Talk to a friend or loved one, even to simply let them know what is going on without needing to fix it or change it. Let them know that you just need them to know and understand what is happening.
- **Express Yourself:** Use creative expression (art, music, dance, film, theater, etc.) as a means of expressing or feeling your emotions more fully, learning to make meaning, and knowing that others have experienced what you are going through.

- **Physicalizing:** Contemplate or imagine the emotion as a physical form or object in front of you and noticing it’s “size, shape, color, texture, intensity, temperature” or any other qualities. What is it like to respond to it this way?

- **Laying Hands:** Lay a hand on the part of the body you feel most intensely - send some loving warmth to this area, as if your hand was that of a close friend or loved one.

- **Opposite Action:** When feeling an intense emotion, consider what the opposite of whatever impulse or urge you might have and engage in that action - with a commitment to not do harm either to yourself or others. For example, if you feel like shutting down and withdrawing when feeling lonely or sad, work with being outgoing and social or doing something kind for others.

- **Embracing Discomfort:** Do something that you are avoiding because it elicits unwanted emotions; take action on uncomfortable or difficult situations in our lives, despite unwanted thoughts and feelings (eg, going to an event, making a phone call, taking time by yourself).

- **Developing a Meditation Practice:** Explore and experiment with a regular meditation practice that allows you to become more settled, more aware of yourself and your mind, and more confident in dealing with your emotions and other challenges. Meditation has been shown to improve relaxation, emotion regulation, focus and concentration, and self-confidence. See handouts on “Beginning Mindfulness Meditation” and “Tips for Everyday Mindfulness” for more ideas.

- **Everyday Mindfulness:** Pick an activity that constitutes part of your routine, such as brushing your teeth, shaving, making the bed, or taking a shower. When you do it, totally focus attention on what you’re doing: the body movements, the taste, the touch, the smell, the sight, the sound, and so on. Notice what’s happening with an attitude of openness and curiosity.

- **Mindful Walking:** Go for a deliberately slow walk and take time to pay attention to details. Feel the contact of your feet on the ground and the sensation of breathing in and out. Try focusing on certain senses while you walk - like paying attention to certain colors or pausing, closing your eyes, and listening to the sounds.

- **Ground Yourself in the Body:** Do something physical that allows you to be more aware and present with your body, like practicing yoga or tai chi, getting a massage, or engaging some kind of mindfulness or meditation activity.

- **Taking a Break for Mindful Distraction:** Take a break from a stressful activity and choose an everyday activity like folding the laundry or making your bed or walking to class and let yourself take extra time to do it slowly, paying attention to details and noticing your different senses.

- **Connect to Nature (”Child’s Practice”):** Spend some time outside on a regular basis and practice mindfully paying attention to what you are experiencing in the moment. Stay off of any electronic device. From time to time, pause somewhere and take your time lingering and start to notice the details of texture, color, and shape.

- **Gratitude and Appreciation:** At various times of the day or at the end of your day, take some time to write down or think about three things that you are thankful for about your day or about your life. Write thank you cards or messages of appreciation to people you care about even when there is no special occasion.

- **Self-Affirmations:** Make a habit of using quotes, poems, lyrics, sayings, slogans, or affirmations in order to provide perspective and remind you of who you are, what you believe in, and what provides meaning and value in your life. See handout on “Self-Affirmations” for more ideas.

- **Normalizing:** Remind yourself and others that emotions tell us that we care about things (for example, we wouldn’t worry if we didn’t care) and that we feel things intensely when there’s a gap between what we want/expect and what we get in life.

- **Self-Compassion Practice:** Develop a routine of acknowledging what you are feeling during times of difficulty, recognizing how you are not alone in your experience and how your experience represents something human and universal, and making an intention of being more kind, caring, and understanding toward yourself and others. See “Self-Compassion” handout for more ideas.

- **Reconnecting to Values:** Generate a list of values you hold or qualities of the kind of person you strive to be. Ask yourself how you would like to be remembered by others or what kind of difference you would like to make with your life - what might this say about the kind of life you want to be living day-to-day?