

# Shadow Work Emotional Self Journaling Exercise<sup>1</sup>

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Five Basic Emotions: mad, glad, sad, afraid, shame.

1) First access the emotion of the Emotional Self you are writing from. Select one each session (mad, glad, sad, afraid, shame).

Write your answer to this sentence several times:

“I feel sad (or afraid, or mad, etc.) when ...”

OR, remember a time when you felt sad. (or afraid, or mad, etc.)

2) Locate and energize that Emotional Self in your body.

Feel where that Emotional Self is in your body at this moment. Energize it and make space for it by:

- 1) Focus your attention on the Emotional Self in the place you feel them.
- 2) Touch yourself with both hands over the place where they are.
- 3) Breathe into that place, creating space for them to be alive in you.
- 4) Make the sound the Emotional Self wants to make.
- 5) Move in the way the Emotional Self wants to move.
- 6) Move to a location within the room that best holds the Emotional Self.

3) Write a letter from that Emotional Self.

When writing from each Emotional Self, use the following hand grips:

Sad = use your non-dominant hand.

Afraid = dominant hand, scrunched up grip as if your hand was afraid.

Mad = dominant hand, hold the pen in your fist.

Glad = dominant hand, hold loosely

Shame = dominant hand, hold both hands on the pen.

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<sup>1</sup> This exercise is adapted from the work of Rod Newton, Cliff Barry, and Hal & Sidra Stone. Thank you!



#### 4) Characterize your relationship with each of your Emotional Selves

For example:

My relationship with Sad is too close. It runs me.  
My relationship with Afraid is one of avoidance and suppression.  
My relationship with Anger is adversarial and distant.

#### 5) Interviewing your Emotional Selves

Select some questions that seem particularly relevant to this Emotional Self.

First Set of Questions:

Is it OK if I talk with you for a while?  
How old do you feel today?  
Where do you live in my body?  
If you could be an animal what would you be and why?  
Are you masculine or feminine?  
What storybook character do you like most and why?  
Who in my life do you feel closest to?  
Who in my life do you have the most conflict with?  
What do (did) you like most about mom?  
What do (did) you not like about mom?  
What do (did) you like most about dad?  
What do (did) you not like about dad?  
What do you like most about me?  
What don't you like about me?  
Is there a name I can call you by? (If not, keep asking each journaling session until the self gives you a name.)  
Thank you for coming out, I'll talk with you again soon.

Second Set of Questions (You can continue with these at the same time as the first set or in a later session.)

Is it OK if I talk with you for a while?  
What do you like most about my life now?  
What do you like least about my life now?  
What do you like most about (past or present significant other)?  
What do you not like about ((past or present significant other)?  
What is the best thing about being in love?  
What is the worst thing about being in love?  
If love were a food, what kind of food would it be and why?

What do you like most about sex?

What do you like least about sex?

How do you feel about the Great Mystery, God, Creator, Higher Power?

Can you describe the space the you live in? (like all black, in a cave, stuck in a bottle, alone in space, etc.)

If you could have any three wishes granted, what would they be?

What do I feel like to you? Like a mother, father, big sister or brother, friend?

If I could do anything for you right now, what would you want me to do?

Is there anything else you'd like to say to me right now?

Is there a name I can call you by? (If not, keep asking each journaling session until the self gives you a name.)

Thank you for coming out, I'll talk with you again soon.

#### Bonus Points:

A) Write a letter back to the Emotional Self from you (as you are in your everyday life).

B) Return to the Emotional Self in a subsequent session and have the Emotional Self respond to the letter.

C) Create a dialogue between you and the Emotional Self. This dialogue is where emotional integration occurs.