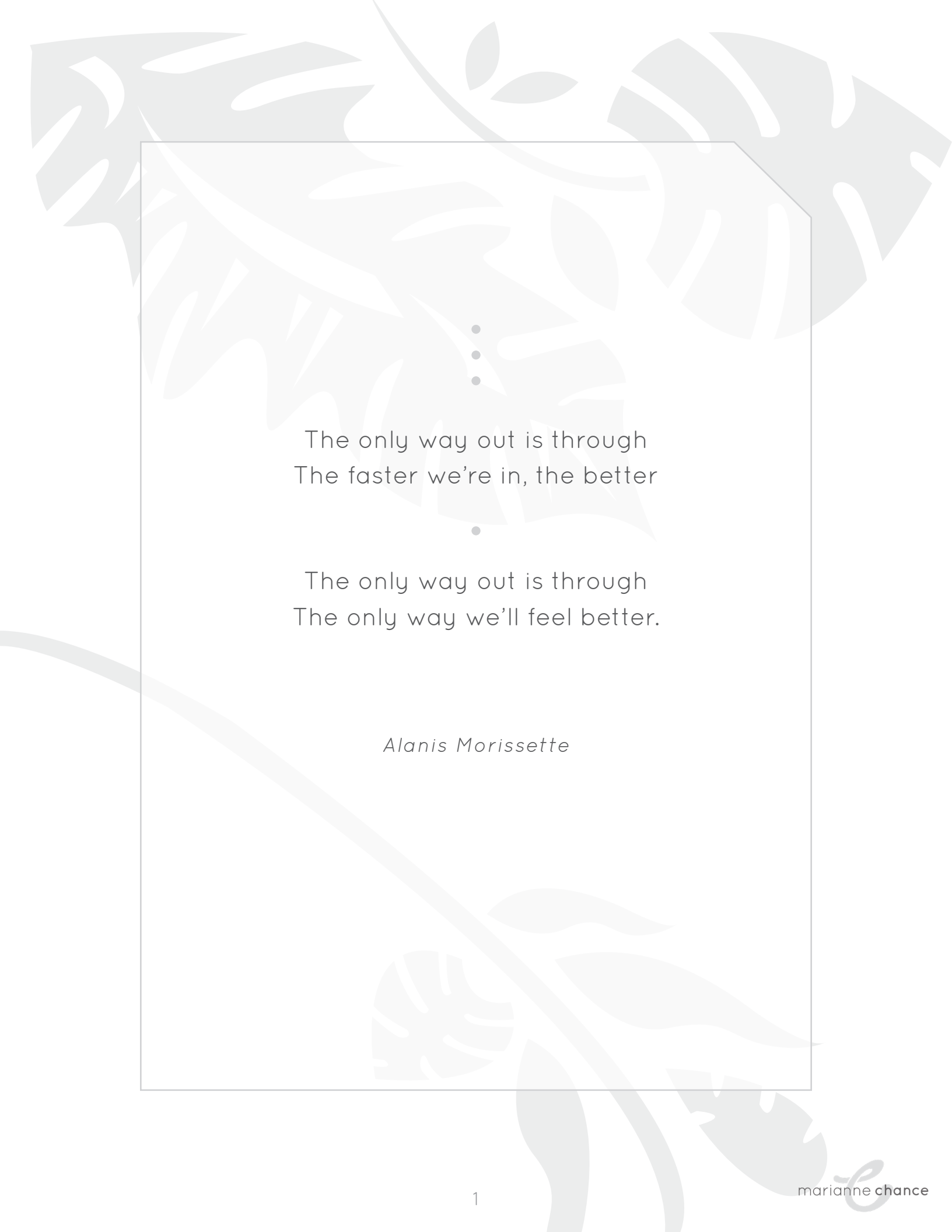




out is through

by Marianne Chance
A workbook of
acceptance and
dealing with
feels



The only way out is through
The faster we're in, the better

The only way out is through
The only way we'll feel better.

Alanis Morissette

Hi There!

Wow! It sure feels like everything is one hot mess lately. When think back on the past year I can't help but think of a line from Sleeping at Last's song, "Aperture." *"God it has been quite a year. I've lived a little bit. And I've died a little more."* As we usher in a new era, I can't help but think that Sleeping at Last was referring to a rebirth as opposed to the notion of "dying inside."

It was March 13th, 2020. I, like the rest of the world, was grounded from travel. For five years I had never been home for more than two weeks. When the going got tough, I went to Europe. And for the first time, I was stuck in a town that never felt like home.

Later in the year, my now ex-husband and I made our divorce official after 3.5 years of being separated. With one stroke of the pen, I had a new name and new beginning. At the same time, I also lost a separate relationship that mattered tremendously to me. Albeit toxic, it was important to me none the less. I felt lost. I felt trapped. Some days I felt like my biggest success of the day was getting dressed. And yet, I refused to be defined by these events.

There's one thing you need to know about me. I always want to know "how" to do things. I'm obsessed with workbooks (Yes! They have those for adults!) So, I pulled out "all the things" and got to work. I declared that I mattered to myself and started down the path of doing the things that I teach others to do.

Now I'm passing those tools onto you. I'm giving you the exercises, questions, quotes, and behind the curtain conversations that allowed me to process where I was, and put me on the path to finding a healthier and more authentic me (we use the word authentic too much but without acceptance we can't have it). I created this workbook to give you the gift of this journey, and I am so excited that you have decided to give yourself this gift. I also hope you feel like I am right next to you as you travel.

- There are two HUGE concepts we're going to cover.

The first is radical acceptance. We cannot change what we can't accept. Not gonna lie, this is hard. For me, there were lots of tears as I had to have a come-to-Jesus talk about where I was and what I needed to do to change.

The second is how to deal with all the feels as they arise—because they will. I want you to give yourself the gift of self-love by having the tools to help you move through the emotion. After all, the only way out is through. And the sooner you start, the sooner you find yourself on the other side.

So glad you're here,

Marianne

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HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

I want you to think of this as a gift you give yourself. Therefore, I want you to gift yourself the time to work through the exercises and reflect on the questions. Here are some tips to help you get the most from this workbook.

- Do each exercise in the order it's given in the book. Trust the process. Trust me.
- Take the liberty to write as little or as much as you'd like. For example if the exercise asks you to list six things and you can only come up with three, that's OK. If you come up with 20, that's OK too.
- Treat the work as a ritual. Set aside time to do the exercises. Do them in a place you feel comfortable. Grab wine or sparkling juice and cheese. Put your headphones in and play your favorite music in the background.
- Be kind to yourself. Some of this stuff is kind of tough. Remind yourself you did the best you could at the time.
- Write down what you hope to get from this journey as a reminder to keep going.
- Remember, the only way out is through. We can't skip around the hard stuff.
- If you feel you need to debrief with someone feel free to! Make sure you set clear boundaries about what you need from them.

Also, you'll find Marianne Musings throughout the workbook. Those have been written, by me, over the course of the past few years. They tell a bit of my story and using the tools I'm giving you!

There's something important I need to tell you! I do not provide the services of a licensed physician, or licensed counselor, information received should not be seen as medical or mental health advice and is not meant to take the place of seeing licensed health professionals.

rad·i·cal ac·cept·ance

/'radək(ə)l/

/ək'septəns/

verb

1. Honestly looking at reality.

"She radically accepted that the world was in a pandemic and she wasn't able to travel."

2. Not ignoring loss.

"He radically accepted that his grandma was gone and he was sad."

3. Embracing responsibility.

"She radically accepted that she stayed too long in a relationship that wasn't healthy."

the hard truth

*Denying reality
doesn't change it.
It only keeps us stuck
longer.*

Rejecting reality doesn't
change it.

Rejecting reality turns pain
into suffering.

Changing reality can't
happen without accepting.

Pain can't be avoided. It's
telling you something isn't
right.



radical acceptance IS NOT

• • •

Being ok with the situation

For some reason we've confused acceptance with being ok with what's happened. This isn't true. It simply means that you recognize the reality of the situation as opposed to avoiding it. It doesn't need to feel good or peaceful. In fact, you might feel the exact opposite of those things.

Passive resignation

Radical acceptance doesn't mean that you throw your hands in the air and say "Fine! I give in." It doesn't mean you can't say anything about the situation. It doesn't mean that you're a victim. Or your voice doesn't matter. It simply means that you recognize this is the situation that you're in and these are the circumstances that you have to work with.

No longer trying to change the situation

You can't fix what you can't face. In fact, you can't change a damn thing until you accept the hard truth of where you are. You can't leave a terrible relationship until you admit it's terrible. You can't pay off debt until you admit you have it and stop taking on more. You can't get a new job until you start to acknowledge the one you have isn't the one you want. You can't _____ until you _____. Fill in the blanks. I know you can. We all can. Every single one of us has denied reality at one point or another.

Accepting this is the way it's going to be forever

One definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over expecting different results. Insanity is also when you deny the situation and expect it to change magically.



Whatever situation
exists in your life right now,
accept it.

Sarah Ban Breathnatch

radical acceptance

HOW TO

*You can't fix what
you can't face.* Jackson Avery

KNOW THYSELF:

When you are not accepting the reality of a situation, what do you do?
What does it sound like? What does it feel like?

For example

- Do you say something like "It shouldn't be this way" or "how can someone do that?"
- Does it sound like making excuses for the situation?
- Do you become defensive?
- Do you get angry?
- Do you justify to yourself that they just don't understand?
- Do you keep telling yourself it will get better, just give it time?
- Do you say one thing but feel another?
- Deep down do you know something's not right but you ignore it?
- Do you blame others or see yourself as the victim?
- Do you shoot the messenger when someone tells you something you don't want to hear?
- Do you live in the past as opposed to living in the now?
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-
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...

What lie do
you keep telling
yourself?

...

What was the hardest part/thing/lie to admit to yourself?

We cannot change
anything unless we
accept it. *Carl Jung*

IT IS WHAT IT IS:

No matter how hard you try, you can't change what happened. Even if you try really, really hard, it still happened. Give yourself the simple gift of saying out loud "this happened." Don't justify it. Don't explain it. Don't make excuses for it.

Simply state what happened. I remember sitting in therapy one day. We were talking about a long term and unhealthy relationship that I was in. I said "this is a toxic relationship." The sentence just hung there, heavy. But it was also the beginning of radical acceptance. What should you say out loud? What sentence do you need to write?

Go ahead. Write it down. Remember, this is just for you. You don't need to share with anyone else unless you choose.



Marianne Musing

Accepting and letting go

Those who can't do, teach.

Sometimes it's hard to be me. I teach people about fear, emotional intelligence, maintaining emotional control, and conflict resolution. My knowledge of the human condition allows me to believe falsely that I have it all figured out. And sometimes I find myself in a situation where I have to be humble and say "those who can't do, teach."

Recently, I've had to learn a hard lesson about the difference between acceptance and letting go.

I'm a big believer in acceptance. In order to change something, one must be willing to accept things as they are. After all, if you can't accept, aren't you denying reality?

Recently I found myself saying over and over, "I'm trying to accept the situation." But I encountered a problem with this language. By using the word acceptance I put myself in what I lovingly call a fool's choice.

Let me explain. I was using "acceptance" as a way to deny that I was a huge part of the problem.

In my attempt to accept the situation, I would hide behind the phrase "I'm trying to work through and process the situation." Part of my processing was bringing up old hurts from the past. It was blaming. It was resurrecting the past in brilliant ways, resulting in self sabotaging behavior that robbed me of the joy of the current moment.

And then something happened. The 1,245th time I said to myself "I need to accept this," I realized rather than accept I needed to let it go. To some, accept and letting go might seem synonymous. But they aren't. There is a very subtle but significant difference.

What I needed to say was I accept what has happened is in the past...and I need let it go. Let go of the blame. Let go of the hurt. Let go...and accept that all the things happened previously.

Part of acceptance is acknowledging the situation. But the second piece is equally important. You must accept and then let go. Because you can't move forward until you let go.

When one says, "I need to accept something," yes, acceptance is part of it. But the much bigger question is, what do you need to let go of so you can move forward?

Letting go is hard. I could tell you 100 scientific reasons why...but moment of hard truth... if you can't let go you'll always have one foot planted firmly in the past. And that's hurtful you, and everyone else. Stop living in a world of hurt.

What do you need to let go of? What do you need to accept responsibility for? And do you have the courage to do both?



RECOGNIZE IT DIDN'T *JUST HAPPEN*:

There was a series of events that led you to the current reality.


Take time to figure out how you got where you are. It didn't come out of nowhere.

Answer the questions below to help you unravel the road that got you here.

What is the specific situation that you are struggling with?

What, specifically, happened that led to the situation (things don't simply happen. There are always clues as to which path you're going down)?

What role did you play (this can be actions, responses, assumptions, etc.)?



What role did other people play (what actions did they take that contributed to the current reality)?

Over what do you have zero control (hint: the other person)?

How did you respond to this event? Think about your emotional response. Did you get angry and yell? Did you blame yourself?

How did your response or behavior affect you? Did it ruin your day? Did you ruminate and have a sleepless night? Did you go get mad at yourself for responding the way you did? Were you proud you spoke up?

How did the other person react to your response?

How could you have responded differently to cause less hurt to you and the other person?

Would the outcome be any different if instead of fighting the situation, you would have accepted it?

Marianne Musing

Tomorrow I'll be better.

I'm in Cincinnati right now and I'm not gonna lie, I'm having flashbacks to the worst training day...ever. I was brand new and the whole training was a cluster. People stared blankly, asked why they were required to come, and the CFO of the organization kept interrupting me.

A while back someone commented that I want to live in this world of Grey's Anatomy, "I think that's how life should work." And my response? "Yes, 100%," I want to live in the world Shonda Rhimes created. Aside from all characters being beautiful, they have a magical way of articulating the hardest, most vulnerable experiences of humans.

To celebrate my love of Grey's, I'm going to share with you some of the most thoughtful lessons I've learned from those who wander the halls of Grey Sloan Memorial Hospital.

Lesson one: tomorrow I will be better.

Dr. Bailey's first day as chief was an epic fail. At the end of episode two of season 12, she owned up to her fail with *this* simple sentence...tomorrow I will be better.

Back to my Cincy story...when my epic fail of a training was over I said things such as...

1. If only I would have been given more information.
2. A more seasoned trainer should have been selected. They knew I was new.
3. It's not my fault they weren't engaged...

Seriously, I needed to look at myself in the mirror and say, girl please. Stop. Own that mess. And simply commit to be better tomorrow. One of the most powerful choices we can make is to be better tomorrow.

However, when we mess up, we usually do the exact opposite.

We blame. We deflect. We deny. We justify. We excuse. We defend. We rationalize. We create reasons why our mistakes, words, and actions are warranted.

Weird. When we blame, deflect, deny, etc...we don't feel better.

The reason? All those behaviors are defense mechanisms, and they are strategies used to protect us from the anxiety coming from *unacceptable* thoughts or feelings. The defense mechanisms are a product of fear (umm, pretty sure my pride and reputation was on the line in Cincy).

Now, here's what I'm going to say with all the love in the world: stop it.

The power behind "tomorrow I will be better" is that the ONLY thing you are owning is you didn't do it perfectly. You can't change what happened. No matter how much you ignore, deny, deflect, rationalize...you can't change your past behavior.

But you can change what you do, starting tomorrow

And what a wonderful world it would be...if we all simply decided to stop being defensive. Stop beating ourselves up over past actions. What a wonderful world it would be if we simply committed to doing better tomorrow.

The truth is scary.
It's also powerful. *Olivia Pope*

LET'S PRETEND:

We deny things as a defense mechanism. We feel like accepting the situation will be too much. We believe the situation is something different than reality. For just a few minutes give yourself space to imagine what your behavior would look like if you radically accepted the situation.

If you accepted the situation...

What would it feel like?

What hardships will come?

What good things would come?

What support would you need?

How do you think the acceptance would affect those around you? Your friends? Family? Work?

What specifically is holding you back?

What would your life look like one year from now?

What is the benefit to you of not accepting the situation?

If you HAD to accept reality what support would you need to help you cope?

How can you get that support right now?



Marianne Musing

It's not hard.

Last week. It went down as one of the hardest weeks ever, for a whole multitude of reasons.

The week ended with a crashed Mini Cooper. And as I stood on the street corner, looking at my hot mess of a car I realized... *this* feels like life right now.

And when life feels like a car crash I watch Grey's Anatomy. I feel you can learn everything you need to from the brilliant writing of Shonda.

R: Reliable

Reliability means you'll do what you say. Sometimes this is super easy. You show up to work on time. You show up to dinner. You call when you say you'll call. But when life feels like a car crash it isn't easy. In fact, reliability feels incredibly hard. Primarily, because you must figure out what you can reasonably be reliable for.

So how do you figure out what reliability looks like? Let's go back to Grey's.

Miranda Bailey says "It's not hard. It's painful, but it's not hard. And you've already decided what you need to do. That's why there's so much pain."

There's so much truth in this. The key to being reliable is recognizing what needs to be done, no matter how painful, and being reliable to walk through the pain.

It means you commit to the hard choice you've made, come hell or high water.

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After you accept,
you feel.

Let's figure out how to deal
with the feels.

Part of the problem with the word *disabilities* is that it immediately suggests an inability to see, or hear or walk or do other things many of us take for granted. But what of people who can't feel? Or talk about their feelings? Or manage their feelings in constructive ways? What of people who aren't able to form close and strong relationships? And people who cannot find fulfillment in their lives, or those who have lost hope, who live in disappointment and bitterness and find in life no joy, no love? These, it seems to me, are the real disabilities.

Mister Rogers

feel·ing

/ˈfēliŋg/

noun

plural noun: feelings

1. an emotional state or reaction. "a feeling of joy"

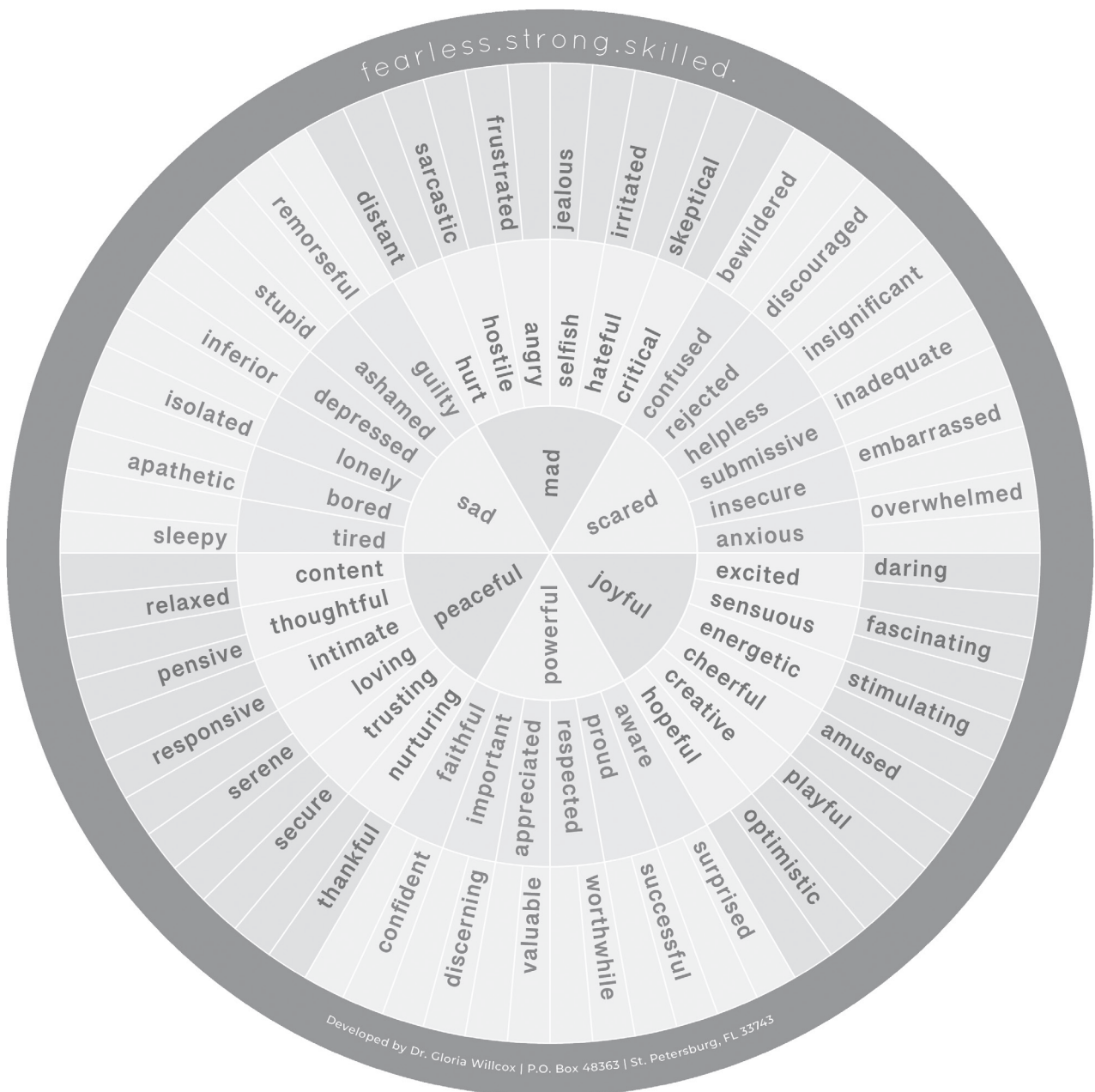


IF YOU NAME IT, YOU CAN SOLVE IT:

Figure out exactly what you're feeling.

Put a name to the emotion, or ALL the emotions.

This is my *most* favorite tool ever! Many times, when talking of emotion we use big emotion words like angry, mad, sad, hurt, sad, happy, excited. But, there are so many other emotions out there. The feelings wheel gives you the gift of words. It gives you the gift of naming specifically what you are feeling.



Marianne Musing

Feel the feels.

Today's thought on choosing you is a tough one. In fact, it's one of the hardest lessons I've learned.

So, grab coffee, a glass of wine, a shot of whisky...or whatever and keep reading.

You can't change, save, or fix others. You can only change, save, and fix yourself. Accepting this is HARD. At least for me anyway.

I can't tell you how many times I've wanted to scream at people...you can save yourself from drowning in the water if you would simply stand up!

But they refuse to stand. So, you can only decide what you're going to do to save, fix, and change yourself.

Now, it's been my experience that, as I'm processing this I have lots of feels. Sometimes they feel overwhelming and have to remind myself I can keep from drowning if I simply stand up.

I'm going to give you a quick exercise so you can stand up you're overwhelmed with big feels. It's going to seem counter intuitive, but if you let it happen it is magic.

First, name the feeling (if you're having issues doing this get out your feelings wheel) and give yourself permission to let that feeling fill up as much space as it needs. Let it fill every part of your body. If it needs more space than that, allow it. See exactly how much space that feel can fill.

Next, give yourself permission to feel that feeling for as long as you need. A minute, a day, a week, a month, even a year...don't put a limit to how long you need to feel it.

Here's why I find the above exercise to be incredibly helpful when processing big feelings.

1. I'm always amazed at how little space my feelings need. I did this once on a plane and at first thought for sure the plane would crash because my feelings were so big...but then discovered the feeling didn't move beyond my chest

2. Feelings come and go. You might think you need a year to get over them, but really...you only need a few minutes. Don't try to contain or shame yourself for your feels and you'll discover they really are temporary. They will pass.

So, give it a go. Remember, you're focusing on the feel, NOT the event. That gets into ruminating...and that isn't the purpose of this.



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Truth about feelings.

Emotion needs motion.

The only way out is through.

Feelings aren't right or wrong.

They just are.

You have the right to your feelings.

Others have the right to theirs.

You can have a plan to deal with the big feels.

It all starts by *accepting* your feelings.

Let's learn how.

a ctivities

c onnect

c ompare

e motions

p ush away

t houghts

s ensory


activities

It's called a plan. If we have a plan, we have control. Look at the list below and circle, star, highlight, whatever activities you can harness to feel better when the emotions are out of control. It's not about ignoring the feeling. It's about giving the feeling space to rest.

Text a friend	Do yoga	Stretch	Go outside	Drive
Take a nap	Cook	Online class	Play with pet	Plan a trip
Watch something funny	Listen to a podcast	Play a game with a friend	Play solitaire	Find a new blog to read
Create a blog	Sell something online	Buy something fun	Subscription box	Get a haircut
Get a massage	Library	Get coffee	Visit museum	Meditate
Write in your journal	List 10 things you're good at	Learn a language	Learn a skill	Listen to happy music
Memorize lines from a movie	Make a scrapbook	Take photos	Plant a garden	Work outside
Knit	Make a video	Paint your nails	Take a bath	Read a book
Write a poem	Join a group	Paint	Write a letter	Draw a picture
Make a bucket list	Do something for someone	Take a nature walk	Wash dishes	Call someone
Clean your room	Organize your closet	Redecorate a wall	Make a reading list	Polish jewelry
Water plants	Pay bills	Burn a candle	Bake cookies	Plan a picnic
Get a state park pass	Create a Vision Board	Listen to a chill playlist	Open a window	Listen to white noise

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What do you do
to get out of your
own head?



*Connection is why we're here.
It is what gives us
purpose, a meaning to
our lives. Brene Brown*

connection

It was a random Friday afternoon during the pandemic and I realized I went a full 48 hours without talking to a single human. We are meant for connection and community. We need to be intentional and schedule time for it.

Below are 15 things you can do to connect with others even while separate. Choose three that sound fun and add them to your calendar. Thought isn't enough. We need to take action too!

- Make a list of 10 people you can call and reconnect with. Then, reach out and schedule a time to chat!
- Set up virtual coffee/wine dates with others. Announce it on social media so you can connect with new people.
- Comment on *friends* social media posts that you usually wouldn't comment on. It's amazing what can happen with a simple comment.
- Create a socially distant safe place so you can see others face to face.
- Ask a thoughtful question on social media and engage with all those that respond.
- Host a virtual dinner. Set the table. Make dinner from scratch. All with others on FaceTime.
- Make something by hand and then do a porch delivery to 5-10 favorite people.
- Have a small group of friends come over and do a yard picnic.*
- Ask your favorite people to share a favorite recipe. Make it and send pictures to the person and tell them thank you for their thoughtful recipe.
- Send postcards to people.
- Invite someone to take a walk with you. Go out in nature!
- Combine hobbies with connection. Join an online book club.
- Watch your favorite TV show with a friend. Check out Netflix Party and give it a try!
- Make some fun future plans with a friend. Plan a trip. Plan a night out.
- Host a game night! This can be either virtual or in person!



compare

IT COULD BE WORSE.

This is a common phrase I hear others use when life hands them crap and they want to avoid it.


Yes. It could always be worse. But when we compare ourselves to others who have it worse we're avoiding assessing our own life. Out is through. And through means facing what exactly what's happening in our world.

I'm going to tweak the way we usually think about comparison. This step involves looking back to a previous time when your world sucked. Then do these three things on the following page.

1. Write down the event that sucked.
2. Jot down healthy ways you coped.
3. Reflect on the joy you found in that mess.

There's always joy in the nonsense. Remember that. Here's an example.

event that sucked	healthy ways I coped	joy found in the mess
separated from my husband	discovered I needed time for myself and went on my first solo vacation to Yellowstone	I found my love for solo travel and discovered I love time with myself!!!

 *now, it's your turn...*



event that sucked	healthy ways I coped	joy found in the mess



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You've heard it before.
What doesn't kill you makes
you stronger.

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Sure. I suppose that's true. I'm
also not convinced I need to
know how strong I am.

Marianne Chance

Marianne Musing

Comparison and authenticity.

I heard someone say comparison is the thief of joy. True.

Comparison is also the thief of self. Here are my observations.

1. I usually compare myself to others when my self esteem is fragile.
2. I compare myself to people I really don't want to be like.
3. Usually comparison results in me "should-ing" all over myself.
4. When I try to be more like others, I become bored
5. Comparing myself to others diminishes and devalues the talents I bring to the world.

And you know what? Despite recognizing these five things, I still fall into the trap of comparing myself. Never, in the history of ever, has my comparison motivated me to do better, be better, or feel good.

I bet you can say the same thing.

Here are six tips I've found to be helpful when I start comparing.

1. Awareness of your comparison triggers and avoid them. Is it Facebook or Instagram? How about a certain "friend" whose braggadocios behavior makes you feel small? Maybe certain places trigger you? Figure out what they are so you can avoid them.
2. Context. People usually post only their best moments on social media. Meaning all that glitters isn't always gold. I was in Paris earlier this year and I received a message from a friend stating that it looked like I was having the best time ever. Truth is, I'd never been sicker and felt like hell the whole time. Again, people rarely pull back the curtain and show you the real stuff.
3. Curiosity. Celebrate other people's success AND ask them how they did it. In other words...learn from others. Luck is mostly nonsense. People usually have to work hard for what they have. So learn from them.
4. Self Improvement? Water your own damn grass! Make a list of five things you want to learn how to do. And the next time you find yourself comparing, pick one item from your list and start focusing on bettering yourself.
5. Empower. Replace **should** with **want**. If you find yourself saying "I **should** do this"....say "I **want** to do this". If it feels true the add it to the list of things for you to water!
6. Gratitude. Make a list of 10 things you have that you wouldn't trade for the world.

You are you. And they are they. I'll close with one of my favorite quotes from Veronica A. Shoffstall. "Plant your own garden and decorate your own soul instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers."




emotion

BEHAVIOR THAT IS REWARDED IS BEHAVIOR THAT WILL CONTINUE.

Ever feel a strong emotion and then act it out? Usually in a way that is unhealthy? Maybe it's yelling. Perhaps you become passive aggressive. Oh! How about you give them the silent treatment? Start a fight? We get into patterns of unbecoming behavior because we get some type of reward for it.

Look below. Does any of this sound familiar?

The Basics	Example
An emotion of though forms	I feel sad
We act out	I start a fight with my partner
The behavior is rewarded	My parter recognizes how I feel
The behavior is repeated	There are more fights in the future

 *now, it's your turn...*

Except, I want you to go a step further. Think about what you can do next time that won't be as hurtful to you or the other person.

The Basics	Example	What I'll do next time
Emotion or thought		
Behavior		
Behavior is rewarded		
Behavior is repeated		

Are there any skills you need to learn so that you can handle your emotions differently next time? If so, list them.

Marianne Musing

Girl, please.

I met with a friend this morning. We were talking marketing ideas for her newly launched business. The topic; how to define the word trauma in a way that people would understand.

Marianne's definition: the hot mess that keeps you stuck in a sick cycle carousel.

As we were talking I thought about how we all have the hot mess that are avoiding... the absolute nonsense that is dizzying...crazy making...maddening. And for some reason we keep putting coins into the carousel. Round. And round. And round.

Guess what? You choose to keep feeding it coins.

What carousel are you continuing to feed? a relationship you need to leave? A job that absolutely sucks? A difficult conversation you've been avoiding? A hard truth you need to speak aloud? What are you feeding that doesn't serve you?

What's keeping you from getting off the carousel?

Girl, please. Get off that horse. You're strong enough to do so, I promise.

The choice is yours. What do you choose?

...

Have you ever gone through a caterpillar to butterfly transition? If so, what inspired it?

Right when the caterpillar thought its world was over, it became a butterfly.



push away

NOT EVERYTHING MUST OR CAN BE ADDRESSED RIGHT NOW.

It's ok to put it aside for a while, to push it away. That's not avoidance. That's making good choices. Here are some techniques you can use to put the feelings on the shelf, metaphorically.

1. Find a place to put your feels. Create that space in your brain. For me it's a storage unit, like you'd see on Storage Wars. I visualize driving to the unit, and put my box full of emotion in the unit. Have a system for putting your emotions away. Make it a ritual. Play the same song while you're walking through the process. Visualize you're walking into the storage unit and putting the box on the shelf. Imagine that you are clicking the padlock closed. Envision every step.
2. Have a plan on how you can re-look at those feelings when you're ready. Think of this as a process from start to finish.

When should you use the above push away technique?

- You can't do anything about the situation right now.
- It's not a good time to be focusing on it because other things need your attention.
- You need space to calm down and process.

Where are you going to push your thoughts when you need space?



Marianne Musing

Sydney to Cedar Rapids.

Did you know studies have shown that Tylenol can ease the pain of emotional hurt? Let's talk about how I found this out.

When I got back to America I had to, in the words of Cheryl Strayed, be brave enough to break my own heart. I had to step away from a friendship that mattered tremendously to me.

"It is decided," is one of the most powerful phrases in the English language. It's definitive. From the second I made this decision It. Hurt. Like. Hell.

And I started to wonder why it hurt like hell. So I took to google. There I discovered that emotional pain, such as heartbreak, is processed in the same part of the brain as physical pain. Also, when you spend lots of time with someone you like, the brain releases happy chemicals. When that person goes away so do the chemicals...and your brain simply needs time to re-balance. That's how I discovered the Tylenol study! To be clear, I'm not advocating pill popping to ease emotional pain.

A Marianne philosophy is if you can understand it, you can push through it. This particular time "choosing me" hurt. And I wanted to understand the why behind the hurt.

Here's why I'm telling you all of this...It's not because I want you to be an expert in heartbreak- -that sounds terrible. Instead it's because so many times I hear people say things like...I feel so stupid for being upset, or I know I shouldn't be thinking about this...or why haven't I gotten over this yet.

It is because you're human and your body is doing exactly what it should be doing to fix, change, and save itself. It is doing its job.

Extend grace to yourself. Period.

Sometimes choosing you means choosing courage over comfort. It means doing really hard things. It means going through suck.

Whether your suck is a heart break, grief, stress, anxiety, whatever...take the time to learn the process. Give yourself the gift of learning why you feel the way you do.


And when your friend is trying to be helpful and says something glib like, "this too shall pass," don't punch her in the face. Instead simply say, "I know. Science says so."



thoughts

We are the BEST storytellers in the world. The fiction we create is far more interesting than any facts. The first step is recognizing the thought errors we make.

Thinking Error	Definition	Examples
Catastrophizing	Focusing on the worst possible outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• My chest hurts. It must be a heart attack• I made a mistake. They won't like me anymore• If I say something, they'll think I'm stupid
Jumping to conclusions	Expecting that a dreaded outcome is probably going to happen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I will bomb the interview• If I say something, they will be made at me and never speak to my again
Tunnel vision	Focusing only on the threat-relevant info while ignoring evidence of safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The test results will come back positive• They look bored. My speech is terrible
Emotional reasoning	Assuming that the more intense the emotion, the greater the actual threat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flying must be dangerous because it makes me anxious• The pit in my stomach means they're mad at me• They hurt me, so they must be the worst person in the world
All or nothing	Viewing the thought and safety in rigid, absolute terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If I get laid off from work, then I will never find a new job• Every time I speak up, my co-workers roll their eyes

 *now, it's your turn...*

Think about the last time you were in a heightened emotional state. What were some of the “thought errors” you had?

Thinking Error	Definition	Examples
Catastrophizing		
Jumping to conclusions		
Tunnel vision		
Emotional reasoning		
All or nothing		



A few more tools to use

HOW CAN I FIGURE OUT IF MY THOUGHTS ARE REALLY IRRATIONAL?

What if my worst-case scenarios are true? How can I pull myself out of my rabbit hole of catastrophe and emotional reasoning?

Start here. Ask yourself these questions to start sorting fact from fiction:

Is that true? Is whatever my thought is true?

What evidence do I have to support that it's true?

What else could be going on?

How do I feel when I believe it is true?

How do I feel when I believe it is true?

How do I feel when I believe it is not true?

How do I choose to feel?

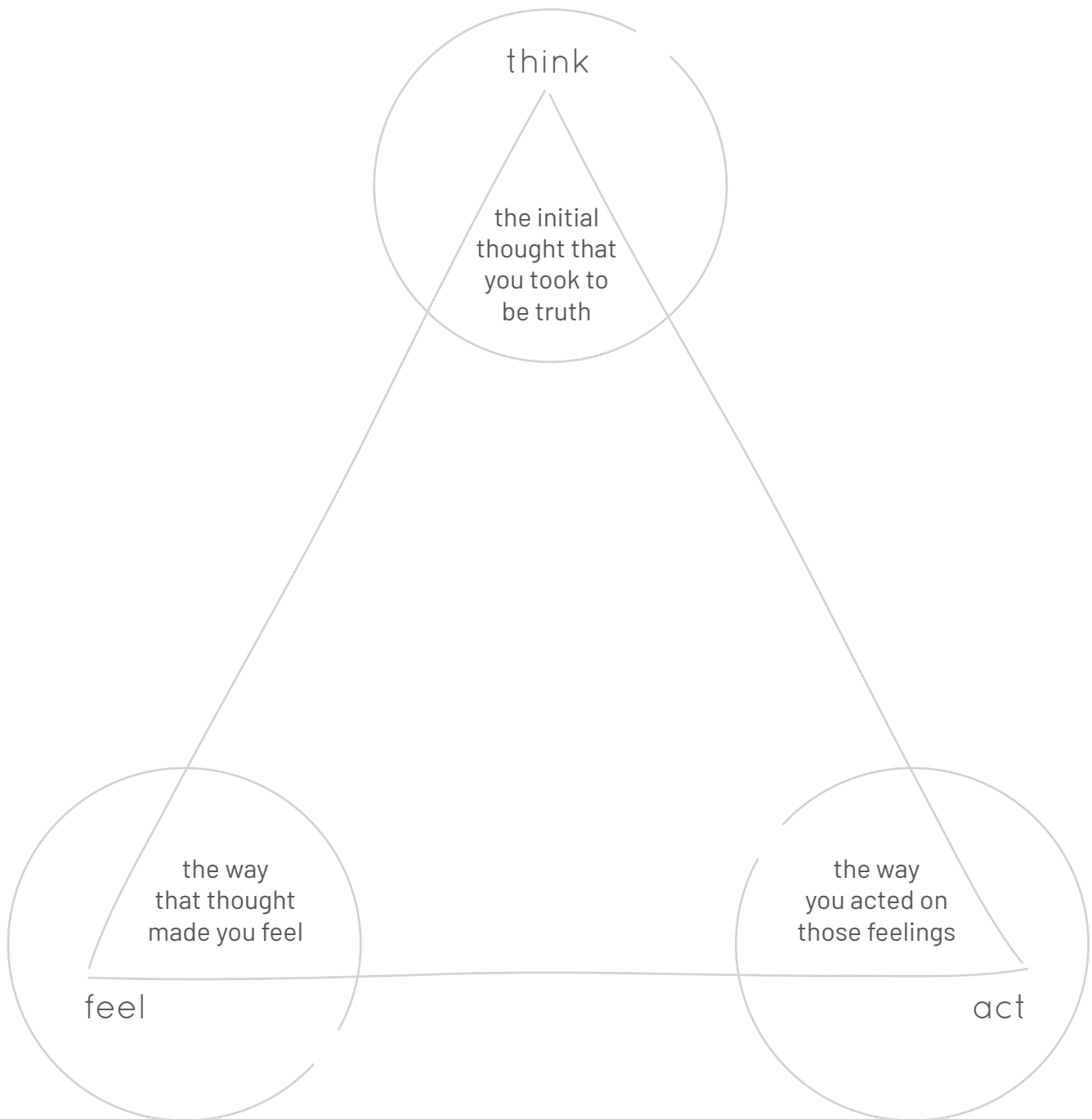




think. feel. act.

When you change the way you think, you change the way you feel. When you change the way you feel you change the way you act.

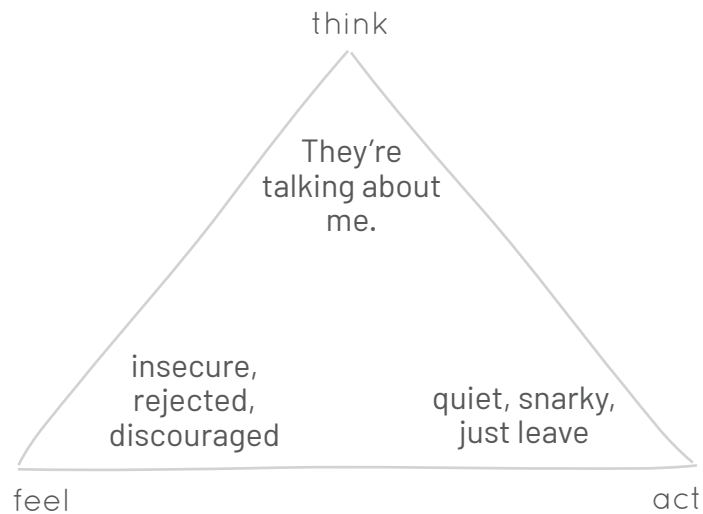
Basically, this is magic.



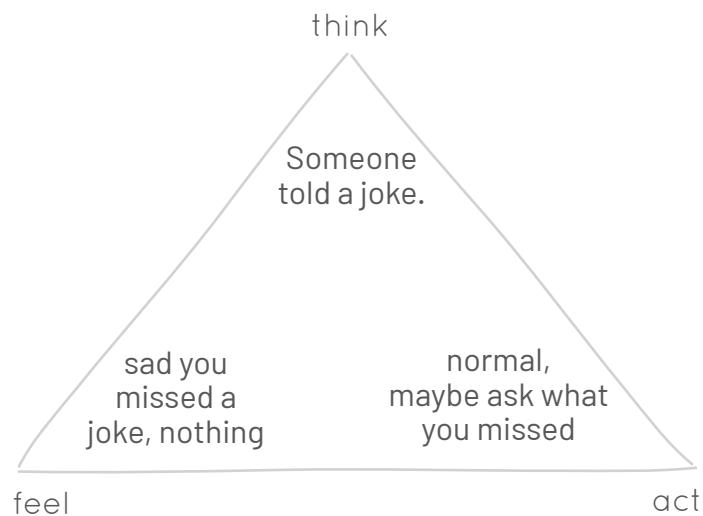
SCENARIO


You're at a company picnic. You get up to use the restroom. When you're walking back you notice that everyone is laughing and having a good time. As you step up to the table everyone stops laughing.

The triangle of magic might look like this:

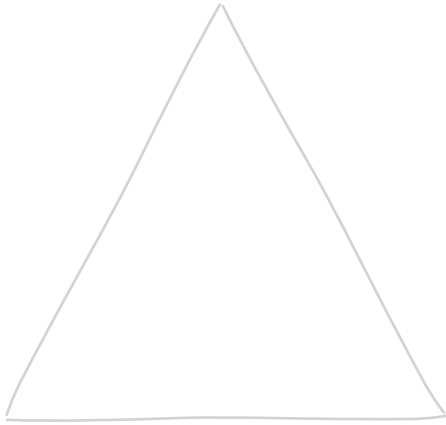


Think about the same situation, but change your thought. Instead of assuming they were talking about you, assume someone told a joke and you missed it.



 *now, it's your turn...*

I love using this tool as a reflection exercise. I encourage you to do the same!!

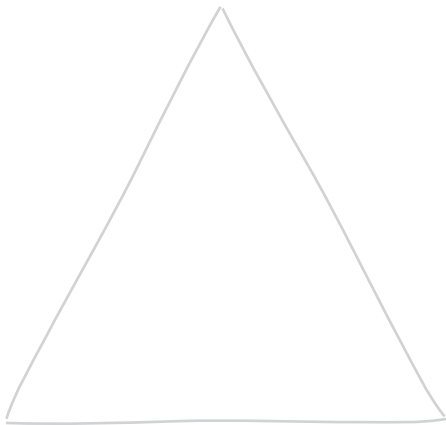


thought:

feel:

act:

different thought:

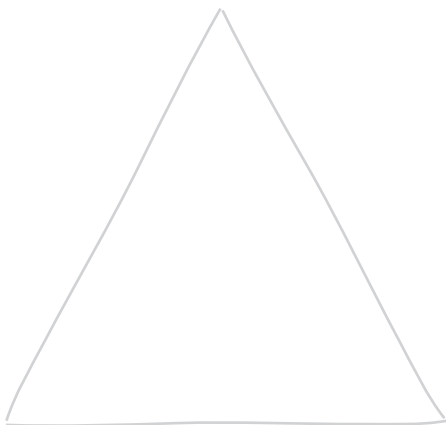


thought:

feel:

act:

different thought:



thought:

feel:

act:

different thought:

...

What are your most negative reoccurring thoughts, and why do you keep going back to them?



sensations

It starts with our thoughts. Imagine how your emotions might be eased if you embraced all senses. If you included not just your head, but your whole body in the process of calming down, feeling better? Imagine just how great that might feel.

TASTE

- Go on a picnic. Research *all the things* and invite a friend to tag along.
- Be mindful when making coffee.**
- Learn how to make a mocktail. Something that will require focus. Mocktails can be creative and delicious**
-
-

SMELL

- Give yourself the gift of an amazing perfume. Wear it when you aren't feeling your best.
- Make a seasonal "simmer." These can make your house smell like magic!**
- Find nature that smells like nostalgia. I love boxwood. It reminds me of my summers with my grandparents who lived in Virginia.
-
-

HEAR

- Make a playlist of songs that you can't help but be happy when you hear them. Forest Gump soundtrack is my go-to.
- Set a timer for 60 seconds and pay attention to all the sounds you hear. A ceiling fan, a car that drives by, the ticking of a clock. Noise is all around us. Bring yourself back into the moment by listening for one minute.
- I'm going to throw comedies under here. Watch a show that makes you laugh. The Office. Enough said.
-
-





sensations



Give yourself the gift of using your whole body to feel better.

TOUCH

- Clean sheets. Nothing feels better than crawling into bed with clean sheets. If you don't like your sheets, give yourself the gift a new set.**
- Snuggle with a puppy (or any pet).
- A worry stone. Sometimes it helps to have something tactile to hold.
-
-

SIGHT

- Print pictures that remind you of something you love and then frame them. Not a photographer? Pick out your favorite postcards and frame those.
- Create a collage. At least three times a year, I cut and paste travel pictures into my planner.
- Read something. I recommend making Post-Its with your favorite life reminders.
-
-

DO (A MARIANNE EXTRA)

- Plant something like lavender. You can then make your own lavender simple syrup AND use the buds for a calming smell.
- Get a grownup Paint By Numbers. It's hard to focus on numbers and hard emotions.
- Download the Yoga Wake Up app and start your day with yoga...in bed.**
-
-

** Go to mariannechance.com/out-is-through-resources and download my favorite resources to make your sensory experience something special—something tailored just for you.

...

What does joy
feel like?

• • •

make a statement.
make a change.

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE WHAT YOU'VE
LEARNED AND USE IT TO MAKE POSITIVE AND
LASTING CHANGE?

If I... (what action do you plan to take)

Then... (the desired outcome)

Three gifts I will give myself for continued support.

Attitude: When I feel negative, I will...

Support: I will reach out to these people when I need support...

Obstacles: When I run into _____, I will _____ ...

Marianne Musing

The truth is beautiful.

Two things I love: Wonder Woman and crystals. Put both together and I'm happy as a little clam (are clams happy?).

As usual, the climax of the movie had a Wonder Woman speech worthy of pondering AND quoting.

"You cannot have it all. You can only have the truth. And the truth is enough. The truth is beautiful."

2020 proved life can be brutal

It also provided me much truth about myself. For years the road was my life. And sometimes – (or almost always) – it was a distraction. Take that away and I was left with nothing but time to figure out my truth.

I uncovered a lot of truths in 2020

I love red lipstick and perfume. It's possible to have a pair of dressy sweatpants. A dog really is my best friend. I get giddy receiving monthly boxes filled with makeup and things that feel nice on my skin. A silk pillowcase can do wonders for my hair. Friends come and go, and that's ok. I adore Paris but Iowa not so much (I adore Iowa people though!!). Cutting the neck out of sweatshirts makes them look fashionable. Cook...with butter makes everything better. Cheese can be a meal – and it's always good!. Trader Joe's is a staple. I like to be by myself. I love to entertain. I get inspiration from decorating. I have a new name and it will be my forever name. My self care Facebook group is something I'm proud of. I genuinely love every single one of my clients. Snow isn't terrible. I like to be alone. I can cook a turkey. Airline status doesn't matter (okay, but it kind of does). I CAN breathe in a mask. It's still cool to vote.

And the biggest truth I learned...I love who I became in 2020. And that truth is beautiful.