

By Harriet Gordon, LPC

# Safe & Sane

A Coping Skills Workbook for when you're  
Stuck at Home due to COVID-19

[restorationtherapyservices.com](http://restorationtherapyservices.com)

# A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

WELCOME, FRIEND.

Keep Calm and Practice Social Distancing.

Sure, ok. One of those is simple to figure out. As much as possible over the next few weeks and months, stay at home to prevent spreading COVID-19. You care about keeping yourself, your loved ones, and strangers safe. Keeping Calm in the presence of an unprecedented global pandemic on the other hand, is much easier said than done.

I have several years' experience practicing skills and applying tools to manage feelings of anxiety within myself and teaching those skills and tools to my counseling clients. Following is a workbook of some of the best techniques I've gathered to maintain a window of emotional tolerance when faced with extraordinary stressors.

This is a time that will test our ability to support each other despite physical distance, and taking all necessary precautions while not letting our fears and worries overwhelm us. While most private practice therapists like myself have made arrangements to continue serving clients through tele-health, I wanted to do more to help my fellow humans while we all do our best to figure things out.

If I can help in any way beyond this workbook, feel free to reach out to me at [harriet@restorationtherapyservices.com](mailto:harriet@restorationtherapyservices.com)

*Harriet Gordon, LPC*

Harriet Gordon, LPC  
Founder of



**RestorationTherapy**  
SERVICES



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Print out the whole workbook, or just the pages you want! Use them once or as many times as you'd like. Fill these out in order, or skip around! This workbook is for you to use in the ways that serve you best.

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# SECTION ONE

*workbook*

# SECTION ONE

## *Affect Management*

Affect Management. Emotional Regulation. Keeping your S\*%^ Together. Whatever you call it, we are referring to the same thing; managing the wild world of feelings so that we stay within a window of tolerance.

If our emotional state is higher than our window of tolerance, we are *hyperaroused*; running around like a chicken with its head cut off. If we are under our window of tolerance, we are *hypoaroused*; zoned out, zonked, zombified.

If we think of staying within this window of tolerance like white water rafting, sometimes the water will be smooth and still, and sometimes the water will be rocky and splashy. All of this is fine; we can weather bumps along the way as long as we *don't fall out of the boat!*

The worksheets in this section are designed to help stay in the boat and appreciate the journey. And, if you happen to fall out and get wet, don't worry- you can always climb back in!

There are six universal feelings: mad, sad, scared, happy, surprise, and disgust. Each of them has a message to deliver if we are open to hearing it.



# WORKSHEET 1

I have many feelings about COVID-19. Right now I feel MAD about:

Mad's message is "Something needs to change." A time mad's message helped me was:

A way to act on mad's message is to change what I can. In this case that means:



## WORKSHEET 2

I have many feelings about COVID-19. Right now I feel SAD about:

Sad's message is that something is lost/gone. A time sad's message helped me was:

A way to respond to sad's message is to grieve the loss and appreciate what I have now. In this case that means:



## WORKSHEET 3

I have many feelings about COVID-19. Right now I feel SCARED about:

Scared's message is "This might hurt me." A time scared's message helped me was:

A way to act on scared's message is to take protective measures. In this case that means:



## WORKSHEET 4

I have many feelings about COVID-19. Right now I feel HAPPY about:

Happy's message is "I like this!" A time happy's message helped me was:

A way to act on Happy's message is to seek out more of what we like. In this case, that means:



## WORKSHEET 5

I have many feelings about COVID-19. Right now I feel SURPRISE about:

Surprise's message is "I didn't expect this!" A time surprise's message helped me was:

A way to act on surprise's message is to investigate. In this case, that means:



## WORKSHEET 6

I have many feelings about COVID-19. Right now I feel DISGUST about:

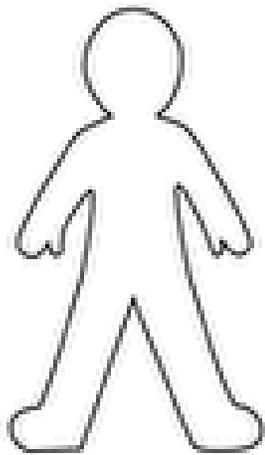
Disgust's message is "I don't like this!" A time disgust's message helped me was:

A way to act on disgust's message is to limit our exposure to what we don't like. In this case, that means:

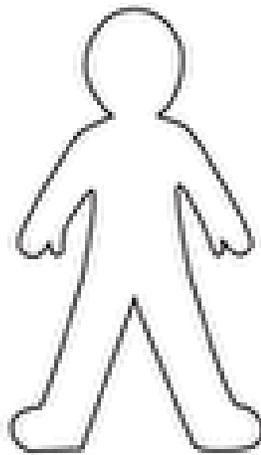


# WORKSHEET 7

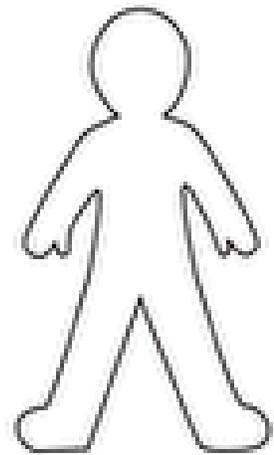
**INSTRUCTIONS:** Use the body diagrams below to identify where in your body you feel each emotion. Draw symbols to represent the body sensations. (ie, circles over the hands to represent clenched fists) Give yourself permission to feel.



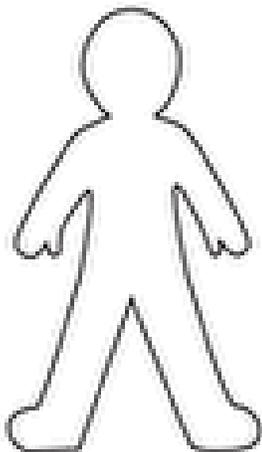
Mad



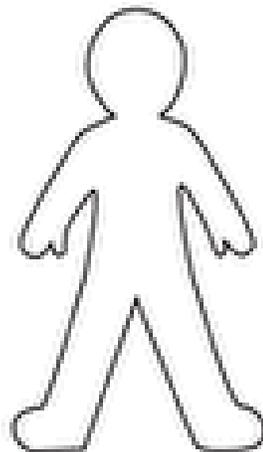
Sad



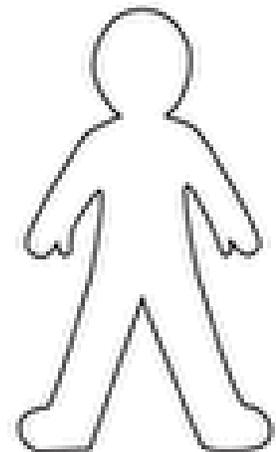
Scared



Happy



Surprise



Disgust

# SECTION TWO

*workbook*

# SECTION TWO

## *Cognitive Coping*

Hamlet said, "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." Cool concept, bro, but...huh? If things aren't good or bad, they just *are*, how can we think something different? Don't thoughts just...appear? Well no, not really, they just appear so quickly it seems that way.

Cognitive behavioral therapy says that something happens, then we think something about it, which influences what we feel, which guides how we behave. So if we want to *do* something different, or *feel* something different, we have to *think* something different.

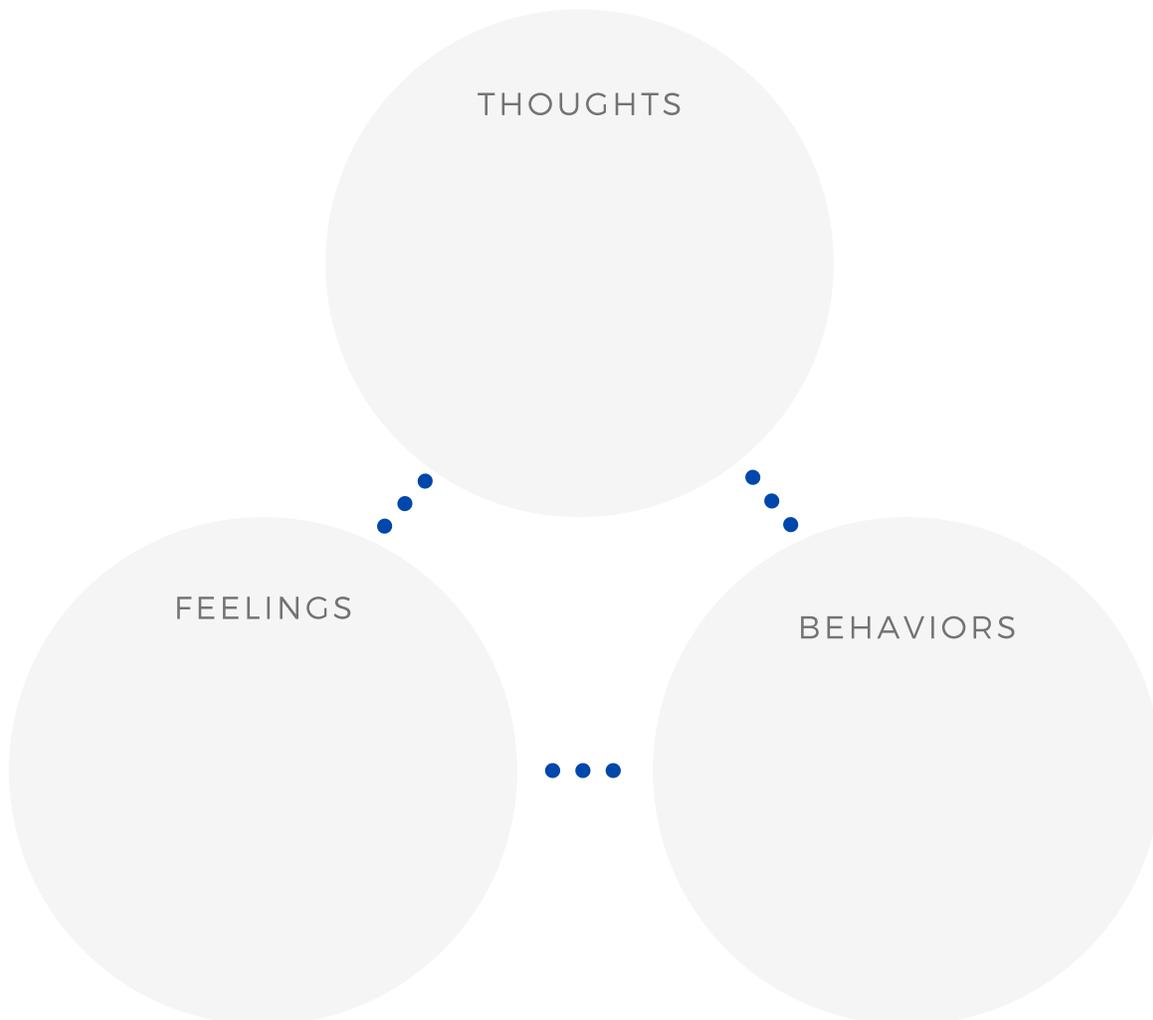
Blocking out negative thoughts almost never works. It's much easier to change-or *reframe*-the thoughts we have. The worksheets in this section guide you through steps of changing thoughts that influence your feelings and behavior, so that you can respond, rather than react.

Hamlet may have thought of Denmark as a prison, but he wouldn't have for long, had he applied the following techniques!



# WORKSHEET 8

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Often, we have a hard time distinguishing between our thoughts and feelings. Try sorting some of what you've thought, felt, and done recently in response to COVID-19 and list them on the corresponding circle.





# WORKSHEET 9

Identify which thoughts need reframing by asking two questions: "Is this thought true?" And "Is this thought helpful?"

**Identify some thoughts you've had about COVID-19. Try sorting them into the following categories.**

<i>True?</i>	YES	True, not helpful	True and helpful
	NO	Not true, not helpful	Not true, helpful
		NO	YES

*Helpful?*



# WORKSHEET 10

Now that we've identified a thought that need to change (anything not true AND helpful), we examine the thought closely. Don't worry, this takes practice!

**THOUGHT TO BE CHANGED:**

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**QUESTION #1: WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE FOR THIS? AGAINST IT?**

**QUESTION #2: IS IT BASED ON FACTS, OR FEELINGS?**

**QUESTION #3: IS THIS BLACK IN WHITE WHEN THE REALITY IS GRAY?**

**QUESTION #4: AM I ASSUMING OR MISINTERPRETING EVIDENCE?**

**QUESTION #5: WOULD OTHER PEOPLE INTERPRET THE SITUATION DIFFERENTLY?**



# WORKSHEET 11

**QUESTION #6: AM I LOOKING AT ALL THE EVIDENCE, OR JUST WHAT SUPPORTS MY BELIEF?**

**QUESTION #7: IS IT AN EXAGGERATION OF WHAT IS SOMETIMES TRUE?**

**QUESTION #8: IS IT OUT OF HABIT, OR DO THE FACTS SUPPORT IT?**

**QUESTION #9: DID SOMEONE ELSE GIVE ME THIS THOUGHT? ARE THEY A RELIABLE SOURCE?**

**QUESTION #10: AM I USING A GROWTH (TEMPORARY) OR FIXED (PERMANENT) MINDSET?**

---

**WRITE A NEW THOUGHT THAT IS BOTH TRUE AND HELPFUL:**



# WORKSHEET 12

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Sometimes our minds present us with worst-case thinking. It often helps to consider alternatives. Fill in the blanks with your worst, best, and most likely case scenarios.

Worst Case:

Best Case:

Most Likely Case:



# WORKSHEET 13

**INSTRUCTIONS: We are often our own harshest critic. We get into a habit of negative self-talk which makes us feel worse and worse. Try changing the tone of your inner monologue to that of a mentor or coach rather than a drill sergeant.**

Current thoughts I tell myself:

I would tell a friend going through this:

Kinder thoughts I can tell myself:



# WORKSHEET 14

**INSTRUCTIONS:** When facing a difficult time, it can help to remind ourselves of difficult times we've been through before and how we got through them. Journal about a hard time you've survived and see if there are lessons, skills or qualities that can help you now.

The situation:

Obstacles I got through:

How I got through them.:

# SECTION THREE

*workbook*

# SECTION THREE

## *Self-care*

If you're anything like me, self-care seems like a luxury sometimes. I'll rest when \_\_\_\_\_. Or, I'll take care of myself after \_\_\_\_\_. Yes, responsibilities are important, but your quality of life is *EQUALLY* important! As the saying goes, "You can't pour from an empty cup."

Now, more than ever, we need to make sure our cups are full. This may be a perfect opportunity to make some small changes in your self-care routine, experiment, see what works for you and what doesn't. It may require extra creativity right now, but you can do it!

When we run ourselves ragged, taking care of everyone and everything else, our bodies will eventually send us a wake-up call that we're neglecting ourselves. That could be anything from gaining or losing weight rapidly, changes in sleep patterns, accelerated hair loss, or skin issues such as hives or rashes. Don't wait for that to happen!

The worksheets in this section are to help you recognize the different dimensions of yourself that needs nurturing and keep them well-nourished.



### Ideas Include:

- Allow yourself to make mistakes and remember your best is good enough
- Name your emotions without judging them-allow yourself to feel them
- Take a break from the news/social media-unfollow or mute toxic "friends"
- Write inspirational quotes down and put them up where you see them often
- Take 15 minutes to write down anything that's bothering you, then tear it up
- Look for ways you can give to others

### Brainstorm your own:

### Try one and record the experience:

BEFORE I FELT...

AFTER I FELT...

MY THOUGHTS, INTUITIONS, REALIZATIONS...



### Ideas Include:

- Do a jigsaw, word search, sudoku, or crossword puzzle
- Read a book, or several
- Learn a new skill or hobby-YouTube tutorials are great!
- Watch a documentary, or several
- Take an online course
- Write poetry or a short story

### Brainstorm your own:

### Try one and record the experience:

BEFORE I FELT...

AFTER I FELT...

MY THOUGHTS, INTUITIONS, REALIZATIONS...



### Ideas Include:

- Drink plenty of water
- Work on establishing healthier sleep habits
- Stretch, dance or walk around a few minutes every hour, even if it's inside
- Follow along an at-home fitness routine
- Try a new type of exercise-yoga, or pilates, or tae bo
- Eat as healthy as possible and take vitamins/supplements

### Brainstorm your own:

### Try one and record the experience:

BEFORE I FELT...

AFTER I FELT...

MY THOUGHTS, INTUITIONS, REALIZATIONS...



### Ideas Include:

- If possible, commune with nature; get outside and use your senses
- Listen to soothing music or nature sounds, such as a beach or rainstorm
- Light a scented candle or bake/cook something that smells good
- Snuggle with a fur baby or significant other
- Take a warm shower, stay in there as long as you like
- Watch funny videos and enjoy the way laughing feels

### Brainstorm your own:

### Try one and record the experience:

BEFORE I FELT...

AFTER I FELT...

MY THOUGHTS, INTUITIONS, REALIZATIONS...



### Ideas Include:

- Pray, meditate, or speak your truth to the universe
- Take a virtual tour of an art gallery or museum
- Practice deep breathing and listening to your body
- Attend a virtual mass or service
- Do something nice for someone in secret/donate money to a charity
- Practice forgiveness whenever possible

### Brainstorm your own:

### Try one and record the experience:

BEFORE I FELT...

AFTER I FELT...

MY THOUGHTS, INTUITIONS, REALIZATIONS...



### Ideas Include:

- Call, face time, or Skype with someone far away or right next door
- Ask for and offer help
- Join an online group and engage in the conversation!
- Start an online group and invite friends to join
- Practice the art of letter writing-to friends, family, even your past or future self
- Watch a movie at the same time as a friend and text them your favorite lines

### Brainstorm your own:

### Try one and record the experience:

BEFORE I FELT...

AFTER I FELT...

MY THOUGHTS, INTUITIONS, REALIZATIONS...

# SECTION FOUR

*workbook*

# SECTION FOUR

## *Additional Worksheets*



The worksheets in the following section are for general use, in times of Coronavirus and beyond! If there are any you would like to see in later editions, or if you'd like more information on anything mentioned in this workbook, feel free to contact me!

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Structure can be a great way to manage expectations. Use this space to outline your tasks for the weeks ahead. Print out one for each month.



# WORKSHEET 21

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	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
MON				
TUES				
WED				
THURS				
FRIDAY				



# WORKSHEET 22

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Keeping a color-coded mood chart can be an excellent way to monitor your overall mental health. Fill in each hexagon with a color that represents your overall mood from the day. Print out one for each month.



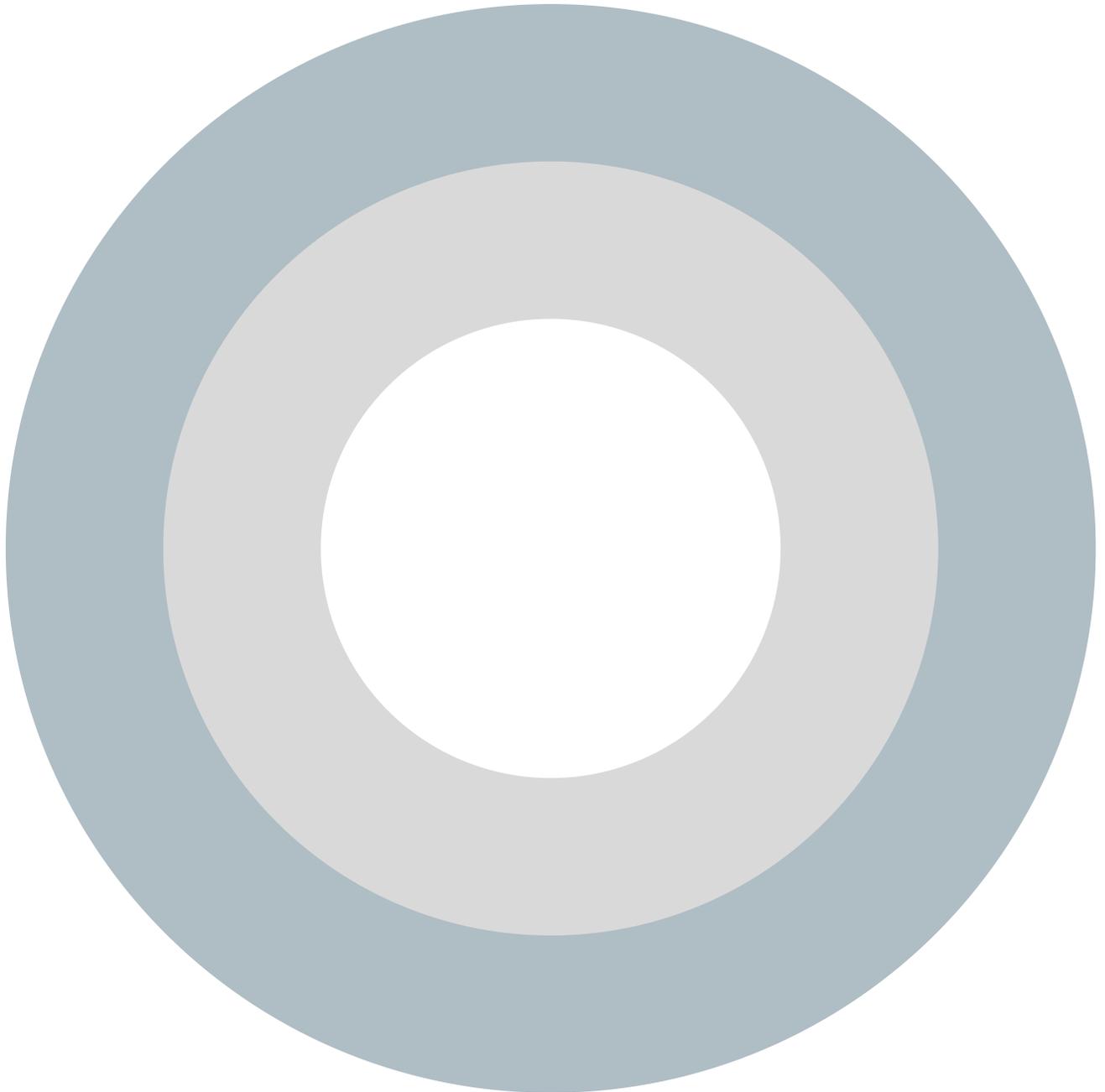
Key:





# WORKSHEET 23

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Asking for help results in getting it! These circles represent your support network. In the smallest circle, write down your closest friends and family you can ask for anything. In the middle circle, write down acquaintances you could ask for help with certain tasks. In the outermost circle, write down the names of agencies or organizations that could help you with unmet needs.





# WORKSHEET 24

What I miss most (past):

What I enjoy most (present):

I look forward to most (future):



# WORKSHEET 25

DRAW OR WRITE YOUR VISION OF A BETTER FUTURE. BE AS DETAILED AS POSSIBLE!

A large, empty white rectangular area intended for the user to draw or write their vision of a better future. It is centered on the page and occupies most of the lower half of the worksheet.



## MEET THE AUTHOR

*HARRIET GORDON, LPC*

My dad had a lot of problems that got in the way of being a good parent. As many kids do, I thought I was the problem. Eventually I grew to understand his issues but I still felt pretty bad, at times worthless and hopeless.

In my search to reconcile what I knew with how I felt, I came across many skills, techniques, and information from psychology that helped click things into place. I knew the same things that helped me could help others. I've spent almost two decades in the mental health field, gathering the latest and best tools available,

As a therapist, I'm honored to be invited into a turning point in my clients' lives. Usually over just a few months' time we work together to pick the lock, adjusting tumblers one by one until the door swings open and they can move forward confidently in the direction of their new lives. I'd love to be there for you as well.

*“There are two ways of spreading light; to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.”*

*-Edith Wharton*

## HAVE QUESTIONS?

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**LEARN FROM  
THE PAST.**

**LIVE IN THE  
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**BELIEVE IN THE  
FUTURE.**