

Cognitive

What sort of things did you *think* before, during and after the emotional episode?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

Affective

What sort of things did you *feel* before, during and after the emotional episode?

Where in the body did you feel these things?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

Behavioural

What sort of things did you *do* before, during and after the emotional episode?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

Balance

Using the model included in this section, appraise whether the emotional episode was balanced or imbalanced.

Emotional balance is the right *emotion*, with the right *intensity*, right *expression*, at the right *moment*.

right emotion

The emotion being felt is appropriate for the events.

right intensity

The appropriate emotion is being felt with an appropriate intensity.

right expression

The appropriately intense emotion is being expressed appropriately.

right moment

The appropriate emotion is being experienced and/or expressed at the right time.

Self-care

What sort of *self-care* and first-aid did you do for yourself after the emotional episode?

Examples include:

- *a few deep breaths*
- *positive self-talk*
- *forgiveness and compassion (if the hurt was primarily caused by someone else)*
- *self-forgiveness and -compassion (if the hurt was primarily caused by you)*
- *the RAIN meditation*
- *gratitude (for the lesson learnt)*
- *write yourself a love letter*
- *reward (a relaxing or comforting activity, pastime or hobby)*

a few deep breaths

This can be the first stopping point to help us arrive at a safe place internally – by breathing deeply into the core of our body, we can connect with a space that is not so destabilised as we are feeling in the places that have been over-run by challenging emotions. That safe place we are breathing into is impervious to the emotions we are feeling in the space around it, so we can go there and see how we feel and this may bring us back to emotional baseline.

positive self-talk

If we are having trouble breathing into that core buddha-nature place, we might try to speak to ourselves as we would to a dear friend. Sometimes such *cognitive* effort may be required before we can breathe ourselves around the *affective* distortions we are experiencing.

forgiveness and compassion

if the hurt was primarily caused by someone else

Here is a whole bunch of [compassion resources](#) by Dr Kristin Neff. And here is a [compassion meditation](#) guided by Sharon Salzberg.

self-forgiveness and -compassion

if the hurt was primarily caused by you

If we have been the primary aggressor in some difficult emotional episode, it can seem impossible to believe that we deserve compassion, but this belief is false, and a trap. The only thing worse than being hurt by someone is hurting someone else – we suffer more from harming others than we do from being harmed (because to hurt others is to hurt ourselves, so the suffering is manifold), so it is of paramount importance that we direct ourselves to practices of self-forgiveness and -compassion. Only then can we hope to see with sufficient clarity to stop berating ourselves and start looking at how we might do differently next time.

the RAIN meditation

The RAIN meditation helps us to:

- **Recognise**
 - the emotions we have experienced
- **Accept or Allow**
 - that we have experienced them, rather than suppressing them
- **Investigate**
 - the experience of these emotions, to see for example whether they have triggered cognitive distortions
- **Nurture**
 - ourselves, because probably we are coming to RAIN because we have experienced some affliction and if so it's time for some compassion and forgiveness

Tara Brach has a very good guided RAIN meditation that you can find on Insight Timer [here](#). If you don't have Insight Timer, here is [a link to where you can download an mp3](#).

gratitude

There is a field below where you can make some notes about things you are grateful for that resulted from the emotional episode.

write yourself a love letter

There is a worthwhile talk or guided meditation by Elizabeth Gilbert about [writing yourself a love letter](#) when you're going through hard times. It's a valuable exercise that I highly recommend as a way to transform the cyclical negative self-talk narrative that sometimes gets set off when we experience high-emotion episodes.

reward

after doing all this hard work it's important to give ourselves some down-time

We've been in a heightened emotional state and are bringing ourselves back to baseline, so we need to go easy on ourselves and not expect to achieve the productivity we wanted before the spot-fire required attention.

Next Time

What sort of thoughts, feelings and actions would you like to be *different* next time a similar episode might happen?

I would like to think,

I would like to feel

I would like to say or do

Now

How do you feel now?

Gratitude

Is there anything you can feel grateful for in this episode?

Key Change

What is the key change you noticed about the way you handled this situation?

What did you do differently from other times situations like this have occurred in the past?

Key Lesson

What is the key lesson you have taken away from this situation?

What is the most-important thing you will try to do differently next time a situation like this happens?