

PTSD DEEP PROCESSING & SELF-COMPASSION JOURNALING EXERCISE



1. MAPPING YOUR TRAUMA RESPONSE

Instead of just identifying triggers, this exercise helps map out how trauma responses show up in daily life.

- Think about the last time you felt triggered. Describe the situation briefly.
- What was your immediate emotional reaction? (Fear, anger, shame, etc.)
- How did your body react? (Tension, numbness, dissociation, etc.)
- What thoughts came up? (“I’m not safe,” “I can’t handle this”)
- How did you cope? (Healthy or unhealthy?)

Reflection: Looking at your response, what does it tell you about what your mind/body are still protecting you from?

2. REWRITING THE NARRATIVE

PTSD keeps people stuck in survival mode, replaying the same story. This exercise helps reframe the past while acknowledging the present.

- What did your trauma teach you about yourself (even if untrue)?
- What beliefs have you carried from that experience? (“I can’t trust anyone.”)
- Now, rewrite that belief as if you were speaking to a loved one. (“Not everyone will hurt me. I can learn to recognize safe people.”)
- What evidence do you have today that challenges the original belief?

3. THE PTSD SHADOW WORK EXERCISE

This exercise acknowledges the hidden, unspoken parts of PTSD, the anger, grief, and unresolved feelings.

- What’s something you’ve never fully expressed about your trauma?
- If you could say one uncensored sentence about what happened, what would it be?
- What emotions have you been avoiding? (And why?)
- How can you give those emotions space without letting them consume you?

4. CREATING A 'SAFE MODE' FOR FLASHBACKS & TRIGGERS

Instead of just listing coping strategies, this exercise personalizes a “Safe Mode”, a structured response plan for triggers.

- Visual Anchor: What image, symbol, or word reminds you that you are safe now?
- Mantra: Create a short, powerful phrase to ground you. (“This is a memory, not my present.”)
- Somatic Reset: What physical action helps you reconnect to your body? (Stretching, pressing feet into the floor, cold water on wrists, etc.)
- Exit Plan: If you need to leave a triggering situation, what’s your go-to strategy?

5. THE FUTURE BEYOND PTSD

PTSD can make it feel like healing is impossible. This exercise encourages forward thinking.

- If PTSD wasn’t in control, what would your life look like?
- What’s one small step you can take toward that vision this week?
- What’s something you already do that proves you are healing?
- Imagine yourself five years from now, having made significant progress. What would that version of you want to tell you today?

*Healing from trauma is not something you have to do alone. At **Elevated Healing Treatment Centers**, we provide a safe, supportive environment where you can work through PTSD with expert guidance and evidence-based therapies. Our trauma-focused treatments include:*

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) – *Rewriting the patterns of negative thoughts and beliefs caused by trauma.*

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) – *Helping the brain reprocess traumatic memories in a healthy way.*

Somatic Therapy – *Releasing trauma stored in the body through movement and mindfulness.*

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) – *Building emotional regulation and distress tolerance skills.*

