



Client Handout

FAMILI

Feelings, Attitudes, Messages, Impressions, and Lessons Inventory

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INSTRUCTIONS

What we learned as children may not serve us well as adults. This exercise is designed to help you identify and understand those childhood lessons, skills, and feelings that interfere with establishing healthy adult relationships. When doing the exercise, find a quiet place without interruptions to consider each topic below and write what comes to mind.

LESSONS LEARNED - As children, we all formed pictures of our world and how we related to it. Pretend you are a child again, reliving your childhood. As you look back, examine your environment and experiences. In the space marked **"Lessons,"** describe the lessons you might have learned from observing or experiencing your environment for each category with single words or short phrases.

SKILLS - As children, we do not have the capacity to judge our lessons; we simply accept them as accurate. Since we believe these lessons, we begin to order our reality around them to make sense of our world. Out of our desire to protect ourselves from hurts, we develop certain survival skills. In the space marked **"Skills,"** describe briefly what skills you may have developed to protect yourself based on those early lessons.

FEELINGS - As children, the lessons we learned and skills we developed to cope with our environment were accompanied by feelings. Often, those feelings may have been unsafe to express openly. Later, these feelings can be identified, understood, and experienced from the safer vantage point of adulthood. In the space marked **"Feelings,"** identify any feelings you may have experienced as a child while the lessons were being learned.

IMPACT - As children, the lessons we learn and the subsequent skills we develop to cope become the unconscious script we use to function later in the world. They impact how we see ourselves, relate to others, and understand our environment. In the space marked **"Impact,"** write down how those earlier lessons and skills continue to influence your behavior today for each category. After identifying how those behaviors persist today, write down what those behaviors cost you in your current relationships and function in the world.

Remember: The goal is depth, not speed, so take your time to consider each topic thoughtfully and reflectively. This exercise generally takes weeks to complete, so be patient with yourself. Ten to twelve topics a week may be a reasonable goal. Pay particular attention to those topics that give you pause or that you may be tempted to skip over since there may be a subconscious reason for your avoidance or resistance. Discuss each topic with your therapist as it applies to your story.

1. TALKING

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

2. SECRETS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

3. FEELINGS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

4. RESPONSIBILITY

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

5. THE WORLD

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

6. POWER

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

7. CHOICE

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

8. MY NEEDS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

9. CHILDREN

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

10. MYSELF

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

11. MY WORTH

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

12. PERFORMANCE

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

13. COMPETITION

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

14. TRUST

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

15. GOD

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

16. CHURCH

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

17. ADULTS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

18. WOMEN

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

19. MEN

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

20. GENDER & GENDER ROLES

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

21. FAMILIES

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

22. RELATIONSHIPS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

23. SELFISHNESS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

24. PUBLIC IMAGE

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

25. PLEASING OTHERS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

26. CONFLICT

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

27. ANGER

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

28. VIOLENCE

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

29. PAIN

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

30. SAFETY

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

31. PRIVACY

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

32. MY RIGHTS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

33. AFFECTION

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

34. LOVE

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

35. SEXUALITY

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

36. MASTURBATION

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

37. MY BODY

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

38. FOOD & EATING

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

39. ALCOHOL & DRUGS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

40. EDUCATION

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

41. ROUTINE & STRUCTURE

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

42. MONEY

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

43. SUCCESS

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

44. PLAY

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:

45. SELF DISCIPLINE

Lessons:

Skills:

Feelings:

Impact:
