

THE EMOTIONAL WORD LIST

TO HELP IDENTIFY FEELINGS

This list is created for those who are hurting—to help identify, name, and express what may have felt unspeakable. Especially in the context of betrayal trauma and relational recovery, these words offer language for the deep and often conflicting emotions that surface in the healing journey. Each category reflects a core emotional experience, with vocabulary to more precisely describe what you may be feeling or have felt. Use this list in personal reflection, guided exercises, or in moments of honest conversation as you re-story your experience with grace, truth, and hope.

How to Use This List in the Healing Journey There are moments in recovery—especially after betrayal or trauma—when words fail. The pain is too deep, or too confusing, or simply too old to name easily. When your partner, loved one, or fellow struggler is visibly hurting but can't express what they feel, this list can become a bridge. A sacred tool of connection.

If you sense that something is wrong but your invitation to share is met with silence—statements like “Nothing’s wrong,” or a simple shake of the head—consider gently offering this list as a guide. You might say:

“I can see you’re hurting. I want to understand, but I know it might be hard to find the words. Would it be okay if I read through some of these feeling words slowly, and you let me know if any of them feel true for you?”

Then, with humility and attentiveness, read the list slowly and softly. Watch not only for verbal responses, but for subtle cues: a change in breathing, a tear, a shift in posture. Sometimes the exact word will break something open—and in that moment, you are standing on holy ground.

Pause. Breathe. Let them feel it. Don’t rush to explain, fix, or solve. Just be with them. When someone feels seen—precisely, tenderly, without judgment—healing can begin, even in places long thought untouchable.

Use this tool not as a script, but as a compass. Let it orient you toward deeper empathy, presence, and connection. And let grace be the atmosphere in which every word is spoken.

Fear & Abandonment

When connection feels lost, danger looms, or safety is threatened.

- abandoned
- afraid
- anxious
- alone
- panicked
- startled
- unsafe
- threatened
- terrified
- overwhelmed
- frozen
- helpless
- disoriented
- disconnected
- unseen
- neglected
- powerless
- vulnerable
- out of control
- scared
- rejected
- secluded
- ignored
- dread
- exposed
- isolated
- paranoid
- trapped
- unmoored
- war

Sadness & Grief

When love, dreams, or dignity are lost.

- sad
- disappointed
- grieving
- mourning
- bereft
- despair
- heartbroken
- heavy
- lost
- hollow
- empty
- hopeless
- withdrawn
- hurt
- wounded
- excluded
- left out
- longing
- lonely
- discouraged
- didn't measure up
- devastated
- forlorn
- numb
- regretful
- yearning
- shattered
- wear

😔 Shame & Worthlessness

When identity is attacked, dignity feels erased, or you feel unworthy of love.

- abandoned
- ashamed
- betrayed
- broken
- burden
- contaminated
- defective
- despised
- disgraced
- dishonored
- embarrassed
- excluded
- failed
- flawed
- forgotten
- fraud
- guilty
- hopeless
- humiliated
- imposter
- inadequate
- inferior
- insignificant
- isolated
- judged
- left out
- lonely
- lost
- masquerade
- misunderstood
- neglected
- pathetic
- rejected
- scorned
- shamed
- shattered
- stigmatized
- suffering
- tainted
- trapped
- unappreciated
- unlovable
- unseen
- untouchable
- unwanted
- unworthy
- useless
- victim
- vulnerable
- weird
- worthless

😡 Anger, Violation & Injustice

When boundaries are crossed, dignity is denied, or respect is withheld.

- angry
- outraged
- resentful
- violated
- manipulated
- betrayed
- deceived
- cheated
- used
- sabotaged
- exploited
- controlled
- dominated
- forced
- trapped
- taken advantage of
- defrauded
- pressured
- hate myself
- pressured to perform
- can't trust anything
- conspired against
- gaslighted
- unfairly treated
- furious
- indignant
- enraged
- disrespected
- wronged
- retaliatory
- abused

🤢 Disgust, Contempt & Revulsion

When something feels revolting—internally or relationally.

- repulsed
- disgusted
- ashamed of needing
- self-disgust
- gross
- perverse
- mindless
- abnormal
- mocked
- tainted
- indecent
- violated
- exposed
- embarrassed
- repelled
- sickened
- debased
- abhorrent
- defiled
- revolted
- scorned

😡 Frustration, Inadequacy & Powerlessness

When goals are blocked, you're not seen, or agency is denied.

- frustrated
- can't do anything right
- thwarted
- defeated
- suffocated
- misunderstood
- ignored
- not listened to
- opinions not valued
- invalidated
- invisible
- emotionally flat
- controlled
- deflated
- misrepresented
- pressured
- emotionally abandoned
- invalid
- stifled
- helpless
- overpowered
- disempowered
- futile
- unheard
- suppressed

😢 Internalized Beliefs & Self-Worth Crises

When trauma has shaped how I see myself, wrongly.

- it's all my fault
- always wrong
- not being affirmed
- good for nothing
- hate myself
- pathetic
- failure
- inadequate
- unimportant
- trash
- wicked
- worthless
- undeserving
- no one could love me
- I don't matter
- I ruin everything
- I'll never be enough
- broken
- cursed
- doomed
- guilty
- stained
- useless
- condemned



Redemptive Emotions & Recovery Identity

To be used in healing exercises, moments of spiritual insight, or re-storying the narrative.

- hopeful
- safe
- loved
- accepted
- forgiven
- seen
- secure
- free
- heard
- known
- chosen
- redeemed
- restored
- pursued
- valuable
- healing
- new
- enough
- peaceful
- being rebuilt
- belonging
- comforted
- covered
- embraced
- no longer alone
- empowered
- renewed
- worthy
- connected
- uplifted
- cherished
- transformed
- resilient
- grateful

Emotions are not weaknesses to suppress or problems to solve—they are signals, sacred and honest, that point to where we've been wounded, where we long to be seen, and where healing is most needed. This list is not meant to label or overwhelm, but to give voice to the often-silenced parts of our story. As you reflect on these words, approach yourself and your partner with compassion. Let this be an invitation to truth, not accusation; to curiosity, not condemnation. And as you begin naming the pain, remember: you are not stuck in what you feel. In Christ, you are already being made new—one honest word, one grace-filled step at a time.