

I.N.S.I.G.H.T.S. – Decoding your emotional responses

The I.N.S.I.G.H.T.S. tool is a guide to understanding how your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors show up in challenging situations. By working through each step, you'll gain valuable self-awareness and uncover hidden patterns that may hold you back from creating positive change.

Use this tool to:

1. **i**dentify the situation to recognize the trigger or event.
2. **n**otice your emotions to become aware of the emotional response.
3. **s**ense your body and pay attention to physical sensations.
4. **i**mpulse awareness to identify initial urges or reactions.
5. **g**rasp the harmful thoughts to recognize automatic negative thoughts.
6. uncover **h**idden precautions and bring to light, subtle avoidance or control behaviors.
7. **t**ransform your perspective to challenge negative thoughts, and develop healthier coping strategies.
8. **s**how up for yourself and others to grow with courage and positively impact your life and those around you.

This process takes practice, so be patient with yourself and celebrate each step you take toward greater self-understanding and emotional well-being.

Let's get started!

i. Identify the situation to recognize the trigger or event.

What happened? Where were you? Who was involved? What were the specific circumstances?

n. Notice your emotions to become aware of the emotional response.

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angry, Frustrated, Irritated, or Mad | <input type="checkbox"/> Burned Out, Exhausted, Overwhelmed, or Stressed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ashamed, Guilty, Embarrassed, Insecure, or Self-conscious | <input type="checkbox"/> Confused, Lost, Indecisive, or Uncertain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious, Fearful, Scared, or Worried | <input type="checkbox"/> Disappointed, Discouraged, Lonely, or Sad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bored, Disconnected, or Distracted | <input type="checkbox"/> Influenced, Jealous, or Peer-pressured |

s. Sense your body and pay attention to the physical sensations.

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chest & Throat: Lump in throat, Pain or Tightness in chest | <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle & Movement: Low muscle tone (limp), Muscle tension/aches, Shaky hands/knees/voice, Weakness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive: Difficulty concentrating | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory: Numb, Tingles/prickles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Levels: Keyed up/On edge, Fatigue/weariness, Low energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep: Trouble sleeping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eyes, Nose, & Throat: Dry mouth, Trouble swallowing, Watery eyes | <input type="checkbox"/> Temperature & Skin: Chills, Blushing, Sweating/clammy hands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gastrointestinal: Abdominal discomfort, Diarrhea, Nausea | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

i. Impulse awareness to identify initial urges and reactions.

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Avoidance/Withdrawal: Avoid, Be silent, Delay, Give up, Hide, Lie down, Run/escape, Shut down
- ☐ Aggression/Confrontation: Argue, Physical aggression, Retaliate, Verbal aggression, Yell
- ☐ Immediate Action/Control: Complete it now/get it over with, Take control of the situation
- ☐ Other:

g. Grasp the Harmful thoughts to recognize automatic negative thoughts.

What harmful thoughts accompany this situation?

What harmful thought pattern(s) emerge?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ **All-or-Nothing Thinking:** Seeing things in black and white categories, with no middle ground. (e.g., "If I don't get an A, I'm a failure.")
- ☐ **Disaster Making (Catastrophizing):** Assuming the worst will happen, often without considering other possibilities. (e.g., "I'm going to bomb this presentation and get fired.")
- ☐ **Feelings Make Facts:** Believing that because you feel a certain way, it must be true. (e.g., "I feel anxious, so this situation must be dangerous.")

- ☐ **Focus on the Bad (Mental Filter):** Focusing only on the negative aspects of a situation and ignoring the positive. (e.g., "I made one mistake, so the whole project is ruined.")
- ☐ **Fortune Telling:** Predicting the future negatively without any real evidence. (e.g., "I'm going to fail this test.")
- ☐ **Labeling:** Assigning negative labels to yourself or others based on mistakes or flaws. (e.g., "I'm such a loser.")
- ☐ **Mind Reading:** Assuming you know what others are thinking, often negatively. (e.g., "They think I'm boring.")
- ☐ **Not Helpful Thoughts:** This is a good catch-all category for any thought that leads to negative emotions, unhelpful behaviors, or prevents you from reaching your goals.
- ☐ **Should Statements:** Using "should," "must," or "ought to" statements that create unrealistic expectations and lead to guilt or shame. (e.g., "I should be able to handle this perfectly.")

h. Hidden precautions to bring light subtle avoidance or control behaviors.

Check all that apply.

Avoidance of Social Interaction:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid eye contact | <input type="checkbox"/> Make jokes to avoid talking about myself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid expressing emotions | <input type="checkbox"/> Make up excuses to avoid situations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid expressing opinions if they differ | <input type="checkbox"/> Make up excuses to end conversations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid going out in public | <input type="checkbox"/> Not greet others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid greeting people | <input type="checkbox"/> Not smile |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid people I don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Refuse invitations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid people I know | <input type="checkbox"/> Sit by myself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid people I only know slightly | <input type="checkbox"/> Sit in the back or side of room |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blend into the woodwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Speak softly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carefully plan where I look or go | <input type="checkbox"/> Stay home or avoid the situation entirely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cut conversations short/rush through them | <input type="checkbox"/> Stay in the background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't join groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Stay with "safe" people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Let others do the talking | <input type="checkbox"/> Wait for others to make the first move |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Look away | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk the other way to avoid people |

Escape/Numbing:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call in sick | <input type="checkbox"/> Use other substances to numb pain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eat for comfort | <input type="checkbox"/> Use social media to escape |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to bed/lie on couch | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch TV to escape |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use alcohol to numb pain | |

Control & Overcompensation:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid asking for help | <input type="checkbox"/> Over-prepare for presentations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid delegating | <input type="checkbox"/> Pace (Slow down) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carefully plan what I say | <input type="checkbox"/> Pace (Speed up) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fill in every moment with talk to avoid silence | <input type="checkbox"/> Refuse help offered even if I have questions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inconvenience myself | <input type="checkbox"/> Try to control almost everything i.e. micromanage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keep busy | <input type="checkbox"/> Try to cover up shakiness, blushing, sweating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keep purchases I should return | <input type="checkbox"/> Wait a long time unnecessarily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not complete work or directives | |

Other hidden precautions (list):

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t. Transform your perspective to challenge harmful thoughts and develop healthier coping strategies.

Explore Alternative Outcomes:

If your thoughts are wrong, the situation could turn out well, and instead:

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If your thoughts are somewhat wrong, the situation could just be ok, and instead:

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Formulate a New Thought:

Even though it feels like your thought could really happen, that is likely not accurate because:

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Even though your thought may be true, you can handle it by:

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Develop Coping Strategies:

If the thought happened, what practical steps could you take to problem-solve:

If the thought happened, you could remind yourself that:

s. Show up for yourself and others to grow with courage and positively impact your life and those around you.

How can you show up for yourself with greater self-care and self-compassion, honoring your needs and values?

How can you show up for others authentically, building stronger connections and contributing positively to your relationships?

What does success mean to you, and how can you show up in ways that align with your values and aspirations, both personally and professionally?

What courageous actions can you take to embrace challenges, learn from setbacks, and continue growing as an individual?