

# Emotional Reactivity

Awareness often promotes change. This activity is designed to increase your awareness about those times when you become emotionally reactive. As you answer the questions below, be as specific as you can about the situations. The more detail you provide, the easier it will be to see patterns that exist. For example, by putting the time of day, you may realize that you are often more vulnerable when you are hungry or tired. Or you may see that conflict with a specific family member tends to often be in the morning, which may suggest they are either not a morning person or are stressed about getting to school/work. These insights can lead to helpful strategies to avoid emotional reactivity, such as avoiding crucial conversations during these times.

## Step 1

Make a list of times and situations when you tend to be more emotionally reactive. Consider including details such as the time of day, persons involved, comments the other person made toward you, thoughts you had go through your mind, and any other helpful details.


## Step 2

Interview two people and ask what they notice about you when you enter your pattern of becoming emotionally reactive. This might include body posture, facial expressions, phrases you often say, and other signs that you are about to lose your patience. Ask them for any insights or suggestions they might have that could be helpful to you. The more open and humble you are, the more likely it is that they will give you valuable information.

Record their observations below:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Step 3

Using your list and the observations from your interviews, write down your ideas for alternate ways to respond to each of the situations listed in step one above.

Record their observations below:

Situation:

New response:

### Step 4

Practice responding differently, and report to your therapist on how you're doing.

- Are you struggling?
- Are you noticing different interactions in your relationships?

Record your observations below.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---