



Building Inner Reassurance

A 10-part reflection on self-soothing, self-trust, and connection

BEGIN WITH CURIOSITY

What tends to happen just before you want reassurance, and what are you hoping reassurance will help you feel or believe?

- Describe a recent moment: what happened, what did you notice, and what did your mind predict?
- What did you want another person to say or do?
- What deeper need may have been present - safety, belonging, certainty, closeness, worth, or something else?
- Rate the intensity from 0-10.

Needing reassurance is human. This worksheet is about building more than one pathway to safety and connection.

WRITE OR TYPE HERE



LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

What does your body do when uncertainty or disconnection shows up, and what does each sensation seem to need?

- Notice your jaw, throat, chest, stomach, hands, breath, temperature, and urge to move or freeze.
- If one sensation could speak, what would it ask for?
- What feels supportive right now: pressure, movement, warmth, coolness, stretching, slower breathing, or orienting to the room?

Stay within a comfortable range. You can pause, look around the room, and return when you feel ready.

WRITE OR TYPE HERE



NAME THE STORY

If the worried or reassurance-seeking story had a name, what would it say - and what is it trying to protect you from?

- Give the story a name that creates some distance, such as The Alarm, The Not-Enough Story, or your own name for it.
- What rules or predictions does this story repeat?
- When did it first learn that reassurance was necessary?
- How has it tried to help, and what does it sometimes cost you?

You are the person noticing the story; you are not the story itself.

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FIND THE EXCEPTIONS

When have you handled uncertainty, loneliness, or a delayed response more capably than the worried story predicted?

- Recall two or three specific moments, even small ones.
- What did you do, believe, remember, or choose in those moments?
- What personal qualities were present - courage, patience, humor, persistence, creativity, or self-respect?
- Who would not be surprised to hear that you have these strengths? Why?

Exceptions are evidence that the problem is influential, but it is not in charge all the time.

WRITE OR TYPE HERE



BECOME AN INNER ALLY

What would a steady, caring version of you say and do for you in this moment?

- Write the words you would offer a close friend in the same situation.
- Turn those words toward yourself without minimizing what hurts.
- Complete: My feelings make sense because... / I do not have to solve... / One thing I can trust about myself is...
- Choose one short reassurance phrase you can remember under stress.

Self-compassion is not pretending everything is fine; it is responding to difficulty without abandoning yourself.

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A MENU OF OPTIONS

Grounding & Self-Soothing Practices

Try one or two options at a time. Notice what helps your body feel even 5% more present, steady, or supported. Skip anything that increases distress.

BODY & BREATH

- ☐ Press both feet into the floor for 10 seconds.
- ☐ Let the exhale be slightly longer than the inhale.
- ☐ Push your palms together or press gently into a wall.

FIVE SENSES

- ☐ Name 5 things you see, 4 feel, 3 hear, 2 smell, and 1 taste.
- ☐ Hold a cool drink, warm mug, textured object, or soft fabric.
- ☐ Use a familiar scent, mint, gum, or a strongly flavored snack.

MOVEMENT & RHYTHM

- ☐ Take a slow walk while noticing each footstep.
- ☐ Stretch, sway, shake out your hands, or roll your shoulders.
- ☐ Hum, tap a steady beat, or listen to a familiar calming song.

ATTENTION & ORIENTATION

- ☐ Say your name, the date, where you are, and what is true right now.
- ☐ Find five objects of the same color or describe one object in detail.
- ☐ Count backward by ones, name categories, or read something aloud.

COMPASSIONATE INNER SUPPORT

- ☐ Place a hand where it feels comforting and name the feeling.
- ☐ Say: This is hard, and I can care for myself through this moment.
- ☐ Ask: What do I need for the next ten minutes - not forever?

CONNECTION WITHOUT OVERLOAD

- ☐ Sit near safe people: a library, cafe, study space, or campus event.
- ☐ Send one brief message to a friend without requiring an immediate reply.
- ☐ Ask for a specific amount of support: Could we talk for five minutes?

MY TOP THREE TO TRY



CREATE A SOOTHING MENU

Which grounding and self-soothing practices actually help your nervous system settle at low, medium, and high levels of distress?

- Low (1-3): What helps you stay regulated before distress grows?
- Medium (4-6): What helps you reconnect with your body and surroundings?
- High (7-10): What simple, safe actions help you get through the next ten minutes?
- Consider music, movement, temperature, comforting pressure, sensory items, nature, a shower, food or water, or a familiar routine.

Choose practices that fit your body. The best tool is one you can realistically use when you need it.

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MAKE SPACE BEFORE REACHING OUT

What short pause plan can help you care for yourself before asking someone else for reassurance?

- Name the trigger and rate the intensity from 0-10.
- Choose one body-based practice and one inner-reassurance statement.
- Decide how long you will pause - perhaps 5, 10, or 20 minutes.
- After the pause, ask: Do I still need connection? If yes, what is the clearest and smallest request I can make?

A pause is not punishment or emotional withdrawal. It is a way to respond with more choice.

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SHARE THE LOAD OF CONNECTION

How can you ask your partner for reassurance clearly and respectfully while also using other sources of support?

- Try: Do you have the capacity to offer me five minutes of reassurance right now? It is okay to say not yet.
- What kind of response would be specific and helpful rather than open-ended or repeated?
- What can you offer yourself first? What could a friend, family member, mentor, group, or campus resource offer?
- How will you respect a no or not-now response without treating it as rejection?

Healthy closeness includes both mutual support and room for each person to have limits.

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GROW YOUR CIRCLE

What kind of friendships do you want to grow, and what small, realistic actions could move you toward them?

- What qualities do you want in a friendship, and what qualities do you want to bring?
- List people, classes, clubs, LGBTQIA+ spaces, study groups, hobbies, volunteer roles, or campus events that could create repeated contact.
- Choose one low-pressure action: say hello, sit near someone again, invite someone for coffee, attend one meeting, or follow up after class.
- How will you measure effort rather than immediate closeness?

Friendship usually grows through repeated, ordinary contact - not one perfect conversation.

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RE-AUTHOR THE NEXT CHAPTER

What new story do you want to practice about who you are, how you handle hard feelings, and how you build connection?

- Name the old story you are loosening and the new story you are strengthening.
- What values and strengths make the new story believable?
- Write your personal reassurance phrase and your three most helpful soothing actions.
- Choose one relationship boundary and one friendship-building step to practice this week.

Growth is not never needing reassurance. It is having more choices, more supports, and more trust in your ability to return to yourself.

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