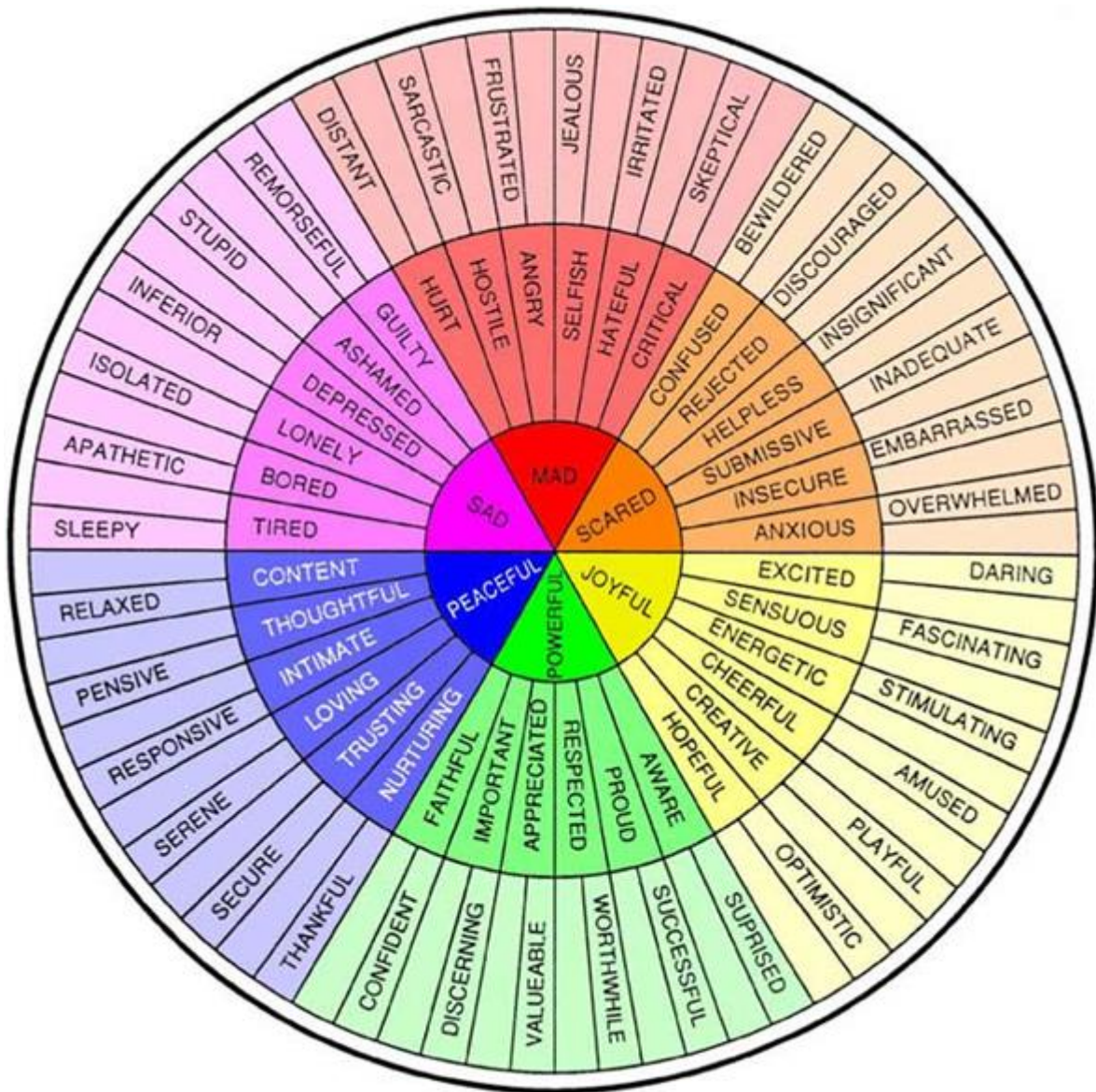


Difficult  
roads  
often lead to  
beautiful  
destinations



## LIVING THROUGH LIFE EVENTS - SESSION 5

It can be hard to identify our emotions and to know what are feelings are at various points in time. The following feeling wheel may help.



## LIVING THROUGH LIFE EVENTS - SESSION 5

**NEW ROLE WORK:** Some changes create a new role – for example a divorce, the birth of a child, losing a job. Sometimes this ‘new role’ is less clear for example, when you have been in a familiar, routine place and then life is filled with uncertainty. The ease with which you move into this new role will depend, in general on whether the new role was something that you went into willingly – whether it was expected and anticipated, or whether it was unexpected and forced on you. If you chose to make a change, and it has not worked out for you, you may feel disappointed and ashamed. If it was something you felt was forced on you, you might feel reluctant about it – or angry! *Take time to think about how you feel about taking up your new role and what you need to do to make it work.*

Given that this change has proved challenging and has been closely tied up with your depression, it is likely you will have some negative feelings about it. It is also possible that you are underestimating and overlooking your skills and your ability to cope with this new place of change and challenge. Depression has a way of fuelling the negative feelings, doubts, and reservations that get in the way of positive attempts to explore what the new role has to offer and how you can make it work for you.

### **Exercise - How do you feel about your new role?**

1. *Start by naming the feelings you have as you face your new role.*
2. *Write a list of these feelings - include all the feelings of which you are aware.*
3. *Discuss these feelings with others - e.g. in the group; or with trusted friends or supportive family members.*
4. *Do you have any positive or neutral feelings about this new role, such as curiosity or excitement? Change isn't only about what we give up but it can also be about creating new possibilities that can lift the burdens of the past away from you.*
5. *Write any positive or neutral feeling you have about your new role.*

**New Roles – and new routines.** Most roles e.g. being a parent, a retiree or a patient involve some form of day-to-day routine and being around other people. Your day might be divided into work time, family time, social time etc. Each role you have through your day will account for part of your day and will influence - where you are e.g. office, home, cinema; what you are doing e.g. paperwork, cooking dinner, relaxing; who you are doing it with e.g. work colleagues, family and friends.

The new role might interrupt any or all of these routines and require us to think of and plan for new ones. For example: A) when a relationship breaks up we might spend more time alone. Home life and social routine no longer automatically provide us with company, so we have to actively seek out people to do things with. If other relationships are not used to fill some of these gaps we might then feel isolated and lonely. B) A new mum who used to go to work now doesn't see her colleagues and friends each day and instead stays at home with a young baby. A 9-5 routine is replaced by being on call 24/7 every day. If she wants to see other people she has to plan to make time to do so.

*What is your day-to-day routine in your new role? How is this different to your old role? What changes do you need to make to improve your current routine to help your depression now?*

## LIVING THROUGH LIFE EVENTS - SESSION 5

MY ROLE CHANGED - FROM BEING .....

- TO BEING .....

OLD ROLE	
THE CHANGE	
NEW ROLE	

## LIVING THROUGH LIFE EVENTS - SESSION 5

How would you treat a friend?

1. First, think about times when a close friend feels really bad about him or herself or is really struggling in some way. How would you respond to your friend in this situation (especially when you're at your best)? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you typically talk to your friends.

2. Now think about times when you feel bad about yourself or are struggling. How do you typically respond to yourself in these situations? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you talk to yourself.

3. Did you notice a difference? If so, ask yourself why. What factors or fears come into play, that lead you to treat yourself so differently from others?

4. Please write down how you think things might change if you responded to yourself in the same way you typically respond to a close friend, when you're suffering.

1.
2.
3.
4.

## LIVING THROUGH LIFE EVENTS - SESSION 5

### The Helicopter View

In any stressful situation, it's easy to get caught up in the emotion, which skews our view of things. Completing this worksheet will help you see a different perspective:

**SITUATION:** What happened? When? Who with? How?

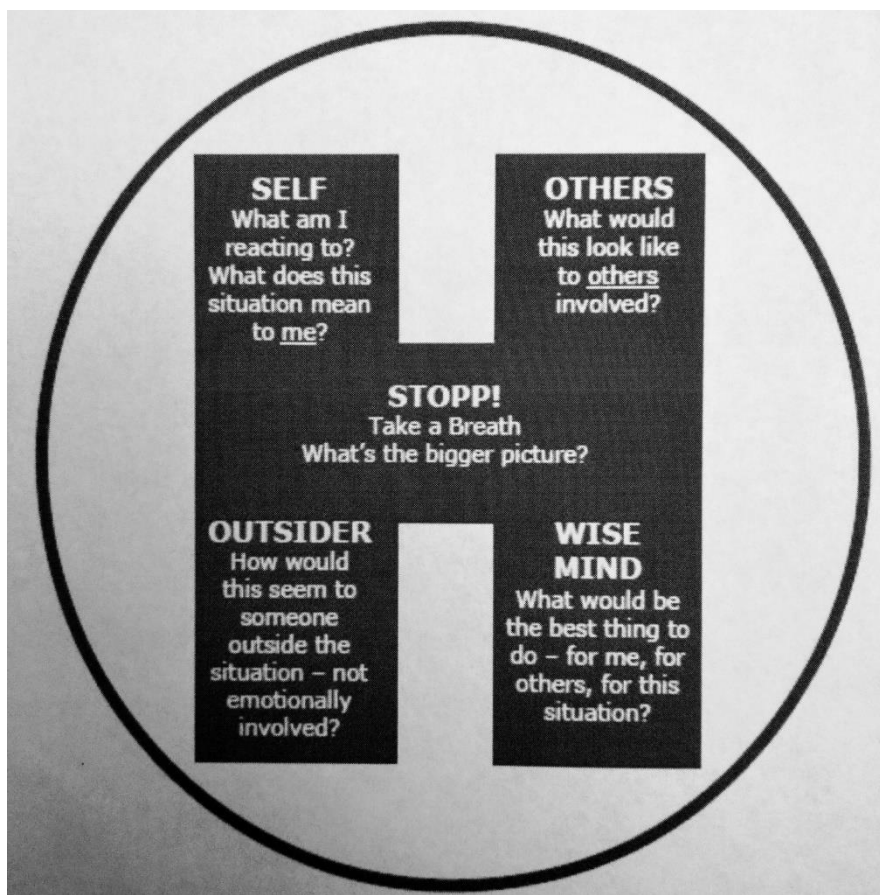
**OTHERS:** What would this look like to others involved? What meaning might they give this situation? What might their thoughts & feelings be?

**SELF:** What am I reacting to? What does this situation mean to, or say about, me? What's the worst thing about thinking that, or about the situation?

**STOP!** Take a Breath. What's the bigger picture?

**OUTSIDER:** How would this seem to someone outside the situation, who's not emotionally involved? What would someone else say? What would I say to others?

**WISE MIND:** Practise what works! What would be the best thing to do — for me, for others, for this situation? What will help most?



## LIVING THROUGH LIFE EVENTS - SESSION 5

### Living through Life Events

My thoughts and feelings - Session 5.