

# Workbook for Lesson 5: A New Way to Think About Your Feelings

## Overview

In this lesson, we will learn to understand our emotions better. Here's the surprising truth about emotions. They aren't coming from events happening or your circumstances. They're coming from your thoughts about the events or circumstances.

## The big insights about emotions:

1. Emotions are created inside your own mind based on how you interpret events.
2. Emotions don't last forever. If left alone, they fade naturally in about 90 seconds unless we keep feeding them with our thoughts.
3. Emotions are not dangerous. They are simply signals from your body.
4. Your emotions are not a verdict on your parenting. They are just feedback about your current thoughts.

## Parenting Example:

Imagine your child refuses to put on shoes before leaving the house. You're running late, and frustration builds. It feels like their refusal is upsetting you, but in reality, it's your thoughts—(Why can't this be easier? I don't have time for this!)—that create that emotional reaction. This is good news because it means you can shift how you experience these moments by changing how you interpret them.

## Three Simple Ways to Handle Emotions

### 1. For Mild to Moderate Funk: Shift Perspective

- Ask yourself: How can I see this in a more empowering way?
- Example: You feel guilty because your child didn't eat the meal you made. Instead of thinking, I failed again; I should be doing better, shift your perspective: My child's sensory needs make food tricky—this isn't about my success or failure as a parent.

## 2. For Recurring Emotional Triggers: Disrupt the Pattern

- Get up, move, or do something completely unrelated.
- Example: Every time your child resists bedtime, you feel overwhelmed because you know a battle is coming. Instead of letting frustration take over, disrupt the pattern—step out of the room for a deep breath, stretch, or remind yourself, this is one moment in a long parenting journey.

## 3. For Overwhelming Emotional Storms: Feel It to Free It

- Instead of resisting, tune into the physical sensation of the emotion. Label and describe it to let it pass naturally without overanalyzing.
- Example: Your child has been having a tough day, and by evening, you feel done. Instead of pushing through or beating yourself up, take a moment: I feel a weight in my chest. My body is telling me I need a break. Even a two-minute pause can help.

## Action Steps

This week, practice noticing your emotions without trying to fix them. Just observe. You'll be surprised at how much easier they are to handle when you stop fighting them.

## Preview of the Next Lesson

In our next lesson, we will do a guided meditation to help you navigate very overwhelming emotions.

## Blank Model Template

Circumstance: \_\_\_\_\_

Thought: \_\_\_\_\_

Emotion: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

Outcome: \_\_\_\_\_

(Use this template to explore how changing your emotions changes the type of actions you take and the outcomes you create.)