

EVERYTHING IS AWFUL AND I'M NOT OKAY: QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE GIVING UP

Are you hydrated? If not, have a glass of water.

Have you showered in the past day? If not, take a shower right now.

Have you stretched your body in the past day? If not, consider it! If you don't have the desire for a run or trip to the gym, just head outside for a stroll around the block, then keep going as long as you please. If the weather's crap, drive to a big store and wander through all of the aisles.

Have you said something nice to someone in the past day? Whether online or in person, give someone you care about or admire a compliment. Let it come naturally. What is something wonderful about them that you want to acknowledge?

Have you cuddled or hugged someone in the past two days? Don't be afraid to ask for hugs from friends, pets, or anyone you feel comforted by. Most of them will enjoy the cuddles too; no need to feel needy!

Is your self-esteem low? Take a selfie and consider sharing it with friends! Let people remind you of how great you are and look. And don't let society's standards convince you otherwise.

Have you seen a therapist in the past few days? Consider leaving those hard decisions for your next session. Having someone to talk through it all with can help.

Have you changed any of your medications in the past couple of weeks (including skipping doses or changing the prescription brand)? That may be impacting your state of mind. Give the change a few days to settle, but talk to your doctor if things don't improve.

Have you waited a week? Sometimes our perception of life is skewed, and we can't even tell that we're not thinking clearly and that there's no obvious external cause. It happens. Try to give whatever it is space and time, and then see if you're still feeling the same way. (And if the situation isn't one that can wait and requires immediate attention, know that emergency services exist and can be used when necessary.)

Have you eaten in the past three hours? If not, eat some food—something with protein. Perhaps some nuts or yogurt?

If daytime: Are you dressed? No? Put on clean clothes that aren't pajamas. Give yourself permission to wear something special, whether it's a TWLOHA T-shirt or a fancy outfit.

If nighttime: Are you sleepy or fatigued but resisting or struggling to sleep? Put on pajamas, make yourself cozy in bed with a favorite blanket or stuffed animal and the sound of falling rain or white noise, and close your eyes for fifteen minutes—no screens allowed. If you're still awake after that, you can get up again. No pressure!

Have you danced to music in the past? Pick an upbeat EDM song or your current favorite tune and just dance around the room for the length of it!

Do you feel ineffective? Pause right now and complete something small, whether it's responding to an e-mail, loading up the dishwasher, or taking out the trash. Well done!

Do you feel frozen by indecision? Give yourself ten minutes to sit back and figure out a game plan for the day. If a particular decision or problem is still creating a roadblock, simply set it aside for now, and pick something else that seems doable. The important part is to break through the freeze state, even if it means doing something trivial.

Have you been over-exerting yourself lately—physically, emotionally, socially, or intellectually? That can take a toll that lingers for days. Give yourself a break in that area, whether it's physical rest, alone time, or relaxing with some light entertainment.

You've made it this far, and you will make it through. You are stronger than you think.

This worksheet can be used alone or as a companion to the guided practice "In The Midst of Depression" led by Joseph Burton, LMHC.

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