

After Session Mindful Scan and Self-Care Plan

It goes without saying that our psychotherapeutic encounters can leave us with a host of emotions and bodily states. We may feel drained from working hard to draw out a reserved client or uplifted by the hard work a client has been doing. Sometimes we feel raw fear regarding a patient's suicidality. And still, at other times, we may be plagued with deep self-doubt about whether we're even cut out for doing this kind of work.

However a session leaves us feeling and thinking, it can benefit us to bear compassionate witness to our own experience. It is only from this space of honest self-reflection that we can take appropriate action to honor the truth of what is and to offer to ourselves the care we really need. This self-compassionate awareness can help us better transition to our next patient as well as stake stock of what we need at the end of our work day.

Toward this end, take a moment to rate yourself on the following mind-body qualities after each session using the 5-point scale below.

The numbered sessions in the leftmost column will of course mean different things to different therapists based on time of day and how many sessions they hold. You may only have a few sessions or may have more than 10 per day (but I certainly hope not).

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The prompt is: "After engaging in this particular session, I feel..."

1 Not at all 2 A little bit 3 Moderate 4 Quite a bit 5 A lot

After Session #	Emotional or physical drain	Self-doubt about my effectiveness as a therapist	Worried about my client's well-being/wellness	Irritated, impatient, or annoyed about my client's demeanor or engagement	Inspired energized, or uplifted as a therapist	Proud of the work I'm/we're doing	Compassion toward my client's struggles
0 (Example)	4	3	2	3	3	1	4
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							

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After You Make Your Ratings

Once you've made your ratings after each patient session and/or at the end of the work day, you can ask yourself the following compassionate inquires:

- Can I honor/respect exactly how I'm feeling in this moment?
- Are these feelings temporary or part of a more consistent pattern?
- What are these feelings asking for? (ex., patience?; respect?; validation?; interpersonal support?; care of my body?; supervision?)
- What tools could I use to detach (enough) from the feelings and the situation that awakened these feelings in order for me to more peacefully move on to my next patient or into my home life? For example:
 - Compartmentalizing through visual imagery (ex., placing situation and feelings in box on a shelf)
 - Reminding myself that I can get support as needed
 - Doing a mind-body or body-level up practice like yoga, acupoint tapping, brief exercise workout, seeking out humor, simply laughing, etc.

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