

# Emotional Self Reliance

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## What does it mean to be emotionally self-reliant?

Emotional self-reliance is your ability to understand your body's signals and choose how to act.

## How can I become emotionally self-reliant?

### 1. Track your emotions

Emotion Tracking Log

My emotions	Situation	My response	Reflection
What emotions did I feel today? Anger, sadness, guilt, fear, happiness, other emotions.	What happened right before? Who was I with? What was I doing? When was it? Where was I?	What was going through my mind right before I started to feel this way? What did I feel in my body? What did I have the urge to do? What did I actually do?	Did I act the way I wanted to? If this situation were to happen again, what would I do differently?

**2. Check in with your body throughout the day and notice how it feels.** If your muscles are tense, your leg is shaking, or your heart is racing, it's because your body feels threatened. Tell your body that you are safe. Help it to relax using one of the following skills.

**3. Take a deep breath.** Lean back in your chair. Put your hands behind your head with elbows back. This will cause you to breathe with your belly like a baby. Take a deep breath.

**4. Relax your muscles.** Pretend that you are a wet noodle. Let your muscles go completely limp. Scan your body for 5 to 10 seconds from the top of your head to your toes. Release any muscles as you go down.

**5. Expand your peripheral vision.** Focus on a spot ahead. Hold your fingers at a 70 degree angle, 1 inch in front of your body. Count down from 10 while pulling fingers back until you can no longer see them.

**6. Imagine that you're in a relaxing place.** Imagine that you are someplace that you find relaxing and peaceful. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you taste? What do you feel with your skin? What do you feel inside your body? You can return here anytime.

Remember: Emotions are a normal part of our mortal experience. They give us information about the world around us. Do not allow your emotions to decide your behaviors, instead, use your agency to respond to your emotions.

“Even when bad things happen around us, we can still choose how we respond. Taking responsibility for how we respond brings peace and power. -David A. Bednar, October 2006.

### **Emotional Self-reliance Resources**

Center for Nonviolent Communication (2005). *Feelings Inventory*. www.cnvc.org. Retrieved July 30, 2023, from <https://www.cnvc.org/training/resource/feelings-inventory>. A list of emotions. Referring to a list like this can help you name how you're feeling.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (2021). *Finding Strength in the Lord: Emotional Resilience*. Salt Lake City, Utah. The church's emotional resilience self-reliance course is offered by the Stake, typically twice per year.

[Gateway Family Life]. (2015, March 25). *Dr. John Townsend/Boundaries/3-2-15* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdLKBabv2OA>. A YouTube video by christian psychologist Dr. John Townsend. He discusses how to protect our stewardship over our thoughts, values, goals, emotions, and aspirations. He has also written several books on the topic.

Hibbels, S., Ph.D. (2007). *Anxiety Gone: The Three C's of Anxiety Recovery*. Dare2Dream Books, Mustang, Oklahoma. This is a short book that discusses simple tools to overcome anxiety. This book is easy for teens and adults to read.

James, J. W., & Friedman, R. (2009). *The Grief Recovery Handbook: The Action Program for Moving Beyond Death, Divorce, and Other Losses, Including Health, Career, and Faith*. Harper-Collins Publishers, New York, NY. This is a step-by-step self-guided program for working through any loss.

Korb, A., Ph.D. (2015). *The Upward Spiral: Using Neuroscience to Reverse the Course of Depression, One Small Change at a Time*. New Harbinger Publications, Inc. Oakland, CA. This book explains the brain science of why we get depressed. It gives small doable steps to overcome depression and anxiety.