

EMOTIONAL SELF-REGULATION



JOURNAL

BEDFORD COUPLE & FAMILY THERAPY

Welcome!

I am a Registered Psychologist with the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Professional Psychology (since 2013). I received a B.A. with honours (psychology) from Wilfred Laurier University (2004) and a M.A. and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Windsor in 2007 and 2011, respectively.

I am certified as an Advanced Therapist in Emotion Focused Family Therapy through the International Institute for Emotion-Focused Family Therapy.

Prior to being in private practice, I worked with the IWK Outpatient Mental Health and Addictions program from 2012 until 2021. I have also worked in the education system and in private practice.

While these are my professional credentials, I'm no different from the people I see. Like everyone else, I'm human. I've been through both wonderful and difficult experiences that have shaped who I am and how I help.

Dr. Adam Kayfitz



These journalling prompts are based on the work of Dr. Adele Lafrance who has created a tool called the Process of Emotional Self Exploration. If you would like to read more about her work you can do so at <https://dradelelafrance.com> or you can watch the video she has created to guide you through her tool <https://dradelelafrance.com/ease>

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1. Describe the Triggering Moment What happened? What did your child do or say? (Stick to the facts without judgment.)

2. Notice Your Immediate Reaction What emotion came up first? (Examples: frustration, sadness, hurt, helplessness, anger, fear)

How strong was this emotion?



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3. Identify the Deeper Meaning What did it feel like underneath the initial emotion? Examples: disrespected, not heard, invisible, not good enough, powerless)

4. Connect to a Past Experience Does this feeling remind you of a memory from your childhood or teen years? What happened then?

What message did you absorb at that time? "My feelings don't matter," "I'm too much," "I'm not important," etc.

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5. Identify What You Needed Back Then: If you imagine your younger self in that moment: What did they need? Examples: comfort, protection, validation, someone listening, reassurance

6. Offer Compassion to Your Younger Self: Write a short message from your adult self to your younger self: "Your feelings matter." "You're allowed to be upset." "You deserved comfort." You did nothing wrong."

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7. Regulate in the Present Moment

What can help you settle your body right now?

(check any that apply)

- Deep breathing
- Grounding (feet on floor, slow inhale/exhale)
- 10-second pause before responding
- Naming your feeling silently
- Stepping away briefly
- Softening your shoulders/jaw
- Other: _____

8. Choose a Grounded Response: How do you want to respond to your child now that you understand what's happening inside you? Examples: hold a boundary calmly, validate their feeling, ask for a redo with warmth, speak with softer tone

9. Repair if Needed If your reaction was bigger than you intended: What can you say to repair the moment? Examples: "I got overwhelmed — that was my feeling, not your fault." "I'm sorry for snapping. I want us to try again." Write your repair phrase:

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10. Reflect on What You Learned: What did this moment teach you about yourself?



WANT LEARN MORE?

If you're ready to deepen your emotional awareness and create a more grounded, connected parenting experience, I'd be happy to support you. Reach out to book an individual therapy session or a parent/caregiver therapy session with me at Bedford Couple & Family Therapy — I'm here to help you navigate this journey with clarity, confidence, and compassion.

This resource is designed for general reflection and personal growth only. It is not a substitute for therapy and does not create a therapeutic relationship. If you need individualized support, please reach out to me or another licensed mental health professional.

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