MANAGE THE IMPACT

Softening Self-Blame

In invalidating environments, people may learn to assume responsibility for keeping everyone calm. This worksheet invites a kinder and more accurate view of what was within your control.

OPTIONAL CHECK-IN - MARK ANYTHING THAT FITS

- [ ] I say “I should have known.”
- [ ] I feel responsible for another adult's choices.
- [ ] I replay how I could have prevented conflict.
- [ ] I judge myself for staying or leaving.
- [ ] I downplay the effort I used to get through a day.
- [ ] I criticize my own emotions or reactions.

REFLECT AT YOUR OWN PACE

What am I blaming myself for right now?

Which parts of this situation were actually mine to influence?

You may skip any prompt. If someone monitors your device or papers, consider whether keeping this worksheet is safe.

Concepts informed by: Durvasula, R. (2023). Working with the Fallout of Narcissistic Abuse. PESI training materials. | Durvasula, R. (2023). Working with Clients Experiencing NA/ARS: An Antagonism-Informed Treatment Approach. PESI training materials.

MANAGE THE IMPACT

Softening Self-Blame

These questions are for you, not for proving anything to someone else. You can write a few words, discuss them in therapy, or simply think about them.

EXPLORE WHAT MATTERS TO YOU

What constraints, needs, or risks influenced my response?

How would I respond to a friend describing the same experience?

What could a compassionate but truthful statement sound like?

OPTIONAL GENTLE PRACTICE

Try completing: “I can learn from this without taking responsibility for what another person chose to do.”

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