



## Caregiver Reflection Exercise

**Introduction:** This exercise helps clients explore their experiences with caregivers and understand how these relationships have shaped their attachment styles. Through reflection, clients can identify patterns that influence their current relationships and discover pathways for growth and healing.

### Caregiver Reflection Narrative Exercise

#### Step 1: Recalling Your Early Caregivers

Time to get your pens and markers ready to write down thoughts and feelings as you reflect on the questions on how caregiver experiences and relationship.

- **Emotional Availability:**

Did you feel unconditional love and support from your caregiver? Did you feel your caregivers were emotionally present and responsive to your needs? Did they express love and affection openly?

- **Support and Security:**

Did you feel safe to express your feelings when feeling upset or angry? How did your caregivers respond when you were upset? Did you feel safe and valued? How did support and security feel like for you?

- **Consistency:**

Did you feel there was consistency in your care? Were your caregivers reliable, or were their behaviors unpredictable? How did this affect your sense of stability?

#### Step 2: Identify Positive and Challenging Experiences

Take a moment to reflect on memories and pick a memory that stands out the most to you when you needed support.

- **Positive Memories:**

What are some comforting memories of your caregivers? How do these experiences influence your current relationships?



- **Challenging Memories:**

Were there times when your caregivers were unavailable or critical? How have these experiences affected your feelings about trust and closeness?

### **Step 3: Write Your Caregiver Narrative**

If you could write a narrative to reflect on your relationship with caregivers, what would that look like? Express via a written narrative a reflection of your relationship.

- In your own words, share what you notice in your caregiver relationships?
- What are somethings that made you feel safe and supported? Fear or neglect?
- How did you respond to what you felt?
- Summarize your reflections on your caregivers' roles in shaping your emotional responses and relational patterns.
- What were some of the strengths, challenges, and lasting impressions from these relationships.

### **Step 4: Focus on Growth and Healing**

By reflecting on the questions below, add to your narrative how your lens and experience of growth and healing was shaped through caregiving relationships.

- What positive qualities did you inherit from your caregivers? How can you amplify these in your relationships?
- Are there patterns you'd like to change? What steps can you take to build healthier relational dynamics?
- How can you reframe past caregiving experiences to foster healing and self-compassion?



## Step 6: Envision Your Ideal Caregiver

Take a moment to notice how your experience has shaped you as a caregiver and how you receive care.

- What traits would your ideal caregiver have? (e.g., patient, nurturing, understanding)  
How would they respond to your emotions and needs?
- How can you embody these qualities for yourself or others in your life today?

## Encouraging Ongoing Reflection

It can be helpful to revisit what we have uncovered and processed in overtime. This can help support changes and guides ongoing reflection and growth:

1. How have your thoughts or feelings about your family's history and receive care during your childhood changed since doing this exercise?
2. What new insights or discoveries have you noticed as you continue to reflect on role of a caregiver?
3. How might your understanding of these insights shift if you revisit them in six months or a year?

Consider returning to your reflections after some time, ideally in six months to a year. Be intentional to write down or draw any feelings, or shifts in your thinking. Reflect on how your awareness has influenced your change and growth.