

Trauma- and stressor-related disorders

Describing Current Effects of a Stressful Experience

Adults and teens 13+ | 10 to 15 minutes

Different stress-related conditions can share some features while needing different care. A clinician considers the event, timing, symptoms, context, and functional impact. This page stays with current needs; you can discuss the effects before deciding how much event information to share.

Choose a recent, manageable example. Write, draw, or discuss your answers. Skip anything that does not fit; this page is not a diagnostic assessment.

Describe changes and timing

Note what changed in sleep, attention, mood, relationships, or daily activities, and approximately when. Include whether the situation is ongoing and what resources or protections are available now.

Clarify the assessment process

Ask why particular information is needed, what can wait, and how diagnosis would guide care. An assessment should consider other explanations and avoid treating every difficult response as a disorder.

1. What changes have you noticed since the stressful experience, without describing the event itself?

2. Approximately when did these changes begin, and how do they affect daily life?

3. Is the stress ongoing, and what present support or protection is needed?

4. What assessment question or disclosure boundary would you like to communicate?

Clinical use and adaptation

Differentiate trauma-related conditions, adjustment responses, grief, medical effects, and ordinary stress within competence. Assess ongoing threat and safeguarding. Avoid implying that symptom matching establishes PTSD or requiring detailed narratives for this worksheet.