The Toolkit

Feeling Words, Body Chart, Journal Prompts & the N.A.M.E. Card

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A free companion to Why “Logical” People Struggle With Feelings *by Peter Tah.*

A. Feeling Words Cheat Sheet

Use this with the “ladder” method from Chapter 13: start broad (good/bad), narrow to a family, then narrow one level further if you can. You don’t need the perfect word, just a better guess than “fine,” “stressed,” or “tired.”

The “Sad” Family

Disappointed · Let down · Discouraged · Hurt · Lonely · Rejected · Grief-stricken · Heavy-hearted · Empty · Regretful · Wistful · Deflated

The “Angry” Family

Irritated · Annoyed · Frustrated · Resentful · Indignant · Betrayed · Bitter · Exasperated · Defensive · Contemptuous

The “Scared” Family

Anxious · Nervous · Worried · Overwhelmed · Insecure · Vulnerable · Apprehensive · On edge · Dread · Panicked

The “Ashamed” Family

Embarrassed · Humiliated · Exposed · Inadequate · Guilty · Self-conscious · Unworthy · Small

The “Good” Family (often under-named too)

Content · Relieved · Grateful · Proud · Hopeful · Energized · Warm · Peaceful · Moved · Tender · Excited · Connected

Mixed / Complicated States (common for this reader)

Numb · Conflicted · Detached · Overstimulated · Underwhelmed · Flat · Restless · Torn · Guarded · Bittersweet

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B. What Your Body Is Trying to Tell You (Quick-Reference Chart)

Use this alongside the body scan from Chapter 12. These are common associations, not rules: your own body’s dialect may differ, and the goal is noticing, not diagnosing. Two things this chart cannot do: a physical sensation on its own cannot *confirm* which emotion you’re feeling (the same tight chest can be anxiety, excitement, or something else entirely, and only context and curiosity narrow it down), and it cannot rule out a physical cause. A racing heart, chest tightness, persistent stomach trouble, or breathlessness can have medical explanations, so if a sensation is severe, sudden, or recurring, treat it as a reason to see a doctor, not just a feeling to name.

Physical Sensation	Often Associated With
Tight chest, shallow breathing	Anxiety, overwhelm, grief
Clenched jaw, tense shoulders	Anger, frustration, suppressed irritation
Knot or tightness in the stomach	Dread, nervousness, anticipation of conflict
Heat in the face or chest	Anger, embarrassment, shame
	Sadness, grief, depletion

Physical Sensation	Often Associated With
Heaviness in the limbs, low energy	
Racing heart, restlessness	Anxiety, excitement (the body often can't tell them apart; context matters)
Lump in the throat	Grief, sadness being held back
Sudden urge to change the subject or leave	Shame (see the Interlude, "The Ones Logic Doesn't Touch")
General numbness or "flatness"	Possible suppression (see Chapter 10)

C. 20 Journal Prompts for People Who Hate Journaling

These aren't "dear diary" prompts. They're short, specific, and designed to be answerable in under five minutes: because a page you'll actually fill out beats a beautiful system you'll abandon in a week.

1. What did I notice in my body today that I usually would have ignored?
2. What's one feeling I labeled today using the ladder method? Was my first guess right?
3. Where did I jump straight to "Engage" this week without Notice, Attach, or Make Room first?
4. What's a recent moment I responded to with analysis when it actually needed connection?
5. Who in my life would benefit most from a repair conversation, and what's stopping me?
6. What did "fine" actually mean the last time I said it?

7. What's a feeling I've been avoiding naming because naming it feels too real?
8. When did my body know something before my mind caught up this week?
9. What's one script from Chapter 19 I could try using this week, and with whom?
10. What did winning an argument cost me this week, if anything?
11. Where did I confuse being right with being close to someone?
12. What's a feeling that ambushed me late at night recently, and what was it actually about?
13. What's something I'm "handling" logistically that I haven't actually let myself feel yet?
14. Which of the three hard emotions (anger, grief, shame) has been showing up most for me lately?
15. What old definition of strength am I still measuring myself against?
16. What's one thing I did this week that the "integrated" version of me from Chapter 22 would be proud of?
17. Where did I ask someone "do you want me to help you think, or just listen?" and what happened?
18. What pattern from my childhood (Chapter 2 or 5) showed up again this week?
19. What would I say to someone I need to repair things with, if I could say it perfectly?
20. What's one small, honest sentence I could say out loud tomorrow that I've been avoiding?

The N.A.M.E. Card

A quick-reference summary of the method from *Why "Logical" People Struggle With Feelings*, Chapter 17.

N — Notice

Start with the body, not the thought. Scan: shoulders, jaw, stomach, chest, breathing. Catch the signal at its source, before it fully surfaces into a thought you can already articulate.

A — Attach a word

Name it as specifically as you can. Good or bad, broadly. Then which family: sad, angry, scared, or something else. Then, if you can, one level more specific still. You don't need certainty, just a working label.

M — Make room

Let the named feeling exist for a period of time, even just sixty seconds, without immediately trying to fix it, argue with it, or move past it. Fully feel it, deliberately, before doing anything else with it.

E — Engage

Only now, decide what, if anything, to do about what you're feeling. Sometimes that's a conversation. Sometimes a decision. Sometimes the feeling was information, you received it, and no external action is needed. Engage means consciously choosing your response, not reacting from whatever was running underneath before you noticed it.

Why this order: it mirrors the order these things happen in your nervous system, body signal first, then naming, then a window of

processing before any response gets chosen. Skipping straight to Engage is the pattern this card exists to interrupt.

If Notice comes up blank: drop to the plainest possible question: *is this a good-ish moment or a bad-ish one, right now?* That's enough to proceed.

If Make Room tips into overwhelming: stop, don't push harder. Step out deliberately, name five things you can see, take a few slow breaths. If this happens reliably with certain feelings, that's a signal to bring in a therapist, not a sign the method failed.