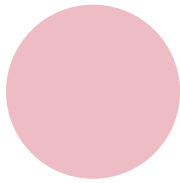


WORKSHEET

This worksheet is a compassionate guide to help you reflect on your relationship patterns, build self-esteem, set healthy boundaries, and recognize any signs of unhealthy dynamics. Use this tool to support your journey towards healthier, more fulfilling relationships.

Disclaimer:

This worksheet is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice. Please consult a healthcare professional for guidance specific to your situation



ADHD and Vulnerability to Abuse

ADHD women may find themselves at a higher risk of experiencing abuse in relationships. This increased vulnerability can result from several unique challenges they face, which can make them more susceptible to mistreatment.

- **Masking to Fit In:**

ADHD women often feel the need to hide or "mask" their true selves to fit into social norms and expectations. This behavior can start in childhood as a strategy to avoid negative attention or punishment and may continue into adulthood. Masking might involve pretending to be more organized, calm, or socially adept than one feels inside. Over time, this constant effort to hide their authentic selves can lead to emotional exhaustion and burnout leaving you with less energy to see what's happening.

- **Low Self-Esteem and Self-Worth:**

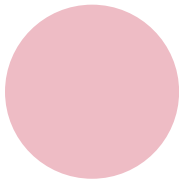
Continuously masking who they truly are can erode self-esteem and self-worth. ADHD women might start to believe their true selves are unworthy or unlovable, making them more vulnerable to being taken advantage of or treated poorly by others.

- **Struggles with Boundaries:**

Many ADHD women find it challenging to set and maintain boundaries. This difficulty can stem from a fear of making others angry or losing relationships. Weak boundaries can make it easier for abusers to cross them, leading to emotional, psychological, or even physical abuse.

- **Seeking Approval and Acceptance:**

The desire to be accepted and approved by others can lead ADHD women to prioritize the needs and desires of others over their own. This tendency can make them more susceptible to manipulative or controlling behaviors in relationships, as they may continuously try to please their partner at the expense of their own well-being.



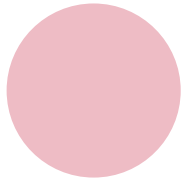
ADHD and Vulnerability to Abuse

- **Not Recognizing Abuse:**

Due to a lack of awareness or understanding of healthy relationship dynamics, ADHD women might not recognize abusive behavior when it occurs. They may even blame themselves for the abuse, believing they are the problem, which can trap them in a cycle of unhealthy relationships.

- **Mistrust of Emotions and Thoughts**

Many ADHD women don't trust their own thoughts and feelings, leading them to easily be gaslit into thinking their own experiences did not happen or are wrong.



ADHD and Vulnerability to Abuse

Steps to Protect Yourself If You Are an ADHD Woman

If you recognize these patterns in your life, here are some compassionate steps you can take to protect yourself:

- **Recognize and Acknowledge Masking:**

Start noticing when you're hiding your true self to fit in or please others. Awareness is the first step toward breaking free from this habit.

- **Work on Self-Esteem:**

Remember that you are worthy just as you are. Consider seeking therapy or joining support groups where you can learn to appreciate your true self without needing to mask.

- **Learn About Healthy Boundaries:**

Understand what healthy boundaries look like in a relationship. Practice setting small boundaries in safe situations and gradually build up to more challenging ones.

- **Educate Yourself on Abuse:**

Learn the signs of emotional, psychological, and physical abuse. The more you know, the better you'll be able to recognize when something is not right.

- **Seek Support:**

Reach out for help. Whether it's from a therapist, a support group, or a trusted friend, having a support network can make a significant difference.

WORKSHEET

SAFE RELATIONSHIPS

Reflect on Your Relationships:

Think about a relationship where you felt drained or unfulfilled.

- What was the relationship dynamic like?
- Example: "I often felt like I had to suppress my needs to keep the peace."

What did you notice about your own behavior in this dynamic?

- Example: "I would frequently say yes to things I didn't want to do."

WORKSHEET

SAFE RELATIONSHIPS

Recognizing Masking in Relationships:

- Do you ever feel like you're not being your true self in relationships?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes

If yes or sometimes, what parts of yourself do you feel you're hiding?

Examples: My emotions, my preferences, my opinions.

Reflect on the Impact of Masking:

- How does hiding your true self affect your relationship?
- Example: "I feel disconnected and that my partner doesn't know the real me."

WORKSHEET

SAFE RELATIONSHIPS

Self-Awareness Exercise:

- List three qualities about yourself that you appreciate, even if you don't always show them in relationships.
- Examples: My creativity, my kindness, my humor.
- deserving of love just as I am." "My feelings matter." "I am enough."

How can you show these qualities more authentically in your relationships?

- Example: "I will share my true thoughts more openly with my partner."

Daily Affirmations:

- Write down three affirmations to boost your self-worth and repeat them each day.
- Examples: "I am deserving of love just as I am." "My feelings matter." "I am enough."

WORKSHEET

SAFE RELATIONSHIPS

Identifying Your Boundaries:

- Think of a recent time when you felt uncomfortable in a relationship.
 - What happened?
 - Example: "My friend kept pressuring me to go out when I wanted to stay home."
 - What boundary could help you in a similar situation?
 - Example: "I need to feel comfortable saying no without feeling guilty."

Practicing Boundary Setting:

- Write a respectful way to set a boundary.
- Example: "I appreciate your invitation, but I need some time to recharge tonight."

Small Steps to Practice:

- Start with setting small boundaries in less challenging situations.
What's a small boundary you will practice setting?
- Example: "Telling a colleague I'm unavailable for a meeting during my lunch break."

WORKSHEET

SAFE RELATIONSHIPS

. Signs of Unhealthy Relationships:

- Write down three signs of unhealthy or abusive behavior.
- Examples: Belittling comments, isolation from friends, controlling behaviors.

Reflect on Your Relationships:

- Have you experienced any of these signs in your relationships?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not Sure
- If yes or unsure, describe what happened and how it made you feel.
- Example: "My partner often criticizes my appearance, making me feel insecure."

Who can you talk to that you trust about this?

WORKSHEET

SAFE RELATIONSHIPS

1. Building Your Support Network:

- List three people you can reach out to for support.

2. Reaching Out:

- Choose one person to connect with this week. What will you share with them?
- Example: "I've been working on understanding my relationship patterns and could use some support."