

PRACTITIONER WORKBOOK

IEMT PRONOUN JUMP WORKBOOK

**Spot the identity jumps to
practice identifying them in
your therapeutic practice.**



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Identity Imprints

Identity imprinting occurs throughout life and is constantly evolving and changing. Some aspects of identity are attributed neurologically but mostly occur as a feedback response to the environment. An example of this is the production worker who yesterday was “*one of the boys*” and today, following promotion to lower management, is now officially an enemy to his former friends and colleagues. Some people will be able to adapt with the appropriate emotional and behavioural adjustments better than others who may find themselves in conflict with themselves.

Other deeper aspects of identity are more permanent and “feed-forward” into the environment. These are the aspects of identity that tend to occur in all contexts, with some being more stable than others. Examples of this are gender identity, identity as a father/mother, brother/sister and so forth. However, some aspects of identity are much more flexible or unstable and may change according to context.

Thus, IEMT also addresses the issue of, “How did this person learn to *be* this way?”

In some cases, the person can adopt aspects of identity that can be problematic. For example, an emotional imprint might be, “I feel unhappy” whilst an identity imprint might be, “I am an unhappy person” or even, “I am a depressive.”

By specifically addressing the identity imprint, this enables the therapist to bypass the beliefs that often support the undesired identity such as, “I cannot do that because I am a depressive” and so forth.

(Source: IEMT Wiki)

Other models that utilize identifying identity imprints in mental space are:

- Mental Space Psychology & Social Panorama by Lucas Derks (<https://www.mentalspaceresearch.com/mental-space-psychology>)
- The Wholeness Process by Connirae Andreas (<https://wholenessprocess.org/>)
- Clean Language by James Lawley and Penny Tompkins (<https://www.cleanlanguage.co.uk/>)

Updating Identity Imprints with IEMT [Revision from the IEMT Manual]

Simple Form – Pronouns

During the training, it is mentioned that it is important to discuss identity with clients; explore themes and issues that are both culturally common and specific to the individual.

You may start with introducing concepts of different aspects of identity such as, “I”, “self”, “me” and “you.” You also use story examples, emphasising the identity shifts: *“I had a cancer patient recently, who said something interesting to me. She said, ‘I didn’t realise just how much cancer would affect me. I guess inside my-self, I knew I’d always be ok, but what really shocks me is just how much cancer changes you.’”*

This workbook provides 39 different cases that you can share when working with new clients.

Summary of above example

I: Didn’t realise the effect on me

Me: (i). Is affected. (ii). Is shocked.

Self: Is ok.

You: Changed.

Another example of the relationship between levels of identity is:

“I hate my self” - (hating of self)

“I like my self” - (liking of self)

“I tell my self to exercise more” - (talking to self)

“When I drink too much, it doesn’t really bother me” - (me is unbothered by I’s behaviour)

“You just cannot feel safe in the cities anymore” (post-hypnotic suggestion/belief)

Locate identity components in the client.

Ask: “...and when you think ‘I’, where is ‘I’?”

Ask: “...and how old is ‘I’?”

Ask: “...and what is happening around <insert age> ‘I’?”

The client often will ask for clarification on the third question – maintain your own state and offer no guidance. If the client gets stuck, repeat the question.

Repeat sequence for “**me**”, “**self**” and “**you**.”

Identify aspect(s) of identity that may be problematic, “immature” or unintegrated.

Updating Identity Imprints with IEMT Complex Form

Same setup as in Simple Form. You start with locating identity components in the client.

Ask: “...and when you think *T*, where is *T*?”

Ask: “...and how old is *T*?”

Ask: “...and what is happening around <insert age> *T*?”

The client often will ask for clarification on the third question – maintain your own state and offer no guidance. If the client gets stuck, repeat the question.

The complex pattern differs from the simple pattern only in as much as the movements are calibrated specifically to the axis deviations that are observed.

With each axis deviation, the practitioner marks the occurrence with a rhetorical question, “Wow, what happened there...oh, there again....and there's another one...” Axis deviations occur when there is a change in the mental representation.

There are two categories of representational change:

1. There is a sub-modality shift.
 - *Distance increases*
 - *Focus decreases*
 - *Dissociation occurs with age progression*
 - *Reduction in kinaesthetic*

Most often when this change occurs the person comes out of their “trance” and is much more present in the room, in there here and now. The process is complete at this point and the eye movement can be discontinued.

2. There is a change in the content of the representation.
 - i.e. the person is having different ideas, memories, concepts etc. come to mind. Often these things have no obvious connection to the original event.
 - There is little value in continuing until there are no further axis deviations. 20-40 seconds is sufficient to initiate the change process.

Updating Identity Imprints with I.E.M.T. Complex Form (part 2): Changing of Identity Referential Index

Other Personal Identity Markers

Having addressed “I”, “me”, “self”, and “you” examine other identity representations around the person’s name and titles.

For example, a man may be “Andrew” to his employer, “Drew” to his parents and family, “Andy” to his friends and so on. In some instances, he may be “Sir”, “Dr” or “Mr” in other contexts or possess some other title that provides a basis for a separate identity.

If problems are identified, repeat the IEMT process as above on these areas.

Referential Indices of Third-Party Identity

Assuming your client already understands the concept of “representations” in three-dimensional space. If in doubt, explain with examples. Then...

- ◆ Ask: “*What representation do you have when you hear, ‘**Him**’?*”
- ◆ Elicit visual representation and what the representation means to the client.

Repeat for the following major themes:

Him, his, he

Her, hers, she

They, them, their

We, us

Also explore pertinent themes such as *boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife, daughter, son, mother, mummy, mum, dad, father, daddy and so forth.*

(Source for the above 3 pages is from the IEMT Manual as created by Andrew T. Austin)

On the following pages, you will find 39 different cases where you can spot identity jumps that are done by the person experiencing a certain problem.

Your task is to spot the pronoun jumps for practice.

These 39 cases will give you additional examples that you can use to explain the concept to your client.

Enjoy!

Case 1: Mental reassurance

I developed an irrational and near-constant fear of dying a few months ago. While I've been able to make progress in preventing the resulting panic attacks, I'm still struggling with intrusive thoughts that tell me I'm dying. These thoughts are very hard to cope with and I end up having to constantly mentally reassure myself to prevent spiraling into a panic attack.

I just want the thoughts and corresponding somatic symptoms to stop. They've gotten much less intense since I stopped my last medication, which is good, but I would really like them to stop completely.

Case 2: Self-punishment

Sometimes, I punish myself for having unproductive days but then I'm reminded that I'm only human and breaks are necessary. Don't feel guilty for putting something on pause temporarily while you reconnect with yourself and find a balance. Remember, your mental health comes first.

Case 3: The thing on the nightstand

I left it on my nightstand overnight, so I'm pretty sure my sister saw it (we live together). We're all adults here, so I'm gonna assume you know what I'm talking about. Because of my anxiety, I'm very secretive of my "personal" life. I know most people can just shrug it off but with my anxiety, I'm so embarrassed, I don't even want to look at my sister. I'm surprised I haven't had a panic attack yet. I mean there's a chance she hasn't seen it right? But she usually puts the dog in the kennel in my room at night, so she also most definitely has saw it. I'm never gonna forget this guys, it's gonna haunt me forever. I don't know what to do with myself...

Case 4: Feeling dreadful

Anyone else have this feeling? It can hit me randomly, it feels almost a bit like existential anxiety... almost feeling anxious for no reason at all, you just feel a pit in your stomach and that you are not like yourself / something is wrong. My mood gets affected badly I'll be totally cut off and in that horrible thought space which pulls me in. I'll be in my head and ruminating constantly.

Case 5: Overcoming Social Anxiety

My social anxiety used to be really bad. Honestly, like mental hospital bad. My freshman year of college when my roommates were gone, I would pee in water bottles in my room instead of using the communal bathrooms on the floor of my dorm because I was so afraid of seeing people. I would walk 20-30 minutes in negative degree weather rather than take public transportation if I saw someone, I knew on it. I had a panic attack over meeting new people at the airport gate on my way to my study abroad semester, missed my flight, and TSA took me to what I'm pretty sure was an interrogation room so I could sit alone and calm down (I ended up taking that semester off). I've probably avoided 4-5x more events than I've actually gone to in my life, and when I did go, I would usually drink alcohol beforehand.

Now, there are times where I forget my anxiety is even there. What changed?

1. I did intensive therapy for a few months. I did therapy when I was younger, but never took it seriously.
2. I came out of the closet, both to friends and to my parents. This removed a lot of my shame which was a constant inhibition.
3. I got on the right medication (for me, it's Zoloft apparently)
4. I started working out regularly, which made me more confident
5. Using DBT skills (more specifically, opposite action-forcing yourself to do something your mind tells you don't want to do, like go to brunch where you don't know most of the people, in order to realize that it isn't so scary)
6. On a similar note to 5, realizing and accepting that most people, especially strangers, don't automatically hate you and think you're a freak (this is honestly probably the most important one)

Case 6: Covid Worries:

My current worry is the new "variant", so I'll spend hours reading about it, reading comments, seeing arguments and doomsday scenarios...

I know I'm seeking reassurance to tell me everything is okay and tell me my fears aren't so bad. THEN I can be content. It's such a horrible pattern and rarely makes me feel any better!

Case 7: The medication is not working

I have crippling anxiety. So much so that it manifests physically. I have a ton of stress weight, I have tension headaches every single day, I have wrinkles from my facial muscles constantly being tense, I have tooth pain from clenching my teeth together all the time. But the only help I can get is antidepressants. I am depressed because my anxiety is out of control so why is only the symptom being treated and not the actual issue? I feel like I'm screaming for help and the top of my lungs and nobody is listening to me. I am trying to advocate myself but it gets hopeless when you go to 6 different doctors and they all seem to downplay it. Am I missing something? I have been on SEVERAL antidepressants and have had no help with any. I am so exhausted.

Case 8: Being alone

About a year ago my parents had to travel to another country, so I drove them to the airport and on my way back it hit me...I was completely alone now! What would happen to me if...?! My mind went overdrive thinking about all the bad things that could happen to me and no one could help since my parents were gone...

This whole thinking led me straight into the worst panic attack I've ever had, I almost crashed my car.

By some miracle I managed to make it home, I thought this would go away, so I tried to keep myself busy but my anxiety was still through the roof and the next day I had multiple panic attacks, I couldn't move out of my bed anymore, I had to call my parents to come back.

After that episode, anxiety drove me to agoraphobia, I fell into depression and was barely able to go out by myself anymore.

So, I went into therapy, for a whole year, had to learn to do things by myself again, go shopping, drive around, take the subway...

Case 9: Missing a shift on a new job

I got a new job at a place I really like. Everyone there is so nice. It's rare for me to have a job cause working and responsibilities give me so much anxiety. But I actually enjoyed my first couple of shifts. But late last night I stupidly decided to go on a spontaneous date with a girl from a dating app. I figured it would leave me in such a good mood that waking up would be easy. The date went ok in general, but she looked very different from her profile and I wasn't very interested anymore. I also took some shots of tequila before the date because I was nervous. This all made it very hard for me to wake up this morning and go to work because I felt so anxious for so many reasons. I let my manager know through email and went back to bed. I woke up later to a missed call from the store. I am not going to call back because I already emailed them and calling them sounds like a nightmare. I feel like they are now seeing why my resume is so tiny and it really bugs me. I get anxious so easily and am unreliable because of it. I loved working here and now I feel like they will not like me as much. I hope they don't fire me. Cause I'd imagine they would rather just find someone who is reliable. It's all because I went on this date to cope with the unrequited crush I have on a different person. I just feel like shit and would love some realistic reassurance if there is any. Thanks.

Case 10: Life is like a rollercoaster

You know, life, it's like a roller coaster ride. You'll be ok for a second and then the next thing you know I'm ready to throw up. I cannot turn off my mind. It is not fun. You are not alone, this is all I want to hear when this happens to me, but it seems less likely to happen the more I go through this, you know?

Case 11: How I deal with anxiety

What helped me a lot was telling myself that unless being anxious was going to solve a problem, I'm going to stop giving my anxiety the attention it wants. The anxiety may stay, it may leave, it may make me puke but I'm going to continue with my day regardless of what my anxiety is doing. It wastes my time and energy so I'm not going to engage with it. What this looks like is when I start to feel anxiety taking over, I kind of personify it and address it. "I acknowledge that you're here but I'm not going to let you waste my time or take over my thoughts. Do whatever you want to do, I'm going to continue enjoying my movie/writing this email/brushing my teeth/sleeping". My thoughts will still drift to anxiety-inducing thoughts, but I catch myself, repeat that I'm not interested in engaging with my anxiety and continue doing whatever I'm doing. It helps to do something that'll occupy your mind and hands, so you have something to redirect your mind towards.

Case 12: My childhood therapist told me

I have CPTSD and I am scared to feel my emotions because I haven't felt them in so long, I don't know how I would react. (My childhood therapist told me I would kill my sister if I kept holding my emotions in and they would snap one day.) but I'm also scared of feeling them because my childhood is a black hole and I don't know what memories my emotions will bring up. It's multifaceted why I'm so scared of my emotions.

I've also never felt safe growing up. Now that I am in a good place feeling even positive emotions is overwhelming because it's so new. I don't know how to deal with any of them. And I feel EVERYTHING through my body.

But also, I'm generally scared of control. So, the fact that you have to feel your emotions instead of controlling them is scary to me. You can control your reactions to the emotions, but not the emotions themselves. How can I protect myself from my own emotions? I got deep-rooted trust and safety issues.

Case 13: The black hole

I think that's actually what mindfulness and embracing anxiety means. I realized that my anxiety got better when I first started to accept that I might have to live with that horrible sudden feeling of panic and fear. And that those waves come and leave....as soon as I really accepted it, my anxiety got much better. The fear of having fear is like a black hole, but once you embrace this feeling (and I know how difficult it is) it gets better.

Case 14: Fear of Meds

Today I had one of the worst days (anxiety-wise) in a really long time. I suffer from a subtype of OCD that makes me hyperaware of everything and I get stuck in this loop of permanent awareness that makes me feel like I gonna lose it. I'm not on any medication and I've never been. I'm just too afraid of them and its known meds make you feel ten times worse before making you feel better. Yeah, it feels like hell, but it will eventually go away. I do get brief moments of complete clarity and I'm so so grateful for them. I will seek help soon. I say to myself, take care of yourself and take it easy. Stay in bed if that helps. Staying in bed really helps me, reading a book takes my mind away from the awareness, also listening to music and paying attention to the words offers me some sort of relief. It's hard, but I have to push through as I always did. I went through this once, I can do it again

Case 15: Mindfulness

At first, mindfulness made it worse. Because I lived my life pushing everything down. Once I started mindfulness, I HAD to feel my body and emotions. After pushing everything down all my life it was overwhelming once mindfulness helped me start to feel and experience emotions again. Then that scared me. But then I had to keep using mindfulness to learn emotions are overwhelming if you are too scared to feel them and are more manageable if you just let them be.

Case 16: Everything feels overwhelming

Everything feels overwhelming at times. My body, my thoughts and life itself. My OCD makes my thoughts become obsessive and I'm always trying to answer questions that don't have an explanation. Sometimes I feel like my brain will collapse upon so much pressure. It's hell and my escape can only come from myself and the healing process is always more difficult than the initial fight. I'm stuck and I'm only 21 and have no heavy trauma. I don't know why this happened to me, but it is what it is at this point. I'm gonna fight it like you fight any other illnesses

Case 17: Eckhart Tolle exercise

I totally relate to what you are feeling, what helps me is feeling your body from within and staying rooted in that, search Eckhart Tolle inner body (just start with your hands can you feel the vibration in them) (He teaches about how your consciousness is being constantly consumed by negative thought patterns)

Case 18: Do I seek help?

So, I've always kind of just self-diagnosed myself as being a generally anxious person who gets stuck in my own obsessive thoughts, And I've always been pretty easily agitated and sensitive. really young I was extremely sensitive to sound, 7- or 8-year-old me couldn't sit in the same room as someone chewing! I'd get sweaty, anxious, and full of just anger and agitation. But teenage years it has gotten significantly worse. I get like overstimulated when it comes to sounds, any sound really, the sizzling of food in a pan, someone's continuous footsteps through the house, and most of all ... chewing. I start to hyperventilate, my dad and I have arguments about it so the sound of his voice like winds me up and if say, there is a sound in the background like someone chewing or the TV is slightly too loud I will start to struggle to breathe, crying uncontrollably and making ugly gasping noises as I cry, the feeling of just distress and terror pretty much like the world is going to explode feeling, I normally have to lie in a ball on the floor as this happens. all from being triggered and hypersensitive to a small sound. These episodes happen about once a week and last for about 30 minutes when they subside I feel extremely exhausted and down and depressed and a little bit embarrassed and will have to sit in bed drained for the rest of the day. life isn't the easiest, I've always put these episodes down to just personal struggles and being stressed. Is this a panic attack? Do I need to talk about this with a doctor? I know my dad and mom have both had spouts of anxiety and depression and trauma throughout their lives and have been medicated I was wondering if it could be genetic?

Case 19: Depression

The only good thing about depression is that you really haven't the energy, nor the motivation to actually kill yourself.

Case 20: Negativity

The anger, the rage, the heartbreak, the anguish, the disappointment, the jealousy, the hatred, it's all a fucking drug. Especially in this evil world that we live in, taken over by an evil species and run by evil people. I can't look at the "beautiful side" of life without some horse shit getting shoved in my face constantly, without making mistake after mistake, without thinking about the evils that exist in this world. And I know that it's all a mindset, but that's the fucking issue, is that it's fucking IMPOSSIBLE to break out of. You can't say "I'm gonna stop doing crack today" and expect it to get magically better, and the same goes for negativity. First, you find something negative in the world. You reject it, then accept it, then process it, then hate it, and the hatred feels awful. Eventually, this happens so much that the hatred starts to feel... good.

Like you want more hatred, more negativity, can't live without it. Soon it starts to fester and bubble, and then grow and boil, until eventually all the pain and hatred that has been building up inside you bursts, and YOU FEEL ENRAGED AND YOU FEEL POWERFUL... until you realize that you hurt someone, most likely someone dear to you. You sink to your lowest possible state and begin feeling the most painful kind of negativity, and vow to stop this mindset. But it doesn't stop, the process starts again, because you are human, and humanity as a species *thrives* on negativity. Yet in the end... it still hurts.

My mom has told me I have a beautiful soul... I feel it fading. My dad has told me I have a heart of gold... I feel it disintegrating. All the love I have left in me... I feel it dying.

Help me.

Case 21: Abusive parents

My parents are abusive assholes. It almost feels like destroying me completely is their life goal. They've been physically and verbally abusive ever since I was little. When I deserve to be hit I have no problem with that, I hold no grudges but they've been raising their hand on me over nothing for most of my life. The most ridiculous reason my mom hit me was for giving her a hug. I was only 12 back then and it still hurts me after all those years. I won't mention any other situations because this post would turn out really long and it's not my intention. Being hit when you don't do anything wrong only makes you hate your parents. My mom would often pull on my hair, slap me across my face and my dad would kick my back multiple times as I sat on the floor and covered my head with my arms out of fear. I never tried seeking help, they would always repeat to me that nobody won't ever listen to me because nobody cares about me. Now I'm all grown up and you may wonder why I just won't move out and prefer to put up with them. Yes, they still abuse me even though I'm 24. I know I'm old and I sound really pathetic but I wish it was so simple. I suffer from anthropophobia, a fear of people. I'm literally terrified to go out because they are people out there... I never leave my room when I don't have to. It may seem like no problem at all but it's so difficult for me. I have no friends and I'm not close to my family. I'm alone and I can't depend on anyone. I can't afford living on my own, I would have to rent an apartment with someone but my fear keeps me from doing so. I'm scared my life will never change and I'll have to live with my parents forever.

Case 22: Asteroid

I know the clickbait titles make me more worried than I should be, but there's gonna be an asteroid passing earth on the 27th of December and now I'm frightened. It really makes me feel helpless when I think about it. It's things like this that keep you on edge that really bother me, I mean when are we going to be more understanding of what triggers are?

Case 23: The Ex

Relationships are hard work, I mean I try to tell myself this will be a good one, but it ends up destroying me. You just go in and out of relationships trying to find yourself true love, but it all ends up disappointing you. They are all the same. No matter what you do, you will end up hurt. Then I try to calm myself and trust that someone might be worthy, like my Ex, or I thought he was. He ends up disappointing me by not understanding, it was like you were talking to a wall, everything you throw at it bounces back, and the harder it bounces back the more it hurts.

I just need to find a way to get convinced that relationships are not for me.

Case 24: Redundancy

The pandemic has destroyed my self-esteem. It's like one day you're in a great job, surrounded by great people who get the best out of you and then poof, it all disappears, you're at home, all alone trying to make sense of it all. That's what happened to me when I started to work online, I just lost it, and couldn't focus on anything. 6 months down the line, I got depression. Depression affects us in ways that we don't expect, and I mean I lost myself, my sense of being. It's like I sunk in a sea of loneliness I couldn't get myself out of. No one understood that, and it caused me to lose my job, but you know life sucks anyway.

Case 25: Therapy

I'm depressed, hating everything, have no motivation, and am SO bitter at everything and everyone. I'm 4 months in.

Does it get better? This is hell and I'm not sure how much more I can take.

Case 26: The Romantic Comedy plot

I (32F) don't have a great dating track record. I have never had a relationship longer than a year and a half, and most don't last over 8 months, and my mental health issues in my youth landed me pregnant with a man who was the younger replica of my abusive father. After I got out of that relationship, I started to work on healing myself and becoming someone who doesn't define myself by the value given to me by the men I am with. It's been almost 8 years since I started this journey, and since then, I have had two relationships I'd consider serious, and both were around 8 months each. Each left me with new hurt and new lessons to learn, and I consider myself lucky to have learned from why they failed. But it's been about 4 years since my last relationship, and in that time I've only had these sorts of feelings for two men (current included). I have a friend (40M) who I've known for a couple of years now. He is wonderful. He's a good father, he's kind and gentle, he's so smart, and we can talk for literally hours. In the last few months, we've started spending a LOT more time together. We talk pretty much every day, and we see each other once a week, sometimes more. I officially asked him on a date almost a month ago and he agreed, but we really haven't talked about it since, nor have we kissed, or even really had much other physical contacts. We just spend all this time together. He also told me this last week that due to a rise in cases in our area, he's reducing his bubble, and I'm it. Other things that have occurred and conversations we've had make me feel that he has feelings for me too, but the fact that there's been no declaration of it has me twisted to shit.

Case 27: The Ugly duckling

I don't know how to explain it, but I just can't get myself to accept some fucking affection. As soon as I see some sign of attraction or just someone showing some interest (which isn't a very common thing for me), I just get scared. My brain just starts telling me that "dude, you'll fuck it up" or something bad will happen, or you'll get rejected/replaced and you'll get hurt again... and all of a sudden I feel nothing even if I think about the person or being in a healthy relationship most of the time.

I (M 21) know I need therapy, and I'm definitely looking to get into it as soon as I get a therapist but I've been working on myself for some time and I've actually started putting myself out there. I'm aware of the fact that I'm not very attractive, but I feel comfortable with myself and I do get some attention, and I like to present myself in a good way and just be comfortable with myself. It's just... even though I want a relationship, I get scared when someone shows interest in me and somehow my brain convinces me that it's not worth it or you'll get hurt and nothing else. I've been avoiding relationships and attachments for years, but I wanna stop this behaviour and actually wanna have a good relationship and love myself more.

Case 28: The Tick box

My girlfriend makes me feel like I'm just a tick box and like I'm inadequate all the time. I've tried talking to her about it, but she always ends up making me feel like I'm the problem. Maybe I am? We've been together for 3 months; the first 2 months were great, and she seemed REALLY into me. It has all gone very fast, she works from mine most of the time, she has loads of her stuff here, she's already planning all these fancy expensive holidays for us abroad (she earns a lot more than me).

It's just, her sense of humour I've noticed is very condescending like she just wants to point out my flaws all of the time about how untidy I am, the layout of my apartment, how disorganized I am. I'm trying my best to get better at it but we're just very different, I'm a creative for a living and a very liberal person, she's more conservative and very corporate.

Case 29: Self Esteem

I got zero self-esteem, a constant need for everyone's approval and I handle criticism the way a four-year-old would. I don't believe in therapy because it's useless and doesn't work. I think it's impossible to change the way you think without altering the brain in some significant way. And I'm tired of living like this.

Case 30: Self Doubt

My boyfriend has seemingly done all the right things and helped me feel safe to be vulnerable and intimate with him. We live together and he doesn't ever go "out" unless it's an occasional guys' night. Instagram is making me feel insecure, on top of the fact that we've had a pretty rough few months of living together. Why do I have such a hard time trusting and how can I feel secure and confident in myself again and stop sabotaging the relationship?

Case 31: What's wrong with me?

So, we last talked in March, and I haven't been doing so good since then. This has been the worst year of my life in terms of mental health. It's truly been one low after another. The only "positive" from this year is a new job which once again, I feel like I'm terrible at and don't deserve. Between feeling like a complete failure at everything I do, loneliness and romantic frustration, a rare condition that's left me possibly permanently sexually impaired, and everything else, my confidence as a person is completely shot. My self-esteem is nil for the first time ever.

I don't want to talk to people, look at people, or want them to look at me. Any kind of social interaction makes me feel worse about myself, even with my friends. I even dread talking to my parents and siblings, who know none of what I've been going through, and I frequently ignore communications from them until I can muster enough willpower to reply. The main ways I cope these days are by taking long naps whenever it feels too painful to stay awake, drinking by myself, which I started this summer, and crying. I must have cried more this year than the past five put together.

I tried therapy over the spring and summer, but I couldn't open up enough to make it worthwhile. Something is wrong with me that I can't even express myself fully to a trained and licensed therapist, I always have to dance around the subject. So, I wasn't getting much out of it and began to dread every session because I felt idiotic trying to articulate my issues and just decided to call it quits. I tried putting myself out there and dating. I went into it with a really positive mindset. But I failed at that too and it just made me realize my chances are even worse than I thought.

Case 32: I hate me in pictures

I'm not sure if this is the right place to share this, but I absolutely hate pictures of myself and think I'm ugly in them when others tell me I'm good looking and I got plenty of compliments before without even asking. So, who's right?

I get the whole you hate pictures of yourself because your mind is used to seeing the mirror you, but I still don't get it. There's no way I don't look ugly in quite a bit of pics. The odd time I'll see a pic of me that I like but most I think I'm pretty ugly. However, I like the mirror me and the mirror me looks nothing like the picture of me. I'm honestly so confused. This ruminating has gotten to such a bad level it's fucking with my self-esteem. How can I be good looking but ugly in pics? Make it makes sense. I don't post much of my life because of this main reason. I don't meet up on dates because of this reason.

Case 33: The disappointed

I just want to share a feeling with you. I was deeply disappointed by a person who showed a completely different face after 3 weeks. I realized that he had played a role and he started to be humiliating and condescending to me. As I was beginning to like him as a friend, it really disturbed me and I didn't say anything, whereas I usually don't let myself be bothered. It was a cold shower, and I took him out of my friendship. I was getting really depressed and wondering why this person treated me like that. But frankly, there are some pretty hypocritical scumbags in this world, and I can guarantee you that these people thrive on upsetting good, kind people and taking advantage. These are not the people who are going to be self-deprecating or empathetic to others. Remember to put on your shell and take a lot of time to give your trust. Also, these are not the scumbags who will question themselves or get depressed. Let's protect ourselves from bad people with our heads up and quietly filter the information we receive from others about ourselves or in general. Good day to all.

Case 34: The crying one

I went through some stuff yesterday, and today when my teachers expressed their concern about my behaviour, I started to well up tears at their questions. It was like the last straw for me. I hated it, it was so embarrassing, and all my classmates avoided me for the rest of the day. And my teachers are probably annoyed at me. And my eyes hurt!

It's been like this for me since childhood (I'm 15 now). I don't really cry when I'm sad, but I literally cannot control myself if I'm frustrated or upset, especially in front of other people. I call it "frying" to make myself feel better. If I'm angry, I have to run away to stew in my crying, so others don't see. It sometimes happens even when my little brother and I squabble... if he manages to make me upset, I feel that itchy nose sensation you get when you're about to cry. So annoying... I'd kill to be angry without shedding tears! And don't get me started on the runny nose. Absolutely disgusting, especially if you're wearing a mask and you don't want anyone to see you wipe your nose, so you just have to let the snot run down.

Case 35: The Jealous

I'm 22 M and hate to see my peers do better than I'm doing. I don't read news about breakthroughs or successes of people within my age group because it burns me on the inside that it could have been me. Heck, I don't open LinkedIn because of the exponential effect it has on my depression.

I'm conscious of this evil feeling and honestly hate myself for this. I have tried my best to stop it by being happy for them whenever they succeed or progress in life by buying them gifts and saying some nice words but the evil feeling is always there.

In life, there will always be people better than one and I understand this. I just need help with this evil.

Case 36: I'm scared of people

I'm 36 and I'm still afraid of people. I'm so scared, it cripples my ability to socialize, get a job, and take care of myself. I ghost people I met because I listen to and trust my anxiety. Fear consumes me 24/7. But I still don't think anything I feel is valid because of my age. It seems so easy for others, and you know how things get sometimes, where you simply just want to find an answer, but you end up lost. I envy the person who knows how to deal with people.

Case 37: But you're beautiful

My boss: "Why are you anxious?"

Me: "well I don't know I've felt like this for a long time like something bad is going to happen."

"But nothing is going to happen. Is it about money?"

"No."

"Is it about... your boyfriend?"

"No."

"Well, what is it then?"

"I don't know, it's anxiety, it's irrational, I spend all day hating myself."

"Don't be silly you're beautiful" *walks away*

She simply doesn't understand me...

Case 38: Teenage Problems

I feel like I do not connect easily with others. This bothered me for years when I was a teenager. Basically, I used to upset my family a lot, say things without thinking and basically think I upset a lot of people. As I grew up, I tried hard to change the way I was just to appease other people only to later find out that it wasn't me that had the issue. I wish I had learned to accept myself at an earlier age as it would have saved me a lot of mental stress and years of self-abuse.

Generally, I was always very pleasant and friendly. It took years to realize that it was other people who didn't really understand me. I am now older and had to learn to accept myself for the oddity that I am and to realize that not everyone will like you all the time. It's just a fact of life. Learn to be ok/happy with yourself and the way you are. Be nice to others as much as you can and ignore the people who you don't like. If someone is annoyed by you, let them be annoyed. That's their problem.

Case 39: Coping with anxiety

One of the things that help me with my anxiety and being around others is asking other people about themselves. Sounds a little crazy but people obviously like to talk about themselves, and it takes the focus off me. I use that time to learn about them and study their habits. I find that other people get nervous too and it helps me feel a little more normal.
