



THERAPY WITH LAUREN

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T H E R A P Y W I T H L A U R E N  
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# Welcome to my **FREE** downloadable PDF!!!

**This PDF provides you with a visual aid that I use in my private practice with client's.**

**I have created this PDF as a self check-in tool that you can use to reflect on your own mental health (without paying the costs of therapy), to check how you are currently feeling and to assess whether there is anything you can do to “lighten the load”.**

This visual aid is a tool that I refer to as the **Mental Health Weighing Scales**

When thinking about your mental health, I invite you to imagine it like an old pair of weighing scales, which you must balance very carefully in order to keep your mental health feeling good (see image below to inspire your visual!)



The same way that these weighing scales will **fluctuate** depending on how much weight is either added or taken off, **so will your mental health!**

Sometimes we will feel great mentally and as though life isn't weighing heavy. Whereas other times, we will feel totally overwhelmed, anxious, stressed, extremely emotional and as though **we cannot manage the never-ending demands of life.**



For this exercise, I invite you to reflect on your own weighing scales. One side of the scales represents the stressors and demands in life that may be weighing you down, these may include (but are not exclusive to):

- Worries about work, school/uni, family, friends, children, loved ones etc.
  - Your anxieties
  - Past traumas
  - To do lists
- Household chores or “life admin”
  - Money stressors or worries
  - Health conditions or concerns
    - Relationship issues
- Self-esteem or confidence difficulties
- Upcoming appointments or deadlines
  - Self-critical or negative thoughts
- Pressures or expectations from others
  - Current or upcoming changes
  - Bereavements or losses

The other side of the scales represents the things in your life that help you to support your mental health, these may include (but are not exclusive to):

- Coping strategies
  - Self-care time
- Speaking with loved ones or using your support systems
  - Therapy or mental health support
    - Hobbies or personal interests
      - Exercise
      - Meditation/mindfulness
- Asking for help or support with things
  - Managing expectations
  - Time management strategies
    - Journalling
  - Religious or spiritual practices
    - Words of affirmation
- Challenging negative or critical thoughts
  - Practicing self-compassion

When reflecting on your own mental health weighing scales, I invite you to consider which side is weighing heavier?

The side which represents the stressors and demands in life or the side which represents the things in life that support your mental health?



Here are some reflective statements which you may wish to consider when thinking about your own weighing scales...

1. *Is there anything that I can put down right now?* If so, what, how and when – make a plan of how you will do this if possible.
2. *If I can't put anything down right now, how can I make it feel more manageable for myself?* Think about forward planning, utilising support, time management tools, managing your expectations, increasing self-care etc.
3. *How much self-care am I engaging in right now and does this need to be changed?* Schedule time in for yourself, even 5 minutes will benefit you and make you better equipped to manage stressors!
4. *Are my expectations of myself realistic?* Sometimes the demands of life are

amplified by our unrealistically high expectations, is it possible to re-frame some of your expectations?

5. *What do I feel like I need in this moment?* Consider what may help you when you're feeling overwhelmed and assess whether there are ways that this can be realistically incorporated in your life.
6. *Can anyone help me with anything right now?* It's easy to take on the demands of life and forget that there are people who can, will and want to help! Utilise people around you whether that be personal or professional support.
7. *What can I add or take off my scales to help them feel more balanced?* Consider how your weight is currently distributed on your scales and whether there is anything you can change on either side to help things feel more balanced for you.





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The key thing to remember is that **we cannot always control the stress, pressure and demands that life puts us under.** However, we can control how we respond, how we take care of ourselves and how we manage our weighing scales!

This visual aid is not an attempt to eliminate stress but instead **a tool that can help you achieve more balance and feel better equipped to navigate the demands of life.**