

Exercise 14.10: Feelings at the moment of change

Copy the table below into your notebook. In the first column, write down each of the feelings you were aware of at the time – for example, you might recall anger and sadness but also relief. Note all the feelings you remember – or perhaps there was just one single overriding feeling in that moment. If you remember more feelings later, you can add them to your list.

Next, think about how you feel about the change *now* and write those feelings in the second column. Do these feelings relate to the same things that prompted the first list, or has your focus changed? For example, Agnes used to focus on how angry she felt at her ex-boss but now she focuses on how lonely her retirement feels.

Feelings at the time of the change	Feelings about the change now	Changes in my feelings over time
1.	1.	
2.	2.	
3.	3.	
4.	4.	
5.	5.	

- Does anyone else know how you feel now?
- Do you feel understood?
- Do you feel supported?
- Who could you talk to about any ways in which your feelings have changed over time?

In the third column, note any ways in which your feelings have changed over time. Discuss this with your IPT team to help you to track what has happened to your feelings. The list below suggests a number of ways in which feelings change over time. Which of your feelings have remained, and which have changed or been replaced by different feelings as time has passed? Monitoring change over time can be helpful in developing perspective. Our feelings generally do change as time passes, sometimes becoming more intense, often becoming less so. You might continue to have strong feelings but perhaps less often. Using the two lists as a prompt, think how your feelings at the time and now compare in terms of:

- type of feelings, e.g. anger or loneliness;
- focus of your feelings, e.g. on my ex-boss or on missing the company in the office;
- strength of feelings, e.g. overwhelming or something you can cope with;
- frequency of feelings, e.g. every day or every week;
- ability to talk about these feelings to someone close or someone who would understand.

In chapter 13 you were encouraged to take a few minutes each day to deliberately think about how you are feeling. Take

note of any changes that become evident in your feelings as you repeat this exercise over the weeks you are using IPT. Feelings may not change overnight, but try to identify any subtle changes that start to happen from week to week and month to month.