**Creating an Emotional SOS Plan**

**Purpose**: Help users develop a personalized plan for managing overwhelming emotions during emotional crises, enabling them to regain stability and take constructive action.

**What is an Emotional SOS Plan?**

**Understanding Emotional SOS**  
An Emotional SOS Plan is a toolkit of strategies and actions you can use to navigate overwhelming emotions when they arise. It’s like an emergency manual for your mental health, guiding you through moments of intense stress, sadness, anger, or anxiety.

**Why It’s Important**  
In the heat of emotional crises, it can be hard to think clearly or make decisions. Having a plan in place ensures you have practical steps to calm your mind and body, address your emotions, and prevent impulsive actions that might worsen the situation.

**Reflection Prompt**  
Think about a time when you felt overwhelmed by your emotions. What helped you, or what would have helped you, regain control in that moment?

**Step 1: Identify Your Emotional Triggers**

**What Situations Overwhelm You?**  
Write down specific situations or experiences that often lead to emotional crises. Examples might include:

* Conflict with loved ones.
* Failing to meet personal expectations.
* Feeling isolated or unsupported.

**Signs of Being Overwhelmed**  
What physical or emotional cues tell you that a crisis is building? Examples might include:

* Racing thoughts.
* Tension in your body.
* Feeling disconnected or frozen.

Write your personal signs:

**Step 2: Calming Your Body**

**Quick Physical Grounding Techniques**  
Choose at least two grounding strategies to help you calm your body:

* Deep breathing (inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4, exhale for 6).
* Grounding through the senses (e.g., noticing 5 things you can see, 4 you can touch).
* Splashing cold water on your face or holding an ice cube.
* Stretching or light physical movement.

Write down your chosen techniques:

**Step 3: Managing Your Thoughts**

**Pause and Reframe**  
When overwhelmed, your thoughts may spiral. Write down two reframing prompts to help you pause and shift your perspective:

1. *“This feeling is temporary, and I can get through it.”*
2. *“What’s one small step I can take right now to feel a little better?”*

Add your own:

**Step 4: Reaching Out for Support**

**Who Can You Turn To?**  
Write down the names and contact information of people or resources you can reach out to for support. Examples:

* A trusted friend or family member.
* A therapist or counselor.
* A crisis hotline (e.g., 988 in the U.S.).

**Step 5: Self-Care Tools**

**Create a Comfort List**  
Write down activities or practices that help you feel safe, calm, or nurtured. Examples:

* Listening to calming music.
* Journaling or creative expression.
* Watching a favorite show or movie.

**Step 6: Personalizing Your Plan**

**Your SOS Plan Summary**  
Fill out the quick-reference guide below:

| **Trigger** | **Physical Grounding** | **Thought Reframe** | **Support Contact** | **Self-Care Tool** |
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**Reflection and Moving Forward**

**Practice Your Plan**

* *What part of your SOS Plan feels most useful to you?*
* *How will you remind yourself to use this plan during emotional crises?*

**Commitment to Self-Care**  
Write one self-care activity you’ll prioritize this week to build emotional resilience: