**Exploring Your Support System**

**Purpose:**  
This worksheet is designed to help you identify, evaluate, and strengthen your support system. By understanding who you can rely on and how to ask for help, you can build connections that foster healing, resilience, and growth.

**1. What Is a Support System?**  
A support system consists of the people, resources, and networks that provide encouragement, guidance, and care during challenging times. Trauma can make reaching out feel difficult, but strong connections are vital for healing. Reflecting on your support system helps you recognize existing resources and identify areas for growth.

* Who comes to mind when you think about your current support system?
* How does having support make you feel?

**2. Mapping Your Current Support System**  
Support can come in many forms—friends, family, professionals, or community groups. Each plays a unique role in your well-being.

* List three people who provide emotional support (e.g., listening, understanding):
* List three people who provide practical support (e.g., helping with tasks, offering advice):
* Are there gaps in your support system (e.g., areas where you feel alone or unsupported)?

**3. Strengthening Your Support System**  
Building a strong support system involves nurturing existing relationships and seeking new connections where needed.

* What is one way you can strengthen an existing supportive relationship (e.g., spending more time together, expressing appreciation)?
* What type of support do you feel you’re missing, and where could you look to find it (e.g., joining a support group, seeking professional help)?

**4. Overcoming Barriers to Reaching Out**  
Trauma can create obstacles to asking for help, such as fear of rejection, guilt, or a sense of self-reliance. Identifying and addressing these barriers can help you connect more openly with others.

* What thoughts or fears hold you back from reaching out for support?
* How can you challenge these fears with self-compassion and courage?

**5. Expanding Your Network**  
Sometimes, broadening your support system involves connecting with new people or communities who understand your experiences.

* What types of groups or activities could help you build new connections (e.g., support groups, community events, faith-based gatherings)?
* What is one step you can take this week to expand your support system?

**6. Communicating Your Needs**  
Expressing your needs clearly helps others understand how they can support you.

* Reflect on a time when someone supported you in a meaningful way. What did they do, and how did it help?
* What is one need you’d like to communicate to someone in your support system? How can you express it clearly and respectfully?

**7. Reflection: Recognizing the Value of Support**  
Support systems are dynamic and grow stronger through intentional care and connection.

* What have you learned about your support system through this reflection?
* How can you show gratitude to someone in your support system this week?

**Conclusion:**  
Your support system is a vital part of your healing journey. By recognizing your current connections, seeking new ones, and communicating your needs, you are creating a network that uplifts and sustains you. Remember, you are not alone—there is strength in seeking support and sharing your journey with others.