

The AND Practice

Both/And Thinking Worksheet

What is Both/And Thinking?

“BUT” creates a hierarchy - it suggests one truth cancels out the other. “AND” allows both truths to coexist with equal validity. This is especially important in chronic illness, where we need to hold both grief and gratitude simultaneously.

The Problem with “BUT”

“I’m in pain, BUT I should be grateful I can still walk.”

The word “BUT” dismisses the pain and introduces shame. It suggests you shouldn’t feel pain because you have something to be grateful for.

The Power of “AND”

“I’m in pain AND I’m grateful I can still walk.”

Both things are true. Neither cancels the other. You can be in pain and grateful. You can grieve and appreciate. You can struggle and find moments of light.

Examples of Both/And Thinking

“I’m exhausted from this flare AND I’m grateful for my comfortable bed.”

“This disease ruined my plans AND I’m building something new.”

“I’m frustrated with my limitations AND I’m proud of my resilience.”

“I hate having RA AND I love the community I’ve found.”

“I’m angry at my body for failing me AND I’m grateful for the parts that still work.”

“I’m grieving my old life AND I’m discovering new strengths.”

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Your Turn: Practice AND Statements

Hard truth:

AND (acknowledgment or gratitude)

Hard truth:

AND (acknowledgment or gratitude)