

## Shadow work prompt exercises

Shadow work is the highest form of work you can do. It is a great way of stepping outside the box to experience inner healing and transformation through self-awareness. The more you become aware of your shadow self and accept it, the more embodied you are as a conscious being and the more agency you have over yourself and your life.

### Identify your triggers

Think about someone who has a trait or habit you find annoying. Quite often the traits we don't like in another person are those that we don't like within ourselves.

Ask yourself a couple of questions:

- What is it about X that I don't like?
- Do I have some of those traits sometimes?
- Why is it so hard to be around them?
- How do those traits come to the surface when I am around them?
- How does that make me feel?



Reflect on what comes up for you during this exercise.

### Look into your family tree

Researching your family tree can be an interesting exercise in learning more about members you may not know that well – or maybe too well. Draw up a diagram of your family members starting with grandparents and working your way through to yourself. Then look at what attributes each has – the good and the bad – to get an honest picture of who you know them to be. You may love your family but have one relative who has a dark side. Spend time reflecting on all those qualities and then ask yourself which reside within you.

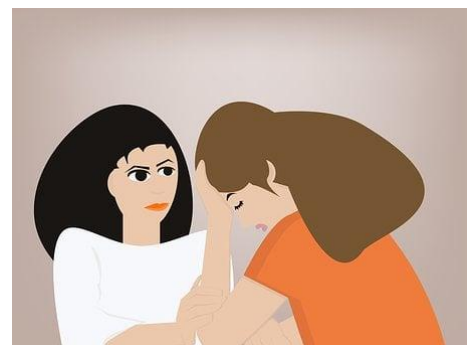


### Analyse the times when you overdo it

Looking into the parts of your life where you tend to overdo or overthink things can provide you with an insight on how you interact with others. Do you always work late? Why? Ask yourself the question 'What do I overdo in my life?' Write down your honest answer. Reflect on what void you are trying to fill or what you are trying to achieve.

### Say it out loud

Talking out loud can be a good way help in your journey of self-acceptance and decrease embarrassment about the shadow self. First, identify the parts of your shadow that you don't like and in a discussion with either a trusted friend, psychologist or holistic counsellor speak your concerns out loud. You might say that you want to feel safe and protected which has taught you that you have to be weak. Spend some time discussing how the truth has impacted your life and come up with ways to change the script so that it benefits you.



## Mirror image

Using the mirror image technique is a good way to help you identify what you are projecting. It can be uncomfortable and challenging at first, but it can be enlightening to discover what has been hidden in your shadow.

The next time you are interacting with another person, reflect on how you think and feel about them. Are your thoughts negative or positive? If they are negative, ask yourself what you may be projecting to feel like that. Are you feeling judgemental of their behaviour that you cannot get a word in? If so, your shadow self is projecting the shame you feel about when you want to speak up for yourself, but you do not.



## Draining vs. energising

There are some things in your daily life that either drain your energy or lift and energise you. This prompt exercise allows you to understand how those daily experiences impact on you.

On a sheet of paper, or a blank page in your journal, make two columns. At the top of column one write 'things that drain me'. At the top of column two write 'things that energise me'. Sit in reflection and think about the interactions you have on a daily basis. Identify those that hold you back and write them in column one. Then identify those that energise you and add value to your life. Write them in column two.



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**Disclaimer** - Don't be afraid to ask for help. You don't have to go through shadow work alone if it becomes too stressful or upsetting, depending on what comes up for you. You can seek the assistance of your doctor, a psychologist or a holistic counsellor who are trained to listen and guide you through shadow work. Sometimes it helps to have someone go on the journey with you – especially if you are new to shadow work.