

Lyra




Press Pause



FLASHCARDS



**to support your
mental health**



Thanks for deciding to press pause with us. The mental health tips in this deck come directly from Lyra mental health providers for you to use in your everyday life. Read one card per day in any order, or shuffle and draw whenever you need a mindful moment.

You can also pull these out at the dinner table as a conversation starter, kick off a meeting with a moment of reflection, or draw a card as a moment of transition between work and home life.

Disclaimer: The content of these cards is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.





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3. Open Up

Quality conversations help build trust and deepen the intimacy in our relationships. Today, try opening up and being vulnerable with a loved one. It's not always easy, but it'll bring you closer together.





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4. Listen Well

Everyone wants to feel heard and understood. Today, try asking a loved one open-ended questions, and really listen to their answers. Show them they can rely on you for a safe space to share their sorrows and joys, and to just be themselves.





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5. Be Intentional

Frequently, we spend our free time and mental focus on things that are convenient or out of habit—like smartphones and TV. Unfortunately, research indicates that this can worsen one's mood. In your next moment of free time, try an activity that will bring you joy, meaning, rest, or connection. Consider how you can spend intentional time engaged with valued people or activities.





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6. Here & Now

The practice of mindfulness asks for us to notice the present moment fully, right as it's happening. Today, make the conscious decision to focus on your breath instead. Put your hand on your stomach and take three long breaths. Try to breathe deep into your belly and make your exhales longer than your inhales. This initiates a calming response throughout your body.







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7. Practice Self-Compassion

Next time you're having a hard time, consider how you'd respond to a friend or family member you love who was feeling depleted. Think about the words of reassurance that you would offer them. Next, turn those words of comfort and encouragement inward. Give yourself the same compassion you would give to someone you love.





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8. Sleep Hygiene

A set sleep schedule—going to bed at the same time every night and waking at the same time every morning—is one of the best gifts you can give yourself. Try establishing a routine: your body and mind will thank you.





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9. Screen-Free Sleep

Scrolling is the sworn enemy of sleep. For more restful nights, consider making your bed a screen-free sanctuary by leaving all electronics (especially your phone) out of reach at least an hour before bed.







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10. Get Off the Clock

Find yourself watching the clock all night, anxious you won't get enough sleep? Just looking at the numbers activates your brain's arousal system, keeping your mind too alert for your body to rest. Next time, resist checking the clock at all, and take three long belly breaths instead.





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11. Relax, Head to Toe

Stressed out or struggling to sleep? Try this:

- Tense your feet and toe muscles, then relax
- Slowly make your way up your body, tensing and relaxing each muscle group until you reach your forehead
- Focus on the relaxation that fills your body until you drift off to sleep or into rest





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12. Just One Thing

To cultivate a grateful mindset, try thinking of just one thing you're thankful for each day. You'll train your brain to notice the good things in life, and realize that even the worst days have parts worth celebrating.

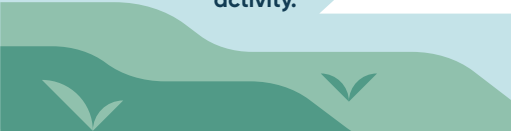





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13. Do, Then Feel

We don't always feel like doing the healthy behaviors that improve wellbeing, like exercising or socializing. Low mood, zapped energy, or lack of motivation are frequent barriers. Instead of becoming helpless to how you feel, take charge and commit to doing the healthy behavior for just 10 minutes, even if you don't initially feel like it. You'll likely find that motivation and energy come after you initiate the activity.





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14. Stroll and Savor

Today, take a short “savoring walk” to appreciate your surroundings, wherever you are. What do you see, hear, and smell? Pay close attention to those sensations. Just 20 minutes can make a world of difference in your mental state.





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15. Say Thanks

Today, write a quick thank-you note to someone who's had a positive impact on your life. (Pen and paper is great, but a short email or text also works.) Consider writing to someone you didn't get a chance to thank at the time, who might appreciate hearing from you.





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16. Seek Out the Positive

Between the news and social media, we're inundated by stories of what's wrong in the world. It's important to be clear-eyed about the world's challenges, but fixating on bad news can de-motivate us if we aren't also attuned to stories that promote inspiration or hope. Be sure to balance your perspective by also seeking positivity and optimism in your news sources.






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17. Let Go of Unhelpful Thoughts

Next time your mood dips or your anxiety spikes, tune into what your mind is telling you at that moment. Unless your thoughts are helping you solve a problem, gain a healthy perspective, or feel better, they're probably adding to your distress. Instead, redirect your attention outward and pursue actions that improve your mood.





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18. You're Not Alone

It's normal to feel isolated and disconnected by current events. Today, make a point to reach out to people in your life for support, and offer them empathy in return. Connecting with others makes us feel less helpless.





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19. Make a Plan

How do you usually deal with overwhelming emotions? Think about strategies you've used in the past to get through tough times: the people you reach out to, the things you do, the helpful things you've told yourself. Build a playbook for the next hard day—whether it's a note in your phone or on a notepad next to your bed.





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20. Airplane Mode

If you consistently notice a darker mood or anxiety after scrolling, take a break. Put your phone on airplane mode for an hour or a day. If that's too much, start by limiting the time you spend on certain apps, like social media and the news.







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21. Use Distraction Strategically

Avoiding life's problems is a recipe for distress, but when our emotions get the best of us, we need to take a "time out" to calm down before moving forward. Distraction is a helpful tool to reset, so that you can address the problem more effectively at a later point. Just be sure to choose healthy distractions such as music, meditation, talking with a friend, or exercise.





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22. Reading Minds

“Mind-reading” is a common thinking trap where we assume we know what others think. If someone is short with you, you might construct a story that they’re angry at you, when they’re really just busy. Next time, try to spot the trap.





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23. Seeking Approval

Imagine that you have the approval of every single person on the planet. Everyone loves and respects you, no matter what you do. What, then, would you do with your life? How would you treat others? What can you implement today?





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24. Your Mission

What's your personal mission statement? A mission statement for a company communicates what they stand for, and a personal mission statement is about your values—who you want to be and how you want to act in your everyday life. Keep it somewhere you can reference often.





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25. Forgive Them

Forgiving people who let you down is something you do for yourself, not the other person. How do you want to act in your life when people disappoint you?





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26. "Happy 80th!"

Imagine it's your 80th birthday party. A few friends make speeches about how you've lived your life. What kind of things would you like them to say? How might you live your life in a way that makes that future a reality?





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27. Catastrophizing

A common thinking trap is “catastrophizing,” or overestimating the consequences of negative events. For example, if you’re running 10 minutes late for work, you might worry that you’ll get fired or yelled at, when neither of those is realistic. If you find yourself in this thinking trap, practice naming it while it happens.





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28. "I Should..."

"Should" statements, like telling yourself "I shouldn't feel this way" or "he should behave differently" are counterproductive. Expecting the world to work a certain way disconnects us from the way it actually is. Instead, practice lending compassion to yourself if you're upset when things don't go the way you envision them.





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29. Find the Facts

The next time you notice self-critical thoughts, look for the counterevidence. What would a loved one say? What evidence is there that you might be wrong about yourself?






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30. 4-Step "I" Method

When trying to get your needs met,
use "I statements" –

1. Start by stating your emotions with "I feel..."
 2. Explain the situation that provokes your feelings with "when you..."
 3. Describe the rationale for your feelings with "because..."
 4. Kindly propose what you need with "I'm hoping you can..."
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31. Help Others Keep You Accountable

Trying to improve your behaviors or habits? Share your plan with friends, colleagues, and family members.

Research tells us that setting intentions with others creates “social accountability” and increases the likelihood that we follow through in pursuing our goals.





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32. Check Yourself

Next time something bothers you, ask yourself, “What is it about this situation that’s so upsetting?” Try to understand the feelings as a personal reaction, not something the other person is doing to you.





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33. THINK First

When dealing with conflict,
be sure to THINK:

Think about the issue from the
other person's perspective

Have empathy for their pain

Interpretation: ask, "what
else could be happening here?"

Notice what's working well

Kindness is key

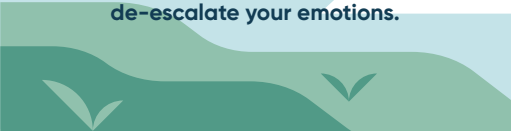




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34. Seek Alternative Explanations

When you feel hurt by someone's actions, take note of your initial thought as to why they behaved that way. Did you assume that their behavior was intended to harm or neglect you? Instead, try generating at least 4 alternative explanations for their behavior. This helps to de-personalize the situation and de-escalate your emotions.





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35. Thoughts ≠ Facts

The next time a negative thought comes up, simply notice it until it passes. Thoughts aren't facts, just temporary experiences. We can't control our thoughts, but we can control our relationship to them.






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36. Help Others by Asking for Help

If you notice that a fear of being a burden is preventing you from asking for support from loved ones, remember that being a helper can benefit one's mental health. Research shows that people feel better about themselves when they're able to help others, and the give-and-take of support between friends or loved ones can increase closeness in the relationship.





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37. Smile File

To fight impostor syndrome, start a “smile file” full of positive feedback. A screenshot of a kind email from a colleague or a strong performance review can remind you of your value when you start to feel less-than.





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38. Your Obituary

Imagine you died tomorrow. Write your own obituary, listing your accomplishments, key relationships, and people you helped. What challenges did life throw your way, and how did you respond? Use it to inspire the way you live your life.





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39. Move It

Stressed? Try stretching it out, then take a quick walk around the block. Just a 10-minute walk can boost your mood for up to two hours, and help clear the cobwebs from your mind.





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40. Zoom Out

If a problem is overwhelming you, zoom out and look at it in the context of your life overall. Will this still matter in a month? A year? A decade? A little perspective can help you process it.





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41. Make Something

Today, create space for something creative. Do a puzzle, doodle in a journal, buy an adult coloring book, bake a cake...anything that's not work-related. Making things makes us feel good.





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42. Reward Yourself

Next time you reach a goal, even a smaller one, congratulate yourself with a tiny reward, like a short social media break or a smiley face on your to-do list. Even minor acts of reinforcement keep you motivated, and make you more likely to keep up good habits.





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43. Reach Out

Make a point to contact someone you haven't spoken to in awhile but care about, like an old friend or extended family member. You'll feel good for making the connection, and can get support from someone with perspective on your life.

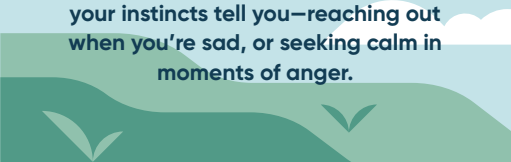




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44. Notice Your Impulse and Do the Opposite

When our feelings are especially intense, we are prone to instinctive behaviors that lead us astray. For example, we may isolate ourselves when feeling depressed, even though social connection is one of the best ways to improve mood. Instead, practice doing the opposite of what your instincts tell you—reaching out when you're sad, or seeking calm in moments of anger.





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45. Take a Break

Not enough time in the day? It sounds counter-intuitive, but you need a break. Regular work breaks actually make you more productive by boosting your attention span and preventing cabin fever.






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46. Track Your Progress

Help yourself achieve your behavior change goals by tracking your progress in concrete, measurable ways. Consider tracking metrics like duration and frequency for a given behavior you're wanting to change and observing how you progress over time. Seeing measurable improvement will help keep you motivated, while seeing plateaus or dips will help you to intervene early, before you're too far off track.





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47. Dance It Out

Did you know that movement can help your body process overwhelming emotions? Here's your cue to play your favorite song, and dance it out.





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48. Think Flexibly

When someone upsets you, try to put yourself in their shoes. Could something else be bothering them?

Empathizing helps broaden the range of emotions you feel in the moment so you can react thoughtfully.





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49. Serenity

Serenity involves changing what you can change, accepting what you can't change, and developing the wisdom to know the difference.

Some things are beyond your control, and that's okay. Reflect on a situation in your life where this concept might apply.





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50. Leave Things Open

Today, instead of asking “yes” or “no” questions, try asking open-ended questions that start with “how” or “what.” For example, “How are you feeling?” or “What are your thoughts?” This signals you truly care what the other person has to say.





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51. Sum It Up

In your next conversation, try to summarize what the other person shared to demonstrate that you're listening closely. For example, "You're concerned about whether we'll meet the deadline and you'd like more help from the team. Do I have that right?"





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52. Show Yourself Grace

We're often harder on ourselves than we are with other people. Remember that you've dealt with working and living under extraordinary circumstances, and are stronger than you think.





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53. Set Boundaries

When was the last time you set a boundary? Taking an assertive position, like limiting communication with someone, can help you protect your emotional energy. State your position neutrally and without judgment, but stand your ground.





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54. Schedule Joy

Today, write down three activities you love to do (or would like to try) that bring you joy. Then, plan a specific time in your calendar to do those things in the next week. Having something to look forward to can be a joy on its own.






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55. A Not-To-Do List

If your to-do list seems overwhelming, take a moment to write yourself a not-to-do list. Include things you've deliberately chosen to deprioritize. Listing the things that aren't true priorities can help us focus on the things that are.



A stylized landscape illustration. The top half of the image is a light blue sky with a white cloud on the left. The bottom half shows rolling green hills in shades of light and dark green. There are two white clouds on the right side, one above the hills and one below. Two small green plants with two leaves each are on the hills. The text is centered in the sky area.

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enroll with Lyra, your mental
health benefit, today.**