

Cheat Sheet: FAP Evokes*

Awareness of Thoughts/Feelings/Sensations

Can you slow down right now, take a deep breath and connect with your body?

Can you take a moment to notice what you're feeling right now?

Can you really notice what it feels like in your body...

- as you tell me this?
- to hear this from me?

You've said it's hard to figure out what you're feeling. How about if I name some feelings you might be having, and you let me know what words seem to fit?

Just now, I noticed a flash of emotion as you were talking. Did you notice what you were feeling in that moment?

Did you notice that you moved on quickly when I gave you that feedback? What was happening there?

- I had the the sense you were brushing me off
- I had the sense you were uncomfortable
- I had the sense that _____
- Does that happen in other areas of your life when you get feedback?

Awareness of Values/Needs/Goals/Identity

Do you know what you want from today's session? What you need?

In this moment, what feels really vital and meaningful to you?

What do you long for?

What goal feels the most difficult to approach right now?

In what areas do you feel disappointed about the progress you've made?

In what areas could we have made more progress?

I'm having a hard time following what's important to you in this. Can you help me understand?

Excerpted and adapted from: Holman, G., Kanter, J.W., Tsai, M., & R. Kohlenberg (2017). *Functional Analytic Psychotherapy Made Simple: A practical guide to therapeutic relationships*. Oakland, CA: New Harbingers Press.

Awareness of Others

What do you think I'm feeling/thinking right now?

I'm wondering if you'd be willing to pay more attention to my face, my expression, my eyes right now. Really notice me.

What are some reactions you've had to me that might be off-putting / inappropriate / hurtful / _____?

What do you think I'm feeling about our work?

Are you aware of how I'm reacting to what you're saying?

You seem really tuned in to how I'm reacting right now. What are you noticing?

It seems like you engage in a lot of conflict in your relationships, and you're interacting that way with me. What do you think that's like for me? For other people who care about you?

Part of making a relationship work is being tuned into the other person. How aware are you of how you're impacting me in terms of _____?

Courage: Vulnerability & Emotion

What were you thinking or feeling on your way here today?

What were you thinking or feeling while you were waiting for our session to begin?

People have different ways of suppressing feelings. Some people distract themselves with their phones, some people _____. What do you do to suppress uncomfortable feelings?

It's hard for me to know what you're feeling based on your facial expression (or lack thereof). Can you describe the physical sensations you're having?

What's your reaction to

- what I just said?
- to that idea?
- to the homework assignment?
- to me as your therapist?

Can we spend five minutes really talking about how we're feeling right now, in this moment, from the heart?

What are you feeling right now?

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What thoughts/feelings are here now?

What thoughts and feelings are you having about the end of our therapy relationship?

What's it like for you to hear my feedback?

It's painful for you to hear me say that -- I want to acknowledge that. Can you tell me more about how it feels?

I have the sense that you're being very careful about your words right now. What are you avoiding saying? If you were less careful, what would you say?

I know (*our disagreement/this disappointment/_____*) is hard for you to stay with. Are you willing to keep talking with me about this?

You seem angry but your words don't reflect that. What if you put your anger into words?

Can you express the hurt beneath your anger? That would make it easier for me to hear what you're upset with me about.

What does it bring up for you that we're getting closer?

It means a lot to me that you just shared something with me that you don't usually tell people, but you're acting like it's no big deal. What are you feeling about having told me what you just said?

I'd like you to slow down and say that to me again. Can you feel what you're saying?

Courage: Self-Disclosure

What would be hard for us to talk about?

What do you not want to talk about?

What do you have a hard time expressing yourself about?

What's difficult for you between sessions?

What's happened that 's been painful for you to discover?

Which of your behaviors tend to bring closeness in your relationships? What do you tend to do that decreases closeness? How would you feel about us watching for those behaviors in here?

What's hard for you to tell me about yourself?

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In what area do you feel disappointed about the progress you've made?

What happens in here that makes it hard for you to manage/make room for your feelings?

What stands out to you most about your interactions with me?

When do you feel closest/most connected to me?

What powerful experiences have you had because of our work together?

What's most vulnerable for you to say to me as we say good-bye?

What regrets do you have about the therapy -- what would you like to have gone differently?

Is there any critical feedback you'd like to share with me?

It seems that you're really making therapy a priority. Can you tell me what your therapy relationship with me means to you?

Courage: Asking for a Need to be Met

What do you not want to talk about?

What can we do to connect right now?

What do you need from me right now?

What do you want to change about our work together?

What's an area that's important for us to continue talking about?

How do you wish I would change? What do you wish I'd do differently?

What's hard for you to say to me?

I hear a need in what you're saying, but it's not quite clear to me. Can you help me understand?

I notice that you're working really hard to take care of me right now. Who takes care of you? How can I take better care of you?

I think it's very hard for you -- scary even -- to ask for what you need here. Would you be willing to ask me despite your fear?

I have the sense that your anger is overwhelming everything else right now. What do you think is needed?

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Love: Providing Safety & Acceptance

You seem kind of scary to me right now. Is there a way you can be less scary while still remaining true to what you feel?

Love: Expressing Understanding, Validation & Empathy

What's important for me to know right now?

When do you feel safest/closest to me?

What do you like or appreciate about me? What will you always remember?

It means a lot to me that you're listening to what I have to say right now. Often, you're very focused on telling your story, so it means a lot to me when you tune in to my input.

Love: Giving What's Needed

What could you do to improve our relationship?

I think it would help me connect with you if _____

I'm wondering what you appreciate about our work. Would you tell me?

It seems that anger is your go-to emotion, and it can really push people away. Can you express your anger to me in a way that brings us closer?

It's hard for me to tell you this because I don't want you to feel distanced from me. And this is important, so here goes: When you express your feelings in a really intense way sometimes, it scares me. I want to stay present with you, and it would be helpful for me if you lowered your voice and slowed down a bit. What do you think?

I notice that you just changed the subject. Can we go back?

I notice that you're not looking at me as you say that. Can you look at me?

Love: Reciprocal Disclosure

Are you upset with me?

What do I do that bothers you?

What are things I've done that you thought were insensitive?

What are some things I've done to hurt you or make you feel angry?

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When do you feel closest to me?

I want you to know that I respect your anger about this. I'm sorry about what I did. Are you willing to let me try to repair the situation?

Would you be willing to compromise with me?

It seems that when you're unhappy with something, you tend to blame other people, including me. Can we each look at what we're contributing to this conflict we're having?

The ability to forgive another person's mistakes is essential in maintaining close relationships. I get that you're really mad at me and want to walk away from our relationship right now. But that would just be a repeat of what you've done with everyone else who's card about you. Are you willing to do something different this time? Will you work on forgiving my mistakes?

Love:Self-Acceptance

What do you have a hard time expressing about yourself?

What can you accept in yourself right now?

What do you like and appreciate about yourself?

It seems like you're being really hard on yourself right now. What can you appreciate about what you're doing in this situation?

Self-Love: Accepting Love from Others

What are you feeling in your body as you hear this appreciation from me?

Can you accept my appreciation of you?

How accepting of my appreciation are you right now?

Self-Love: Self-Care

What do you need from me right now that would help you take care of yourself?

How can you take care of yourself in this moment?

If you were to make our session today the most nourishing and supportive for yourself, how would you approach it?