



# Post-Game Emotional Release Workbook



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## Introduction:

### The Importance of Post-Game Emotional Release

**Explain:** After a competition, athletes often experience a range of emotions—such as pride, frustration, disappointment, or relief. When negative emotions go unprocessed, they can accumulate, impacting mental clarity, confidence, and performance in future games. Developing a routine for emotional release can help athletes reflect, grow, and reset for the next challenge.

**Research Basis:** Emotional regulation is linked to improved resilience and stress management in athletes, helping them perform at their best. Studies show that expressive writing and physical activity are effective methods for emotional processing and mental well-being (Pennebaker, 1997; Hays, 2019)

### 1. Understanding Your Emotions:

**Overview:** Athletes often experience both highs and lows post-competition. Identifying and naming these emotions is the first step to managing them.

**Exercise:** Write down three emotions you commonly feel after a competition, especially one that didn't go as planned. Reflect on why each emotion might arise.

#### Reflection Questions:

1. When did you last feel each of these emotions after a game?

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2. How did each emotion impact your behavior, thoughts, or physical state?

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3. What situations or triggers usually bring these emotions to the surface?

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## 2. Methods for Emotional Release:

**Overview:** There are multiple ways to release emotions—each method allows the mind and body to reset and refocus.

### Options for Emotional Release:

**Writing:** Take 5-10 minutes to write about your thoughts and feelings. This helps clarify what you're experiencing and can reduce emotional intensity.

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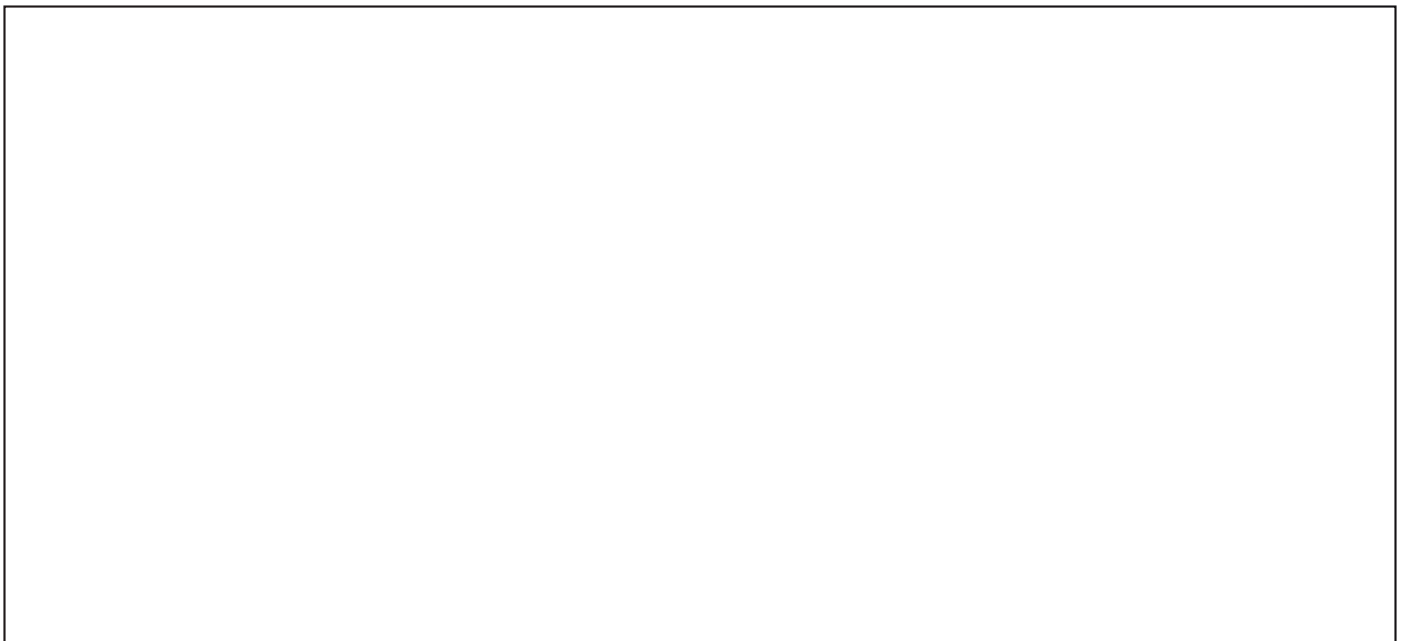
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**Drawing/Sketching:** Illustrating emotions can be a creative, non-verbal way to express what might be difficult to put into words.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for drawing or sketching.



**Physical Release:** Physical activities, such as a brisk walk, stretching, or a brief workout, can ease tension and clear the mind.

*Instructions: After your next competition, choose one of the above methods to release your emotions.*

### Writing Prompts:

1. If writing, answer: "What happened during the game that left a lasting impact on me?"

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2. If drawing, sketch shapes or symbols representing how you feel.

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3. If doing a physical release, note any specific movements or stretches that helped you feel more relaxed.

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## 3. Reflective Writing for Emotional Processing

**Explain:** Reflecting on emotional experiences can deepen self-awareness and promote personal growth. Use the prompts below to process emotions after a game.

### Writing Prompts:

1. What emotion(s) did I feel the most strongly after my last competition?

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2. How did I initially respond to these feelings?

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3. Did my response help or hurt my mental clarity and emotional state?

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4. How would I ideally like to respond to similar situations in the future?

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**Tips for Reflection:** Encourage athletes to answer these prompts honestly and without judgment. Remind them that this exercise is about understanding emotions, not suppressing them.

## 4. Developing Your Personal Emotional Release Routine

**Overview:** Creating a personalized post-game routine helps solidify emotional processing as part of the athlete's regular habits.

### Step-by-Step Guide:

- 1. Identify Triggers:** Think about specific situations in games that tend to create a strong emotional response. Write these down.
- 2. Select a Release Method:** Choose which of the release methods (writing, drawing, physical release) feels the most helpful for you.
- 3. Set a Post-Game Routine:** Decide when and where you'll do your emotional release. For instance, "I'll take 5 minutes in the locker room after each game to write or sketch my feelings."

### Example Routine:

**Trigger:** After a loss or mistake.

**Response:** 5 minutes of reflective journaling, followed by a quick stretching routine.





### Reflection Questions:

1. What do I need to feel emotionally balanced after a game?

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2. How will I stay committed to this routine, even when I'm feeling disappointed or frustrated?

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## 5. Tracking Emotional Patterns and Progress

**Purpose:** Tracking patterns in post-game emotions can reveal common triggers and help athletes see their growth over time.

**Exercise:** Create an Emotion Tracker

**Instructions:** After each competition, log your primary emotions, what triggered them, and your chosen release method. Rate your emotional release on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = didn't help at all, 5 = felt much better)

### Emotion Tracking Chart Example:

| Date | Emotion(s) Felt | Trigger/Source | Release Method Used | Rating (1-5) | Notes (e.g., what helped, what didn't) |
|------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------|--|
|      |                 |                |                     |              |  |
|      |                 |                |                     |              |  |
|      |                 |                |                     |              |  |
|      |                 |                |                     |              |  |







| Date | Frustration, Disappointment | Missed shot at end of game | 5 min writing + deep breathing | 4 | Felt calmer afterward, writing helped me process. |
|------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
|      |                             |                            |                                |   |   |
|      |                             |                            |                                |   |   |
|      |                             |                            |                                |   |   |
|      |                             |                            |                                |   |   |

| Date | Pride, Relief | Great teamwork | Light stretching | 5 | Physical release was refreshing, felt proud. |
|------|---------------|----------------|------------------|---|--|
|      |               |                |                  |   |  |
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### Reflection Prompt:

1. What patterns do you notice in your emotions and responses?

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2. Are certain release methods more effective for certain emotions?

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## 6. Looking Forward - Setting Goals for Emotional Growth

**Overview:** Reflecting on past emotional responses can help athletes set future goals.

### Goal-Setting Prompts:

1. In which situations do I want to improve my emotional response?

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2. What one new habit could help me better manage emotions after a competition?

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3. How will I measure my progress in emotional resilience?

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### Example Goals:

**Goal:** Reduce frustration after mistakes by focusing on immediate mental reset exercises.

**Goal:** Practice deep breathing when feeling stressed to avoid carrying tension into the next game.

**Sources Cited:** Pennebaker, J. W. (1997). \*Opening Up: The Healing Power of Expressing Emotions.

**Guilford Press:** Hays, K. F. (2019). \*Integrating Mindfulness Strategies into Sport Psychology Interventions.\*

**Oxford University Press:** Martens, R. (2012). \*Successful Coaching.\* Human Kinetics Publishers.





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