



**THE SHITTY
FIRST
DRAFT**

A guide for processing out the pain and anger

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“The most dangerous stories we make up are the narratives that diminish our inherent worthiness. We must reclaim the truth about our lovability, divinity, and creativity.”

Brene Brown

So what is

THE SHITTY FIRST DRAFT

The Shitty First Draft (SFD) is a processing tool for dealing with the situations that stick with us even after hours or days or weeks! How do we let go of the pain, anger, and frustration? Brene Brown talks about the Shitty First Draft in some of her talks. She describes the research conducted by a trauma therapist who found that patients were able to process their trauma faster by writing about the experience regularly. The power behind writing it all out 4-5 times helped them process their trauma. The idea intrigued me so much that I started using this concept to process my own emotions when it came to situations I could not emotionally let go of.

This guide is my process that I created off of the Shitty First Draft (SFD) description. I use it when I cannot let go of a situation and I also use it with my coaching clients. The process also creates awareness in my life and relationships. Sometimes it only takes one time through, and other times it takes multiple times through the Shitty First Draft process.

This is a slow and intentional process. All of the steps do not have to be conducted in one sitting. I often recommend that there be time between each step so that the work can settle in. Take your time and remember to breathe.

01

Write Your Shitty First Draft.

Pick an event or situation that is still upsetting to you. It could have happened today or years ago. Without any censorship, write everything that comes to mind about what happened. Write your thoughts, feelings, beliefs about the event. Include every detail about the experience, including what you were wearing, the words that were exchanged, the day of the week, whatever comes to mind about it. **WRITE IT ALL.**



02

Write The Facts.

Next, you are going to review your shitty first draft (SFD) and look for facts. Things that qualify as facts include:

- exact words that were spoken
- actions that actually took place (stomping, throwing of things, pointing, etc)
- the day and time

03

Write Your Feelings.

Go through the Shitty First Draft and make a list of the emotions you listed. If you didn't put any in your SFD, then focus on the emotions that come up for you when reading the SFD. Write down every emotion that comes up. Consider the following:

- If you say you are angry, is there another emotion behind the anger?
- Are you feeling unworthy or not valued?



04

Write Your Thoughts.

Consider what thoughts you had in the moment.

- What did you think about the other person(s) involved?
- What did you think was their motivation behind their words and actions?
- What did you think the situation said about you?
- What did you think about your own reactions?

05

Write Your Beliefs.

Consider what beliefs you had in the moment.

- What did you believe about the other person(s) involved?
- What did you believe about your self?
- What did you believe about your worth?
- What did you believe that the situation meant?



06

Look For Links.

Look back over what you wrote about the facts, your feelings, and your beliefs. Do you see any connections between your thoughts and feelings? Do you see any links between your feelings and the facts? Or your beliefs and the facts?

07

Look For Disconnections.

Look over what you wrote about the facts, your feelings, and your beliefs. Do you see any disconnections between the facts and your feelings? Do you see any disconnections between the facts and your beliefs? Or between your beliefs and feelings?



08

Debrief.

After working through the previous steps, take a few minutes to write about any inconsistencies, validations, or insights that came up during the SFD process.

That's it.

TIP: REPEAT AS NECESSARY

The Shitty First Draft is not a complex process. It feels clunky at first and requires some intention and awareness. But working through this process can be incredibly beneficial in helping you become more aware of thought patterns and beliefs that may be negatively impacting your life and relationships. Sometimes, it's necessary to do the SFD more than once for a particular event and that's ok! There's no limit to how many times it should be done and doing it multiple times does not mean anything about you. It is simply a process for releasing hurt and anger.

I hope that this has been helpful for you. I would love to hear your feedback on this so feel free to reach out and connect!

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