



Emotional Carryover Worksheet


A reflection tool for noticing what you may be carrying from shift into home, relationships, or time off.



When the Shift Comes Home With You

Stress, tension, frustration, and emotional overload do not always stay at work. The body can clock out while the mind is still on scene. You may drive home, walk through the door, and still be fully inside the last call, running it back, feeling the weight of it, carrying the residue of what you absorbed on shift.

This is not weakness. It is what sustained exposure to high-stakes, high-emotion environments does to a human nervous system. The problem is not that you feel it. The problem is when it moves through you and into the people and spaces you care about, without you even realizing it happened.

 This worksheet is a self-check, not a diagnosis. Use it honestly. No one else needs to see it.

What Are You Bringing Home Right Now?

Check in with yourself honestly. Which of these are present right now, after shift?

Stress

A general tension in your body or mind that has not released since your last call or interaction.

Irritability

A short fuse. Small things feel bigger than they should. People feel like an interruption.

Exhaustion

Not just physical tiredness, a deep, hollow fatigue that sleep alone may not fix.

Mental Replaying

Running through a call, a decision, or an interaction on loop. Not letting it settle.

Emotional Numbness

Flat. Disconnected from what you normally feel. Going through the motions without presence.

Feeling Disconnected

Present in body, absent everywhere else. Hard to engage with your environment or the people in it.

How Is It Showing Up at Home?

Emotional carryover rarely announces itself directly. It leaks out in behavior. Recognize any of these?



Short Patience

Snapping at small things. Reacting faster and harder than the situation calls for.



Wanting Isolation

Pulling away from family or roommates. Needing walls instead of connection.



Staying Distracted

Phone, TV, anything to avoid sitting still with what is actually there.



Trouble Relaxing

The body is off duty but the nervous system has not received the message yet.



Feeling Emotionally Unavailable

There but not there. Your people sense it even when you cannot name it yourself.

Pause and Reset the System

Before you walk through the door, or right now, wherever you are, take 60 seconds. This is not a meditation. It is a nervous system interrupt. A signal that says: shift is over. You are here now.



Inhale Slowly

Exhale
Longer

Relax Jaw &
Shoulders

Feel Your Feet

Slow 60
Seconds

You do not need a perfect environment or extra time. You need 60 seconds and the willingness to use them. This is not about forgetting what happened. It is about choosing not to carry it forward into the next moment.



What Do You Need Before Reconnecting?

Coming home and immediately being available to everyone is not always realistic after a hard shift. Knowing what you need, and asking for it, is not selfish. It is smart. Check what applies:

Quiet

A few minutes without noise, questions, or demands before re-entering the household.

Food or Water

Basic physical needs that often go unmet during shift and directly affect mood and regulation.

A Shower

A physical transition ritual. Washing off the shift, literally and symbolically.

Ten Minutes Alone

Not avoidance. A brief buffer that allows you to arrive fully, rather than in fragments.

A Mental Reset

Acknowledging what happened on shift, setting it aside intentionally, and choosing what comes next.

- ✔ It is okay to ask your household for a few minutes before you are "on." That communication protects them too.

Closing Reminder

"Awareness creates choice. Noticing what you are carrying is the first step toward not passing it forward."

You do not have to be perfect at this. You just have to be willing to look. Every shift brings something with it. That is the nature of the work. What you do with it between the cruiser and the front door matters more than most people realize.

You showed up today.
That counts. The job is hard and you are still doing it. Give yourself credit for that before you ask anything more of yourself.

Your people at home need you present, not perfect.

Connection does not require having it all together. It requires showing up with some degree of awareness.

Use this worksheet again.

Emotional carryover is not a one-time event. Return to this check-in whenever the shift feels heavier than usual.

