If you completed the Interpersonal Savvy: How They Perceive You exercise, or even if you didn’t but want a tool to help you learn more about how you are being perceived, try a “red flag journal.”

What is that? Consider that if you are trying to change your behaviors you may have found that it isn’t easy. You intend to change, but sometimes the automatic or instinctive reactions just take over. It’s like waving a red flag! You can train yourself to detect a red flag and to slow down your reaction by thinking, “I’m seeing a red flag.” You can begin by tracking the times that you react based on instinct. Keep a “red flag journal” to gather information about your red flags and your behaviors. Grab any notebook and record this information:

- Specific situation
- Your feelings
- Your thoughts
- How you behaved
- What you want to do differently in the future

The most important step to identify is your “feelings” because these feelings at the root of your behavior are what you will adjust in order to change your behavior.

Study your journal to strengthen your ability to identify similar situations in the future. The next time a challenge arises you’ll recognize it and think, “Aha! There it is again!” You’ve taken control of the feeling-thought-behavior chain. Now you can decide how to act rather than simply acting from instinct. You can choose to be interpersonally savvy.