

Conversation 9: Breaking the Cycle

Interrupting Old Patterns Before They Take Over

Wouldn't it be great if your patterns could simply disappear? You wake up one morning and discover that people-pleasing, self-doubt, and overthinking have gone. The inner critic's given up and packed their bags. Unfortunately, the old patterns rarely disappear overnight but what *can* change immediately is your relationship with them.

In the beginning, the pattern runs your life without you noticing. Then one day, you become aware of the pattern just **after** it's happened. A short time later you become aware of it **as** it's happening. Eventually you notice yourself interrupting the pattern **before** you allow it to take over in the next moment. **That is progress.** The pattern hasn't vanished completely as of yet, but **awareness** of the pattern is arriving sooner.

As **The Power Of The Pause** helps the **gap between recognising the pattern and choosing differently** to become **shorter** you return to an emotionally regulated version of yourself more quickly. That's what breaking the cycle is - not never falling back into old ways but learning that you **no longer need to set up home and live there.**

Imagine taking a wrong turning while driving somewhere unfamiliar. Years ago, you'd have become distressed, told yourself how useless you are, what an idiot, driven for miles before calming down enough to turn around. Now imagine your sat-nav quietly saying, 'recalculating.' It doesn't shout. It doesn't

criticise. It doesn't say you've ruined the journey. It simply finds another route. Healing needs more of that energy. Less self-punishment, more recalculating.

Every human being loses their way. It's not about who stays lost; it's about who learns to come back and how quickly. For years, perhaps decades, you may have believed that one mistake meant failure, one emotional reaction meant you were back where you started, one people-pleasing moment meant nothing had changed. But that simply isn't true. If you **notice the pattern** you're no longer unconsciously going through the motions. If you **question the pattern** you're no longer powerless. If **you interrupt the pattern** you're no longer trapped. And if you **return to your emotionally regulated self after the pattern** you're no longer living the life you once lived.

That is the **pattern breaking**.

There's another reason people struggle to create lasting change: they keep measuring the wrong thing. They ask: did I get through the week without anxiety? Did I avoid every trigger? Did I walk away when I could have succumbed to people-pleasing?

They are impossible standards. Instead, ask different questions:

- ♥ Did I notice sooner?
- ♥ Did I pause more often?
- ♥ Did I return to myself more quickly?
- ♥ Did I show myself more compassion than I used to?

Those questions measure progress.

Healing isn't the absence of old patterns. It's the presence of a **new relationship** with your old patterns.

The person you were five or eight conversations ago might have apologised automatically. Today you pause. The old version of you might have spiralled for three days; today you recover in a few hours. One day it will be thirty minutes. Then five. Then perhaps only a few breaths.

That is lasting change - not because life stopped challenging you, but because you stopped abandoning yourself every time it did. That's the greatest shift of all. The old you believed every difficult emotion meant something had gone wrong. The new you is aware that difficult emotions are simply invitations to return to your values, your breathing, your boundaries, your healing habit.

Lasting change is not built on never losing your way; it's built on:

- ♥ **Consciously choosing a Power Pause.**
- ♥ Knowing when to ask, '**what does this situation need from me right now**'.
- ♥ And knowing that you *always* have the **choice to do something different**.