

The Practice

Gratitude for the Pattern

Over the next week, I'd like you to do something that will feel **unfamiliar**: instead of criticising your coping mechanisms, **I'd like you to show them gratitude.**

Every time you notice a familiar pattern appear, pause for a moment and silently say: I can see what you're trying to do. Thank you, but I've got this.

That's all.

- ♥ You're not trying to stop the pattern.
- ♥ You're not wrestling with it.
- ♥ You're not trying to argue with it.
- ♥ You're not trying to change it.
- ♥ You're simply recognising it.

Perhaps you notice yourself worrying excessively about something. Instead of becoming frustrated, pause and say: **I can see you're trying to protect me from being caught off guard. Thanks, I've got this now.**

You might notice yourself trying to keep everyone happy. Pause and say: **I can see you're trying to protect me from rejection and confrontation. Thanks, I've got this now.**

You notice yourself avoiding a difficult conversation. Pause and say: **I can see you're trying to protect me from conflict. Thanks, I've got this now.**

Perhaps you notice yourself striving for perfection. Pause and say: **I can see you're trying to protect me from criticism. Thanks, I've got this now.**

Throughout the week, treat your coping mechanisms as though they're outdated bodyguards. They mean well. They've worked hard. They've kept you safe. The problem is some of them are over-zealous; they're showing off, loving the spotlight, feeling like a hero as they flex their muscles. But they no longer recognise when the danger has passed; you may even find yourself thinking, 'what on earth was that.'

Your job this week is simply to notice which bodyguards/coping mechanisms appear most often. What situations trigger them? What are they most afraid might happen? But more significantly, **notice what they're trying to prevent.**

At the end of each day, ask yourself:

What coping mechanisms showed up today?

What were they trying to protect me from?

Did I respond with criticism or understanding?

Did I learn anything new about myself?

Most people spend years feeling worthless and depressed because of their patterns. You're learning to understand them, why they exist, and whether you still need them. This practice is important because it helps you to begin changing your relationship with your patterns.

Before we can let go of the old patterns that protected us, **we must recognise why we needed them and show our appreciation for what they did for us.** We've employed them for a lifetime; they deserve a decent send off.