

## **Chapter 13**

### **Rebuilding Self-Trust**

When someone has spent many years adapting themselves to maintain harmony in relationships, something important can slowly weaken: self-trust.

Self-trust is the quiet confidence that your feelings, instincts, and perceptions are worth listening to. It allows you to recognise when something feels comfortable or uncomfortable. It helps guide your decisions and shape the boundaries that protect your emotional well-being.

But when your internal signals have been repeatedly softened, postponed, or ignored to maintain connection, your relationship with those signals can become uncertain:

- you may begin second-guessing your reactions
- you may wonder whether your feelings are reasonable
- you may ask others for reassurance before trusting your own judgement

This uncertainty does not mean your instincts have disappeared; it means they've not been receiving consistent attention.

Rebuilding self-trust begins with something very simple: noticing your internal responses and allowing them to exist without immediately dismissing them. Feelings of discomfort, a moment of hesitation, a sense that something does not feel right. These signals are valuable, providing information about what's happening within you emotionally.

Paying attention to these signals may feel unfamiliar at first. You may feel uncertain about their meaning, or tempted to dismiss them as you return your attention to meeting and prioritising someone else's needs. But rebuilding self-trust begins with acknowledging what you feel.

You might notice:

- "I feel uncomfortable about this."
- "I feel tired."
- "I feel uncertain."
- "I feel resentful."
- "I feel angry."

This recognition is enough. You don't need to analyse the feeling or act on it immediately. The important step is allowing your internal experience to be visible again.

This simple act of noticing strengthens your relationship with yourself. You begin to recognise patterns in your reactions, and to trust the signals your body and emotions provide. You begin to understand what feels supportive and what feels draining.

As this awareness grows, decision-making becomes clearer. You no longer rely entirely on external cues to determine what is appropriate or acceptable, and you begin including your own perspective in the process.

Rebuilding self-trust is about developing confidence that your experiences and feelings deserve attention. When self-trust strengthens, the self-abandonment loop loses power. Instead of automatically adapting to every situation, you begin responding with greater awareness.

You listen to yourself.

You consider your needs.

You allow your voice to participate in your decisions.

Slowly, something that may have felt distant for a long time begins to return - a sense of alignment between your internal experience and the way you move through the world.

## **Reflection Exercise**

### **Listening to Your Internal Signals**

Take a moment to reflect on situations where you may have ignored or doubted your instincts.

**A recent situation where I felt uncertain or uncomfortable was...**

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**In that moment, what did your body or emotions seem to be telling you?**

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**How did you respond to that signal?**

Examples might include:

- ignoring the feeling
- reassuring the other person

- convincing yourself it was not important
- adapting your response

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**Looking back now, do you think your instinct was trying to tell you something?**

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### **Practice Exercise**

#### **A Daily Self-Check**

Over the next few days, pause occasionally and ask yourself three simple questions.

**What am I feeling right now?**

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**What do I need right now?**

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**What would help me feel more comfortable in this moment?**

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## **Final Reflection**

How comfortable do you currently feel trusting your own instincts and feelings?

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Rebuilding self-trust happens gradually. Each time you acknowledge your internal signals, you strengthen your connection with yourself. The stronger that connection becomes, the easier it is to move through relationships without leaving parts of yourself behind.