

The Reflection

One insight I'd like you to take away from this conversation, is this: you may not like them, you may be exhausted by them, you may wish they'd disappear overnight, **but your patterns make sense.**

For years, you may have viewed certain emotional parts of yourself as evidence that something was wrong with you. Perhaps you've criticised yourself for being too sensitive, too anxious, too needy, too emotional, too cautious, too trusting, too guarded, or too concerned about what other people think.

Maybe you've spent years trying to fix yourself, or promised yourself you'd stop overthinking, worrying, people-pleasing, seeking approval, or doubting yourself. And yet the patterns remained.

But what if the reason they remained is because they were never accidental? What if your patterns were solutions? Not perfect lifelong solutions but solutions, nonetheless.

Before you can change a pattern, you must understand it. Every pattern begins as an attempt to meet a need for safety, for acceptance, for connection, for belonging, and for protection. The difficulty is that many of the patterns and strategies that helped us survive one chapter of our lives continue to keep us in survival mode long after that chapter has ended.

- ♥ What once protected us eventually restricts us.
- ♥ What once helped us belong eventually disconnects us from ourselves.

♥ What once kept us safe can eventually keep us small.

This is where healing your patterns begins - not with judgment, blame, or forcing yourself to change, but with **understanding**.

As you reflect on this conversation, I invite you to become curious about your own story.

♥ Instead of asking what's wrong with me, try asking, **what happened to me that make these patterns make sense?**

♥ Instead of asking, why can't I just get over it, try asking, **what purpose might this pattern have served?**

♥ Instead of viewing yourself **as a problem to be solved**, consider the possibility that you are **a person to be understood**.

The goal is to see yourself more clearly and change behaviours that no longer serve you.

When we understand the **source and reason for a pattern**, we stop judging, criticising and shaming ourselves for continued behaviours that once helped us cope. The absence of self-judgement, criticism, and shame creates mental and emotional space for us to think about and do something different.

Perhaps, for the first time in a long time, you can begin looking at yourself with curiosity instead of criticism, with compassion instead of condemnation, with understanding instead of shame.

Your story matters, your experiences matter. When you look at it all in context, the person you've become makes perfect sense. Understanding *that* may be the first step towards becoming the

person you'd like to be - the person who, in fact, has been there all along waiting patiently for their turn to shine.