

The Practice

Notice the Price

This week, I'd like you to become aware of the hidden cost of your coping mechanisms in real time. Choose one pattern that you identified in this conversation - not because it's the biggest problem in your life, but *because it's a pattern you genuinely want to understand more clearly.*

Throughout the week, every time you notice this pattern appearing, pause and ask yourself two questions:

What is this trying to give me?

And:

What is this costing me right now?

For example: if you find yourself saying yes when you want to say no, ask yourself: what's this giving me? Approval, conflict-avoidance, a sense of being liked?

Then ask: what is it costing me? Honesty, time, energy, self-respect?

If you find yourself overthinking, ask: what is overthinking giving me? Certainty? Preparation? The illusion of control?

Then ask: what is overthinking costing me? Peace, presence, sleep, enjoyment of the moment?

If you find yourself avoiding a difficult conversation, ask yourself: what is this giving me? Temporary safety? Then ask: what is it costing me? Authenticity? Connection? Resolution?

Throughout the week, record what you notice. You don't need to write pages, a few words are enough, as long as it's raising your awareness. You could write something like:

Pattern:

What it gave me:

What it cost me:

By the end of the week, look back over your notes, and you'll notice something important: **most coping mechanisms provide immediate relief but create long-term discomfort.** They solve one problem while quietly creating another. That doesn't make them a bad idea, but it does limit what they can do for us long-term.

The purpose of this practice is not to stop the pattern, but to see it clearly and notice the cost it leaves behind. When we're fully aware of the price we're paying for our patterns, we unsurprisingly become more willing to choose something different.

What else could you do with the time, money, and energy this coping mechanism is costing you?

Awareness comes first.

Change follows.