

# Write Back to Yourself

## Breaking the Loop: A Journal Guide to Awareness & Self-Connection

**Most of us get caught in loops...**by loops I mean the automatic patterns your mind and body fall into, almost like well-worn tracks in the brain.

In neuroscience, these patterns reflect neural pathways: networks in the brain that strengthen the more often they're used. The more a particular way of thinking or responding repeats, the easier it becomes for the mind to return there again.

Many of these loops began as ways of coping. At some point they helped you feel safer, more accepted, or more prepared for what might happen. Over time they're shaped further by our environments, stress, biology, and the messages we absorb from the world around us. With repetition, they start to run automatically — even when they're no longer particularly helpful.

This journal guide is simply an invitation to slow down and notice what's here.

You don't need to answer every prompt, or follow them in order. Just begin wherever something resonates and see what unfolds.

### The Prompts

#### **Awareness (naming the loop):**

- What thought or feeling has been replaying itself most for me lately?
- When this loop shows up, what does my body do?
- Where am I saying "yes" when I really want to say "no"?
- If this loop is trying to protect me, what might it be keeping me safe from?

#### **Compassion (soothing the loop):**

- If I spoke to myself the way I would to a close friend, what would I say right now?
- What part of me is asking for compassion right now?
- If I stopped worrying about being 'too much,' what would I say to myself in this moment?

#### **Shift (loosening the loop):**

- What's one thing this loop is costing me right now?
- What's one small action I could take today that supports me instead?
- What story about myself am I tired of carrying? What truth do I want to practice instead?

#### **Resource (grounding outside the loop):**

- What's one small moment today where I felt even a flicker of calm, relief, or joy?
- What am I avoiding facing and what happens if I just write it down here, honestly?

*Side Note:* These prompts aren't about "fixing" you, you're not broken. They're about noticing old loops you get caught in and building a new way of relating to yourself.

Sometimes the win is as simple as naming what's here. Sometimes it's taking one small step.

With practice, the muscle of self-connection gets stronger. And that's what creates real, lasting change.

# Example Answers

These aren't "right" answers, just illustrations to show how even a few honest words can open up space for self-connection.

## Awareness Prompts (naming the loop):

**Q: What thought or feeling has been replaying itself most for me lately?**

A: "I keep thinking I'll mess things up at work. It loops in the back of my mind all day."

**Q: When this loop shows up, what does my body do?**

A: "My shoulders tense, and I notice I start holding my breath without realising it."

**Q: Where am I saying 'yes' when I really want to say 'no'?**

A: "I agreed to take on extra tasks at work even though I'm already stretched thin."

**Q: If this loop is trying to protect me, what might it be keeping me safe from?**

A: "By overworking and saying yes, I think I'm trying to protect myself from feeling like I'm not enough. It's like I'm proving my value by showing I'm a hard worker, even when it costs me."

## Compassion Prompts (soothing the loop):

**Q: If I spoke to myself the way I would to a close friend, what would I say right now?**

A: "You're good at what you do, showing up and trying your best that's already enough. You don't have to keep proving it."

**Q: What part of me is asking for compassion right now?**

A: The part that feels scared of failing and thinks working harder will keep me safe."

**Q: If I stopped worrying about being 'too much,' what would I say to myself in this moment?**

A: "I can ask for help without being a burden. Needing support doesn't make me 'too much.'"

## Shift Prompts (loosening the loop):

**Q: What's one thing this loop is costing me right now?**

A: "It's stealing my energy and making me dread work instead of feeling proud of it."

**Q: What's one small action I could take today that supports me instead?**

A: "I could go for a ten-minute walk before answering more emails."

**Q: What story about myself am I tired of carrying? What truth do I want to practice instead?**

A "I'm tired of carrying the story that I'll never be good enough. The truth is: I already bring value, even when I'm not perfect."

## Resource Prompts (grounding outside the loop):

**Q: What's one small moment today where I felt even a flicker of calm, relief, or joy?**

A: "When I made my coffee this morning and took the first sip in silence."

**Q: What am I avoiding facing and what happens if I just write it down here, honestly?**

A "I've been avoiding admitting that I can't keep running at this pace. Writing it down makes me realise I need to set some boundaries before I burn out."