



Do I Know What I Actually Want?

Separating my own direction from obligation, fear, habit, and other people's expectations

In recovery, stopping what is hurting me does not automatically tell me what I want. I may know what I should do, what other people hope for, what looks responsible, or what fear wants me to avoid, and still have trouble hearing my own preferences.

Clarity does not always mean immediate certainty. Sometimes it begins by noticing how a decision changes as I remove the pressure around it.

Follow the Decision

Watch what becomes clearer as each layer is taken away.

1

At first, I thought I wanted...

Before I analyze it too much, what answer comes up first?

2

Then I noticed I was reacting to...

Whose opinion, expectation, approval, disappointment, or pressure entered the decision?

3

If I remove other people's expectations...

What changes when I stop trying to manage how someone else will feel about my choice?

4

If I remove fear...

If I knew I could tolerate uncertainty, conflict, failure, rejection, or being misunderstood, what would change?

5

What seems to be mine?

After taking away pressure and fear, what preference, value, or direction still remains?

The part of this decision that feels most like my own voice is:



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Using one real choice to test what is actually guiding me

I do not need perfect certainty before I make a decision. I need enough honesty to notice what is influencing me and enough direction to choose what I am willing to stand behind.

Put One Choice Through the Filter

1. THE CHOICE

What am I actually deciding?

2. REMOVE THE AUDIENCE

If nobody were disappointed, impressed, relieved, or upset by my choice, what would I want?

3. REMOVE FEAR

If I knew I could tolerate discomfort, uncertainty, or being misunderstood, what would change?

4. CHECK DIRECTION

Am I moving toward something I value, or mainly away from discomfort? Will this bring me closer to or farther from the person I want to be?

5. COUNT THE COST

What am I willing to give up, tolerate, or disappoint in order to choose honestly?

6. NAME THE NEXT STEP

What is the smallest honest action I can take next?

Clarity is not the absence of competing voices. It is knowing which voice I am willing to let make the decision.