

FROM
self-blame
to
self-understanding



An invitation to move from self-criticism towards a more compassionate understanding of what your system may have learned over time.

Protective systems are not the same as broken systems.

Sometimes the responses we criticise most in ourselves make more sense when viewed through the lens of protection.

The nervous system learns through repetition, experience, and prediction. Over time, stress, overwhelm, pain, or unpredictability can shape the way the system responds — often automatically.

This worksheet is an invitation to explore some of those responses with curiosity rather than criticism.

What if this response makes sense?

Self-blame thought

(e.g. Why can't I just relax?)



Gentle re-frame

(e.g. "My system may have learned that staying alert feels safer.")

A different question

Instead of asking:

"What's wrong with me?"

What changes when we ask:

"What might my system have learned?"



Reflective Prompts...



What response do I criticise in myself most often?



What might this response be trying to protect me from?



What changes when I view this through the lens of protection instead of failure?