Why Do I Always Put Everyone Else First?

Six Questions Worth Asking Yourself

Caring for others? Start by understanding yourself.

Perhaps you're the person everyone turns to. The one who notices what needs doing and steps in when someone needs help.

Caring can be a wonderful expression of who you are. But sometimes it can be difficult to know where caring ends and obligation begins.

Before deciding that anything needs to change, spend a little time thinking about you.

There are no right or wrong answers. You may want to write your answers down, or simply sit with them. There's no timeline. Take your time with each question.

1. When does caring feel good?

When do I genuinely enjoy giving to others?

Think about times when helping leaves you happy, satisfied or quietly fulfilled. Not all giving is a burden; some may be a lovely expression of who you are.

Something to notice: What kinds of giving leave you feeling good rather than depleted?

Your thoughts:

2. When does giving feel expected?

When does helping begin to feel like an obligation?

Sometimes we say yes because we want to. Sometimes we say yes because we fear disappointing someone, creating conflict or being thought selfish. Think of a recent yes you did not really want to give.

Something to notice: What made saying no difficult?

Your thoughts:

3. How do I respond to disappointment?

What happens when someone is disappointed with me?

You might feel responsible for making things better, explain yourself, feel guilty, become frustrated or withdraw. Someone's disappointment does not automatically mean you have done something wrong.

Something to notice: The next time someone is disappointed, give yourself a moment before deciding you must fix it.

Your thoughts:

4. Do my needs matter too?

Do I give myself the same consideration I give others?

Think about how you respond when someone you love is tired or overwhelmed. Now consider how you respond when you need rest or support.

Something to notice: What would it look like to offer yourself the same kindness?

Your thoughts:

5. What would I enjoy?

What would I choose if nobody needed anything from me?

This is not about abandoning responsibilities. It is an invitation to listen to your own wishes: something to learn, somewhere to go, or an ordinary afternoon you would enjoy.

Something to notice: Choose one small thing this week simply because you would enjoy it.

Your thoughts:

6. Can I care for us both?

What would caring for others and caring for myself look like together?

Perhaps the answer is not to become less caring. Your needs belong in the picture too. You might share a responsibility, take time for yourself or say, 'I'd love to help, but not today.'

Something to notice: You do not have to choose between being caring and being someone who matters.

Your thoughts:

What do your answers tell you about you?

Notice when caring feels like a natural gift and when it begins to feel like an obligation.

There are reasons you respond the way you do. SolePath helps you understand them.

Your SolePath is a three-Path braid that helps you understand the patterns shaping your behaviour, choices, relationships and the way you live.

Know your SolePath. Then live it.

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