



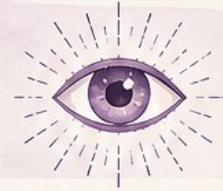
The MESSY MIDDLE™

A FRAMEWORK FOR NAVIGATING
THE SPACE BETWEEN WHO YOU WERE AND
WHO YOU ARE BECOMING



1 NOTICE —

Observe what's happening
without judgment.



2 NAME —

Identify the truths
that coexist.



3 STAY —

Resist the urge to rush certainty.
Let both truths breathe.



4 ALIGN —

Return to your values
and inner compass.



5 CHOOSE —

Act from alignment,
not fear.



6 INTEGRATE —

Reflect on what the
experience taught you.



Many healing approaches focus on helping people
understand **why** they feel the way they do.

Here we add the next step:

**“Once you understand what’s true,
how do you make a decision without
abandoning yourself?”**



You are not meant to skip the messy middle.
You are meant to **TRAVERSE** it, **LEARN** from it, and **GROW** through it.

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS

for the Messy Middles

— GENTLE PROMPTS FOR HEALING, GROWTH & SELF-DISCOVERY —

There are no right or wrong answers. Take what resonates and leave what doesn't.
Your answers may change over time, and that's a sign of growth—not failure.
Return to these questions whenever you feel called to.

1 BEGINNING WHERE YOU ARE



- What am I feeling right now?
- Where do I notice this feeling in my body?
- What would make me feel 5% safer right now?

2 CURIOSITY INSTEAD OF JUDGMENT



- What story am I telling myself?
- Where did I first learn this belief?
- Is this belief helping me today?

3 MAKING SENSE OF THE PAST



- What happened?
- What do I understand about it now?
- What questions may never have answers?

4 HOLDING COMPLEXITY



- Can two things be true here?
- What good memories exist alongside the painful ones?
- Am I trying to make someone all good or all bad?

5 UNDERSTANDING ADAPTATIONS



- How did this behavior protect me?
- When did it first become useful?
- Is it still protecting me today?

6 RELATIONSHIPS



- When do I feel safest with others?
- What boundaries help me feel respected?
- Which relationships help me grow?

7 RETURNING TO YOURSELF



- Who am I beneath survival?
- What brings me genuine joy?
- When do I feel most like myself?

8 INNER CHILD



- What age do I feel today?
- What did that younger version of me need?
- If I sat beside them today, what would I say?

9 SELF-COMPASSION



- Am I blaming myself for surviving?
- Would I judge another child the way I judge myself?
- What am I ready to set down?

10 LOOKING FORWARD



- What kind of person am I becoming?
- What values do I want to live by?
- What is one gentle step I can take next?

11 A QUESTION FOR THE FUTURE



If I answered these questions again five years from now, what do I hope I would understand that I don't yet understand today?



You are the expert of your own life.

These questions are lanterns, not maps—
meant to light the way, not walk it for you.

Be patient. Be gentle. You are allowed.



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JOURNAL REFLECTIONS

for my Messy Middle



Write with compassion. There are no right or wrong answers.



1. BEGINNING WHERE YOU ARE



2. CURIOSITY INSTEAD OF JUDGMENT

3

3. MAKING SENSE OF THE PAST



4

4. UNDERSTANDING ADAPTATIONS



5

5. HOLDING COMPLEXITY



6

6. RELATIONSHIPS



7

7. RETURNING TO YOURSELF



8

8. SELF-COMPASSION



9

9. LOOKING FORWARD



10

10. A QUESTION FOR THE FUTURE

