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The Person Across From You Is Always a Mystery

A Reflection Guide from Spirit of EQ

What This Guide Is For

Use this quietly — before a meeting, after a conversation that surprised you, or anytime you catch yourself deciding you already know who someone is. There are no right answers. The practice is in the sitting with the questions.

Part One: Notice the File

Think of someone you interact with regularly — a colleague, a family member, someone in your community.

What is the story you carry about this person? What are the three words you would use to describe them?

Where did that story come from — a single moment, a repeated pattern, something someone else told you?

What evidence are you collecting that confirms what you already believe? What evidence might you be discarding?

Part Two: The Cost of the Label

Think of a time you were labeled — misjudged, looked past, or underestimated.

What did the person see? What did they miss?

What did it cost the relationship — or the situation — that they had already decided who you were?

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What would you have wanted them to ask you instead?

Part Three: This Week's Practice

Pick one person you think you know well. In your next interaction, try to find one thing that surprises you — one thing that doesn't fit the file.

You don't have to tell them what you're doing. Just stay curious a little longer than usual.

What did you notice?

The label is not the person.

Peace and every good.

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